

SIDNEY'S TREATMENT OF THE THEME OF VIRTUE

IN ARCADIA

by

Marion Glasscoe

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ABSTRACT

Although Sidney revised his original Arcadia he did not change his intentions to present an ideal of public and private virtue. It is, therefore, possible to analyse this in the composite Arcadia of Sidney's unfinished revision, completed by the last three books, also slightly revised, of the original version.

Sidney moralises heroic pastoral romance so that the formal structure is also organic to his central purpose. Primarily pastoral both represents an ideal life whose maintenance is conditional on wise government, and symbolises qualities essential to virtue at all social levels. Arcadia reflects the contemporary adaptation of medieval chivalry to the changing needs of society. Although chivalric pageantry and ethics govern much of the action, its impractical extremes are mocked.

The rationale of virtue in Arcadia is order. As in the love episodes Sidney shows that this is achieved in the individual by a co-operation of reason and passion necessary for moral health, so he shows that in the state it consists in the reasonable co-operation of king and people for their common good. These public and private aspects of virtue clash in the trial scene, which stresses the need for an impersonal maintenance of justice in the interests of public order, but also reflects on the fallibility of that very reason which is instrumental in understanding and maintaining virtue.

In the last analysis reason gives way to religious faith. Human virtue reflects the order of a divine system by which it will finally be

vindicated. The plot illustrates a conception of providence working behind the accidents of fortune for human good, and Pamela argues a rational, philosophical justification for a faith in this providence which, although it supersedes human reason, is the mainspring of all virtuous action.

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INTRODUCTION

Any study of Sir Philip Sidney's Arcadia is complicated by the fact that it exists in more than one version. In his new edition of Sidney's poems W. Ringler has shown that Sidney started work on his original version of Arcadia in 1577 and completed it in 1580.¹ In 1584 he started to rewrite it but did not live to complete his revision. In this New Arcadia he does not radically change the contents of the original version, but expands it by adding new episodes which provide variations on the themes of the main plot.² Fulke Greville, with whom the manuscript of this unfinished version was left, had it published by Ponsonby in 1590. In 1593 Sidney's sister, the Countess of Pembroke, issued a composite version consisting of a reprint of the narrative portion of 1590, completed by the last three books of the original version. These last three books also contain, besides some minor alterations, important revisions which modify the conduct of the heroes in such a way that it is incompatible with the judgement passed on it in the trial at the end of the book. Thus it seems as if the conclusion of the whole work is inconsistent with what has gone before. Contrary to earlier opinions that these revisions were made by the Countess of Pembroke,

¹The Poems of Sir Philip Sidney, ed. W. Ringler, Oxford 1962, p. 365.

²For a study of the relationship between the two versions see R.W. Zandvoort, Sidney's Arcadia, Amsterdam, 1929. See also A.G.D. Wiles, "Parallel Analyses of the Two Versions of Sidney's Arcadia," SP, 39, 1942, pp. 167-206.

modern scholars incline to the view that they were intended by Sidney himself.¹ W. Ringler has produced new evidence to show not only that Sidney intended them, but that there is also evidence in the New Arcadia of how he would have harmonised them with the judgement at the final trial.² This will be examined in greater detail in the following chapters. Taken with the fact that Sidney did not appear to alter radically his original version of Arcadia it does mean that it is reasonable to examine as a whole the composite version of Arcadia which originally attained popularity.

All references given to the narrative portion of Arcadia and other of Sidney's prose works will be from Feuillerat's edition of Sidney's works reissued in 1962 as The Prose Works of Sir Philip Sidney by the Cambridge University Press in four volumes. In this edition the text of the unfinished New Arcadia, based on the quarto edition published by Ponsonby in 1590, is printed in the first volume, and that part of the original Arcadia which was added in the Countess of Pembroke's folio version of 1593 is given separately in volume two. Feuillerat's text is followed exactly except that the ampersand is spelled out and the consonants m and n are included where the text leaves them out.

In using this composite version of Arcadia there is, however, difficulty in placing the eclogues. This problem has been examined by W. Ringler. He believes that the eclogues as they stand in the original version "form a

¹See K.T. Rowe, "The Countess of Pembroke's Editorship of The Arcadia," PMLA, 54, 1939, pp. 122-138.

²Ringler, op.cit., pp. 378-379.

more extensive and varied pastoral work than Spenser's", and that the most striking thing about them is their "carefully integrated structure".¹ They deal with the themes which control the action of the main narrative and "each of the four groups develops a situation and explores a theme: the first presents the pangs of unrequited love, the second the struggle between reason and passion, the third the ideals of married love, the fourth the sorrows of lovers and the sorrows of death; and through them all moves the figure of Philisides (Sidney himself), whose identity and full story are not revealed until the very end".² However this careful structure is altered by the rearrangement of the eclogues in the 1590 and 1593 editions which was necessitated because Sidney himself had "transferred five of the poems to the narrative text of the New Arcadia and furthermore had revised his fictional self-portrait of Philisides".³ Ringler points out that "the editors of 90 explained in a prefatory note" that Sidney had not decided on which eclogues "'should have bene taken, and in what maner brought in' to the New Arcadia", and they therefore rearranged the eclogues in consideration of the changes which Sidney had introduced into the revision.⁴ The 1593 editors, however, instead of following this lead rearranged the poems and the eclogues, with some exceptions, to conform to their original order in the Old Arcadia, and some strange inconsistencies resulted. There is, therefore, nothing to indicate that the arrangement of the eclogues in either the 1590 or the 1593

¹ Ringler, op.cit., Introduction, p. xxxviii.

² Idem.

³ Ibid., p. 378.

⁴ Ibid., p. 372 and 378.

editions of Arcadia contains Sidney's own plan for revision, and Ringler believes that these eclogues should be read "only in the order in which they appear in the Old Arcadia".¹ He has printed them in that order in his new edition of the poems.

It is true that the eclogues achieve a measure of artistic unity in the Old Arcadia which is, to some extent, lost in the later editions. However, since this is a study of the composite, not the original, version, for convenience sake all references will be given to the context of the poems and eclogues of the 1590 edition of the New Arcadia completed by books three to five of the original version in 1593, as these are printed in volumes one and two of Feuillerat's edition referred to above.

In the publishers' note to this edition, however, it is remarked that "bibliographical research has shown that Feuillerat did not work from the best copy texts".² The actual text of the poems quoted will, therefore, be based on Ringler's new and corrected edition of Sidney's poems and page reference to this will be given in brackets after the quotation. The references to the context of the poems will be included in footnotes.

There are, however, still certain difficulties. Since the editors of 1590 and 1593 both followed a different system of ordering the poems in the eclogues, it sometimes happens that a poem which appears in the New Arcadia of 1590 reappears in the last three books of the original version added in 1593. When this occurs references to both places will be given. When an eclogue is quoted which is omitted by the 1590 editors and does not

¹Ringler, op.cit., p. 379.

²Sidney, Prose Works (hereafter referred to as Works) ed. A. Feuillerat, Cambridge, 1962, p.vii.

appear in the last three books of the 1593 version either, only the reference to Ringler's edition will be given.

At the beginning of both versions of Arcadia, Philanax, the wise counsellor of Basilius, says to him, "I would then have said, that wisdome and vertue be the only destinies appointed to man to follow, whence we ought to seeke al our knowledge, since they be such guydes as cannot faile". (1590.1.p.24.) This thesis argues that Arcadia with its highly elaborate pattern of main plot, subsidiary episodes and formal eclogues, contains a definition of this "wisdome and vertue", and is therefore to be taken seriously.

In defence of this it is now recognised that Sidney's description of Arcadia in the dedication to his sister as "a trifle, and that triflinglie handled",¹ is not to be taken seriously. Fulke Greville, Sidney's close friend and earliest biographer, talks of that "hypocriticall figure Ironia, wherein men commonly (to keep above their workes) seeme to make toies of the utmost they can doe",² and it has been pointed out that it was customary for courtly writers in the sixteenth century to speak lightly of their work.³ Even apart from this, however, it is extremely unlikely that Sidney, a somewhat grave courtier, statesman and man of action, who professed a belief in the moral value of literature in his Defence of Poesie,⁴ would have spent

¹Sidney, Works, I, p.3.

²F. Greville, Life of Sir Philip Sidney (1652), ed. N.Smith, Oxford, 1907, p.154.

³See E. Greenlaw, "Sidney's Arcadia As An Example of Elizabethan Allegory", Anniversary Papers By Colleagues and Pupils of G.L. Kittredge, Boston, 1913, p.329, Note 3. See also M. Goldman, Sir Philip Sidney and the Arcadia, Urbana, 1934, p.153.

⁴See for instance: "...as vertue is the most excellent resting place for al worldly learning to make his end of, so Poetry, being the most familiar to teach it, and most Princely to move towards it, in the most excellent worke, is the most excellent workeman". Sidney, Works, III, pp.21-22.

so much time and care on Arcadia if he had not taken it seriously. Besides the fact that he started to recast the work completely, Ringler points out that even in the period between finishing the original version in 1580 and starting the main revision in 1584, "the manuscripts reveal that ... he made minor revisions on at least five different occasions".¹

Certainly Greville regarded Arcadia with the utmost seriousness. Although he concentrates chiefly on its political aspects he says that Sidney's "purpose was to limn out such exact pictures, of every posture in the minde, that any man being forced, in the straines of this life, to pass through any straights, or latitudes of good, or ill fortune, might (as in a glasse) see how to set a good countenance upon all the discountenances of adversitie, and a stay upon the exorbitant smilings of chance".²

In addition to this, many critics have shown that Arcadia embodies a theory of heroic poetry derived from Italian renaissance critics which Sidney himself put forward in the Defence of Poesie.³ There he maintains that "heroicall" poetry moves men to virtuous action by means of example and writes that "as the Image of each Action stirreth and instructeth the minde, so the loftie Image of such woorthies, moste enflameth the minde with desire to bee worthie: and enformes with consaile how to bee woorthie".⁴ However, although such critics emphasise that Arcadia exists to move men to

¹Ringler, op.cit., Introduction, p. xxxvi.

²Greville, op.cit., p.16.

³See E. Greenlaw, op.cit., p. 327 ff., M. Goldman, op.cit., p. 150 ff., D.L. Clark, Rhetoric and Poetry in the Renaissance, New York, 1922, p. 146 ff., K.O. Myrick, Sir Philip Sidney as a Literary Craftsman, Camb., Mass., 1935, pp. 110-50 and pp. 229-297. For variations on this view, see R.W. Zandvoort, op.cit., pp. 120-164 and C.M. Dowlin, 'Sidney and Other Men's Thought', RES, 20, 1944, pp. 257-271.

⁴Sidney, Works, III, p.25.

virtue, they examine only some of the aspects of the rationale on which this virtue is based in the book.

Greenlaw, who claims that Arcadia is a "prose counterpart of the Faerie Queene, having for its object 'to fashion a gentleman or noble person in vertuous and gentle discipline,' and to portray 'a good governour and a vertuous man'",¹ examines briefly, and with particular stress on the role of the "governour", how this works in Arcadia. He later also examines the serious historical and philosophical implications of the captivity episode in book three of the New Arcadia.²

Friedrich Brie³ takes up Greenlaw's idea of Arcadia as a kind of allegory, and does examine it in great detail. However, it will be seen that his main interpretation of it as a work in which all the elements are subordinate to a political allegory of Aristotelian and Platonic thought is too narrow, and that his belief that the love episodes represent a conflict between passion and virtue which can be resolved only by Platonic idealism, is mistaken.

K.O. Myrick, who examines Arcadia as a renaissance epic in great detail, modifies some of Brie's more extreme interpretations and concludes that while Arcadia is a serious work it is not a "treatise about public and private virtue. Still less is it an idle tale, ... It is an heroic poem which makes noble conduct beautiful".⁴

This thesis will draw on the work already referred to, and also on

¹E. Greenlaw, op.cit., p.337.

²"The Captivity Episode in Sidney's Arcadia," The Manly Anniversary Studies, Chicago, 1923, pp. 54-63.

³F. Brie, Sidney's Arcadia, Strassburg, 1918.

⁴Myrick, op.cit., p.295.

many other chapters and articles which explore the structural significance and general relevance of different episodes in Arcadia; it will attempt to bring them all together in an examination of Arcadia as a serious work in which all the elements are organic to a central analysis of virtue.

The first two chapters will demonstrate this by showing that the pastoral and chivalric aspects of Arcadia, besides having a purely formal function, also contribute to an ideal of virtue. They will also show that Sidney's highly decorative use of pastoral figures and chivalric forms reflects contemporary social customs.

It is important to remember that Arcadia would not have appeared to contemporaries the unrealistic romance that it does to modern readers. This will also be stressed in the following chapters but it is interesting to note here one or two small details which bear this out. Basilius's fantastic lodge described as "of a yellow stone, built in the forme of a starre" (1590.1.p.91), is not just a fanciful fairy-tale castle. Marcus Whiffen notes that it resembles the star castle at Stern near Prague which Sidney visited in 1575.¹ Sir Henry Wotton, who was connected with Sidney on that journey, in his treatise on The Elements of Architecture remarks on Basilius's lodge and comments, "Sir Philip Sidney ... who well knowing that Basilius (as hee had painted the State of his Minde) did rather want some extraordinary Formes to entertaine his Fancie, then roome for Courtiers; was contented to place him in a Star-like Lodge; which otherwise in severe Iudgement of Art had beene an incommodious Figure".² This may be so, but

¹Marcus Whiffen, An Introduction to Elizabethan and Jacobean Architecture, London, 1952, p.43.

²Sir Henry Wotton, The Elements of Architecture, (1624), London 1903, p.96.

when it is remembered that both the Star castle at Stern, which Sidney must have known, and the only English version of this, built at the end of the sixteenth century on St Mary's island in the Scillies, were for defensive purposes, it may be wondered whether apart from its decorative qualities, this was not also the purpose of Basilius's lodge.

There are other ornamental structures in Arcadia which would not have seemed so bizarre to the Elizabethans as they do today. By the side of a fountain made in the image of Venus, Kalandar has a summer house where pictures of Basilius and his family hang side by side with those of Atalanta and Diana and Actaeon. (1590.1.pl8.) When Pyrocles describes to Musidorus Basilius's banqueting house he says there were

birds also made so finely, that they did not onely deceive the sight with their figure, but the hearing with their songs; which the watrie instruments did make their gorge deliver. The table at which we sate, was round, which being fast to the floore whereon we sate, and that devided from the rest of the buildings (with turning a vice, which Basilius at first did to make me sport) the table, and we about the table, did all turne rounde, by meanes of water which ranne under, and carried it about as a Mille. (1590.1.p92.)

Paul Hentzner records how in the 1590's he visited Thebbalds, the home of Lord Burleigh, and saw a summer house

in the lower part of which, built semicircularly, are the twelve Roman emperors in white marble, and a table of touchstone; the upper part of it is set round with cisterns of lead, into which the water is conveyed through pipes, so that fish may be kept in them, and in summer-time they are very convenient for bathing (1)

He also saw in the gardens at Nonesuch

¹Paul Hentzner, Travels in England (Nuremburg 1612), trans. R. Bentley, London, 1889, p.52.

many columns and pyramids of marble, [and] two fountains that spout water one round the other like a pyramid, upon which are perched small birds that stream water out of their bills (1)

At least Basilius did not have at his lodge the doubtful pleasure of a "pyramid of marble full of concealed pipes, which spurt upon all who come within their reach",² which Hentzner also observed at Nonesuch.

Such descriptions in Arcadia would have been recognised and appreciated chiefly by the upper classes, and it is important to remember that Arcadia was, in fact, written by a member of the aristocracy for his own kind. Danby has rightly said that it is "Great House literature, and Sidney the interpreter of the ethos of the Great House".³ This does not mean that the ideal of virtue which Sidney puts forward does not apply to all levels of society, it will be seen that it clearly does. It does mean, however, that he was chiefly concerned to make this ideal relevant to the circumstances and responsibilities of that class to which he belonged and which carried most responsibility in the community. This is emphasised in Arcadia by his insistence on the relevance of chivalric ideals which applied only to the nobility, and by the fact that nearly all the characters belong to the upper classes.

The third and fourth chapters of this thesis will examine in more detail the rationale of virtue in Arcadia. Although Myrick claims that "it is not a treatise about public and private virtue",⁴ it will be seen

¹Hentzner, op.cit., p. 78.

²Idem.

³J. F. Danby, Poet's on Fortune's Hill, London, 1952, p.17.

⁴Myrick, op.cit., p.295.

that Sidney did distinguish between these two aspects in the book. They are, of course, inextricably involved with each other, but it does seem that in the love episodes Sidney deals with a problem of self-government which constitutes the private aspect of virtue, and in those stories which are concerned with politics and public justice he defines an ideal of social order in which all must co-operate to achieve an ideal of public virtue.

It will be seen that the narrative is carefully patterned so that the theme of human virtue is represented on several levels. For instance it is seen as ideally achieved in such characters as Pamela, Euarchus, Argalus and Parthenia, and in the process of achievement by the Princes, Pyrocles and Musidorus. At the same time, however, it will be seen that some episodes demonstrate the evils which result from a lack of virtue, while others show it in circumstances which expose its vulnerability and threaten its eclipse. It is these episodes which make Arcadia a more melancholy book than either its title suggests, or is often realised. Sidney was a realist. His ideal of virtue is itself a practical one, but he sees that it is, nevertheless, painful to achieve because of the composition of that very human nature to which it is relevant. It is also hard to maintain in the face of unpredictable and seemingly purposeless fortune.

This melancholy side to Arcadia is consistent with what we know of Sidney as a man. On January 22nd 1574, Languet wrote to him, "Besides, you are not over cheerful by nature, and it [geometry] is a study which will make you still more grave".¹ There is also evidence that this serious

¹The Correspondence of Philip Sidney and Hubert Languet, ed. W.A. Bradley, Boston, 1912, p.29.

man, naturally inclined to melancholy, found his duties as a responsible courtier and statesman wearisome. On October 22nd 1578 Languet wrote,

I am especially sorry to hear you say that you are weary of the life to which I have no doubt God has called you, and desire to fly from the light of your court and betake yourself to the privacy of secluded places to escape the tempest of affairs by which statesmen are generally harassed (1)

Later, on September 24th 1580 he wrote, "You used sometimes to say that you were by nature entirely averse to the excitement and the fascinations of a court".² From this it appears that Sidney did not always achieve the "vertuous action" which should be the end of all "earthly learning"³ with the ease that is sometimes imagined.

Certainly in Arcadia he presents his ideal of virtue as continually threatened both by the innate weakness of human nature and the outward force of circumstance.

However, the final perspective in which events in Arcadia are seen is not a melancholy one, for by resurrecting Basilius from his supposed death Sidney turns the plot to a happy ending for all the main characters. It will be seen that it is likely that this ending would have remained even in a completed revised version. It stands for a religious view of the universe in which a divine providence works for human good; and this view is explicitly defended in a philosophical argument by Pamela in the New Arcadia.

¹The Correspondence ... op.cit., p.173.

²Ibid., p.202.

³Sidney, "Defence of Poesie", Works, III, p.12.

The last chapter of this thesis will examine this religious element in Arcadia. It will be shown that this does not cancel the significance of the darker episodes in which evil results from a lack of virtue, or from circumstances beyond human control, but that it gives them an added perspective, and vindicates the struggle to achieve and maintain virtue in the face of seemingly overwhelming odds.

Thus finally it will be easier to understand the full significance of Philanax's advice to Basilius and to relate it to the central purpose of Arcadia.

I would then have said, that wisdom and vertue be the only destinies appointed to man to follow, whence we ought to seeke al our knowledge, since they be such guydes as cannot faile; which, besides their inward comfort, doo lead so direct a way of proceeding, as either prosperitie must ensue; or, if the wickednes of the world should oppresse it, it can never be said, that evil hapneth to him, who falles accompanied with vertue: I would then have said, the heavenly powers to be revered, and not searched into; and their mercies rather by prayers to be sought, then their hidden counsels by curiositie (1590.1.p24.)

CHAPTER I

PASTORAL IN ARCADIA

This chapter will examine how Sidney uses the conventions and ideals traditionally associated with pastoral literature both to govern the form of Arcadia and to contribute to a comprehensive analysis of virtue which is the unifying theme of the whole book.

Although it is agreed that Arcadia is to some extent a pastoral work, it is generally considered that this element is of little significance. Dr. Brie examines the pastoral element and concludes that its role is unimportant in the events of the book.¹ W.W. Greg treats Arcadia under the heading of Pastoral Romance, yet notes only that it contains no really pastoral characters "the personae being all either shepherds in their disguise only, or else...burlesque characters of the rustic tradition".² S.K. Heninger finds that the Renaissance perverted pastoral literature from an expression of man's god-like nature in a literary Eden to satire, moral allegory and sentimental narrative. He sees Arcadia as a specimen of the last in which, as in the Diana of Montemayor, pastoral and medieval chivalric romance unite and "shepherds began to posture in courtly and heroic attitudes. From there the pastoral romance sunk even deeper into banality".³ C.S. Lewis

¹Friedrich Brie, op.cit., pp.222-256.

²W.W. Greg, Pastoral Poetry and Pastoral Drama, London, 1906, p.150.

³S.K. Heninger, "The Renaissance Perversion of Pastoral", JHI, 22, 1961, p.260.

maintains that, "To call it [Arcadia] a pastoral romance is misleading".¹ None of these comments does justice to the nature and significance of the pastoral element in Arcadia and in order to understand this better it will be helpful to make a brief survey of the traditions of pastoral literature on which Sidney drew.

In the Defence of Poesie Sidney himself makes two direct references to pastoral literature. The second occurs in a section dealing with the archaic language of Spenser's Shepherd's Calender. "That same framing of his style to an olde rusticke language, I dare not allow: since neither Theocritus in Greeke, Virgill in Latine, nor Sanazara in Italian, did affect it".² This suggests that he took these three writers as models for pastoral. It is, therefore, interesting that all three are concerned with pastoral primarily as an idealised setting, and way of life to be sought for its own sake, and this is not true of Sidney's treatment of pastoral in Arcadia.

Leaving Sannazaro aside for the moment, Theocritus and Virgil provide the sources from which later pastoral literature developed. In both, country life is preferred to town life, but the eclogues are not so much about the reasons for this preference, as the shepherds' delight in the natural beauty of their world, their loves and sorrows, their country pursuits and festivals. The description of country life is not devoid of realism and there is always an awareness of the precariousness of human life.

¹C.S. Lewis, English Literature in the Sixteenth Century, Oxford, 1954, p.335.

²Sidney, Works, III, p.37.

In Theocritus death is seen in dramatic terms. Daphnis is dying and the function of the natural world is to mirror the confusion that the fact of death seems to imply

Let all things be confounded; let the pine-tree put forth figs,
Since Daphnis lies dying! (1)

In Virgil Daphnis's death is placed in the past. The singers treat it as a subject for a formal lament and thus the tradition of pastoral elegy is founded. Again the singers find relief in imagining that the natural world sympathises with their sorrow.

When you were taken from us, Pales herself withdrew, and our own Apollo left the countryside. Too often now, in furrows where we cast fat grains of barley, the wretched darnel and the unprofitable wild-oat spring up. Gone is the gentle violet, the gay narcissus gone: thistles and prickly thorns rise up instead (2)

Part of the lasting satisfaction of pastoral is that its extension of human emotion to the natural world, and its concern with the natural cycle of birth and death, satisfies a need to find some universal significance in the fact of death to help to overcome the agony of personal loss. In these eclogues the setting mirrors and relieves the emotion.

It is through the setting in another eclogue that a coming golden age is imagined; "the waving corn will slowly flood the plains with gold, grapes hang in ruby clusters on the neglected thorn, and honey-dew exude from the hard trunk of the oak".³ Not all the eclogues strike this visionary note, but the point to be stressed is that it is the setting itself which is the

¹Theocritus, *Idylls*, trans. R.C. Trevelyan, Cambridge, 1947, I, p.6.

²Virgil, *The Pastoral Poems*, trans. E.V. Rieu, Penguin Classics, 1959, V, p.63.

³*Ibid.*, IV, p.55.

substance of the song. The shepherds may be threatened with dispossession but the point of mentioning it at all is only to stress the advantages of the country life they must leave. Melibeus, on the verge of exile, envies Tityrus who is staying on his farm.

Happy old man! You will stay here, between the rivers that you know so well, by springs that have their Nymphs, and find some cool spot underneath the trees. Time and again, as it has always done, the hedge there, leading from your neighbour's land, will have its willow-blossom rifled by Hyblaeon bees and coax you with a gentle humming through the gates of sleep. On the other side, at the foot of the high rock, you will have the vine-dresser singing to the breezes. (1)

There is an acute nostalgia for a way of life which is ideal because loved and familiar. The presence of nymphs and gods never removes the singers or their setting from a familiar country scene. There is as yet, however, no specifically moral virtue attached to pastoral life. It was much later that Barclay announced heavy-handedly,

But if that any would nowe to me obiect
That this my labour shall be of small effect,
And to the Reader not greatly profitable,
And by that maner as vayne and reprocable,
Because it maketh onely relation
Of Shepherdes maner and disputation.
If any suche reade my treatise to the ende
He shall well perceyue, if he thereto intende,
That it conteyneth both laudes of vertue,
And man infourmeth misliuing to eschue,
With diuers bourdes and sentences morall,
Closed in shadowe of speeches pastorall. (2)

By the time of the Renaissance pastoral literature loses its original simplicity of form. The advent of Christianity, the growth of the medieval

¹Ibid., I, p.25.

²Alexander Barclay, Eclogues, ed. B. White, Early English Text Soc. 175, 1928, Prologe, p.3.

church with its body of formulated doctrine and the development of the ideals of chivalry, helped to produce a quite differently oriented society and literature, in relation to which the subject of pastoral literature becomes extremely complex. It is possible here to indicate only a few lines of approach which are also relevant to the use of the pastoral convention in Arcadia.

Although it is impossible to generalise about the treatment of pastoral life in medieval literature it is important for a study of sixteenth-century as compared with classical pastoral to notice one aspect of this. In popular literature, such as the miracle plays, stress is laid on the realistic aspects of pastoral life, which, under English social and climatic conditions appears far from ideal. In the Second Shepherds Play of the Townley cycle, the first shepherd complains:

Lord, what these weders ar cold, and I am ylle happyd;
I am nere hande dold, so long have I nappyd;
My legys thay fold, my fyngers ar chappyd,
It is not as I wold, for I am al lappyd
In sorow.

He goes on to point out the harsh circumstances in which shepherds are forced to live:

We ar so hamyd,
For-taxed and ranyd,
We ar mayde hand tamyd,
Withe these gentlery men. (1)

In these plays too, country people are often treated as comic characters by virtue of their simplicity. This humour and harsh realism are both

¹English Miracle Plays Moralities and Interludes, ed. A.W. Pollard, Oxford, 1890, p.31.

present in sixteenth-century pastoral. In Arcadia the treatment of Dametas and his family is akin to this tradition but is complicated by the fact that the humour is directed at them from a courtly and not a popular standpoint.

In the sixteenth century pastoral is used both as a way of escape from the pressures of court life and as an instrument of criticism of it. It has become far more self-conscious than the early classical eclogues. This may be partly due to the spread of the ideals of chivalry with their stress on the value of noble birth and deeds of arms. The idea that the social structure was a divinely ordained reflection of a heavenly hierarchy was fairly widespread, and, as Professor Huizinga points out, tended to lead to an evaluation of the social orders according to their proximity to the highest place.¹ In such a scheme shepherds would appear to be of little significance, and there was felt some need to apologise for treating them as subjects for poetry, hence Barclay's prologue. At the same time, however, the intrigue of court life, and the mercenary reasons for cruel wars, gave the lie to chivalric ideals, and the shepherd who stood outside this world had a good vantage point from which to criticise it.

This uncertainty of attitude towards shepherds as people of low birth is connected with the argument as to whether true nobility stems from nature or nurture and this was a common-place of discussion. In his third eclogue Barnabe Googe writes,

¹J. Huizinga, The Waning of the Middle Ages, Penguin Books, 1955, p.58.

For yf theyr Natures gentell be,
 thoughe byrth be neuer so base,
 Of Gentlemen (for mete it is)
 they ought haue name and place. (1)

It will be seen later that this is an ideal to which many pay lip service.

Besides this basic difference in the attitude towards the shepherds, there is also a change in the atmosphere and substance of the pastoral eclogues which were written in England during the early sixteenth century. The prototype for these was the ten eclogues of Baptista Spagnuoli, called *Mantuan*, published in 1498, and a standard school text book in the sixteenth century. Turberville translated the first nine of Mantuan's eclogues in 1567, and they had many imitators. The old fresh delight in country life is missing and greater stress is laid on the hardships of the shepherd's lot with a realism like that of an earlier medieval tradition.

With too much heate in Somer cloyde,
 in Winter nipte with colde:
 The Raynie dayes upon the ground
 we sleepe in Shepecots olde. (2)

The natural grace and dignity of the classical shepherds is lost. In Mantuan's first eclogue the pastoral lover is made to look ridiculous. The shepherd Faustus tries to come to his mistress by night, only to be set on by dogs,

With open iawes on me they ranne,
 I leapte a hedge in hast. (3)

This situation might well be compared to Basilius's undignified behaviour stumbling in the dark, and barking his shins against the furniture as he

¹Barhabe Googe, *Eglogs, Epytaphes, and Sonettes* (1563), ed. E. Arber, London, 1871, p.40.

²*The Eclogues of Mantuan* (trans. George Turberville, 1567), ed. D. Bush, New York, 1937, *The Third Egloge*, p.19.

³*Ibid.*, *The first Egloge*, p.8.

comes to make sure his wife is asleep before joining his supposed mistress.
(1593,3.p49).

The love complaints are stereotyped and prosaic,

Unmindfull beast I was become,
I took no nightly rest:
Twas easie eke to know my grief,
The browe bewrayes the brest. (1)

Moreover a new moral note has crept in. Barnabe Googe, who wrote eclogues after the Mantuan style, reflects in his fourth eclogue,

A fonde Affection lead me then,
When I for God dyd place,
A Creature, cause of all my Care,
A flesshye fletynge face. (2)

Behind this statement there is the pressure of the medieval opposition of sacred and profane love. Chaucer's Troilus, that perfect courtly lover, translated after death to the seventh sphere, had laughed at his earthly suffering from passion, and exhorted young lovers to turn away from earthly love,

To thilke God that after his ymage
Yow made, and thynketh al nys but a faire
This world, that passeth soone as floures faire. (3)

A moral tone is, in fact, the distinguishing mark of the Renaissance eclogues. The golden age has gone and shepherds complain of their lot, or as poets, of niggardly patrons,

Besides our Princes now a dayes
accompt of Verses so,
As Borias blast of leaues,
with whissing force that flie. (4)

¹ Ibid., p.7.

² Googe, op.cit., p.45.

³ Chaucer, 'Troilus and Criseyde', V, ll.1839-1841, Works, ed. F.N. Robinson, London. Printed in U.S.A., 1957.

⁴ Mantuan, op.cit., The fift Egloge, p.49.

They inveigh against the vices of the city,

The Townes estate? Menalcas oh
 thou makste my harte to grone,
 For Vice hath euery place posseste,
 and Vertue thence is flowne. (1)

One of these vices is a lack of faith in providence, and the townsman is condemned for daring to search into the nature of the gods and for trying to foretell his fate by the stars.² Basilus also tries to do just this in Arcadia.

Barnabe Googe does make some concession to the pleasant, desirable nature of country life in his eighth eclogue,

...while others cark and toyle
 we lyue at home with ease.
 ...
 A lyfe that sure doth fare exceade,
 eche other kynd of lyfe:
 O happy state, that doth content,
 How farre be we from stryfe? (3)

However there is no attempt to realise this happy state in imagery. The eclogue has become a hook on which to hang moral themes.

In Spenser's Shepheardes Calender the ideal picture of country life is reintroduced, although the pastoral convention is also used as a pivot on which to turn to other themes. The shepherd Hobbinall asks,

Tell me, what wants me here, to work delyte?
 The simple ayre, the gentle warbling wynde,
 So calme, so coole, as no where else I fynde:
 The grassye ground with daintye Daysies dight,
 The Bramble bush, where Byrds of euery kynde
 To the waters fall their tunes attemper right.

Colin replies,

¹Googe, op.cit., Egloga Tertia, p.39.

²See Mantuan, The sixt Egloge, p.61, verso.

³Googe, op.cit., pp.62-3.

Oh happy Hobbinoll, I blesse thy state,
That Paradise hast found, whych Adam lost. (1)

The Shepheardes Calender is too complex a work to comment on briefly. The point of mentioning it in this survey is that it brings to a climax the trend of the earlier eclogues to use the pastoral convention as a cloak for other themes. In it the shepherd is far more than a countryman, he is lover, poet and priest as well and the pastoral becomes a way of focussing on a complexity of themes in one unified form. The Calender was published in 1579 with a dedication to Sidney.

Side by side with this use of the pastoral convention to express criticism and dissatisfaction, there was also a literary tradition which treated pastoral as a way of escape into a world where life was reduced to a simple round of pleasures among the shepherds and fountains, under eternal sunshine. In 1501 the Arcadia of Sannazaro was published. In it he creates a world of ideal beauty which is only partially present in Sidney's. It is a world much further removed from reality than the countryside of Theocritus and Virgil. C.S. Lewis says that,

It creates for the singing shepherds a landscape, a social structure, a whole world; a new image, only hinted by previous pastoralists, has come into existence - the image of Arcadia itself. That is why Sannazaro's work, though in one sense highly derivative - it is claimed that almost every phrase has a classical origin - is, in another, so new and so important. If Pope was able to take it for granted that 'Pastoral is an image of what they call the Golden Age', this was largely the result of Sannazaro's Arcadia. It was Sannazaro, more than any one else, who turned pastoral away from the harshness of Mantuan (or our own Barclay), made of it something to be pictured, not in grotesque woodcuts but in the art of Poussin, and so created one of the great dreams of humanity. (2)

¹Spenser, 'The Shepheardes Calender', Iune, ll.3-10, Works, ed. E. de Selincourt, London, 1912.

²C.S. Lewis, op.cit., pp.333-4.

This turning away from the harsher element in pastoral is also in Spenser's Shepherd's Calendar.

Since the idealism of Sannazaro's Arcadia has more in common with the atmosphere of Theocritus's and Virgil's eclogues, than those by English writers, it is to be supposed from Sidney's comment on these authors in the Defence that he considered this idealised element to belong integrally to the pastoral form. It is also an element which can be utilised to add grace and sophistication to court life, and to provide release from the intolerable pressures of living in a small community where competition for power and position is the predominant element. Lorenzo the Magnificent made idealised pastoral an extension of aristocratic life when he identified the Medici villa at Fiesole, in the hills above Florence, with Arcady, and his own circle of friends with Arcadian shepherds.

In England pastoral played a large part in court entertainment. When the Queen visited Lord Chandos at Sudley she was received by an old shepherd and watched a show of Apollo running after Daphne. On the third day she was to have been led to where a group of Cotswold shepherds were choosing a King and Queen for their feast, and there to have been welcomed by them. This was cancelled owing to bad weather.¹ In the April Eclogue of the Shepherd's Calendar Spenser pays elaborate compliment to Elizabeth in pastoral form,

Of fayre Elisa be your siluer song,
 that blessed wight:
 The flowre of Virgins, may shee florish long,
 In princely plight.
 For shee is Syrinx daughter without spotte,
 Which Pan the shepherds God of her begot:
 So sprong her grace
 Of heauenly race,
 No mortall blemishe may her blotte. (2)

¹See W.W. Greg, op.cit., pp. 373-4.

²Spenser, The Shepherd's Calendar, April, ll.46-54.

In May 1578 Sidney himself wrote a pastoral entertainment, The Lady of May, for the Queen when she visited the Earl of Leicester's house at Wanstead. Here,

Her Most Excellent Majestie Walking in Wansteed Garden, As She Passed Downe Into The grove, there came suddenly among the traine, one apparelled like an honest mans wife of the countrey, where crying out for justice, and desiring all the Lords and Gentlemen to speake a good word for her, she was brought to the presence of her Majestie, to whom upon her knees she offred a supplication, and used this speech. (1)

The supplication is that she should judge between the two suitors for her daughter who is the Lady of May.

This play-acting at pastoral life is more than a frivolous pastime. Like the elaborate chivalric displays to be examined in the next chapter, it acquired moral overtones. G.K. Hunter has pointed out that the contrast between the courtly and pastoral life was such that "the courtier finds virtue in the image of himself as a shepherd".² Like the author exercising the courtly quality of sprezzatura in dismissing his work as a mere trifle, he indulges in a show of "proud humility". This both conceals the competitive nature of court life and shows up, by contrast, its actual brilliance.³

The work of a shepherd, moreover, lends itself as a symbol for other courtly offices. In 1591 Peele's pageant, Descensus Astrea, was born through London before the new Lord Mayor. In this pageant Astrea with a sheep hook represents the Queen and bids her people,

Feed on, my flock, among the gladsome green,
Where heavenly nectar flows above the banks;

¹ Sidney, Works, II, p. 208.

² G.K. Hunter, John Lyly The Humanist as Courtier, London, 1962, p.129.

³ Ibid., see p.130.

Such pastures are not common to be seen:
 Pay to immortal Jove immortal thanks,
 For what is good from heauen's high throne doth fall;
 And heauen's great architect be praised for all. (1)

This courtly, pastoral fiction, as is well known, extended beyond the range of court entertainment; it was an accepted way of writing about contemporaries. Pastoral laments poured in at Sidney's death, mourning the loss of the shepherd Astrophel.

In the Diana of Montemayor, which, to some extent, influenced Sidney's Arcadia, we find this use of the pastoral convention. In 1598 Bartholomew Yong, in the preface to his translation writes,

The low and pastorall stile hereof, Montemayor in his Epistle to the L. of Villanoua excuseth, entreating of Shepherds, though indeed they were but shadowes of great and honorable personages, and of their marriages, that not many yeeres ago liued in the Court of Spaine, whose posteritie to this day liue in noble estate.(2)

The background to this romance is an idealised countryside like that in Sannazaro's Arcadia.

In book six of the Faerie Queene Spenser uses this same idealised background for a moral purpose. However, he peoples it with real shepherds, not courtly persons in disguise, and then introduces the court world into it. At the deepest level of Book Six the court confronts pastoral simplicity because it learns from it a virtue which must be achieved at its own level. Pastoral symbolises a fundamental value without reducing everything to rusticity. Sir Calidore, the knight who is in pursuit of the blatant beast, falls in love with Pastorella among the shepherds and is vouchsafed a

¹George Peele, Works, ed. A.H. Bullen, 1888, p.363. Quoted by W.W.Greg, op.cit., p.371. For the connection of Astrea with the themes of Imperial Christianity and the return of the golden age, see Frances Yates, "Queen Elizabeth as Astrea", JWCI, X, 1947, pp.27-82.

²George of Montemayor, Diana, trans. B. Yong, London, 1598, a3.

vision of the Graces. Attracted by the simple and happy nature of the shepherds' life he comments on this to Melibeus who replies:

If happie, then it is in this intent,
That hauing small, yet doe I not complaine
Of want, ne wish for more it to augment,
But doe my self, with what I haue, content; (1)

Ambition does not touch him,

Ne once my minde vnmoued quiet grieue,
But all the night in siluer sleepe I spend,
And all the day, to what I list, I doe attend. (2)

From this simple and rather limited existence he is in a strong position to level criticism at the corruption at court, but he does not for one moment suggest that all the courtiers should become shepherds. The issue is not as simple as that. When Calidore wishes to cast in his lot with the shepherds he is told that, the heavens,

...to each such fortune doe diffuse,
As they doe know each can most aptly vse. (3)

Calidore must find happiness in his own station of life,

But fittest is, that all contented rest
☞ With what they hold: each hath his fortune in his brest.(4)

The existing social orders are divinely ordained, and courtesy exists in fulfilling one's place in this order with the same integrity as Melibeus fulfills his. The Graces who appear in this pastoral paradise, which symbolizes the purity of the good life, emphasize this.

They teach vs, how to each degree and kynde
We should our selues demeane, to low, to hie;
☞ To friends, to foes, which skill men call Ciuility. (5)

¹Spenser, The Faerie Queene (hereafter referred to as F.Q.) VI.ix.20.

²Ibid., VI, IX, 22.

³Ibid., VI, IX, 29.

⁴Idem.

⁵Ibid., VI, X, 23.

Another example of this confronting of courtly and pastoral worlds, similar to Book Six of the Faerie Queene, exists in the manuscript fragment of a speech connected with the celebrations for the Accession Day Tilts which will be looked at in more detail in the next chapter. This speech includes a tale of a knight who goes to live with shepherds in circumstances which parallel those of Sir Calidore. Both knights oppose a beast who represents envy and slander and who troubles the shepherds as well as themselves. Like Calidore, too, this knight finds that the shepherds' life is idyllic. He is weary of the evils and mutability of the world and finds in the country

Ther was no deuises or discourses of princes of stats, nor
whisperinge of lie[s] to breed or feed factions, to uporne
noble houses, and troble comon wealths... (1)

There are other less pleasant things, however, which emerge from this confronting of court and country. It may be claimed that

...vertues seat is deepe within the mynd, (2)

but in fact great stress is laid on the desirability of noble birth. In this same Accession Day story, the hermit who tells it feels it necessary to apologise to the Queen for the country folk as, "no better then Shepards, and heardmen, breaders of Cattell, and followers of the plough".³ In the Faerie Queene the salvage man owes his good behaviour to good instincts prompted by noble birth.

For certes he was borne of noble blood,
How euer by hard hap he hether came;
As ye may know, when time shall be to tell the same. (4)

¹ B.M. Add. MSS. 41,499.B. Modern Transcript, p.13.

² F.Q. VI, Introduction, 5.

³ B.M. Add. MSS. 41,499.B. p.7.

⁴ F.Q. VI. V. 2.

In fact it is

...seldome seene, that one in basenesse set
Doth noble courage shew, with curteous manners met.

for it is "gentle bloud will gentle manners breed".¹ The knight, Sir Calidore, plays at being a shepherd wooer with far greater success than the actual shepherd Corydon, but he is not allowed to marry a shepherdess, since Pastorella turns out to be a Princess. On the occasion when she is surprised by a tiger, Corydon flees away in "cowherd feare", but Calidore, armed only with a crook, slays the monster.²

The last point which emerges out of this confronting of the two worlds of court and pastoral is that they are interdependent. In the Faerie Queene the shepherds fall victims to marauding thieves and the situation is only partially retrieved by Sir Calidore. In the Accession Day story, the hermit ends his apology for the rude country men by admitting that, without their "earthly paynes, and toyle, yet the gallant Courtier cold euell weare his garded Cloack, and fill his Idle belley".³

In the sixteenth century then, it seems that there were two fairly distinct ways of treating pastoral. One is the realistic eclogues of Mantuan and his imitators with their heavy moral bias, the other is ^{the} decorative pastoral game in which courtiers played at being shepherds, but were well insulated from any contact with the real hardships of country life. This last is more allied to the idealised pastoral of Sannazaro and Montemayor. These two traditions seem incompatible, but Spenser combines them successfully in Book Six of the Faerie Queene, because, although the court and the country

¹F.Q. VI.III, 1 and 2.

²Ibid., VI.X.34-36.

³B.M.Add.MSS. 41,499.B.p.7.

are confronted, the court learns a certain grace and value which the country represents, but at the same time is kept distinct from it. Furthermore, the shepherds are seen to be dependent on the court for the protection of their well-being.

This treatment of the shepherd's state as representative of a certain value, but at the same time dependent on the court, to which it must be subordinate for its preservation, is at the heart of Sidney's Arcadia as a pastoral work. It is significant that although Sidney quotes Theocritus and Virgil as models for pastoral, what really appears to interest him is not their nostalgic evocation of an ideal existence, but their treatment of the pastoral state as one whose security is dependent on others. In his first reference to pastoral in the Defence he writes,

Is it then the Pastorall Poeme which is misliked? (For perchance where the hedge is lowest they will soonest leape over) is the poore pipe disdained, which sometimes out of Maelibeus mouth, can shewe the miserie of people, under hard Lords, and ravening souldiers? And again by Titerus, what blessednesse is derived, to them that lie lowest, from the goodnesse of them that sit highest? Sometimes under the prettie tales of Woolves and sheepe, can include the whole considerations of wrong doing and patience. (1)

The use of the pastoral convention in Arcadia is complex. Structurally it is important for it provides a setting which both focusses the main themes of the book and also contributes to an analysis of virtue which is at the heart of Arcadia.

Basilus, who is described as a man who does not exceed "in the vertues which get admiration; as depth of wisdome, height of courage and largenesse of magnificence" (1590.1.pl9), gives up his responsibilities as

¹Sidney, Works, III, p.22.

king and retires into the country in order to safeguard himself from the fulfillment of an oracle which he would have been wiser never to have searched into at all. When Philanax reproves him for his course of action, "I would then have said, the heavenly powers to be revered, and not searched into; and their mercies rather by prayers to be sought, then their hidden counsels by curiositie", (1590.1.p24) one is reminded of Mantuan's reproof to the townsman who tries to know

The nature of the Gods

...

And dares upon so great a light
his little eyes to throwe. (1)

By his pastoral retirement Basilius thus fails to trust in providence and acts irresponsibly as a governor for he precipitates chaos within the social order. This introduces the theme of the working of providence, which is to be important, and of state government, through which Sidney defines virtue in its public aspect. Basilius's unnatural seclusion of his daughters from the access of any suitors also provides the setting for the main love episodes through which Sidney defines virtue in its private aspect of self-government. Pyrocles and Musidorus are forced into the conventional attitudes of frustrated lovers of unattainable ladies and thus afford an excellent opportunity for exploring the validity of this position. The pastoral disguises which they are driven to adopt not only help them to project and discuss their emotions, but are essential to the working out of a complex theme.

However, the pastoral setting is more important than a merely

¹Mantuan, op.cit., The sixt Egloge, p.61 verso.

structural device; it is itself integral to an analysis of virtue. It seems that Sidney places an ideal Arcadia, like that of Sannazaro, in a realistic framework to show that it is only in times of national peace, when both ruler and ruled have conformed to the ideal of virtue he is concerned to define, that there is any possibility of such a rural paradise being enjoyed. When Musidorus first comes to Arcadia he passes through Laconia. Caius, one of the shepherds who accompanies him, explains that this country is,

not so poore by the barrennes of the soyle (though in it~~selfe~~ not passing fertill) as by a civill warre, which being these two yeares within the bowels of that estate, betweene the gentlemen and the peasants (by them named Helots) hath in this sorte as it were disfigured the face of nature, and made it so unhospitall as now you have found it: (1590.1.p14)

Arcadia, on the other hand, presents an ideal scene, and

welcomed Musidorus eyes (wearied with the wasted soyle of Laconia) with delightfull prospect. There were hilles which garnished their proud heights with stately trees: humble valleis, whose base estate semed comforted with refreshing of silver rivers: meadows, enameld with al sorts of ey-pleasing floures: thickets, which being lined with most pleasant shade, were witnessed so to by the chereful deposition of many wel-tuned birds: each pasture stored with sheep feeding with sober security, while the pretie lambs with bleting oratory craved the dams comfort: here a shepheards boy piping, as though he should never be old: there a yong shepherdesse knitting, and withall singing, and it seemd that her voice comforted her hands to work, and her hands kept time to her voices musick. (1590.1.p13)

This obvious contrast to Laconia is the result of Arcadia's being at peace. Caius explains to Musidorus that "this countrie" is "decked with peace, and (the child of peace) good husbandrie". (1590.1.p14)

However, Basilius's shedding his responsibility gives rise to rebellion in this happy state. His abandoning his place in the social

order goes hand in hand with a complete loss of self-government. The one is symptomatic of the other. He reduces himself to a figure of fun by his obsessive love for Zelmane and the fundamental unnaturalness of this attachment only emphasises more heavily the unnaturalness of his behaviour as a king, and as a man. The Elizabethans believed that the quality which raises man above the beasts is reason which must therefore be the governing faculty in human nature. The office of king in society corresponds to that of reason in the individual, and both reflect a rational order which is divinely ordained. The 1547 Homily of Obedience states this clearly: "In the earth God hath assigned kings princes with other governors under them, all in good and necessary order".¹ When Basilius refuses to accept the responsibility of his calling, his act has repercussions throughout the social order.

The citizens rebel because there is no strong ruler, but they are quite unable to agree among themselves on any form of government and fall "to direct contrarities". (1590.2.p315)

At the centre of Arcadia the world of pastoral confronts that of the court to stress the necessity of the one being placed in subordination to the other. While it is partly true that the shepherds "posture strangely in courtly and heroic attitudes",² it is far more important to notice that the court is posturing in pastoral attitudes, and in so doing is relinquishing the responsibility of government without which there can be no contented

¹Quoted by E.M.W. Tillyard, The Elizabethan World Picture, London, 1943, p.82.

²Heninger, op.cit., p.260.

pastoral or social life of any kind. Zelmane stresses this in her speech to the rebellious citizens and insists that proper government consists in maintaining obedience to a hierarchically delegated authority.

Do you think them fooles, that saw you should not enjoy your vines, your cattell, no not your wives and children, without government; and that there could be no government without a Magistrate, and no Magistrate without obedience, and no obedience where every one upon his own private passion, may interpret the doings of the rulers? (1590.2.p317)

When a king retires to live among the shepherds then the keystone in this structure is removed. Basilius is at fault as well as those who rebel against him. Melibeus warned Calidore that the pastoral ideal he represented did not mean that all should reduce themselves to a rustic level, for this would deny the divinely ordained hierarchy of society,¹ but this is exactly what happens in Arcadia.

When Basilius's folly finally leads him into a situation where he drinks a potion which sends him into a swoon for thirty hours, he is believed dead. The nobles at once divide into jealous factions and chaos ensues. The shepherds, formerly so happy in their occupation, gather on "the Westerne side of a hill, whose prospect extended it so farre, as they might well discerne many of Arcadias beawtyes". There Geron,

(who as he had longest tasted the benefites of Basilius government, so seemed to have a speciall feeling of the present losse) ... began in this sorte to complayne. Alas poore sheepe, sayde hee, which hitherto have enjoyed your fruitefull pasture, in such quietnes, as your wooll amongst other things hath made this Countrie famous, your best dayes are now past: now you must become the vittaille of an armye, and perchance an armye of foraine enemyes: you are now not onley to feare home Wolves, but alien Lions; now, I say now,

¹See F.Q. VI.IX.29.

that our right Basilus is deceased. Alas sweete pastures!
 Shall soldiours that knowe not how to use you, possesse you?
 Shall they that cannot speake Arcadian language be Lordes over
 your Shepherds? For alas with good cause may we looke for any
 evill, since Basilus our only strength is taken from us. (1593.4.ppl37-8)

The magnificent pastoral lament, "Since that to death is gone the
 shepherd he", lifts this particular situation on to a more universal level.¹
 It is not simply a lament for a shepherd at whose death grief-stricken friends
 find relief for their sorrow in a mourning nature. This element does enter
 into it:

Lilly in mourning blacke thy whitenes die:
 O Hiacinthe let Al be on thee still, (p.125)

but it goes further than this. The shepherd who is lamented is a governor
 and his flock his people,

Shepherd of shepherds, whose well settled order
 Private with welth, publike with quiet garnished.
 While he did live, farre, farre was all disorder. (p.128)

The mysterious and disruptive force of death is more universally felt at the
 death of a king than a private individual, for he is God's representative on
 earth and the preserver of order in the state. His loss threatens social
 chaos especially if he has no direct heir, and this point was of vital
 significance to the subjects of the Virgin Queen. His death not only
 imperils the order of the state, however, it also raises in those who are
 left behind an agonised questioning of the whole scheme of a seemingly
 indifferent universe obeying an order in which human death appears as a
 monstrous and irrational injustice.

¹1590.3.p498ff.

1593.4.pl39ff. In the New Arcadia Sidney transferred this lament
 from the Fourth eclogues, where it refers to the death of Basilus, to the
 narrative of Book III where it refers to the death of Amphialus, also a leader
 of men and a prince, though not a ruling king.

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Nay to the heav'ns your just complaining sende,
 And stay the starrs' inconstant constant race,
 (Till that they doo unto our dolours bende:
 And aske the reason of that speciall grace,
 That they, which have no lives, should live so long,
 And vertuous soules so soone should lose their place? (p.126)

...

Justice, justice is now (alas) oppressed:
 Bountifulness hath made his last conclusion:
 Goodnes for best attire in dust is dressed.
 Shepherds bewaile your uttermost confusion;
 And see by this picture to you presented,
 Death is our home, life is but a delusion. (p.128)

Since the social order which reflects the conception of a divine order is upset, could it be that, after all, it is chaos which is the norm, and nature not a rational system in which the "sun moon stars rainbow thunder lightning clouds and all birds of the air do keep their order",¹ but an amoral force?

Ah let us all against foule Nature crie:
 We Nature's workes doo helpe, she us defaces.
 For how can Nature unto this reply?
 That she her child, I say, her best child killeth?
 Your dolefull tunes sweete Muses now apply. (p.127)

Sidney does attempt to answer this question, in terms of the plot, and by a formal dispute which will be examined in the last chapter. The present examination of pastoral does not include this.

So far it has been seen that Sidney uses the pastoral convention in Arcadia by drawing on the tradition of an idyllic rural Arcadia, but placing it in a realistic setting, in which its beauty is not denied, but made dependent on the wise governing of the ruler. The death of a ruler leads to a questioning of the justice of the whole universe which is

¹Homily of Obedience, 1547, quoted by Tillyard, op.cit., p.82.

expressed in terms of a pastoral lament.

Sidney also attaches to pastoral life a specific value which contributes to the more complex ideal of virtue at the heart of the book. There are, however, certain difficulties involved in examining this. With a full realisation of the flexibility of the pastoral convention, Sidney makes use of it to introduce separate ideas, while at the same time preserving a superficial structural unity. To do this successfully involves keeping a delicate correspondence between the ideas and the vehicle which carries them, if they can be separated for a moment. In Arcadia the complexity of the ideas tends to be too great for the pastoral framework in which they are expressed, with the result that this framework appears to break down in inconsistencies. However, a probing behind these apparent inconsistencies can be shown to reveal a mind dealing clearly between the different issues.

The source of the difficulty is Sidney's use of the shepherds in different conventions at the same time. On one level they are real shepherds like those of medieval, English literary tradition. Their rustic activities are amusing but certainly not compatible with courtly life, and are not to be taken seriously. On another level they are real shepherds in the way that those of Virgil and Theocritus are real. They keep sheep and live in the country, but they have a certain innate dignity and value which are valid at all levels of society. At the same time there is a built-in criticism of the way of life they represent. Yet again they are not real shepherds at all, but court entertainers in the tradition of courtly pastoral entertainments traced above. It is this aspect which must have

led S.K. Heninger to generalise mistakenly about the pastoral element in Arcadia, and to say that in it, shepherds "posture strangely in courtly and heroic attitudes".¹

The specific virtue associated with pastoral is a contented acceptance of a way of life which has an honest simplicity, valued at all levels of society, but most easily recognized in a pastoral setting. This value is central to the function of pastoral in Book Six of the Faerie Queene: it is also important in Arcadia.

The Arcadian shepherds "live upon the commoditie of their sheepe: and therefore in the division of the Arcadian estate are termed shepheards; a happie people, wanting litle, because they desire not much". (1590.1.pl4.) Their peace of mind is brought about by their quiet acceptance of their lot. That they also embody a value which must be learned at the level of the court is clearly shown in the episode when Musidorus is disguising himself in order to gain access to the Princess Pamela. Clothes carry an obvious symbolic function as outward signs of a certain inner state or calling. Musidorus addresses his disguise,

Come shepheard's weedes, become your master's minde:
Yeld outward shew, what inward change he tryes: (p.13)²

The inward change is caused by love. Musidorus is trying to win the hand of the Princess and fulfill the passion which torments him. At first sight this would seem to contradict the pastoral ideal of contentment, for Musidorus is not happy with his lot and seeks to alter it. However, the reason that

¹Heninger, op.cit., p.260.

²1590.1.p.113.

he is driven to such lengths is the faulty action of Basilius, who was not willing to abide by the responsibilities of his station. Musidorus reduces himself to a shepherd because only by so doing can he restore Pamela, with himself, to her proper position in society. At the same time he has learnt through experience the lesson that the pastoral element in Arcadia exists to point.

And thus is Menalcas gone, and I here a poore shepheard; more proud of this estate, then of any kingdom: so manifest it is, that the highest point outward things can bring one unto, is the contentment of the mind: with which, no estate; without which, all estates be miserable. (1590.1.pl16, my italics)

Philocles embodies the pastoral virtues at a courtly level. She is described as sweeter and gentler than her sister. This is odd in consideration of her name which signifies 'lover of glory', as opposed to Pamela, 'all sweetness'. She is also described as, "so humble, that she will put all pride out of countenance". (1590.1.p20). The first view Pyrocles obtains of her has a decorative quality which at the same time symbolises the essential simplicity and grace of her nature. She appeared in her

Nimphe-like apparell, so neare nakednes, as one might well discerne part of her perfections; and yet so apparelled, as did shew she kept best store of her beuty to her self: ... [her] light taffeta garment, so cut, as the wrought smocke came through it in many places, ... Then (I say) indeede me thought the Lillies grew pale for envie, the roses me thought blushed to see sweeter roses in her cheekes, and the apples me thought, fell downe from the trees, to do homage to the apples of her breast (1590.1.p90)

Two of the shepherds, Strephon and Claius, however, seem to criticise this ideal of pastoral simplicity and content. As they conduct Musidorus to Arcadia, they describe the contented pastoral life there.

These houses you see so scattered are of men, as we two are,
 that live upon the commoditie of their sheepe: and therefore
 in the division of the Arcadian estate are termed shepheards;
 a happie people, wanting litle, because they desire not much.
 (1590.1.pl4)

Yet they themselves have left this idyllic rural life, and Musidorus, not unnaturally, enquires why.

What cause, then, said Musidorus, made you venter to leave this sweete life, and put your selfe in yonder unpleasant and dangerous realme? Garded with povertie (answered Strephon) and guided with love. (1590.1.pl4)

Their love for Urania leads them to a course of action which appears to contradict the ideal of pastoral content as a virtue which is universally valid. They become discontented with their lot as shepherds, and take steps to rise above their natural station.

hath not the onely love of her made us (being silly ignorant shepheards) raise up our thoughts above the ordinary leuell of the worlde, so as great clearkes do not disdain our conference? hath not the desire to seem worthe in her eyes made us when others were sleeping, to sit vewing the course of heavens? when others were running at base, to runne over learned writings? when other marke their sheepe, we to marke our selves?
 (1590.1.pp7-8)

The reason behind their action, however, is the ennobling influence of love and this episode is one example of Sidney's rather complex use of the pastoral convention, for the full significance of Strephon and Claius in Arcadia really belongs to the love episodes. In so far as they also belong to the pastoral tradition, however, they point the same moral which Melibeus stated in the Faerie Queene, that there are wider issues in life than a contented keeping of sheep.¹

¹See F.Q. VI.IX.26-29.

The incident with the shepherd Lalus points to the same end.

Musidorus may acquire a grace in shepherd's clothing because he is indulging in a kind of proud humility in the tradition of courtiers playing at pastoral, "his rayments, though they were meane, yet received they hansomnes by the grace of the wearer" (1590.1.pl12), but this process does not work in reverse. Lalus, who appears to defend Urania in Phalantus's tournament, is laughed at. He arrives, "doing all things with so pretie grace, that it seemed ignorance could not make him do amisse..." (1590.1.pl06). However,

Basilus sawe it was the fine shepheard Lalus, whom once he had afore him in Pastorall sportes, and had greatly delighted in his wit full of prety simplicitie, and therefore laughing at his earnestnesse, he bad him be content, since he sawe the pictures of so great Queenes, were faine to follow their champions fortuné. (1590.1.pl07) (1)

Pastoral grace is not enough to compete with in the active life of the nobility.

The fact that Strephon and Claius really do rise above their fellows also points to the fact that Sidney believed that it was open to exceptional people in any station to achieve a noble and virtuous life. Thus in this episode Sidney also uses pastoral to introduce the problem of nature and nurture, an important one in the definition of an ideal of individual virtue. These two terms are connected with opposing definitions of true nobility which were much discussed in the sixteenth century for reasons that will be examined in the next chapter. In so far as the subject is here connected with the pastoral tradition, Strephon and Claius are described as superior

¹This incident recalls the Accession Day hermit's tale (op.cit.) for there the knight refuses to allow the shepherds with whom he is staying to take part in a formal tournament.

to their fellow shepherds. Kalander says of them that:

they are beyond the rest by so much, as learning commonlie doth adde to nature: for, having neglected their wealth in respect of their knowledge, they have not so much empayred the meaner, as they have bettered the better. (1590.1.p27.)

Musidorus finds their wits,

might better become such shepheards as Homer speakes of, that be governors of peoples, then such senatours who hold their councell in a shepecoate. (1590.1.p27)

This is a nasty thrust at Basilius in passing, but it also implies that it is nature not nurture which is the foundation for following and achieving wisdom and virtue. This is endorsed by Kalander, a man who is described as of "upright dealing" and as possessing great power, yet not more than "his nature gives him will to benefit". (1590.1.p12) When he describes Basilius's extraordinary action in placing the clown Dametas in charge of his daughter, he says,

Neyther doo I accuse my maister for advauncing a countriman, as Dametas is, since God forbid, but where worthinesse is (as truely it is among divers of that fellowship) any outward lownesse should hinder the hiest raysing. (1590.1.p28.)

but he does object to the fact that Basilius has chosen a man "the basenesse of whose minde is such, that it sinckes a thousand degrees lower, then the basest bodie could carrie the most base fortune". (1590.1.pp.28-29) This, taken with the fact that Strephon and Claius are superior "by so much, as learning commonlie doth adde to nature" (1590.1.p27), makes it seem that a certain natural mental aptitude is necessary for those, in any station of life, who are to achieve virtue. Sidney says in the Defence that, "our erected wit maketh us to know what perfection is, and yet our infected wil

keepeth us from reaching unto it".¹ The basis for leading a virtuous life, then, is a mind so able to understand in what virtue consists that it will move the will to act in accordance with it.

Dametas lacks this good understanding and part, at least, of the reason why he is treated with such unpleasant scorn is because he is elevated to a position in which his baseness becomes cruelly apparent. He emphasises the chaos precipitated within the social order when Basilius steps out of his rightful place. It is no accident that Dametas's device, when he takes up arms in the war against Amphialus, is, "a plowe with the oxen lewsed from it". (1590.3.p430) Devices were a means of revealing ideas and intentions of personal significance. Camden defines them as a

Picture with his Motto, or Word, born by Noble and Learned
Parsonages, to notifie some particular conceit of their own,
as Emblems...do propound some general instruction to all. (2)

In the context of the whole story in Arcadia, the point of Dametas's is, not only that he has left his plough for the sword, but that a plough with the oxen loosed from it is useless.

However, when all this has been said, the fact remains that the man whose baseness of mind is ridiculed is also of a low social standing. Dametas is treated in line with the comic characters of the rustic tradition. He bores Zelmane discussing the "well dunging of a fielde" (1590.2.p166), a skill in which it apparently did not beseem the courtier to display interest. As Corydon beside Sir Calidore, so Dametas, beside Pyrocles and

¹Sidney, Works, III, p.9.

²William Camden, Remains Concerning Britain (1674), London, 1870, p.366.

Musidorus, comes off very badly in heroic action. Like Pastorella by the tiger,¹ Pamela and Philoclea are threatened by a lion and a bear respectively, While the heroes slay these beasts with an almost nonchalant ease, Dametas lies quaking inside a bush, and only when he is persuaded of absolute safety does he venture out. Then he behaves in a Falstaffian manner giving the dead bear "many a manfull wound" (1590.1.p123). His conduct in challenging and fighting Clinias which surely inspired the duel between Sir Andrew Aguecheek and Viola in Twelfth Night, is even more horrifying. (See 1590.3. pp228 ff.)

There is also other evidence, apart from Dametas, that, although Sidney admitted that under certain conditions it is nature and not nurture that lays the foundation of a virtuous life, in practice he believed that nobility of birth is important. When Strephon and Claius bring the half naked Musidorus to that upright,gentleman, Kalander, the latter protests, "I am no herald to enquire of men's pedegrees, it sufficeth me, if I know their vertues" (1590.1.p15). Only a few minutes later, however, he catches sight of Musidorus's treasure and, "soone judged that his guest was of no meane calling; and therefore the more respectfullie" entertained him (1590.1.p16).

Musidorus, who has to become a shepherd in order to gain access to Pamela, soon finds that "a shepheards service was but considered of as from a shepheard" (1590.2.p153). In his first song in the first eclogues

¹See F.Q. VI.X.35-36.

he complains:

Well may a Pastor plaine, but alas his plaints be not esteem'de.
Silly shepheard's, poore pype, when his harsh sound testifis our woes,
Into the faire looker on, pastime, not passion enters. (p.32)

In Arcadia, then, on one level the shepherds are idealised like those of the classical tradition. They represent the virtues of humility and content which all must achieve, and their function is thus chiefly symbolic. While it appears true in principle, however, that it is nature, rather than nurture, that determines virtue, in practice nurture seems to be the more important.

On a different level, certain of these shepherds have yet another role to play. They are courtly entertainers. Basilius has settled down with the "choise of all...either for goodnesse of voice, or pleasantnesse of wit" (1590.1.p28), and at the end of each book of prose narrative the shepherds give a pastoral entertainment and sing eclogues. This puts a considerable strain on the pastoral framework. Musidorus states the technical difficulty when he says to Kalander,

But among many strange conceits you tolde me, which have shewed effects in your Prince, truly even the last, that he should conceive such pleasure in shepheards discourses, would not seeme the least unto me. (1590.1.p27)

Sidney solves the problem by making a special case of all the Arcadian shepherds. At the same time he reflects on the contemporary political scene. The Arcadians pursue a peaceful foreign policy so that,

Even the Muses seeme to approve their good determination, by chosing this countrie for their chiefe 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.(1) (1590.1.p19)

This reference to the arts flourishing in a country which is at peace is probably a delicate compliment to the policy of Elizabeth.

Kalander further emphasises the special nature of the shepherds,

But certainly, all the people of this countrie from high to lowe, is given to those sportes of the witte, so as you would wonder to heare how soone even children will beginne to versifie.
(1590.1.p27)

Even Dametas will

stumble sometimes upon some Songs that might become a better brayne: but no sorte of people so excellent in that kinde as the pastors; for their living standing but upon the looking to their beastes, they have ease, the Nurse of Poetrie. (1590.1.p28)

Joined with the shepherds are

two or three straungers, whom inwarde melancholies having made weery of the worldes eyes, have come to spende their lives among the countrie people of Arcadia; (1590.1.p28)

and together they present entertainments, singing sometimes of

joyes, sometimes lamentations, sometimes chalengings one of the other, sometimes under hidden formes uttering such matters, as otherwise they durst not deal with. (1590.1.p28)

This is a perfect description of the sixteenth-century pastoral eclogue.

So far this chapter has examined Sidney's treatment of pastoral life itself to contribute to his central analysis of virtue. The eclogues in Arcadia also contribute to this, but Sidney includes them not so much to deal with pastoral for its own sake, as to treat other subjects under the

¹It may be, as Dr. Brie has pointed out, that Sidney took the idea that the Arcadians were famous for their peace-loving nature, hospitality and musical skill, from Polybius. See, Sidney's Arcadia, pp.200 ff.

pastoral convention, and thus they are in the tradition of the Mantuan eclogues and the Shepherd's Calendar. (It is a clever device to join the courtly pastoral tradition with that of the eclogues in a work like Arcadia, written to entertain, since pastoral lends an undeniable grace to the whole proceedings.) Many refer to themes which are the subject of later chapters, and these will be mentioned separately. In this chapter only those which are concerned with pastoral itself will be remarked.

It is not quite true, that the eclogues, as Hallett Smith says, are simply entertainment for the court, "since serious political and moral ideas are dealt with sufficiently in the romance".¹ The eclogues universalise the themes which are worked out at a personal level in the development of the story. One of the ways in which pastoral has been used in the narrative is to evaluate a traditionally ideal way of life in a realistic setting and show that an approximation to this ideal can only be achieved under a good government. At the same time it represents certain moral values which are valid at all levels of society. These themes are brought together in Dorus's song, "O sweete woods the delight of solitarines !" Here the virtues of pastoral existence are elaborated in order to constitute a criticism of the evils of court life.

O sweet woods the delight of solitarines !
O how much I do like your solitarines !

...

Here no treason is hidd, vailed in innocence ,
Nor envie's snaky ey, finds any harbor here,
Nor flatterers' venomous insinuations,
Nor conning humorists' puddled opinions,

¹Hallett Smith, Elizabethan Poetry, Camb., Mass., 1952, p.52.

Nor courteous ruin of proffered usury,
 Nor time prattled away, cradle of ignorance,
 Nor causelesse duty, nor comber of arrogance,
 Nor trifling title of vanity dazleth us,
 Nor golden manacles, stand for a paradise,
 Here wrong's name is unheard: slander a monster is. (pp.68-69)

Here the pastoral ideal is worked out by implications which point to its lack in the society of men in cities. In the wider structure of the book, however, the song takes on a greater significance because of the irony with which Sidney places it. The editors of the 1590 edition of Arcadia left it out of their arrangement of the eclogues, but, in 1593, the Countess of Pembroke restored it to its original place in the second eclogues. Thus Dorus sings it in a wood into which treason has just burst in the rebellion of the citizens, who were stirred up by Basilius's pastoral life which necessitated his "living from among them". (1590.2.p322) The very ideal which Dorus confidently asserts to be generally present in pastoral life is thus shattered in terms of the actual story by Basilius's abandoning his responsibilities. In the revised version, moreover, Clinias personifies treason "vailed in innocence", and behind his machiavellian exterior of self-righteousness is "envie's snaky ey", for Clinias is the agent of Cecropia who wishes her son Amphialus to succeed to Basilius's throne although he is not the rightful heir.

The pastoral setting is also used in a significant way in the song, "Yee Gote-heard Gods, that love the grassie mountaines".¹ It works in the tradition of the pastoral lament in which nature reflects at a more universal

¹1590.1.p141 ff.

level the personal grief of the mourners. Virgil's shepherds mourn Daphnis: "When you were taken from us, ...in furrows where we cast fat grains of barley, the wretched darnel and the unprofitable wild-oat spring up".¹ In Sidney's poem, however, something more subtle is happening. The speakers remain aware that nature herself is unchanged by personal grief and that it is they, themselves, who distort natural images in their misery. The natural landscape and a mental landscape are held together in tension to create a specific mood.

Strephon: Me seemes I see the high and stately mountaines,
Transforme themselves to lowe dejected vallies:

...

Klaius: Me seemes I see a filthie clowdie evening,
As soon as Sunne begins to clime the mountained:
Mē seemes I feele a noysome sent, the morning
When I doo smell the flowers of these vallies:
Me seemes I heare, when I doo heare sweete musique,
The dreadfull cries of muredred men in forrests. (p.112)

This idea that it is men's passions and emotions that can make outward nature seem different, although it, in fact, remains stable, is important for it is linked with a wider area of meaning in the whole structure of the book. Sidney believed that it was possible to see a divine purpose at work in the natural world and Pamela speaks for him when she says to Cecropia: "If you meane a Nature of wisdome, goodnes, and providence, which knowes what it doth, then say you that, which I seeke of you" (1590.3.p408). It will be seen later that his ideal of personal virtue consists in maintaining a rational order in harmony with this divine purpose. It is, therefore, significant that Strephon and Claius, overwhelmed by passion, are not able to see nature clearly as she is.

¹Virgil, Pastoral Poems, op.cit., V. p.63.

It can be concluded from this study of the pastoral element in Arcadia that it does play a significant part in the book. The word pastoral covers a complex literary tradition in which shepherds, ideal, real and feigned play a part. Accepting Professor Greg's assertion that a "constant element in the pastoral as known to literature is the recognition of a contrast, implicit or expressed, between pastoral life and some more complex type of civilisation",¹ we need not conclude that in Arcadia there are no really pastoral characters "the personae being all either shepherds in their disguise only, or else, ... burlesque characters of the rustic tradition".² Such figures all belong to pastoral literature and neither group destroys the contrast Greg would make its essential element. Those who play at being shepherds, do so because they see some virtue in the image of themselves as shepherds which they do not have as courtiers. The rustic, who is regarded only with amusement, embodies a contrast to court life in that very simplicity which gives rise to the amusement. Neither is excluded from pastoral literature which, in its broadest sense, occurs whenever shepherds are the protagonists.

It is not "misleading" to call Arcadia a pastoral romance providing that it is also made clear that this element is subordinate to, and dependent on, other factors. The pastoral besides providing a purely formal structural device stands for certain moral values in the story. The specific virtues associated with ideal pastoral life are innocence, content and guilelessness.

¹W.W. Greg, op.cit., p.4.

²Ibid., p.150.

In Arcadia Sidney shows that these have, for all levels of society, a moral value which is achievable neither by the rude clown Dametas at one end of the social scale, nor by the king Basilius, at the other, if the order which Sidney believed to be in the natural and supernatural world is not achieved in the state and in the individual. Only when this order is achieved will a happy country life, as distinct from the values it represents, be possible. Later chapters will examine in more detail this individual and social order which constitutes Sidney's ideal of virtue. Here it is sufficient to notice that Sidney brings together these different attitudes towards and treatment of pastoral to illustrate and enrich a picture of virtue with which he wished to move his readers.

CHAPTER II

CHIVALRY IN ARCADIA

This chapter will examine the forms and ideals of chivalry in Arcadia. It will show that, like the pastoral aspects of the romance examined in the previous chapter, these have a formal function in the book and also contribute to its central theme.

Besides this formal connection, the pastoral and chivalric episodes in Arcadia are related in a similar way to contemporary thought and customs. They both represent ways of life, not based on social reality, which had become a source of ethical inspiration to the Elizabethans, and governed the form of many of their pageants and entertainments. Thus a study of chivalry, as of any aspect of Arcadia, reveals its close connection with contemporary life.

However, in order to appreciate the significance of chivalric forms and ideals in the Elizabethan period it is necessary to understand how they developed from those of medieval chivalry. A brief survey of this will be made before going on to examine more particularly their function in Arcadia.

Although the conventions of courtly love are closely connected with chivalric behaviour they will not be dealt with in this chapter. The relation of the love stories in Arcadia to literary tradition is interesting but since it is through them that Sidney defines in detail the private aspect of his ideal of virtue, they will be treated separately in the next chapter.

Apart from its association with the ideals of courtly love, chivalry is the term given to the code of morals and behaviour which inspired the noble members, particularly the knight, of a social order which was considered as divinely ordained. Ramon Lull makes this clear in the opening paragraphs of his Book of the Ordre of Chyualry.

Vnto the praysynge and dyuyne glorye of god / whiche is lord
and souerayne kynge aboue and ouer alle thynges celestyal /
and worldly / We begynne this book of the ordre of chyualry
For to shewe that to the sygnefyauce of god the prynce almyghty
whiche seynoryeth aboue the seuen planettes / that make the
cours celestyal / and haue power and seynorye in gouernynge
and ordeynynge the bodyes terrestre and erthely / that in lyke
wyse owen the kynges prynces and grete lordes to haue puyssaunce
and seynorye vpon the knyghtes / And the knyghtes by symylytude
oughten to haue power and dominacioun ouer the moyen peple. (1)

There is general agreement among scholars that the chivalric ideals professed rarely matched actual practice. However, this does not lessen their importance. They were formulated to inspire the knight, and in a slightly modified form, remained significant in the sixteenth century when the feudal context out of which they grew had largely disappeared.

The ancestor of the feudal knight is the hero of Germanic legend inspired by the loyalty of the comitatus ideal,² but it is in the middle ages, when the ideals of nobility meet those of Christianity, that this survey really begins. The knight's function was to protect this divinely ordained organisation of feudal society. In combatting evils which threatened to destroy it, he could be thought of as defending a status quo which was essentially good. The code of values which inspired him was considered

¹Ramon Lull, The Book of the Ordre of Chyualry (trans. Caxton c.1484) ed. A.T.P. Byles, EEES, 168, 1926, pp.1-2.

²See S. Painter, French Chivalry, Baltimore, 1940, p.28.

to be the secular counterpart of a divine system. Huizinga points out that the conception of chivalry

even tends to invade the transcendental domain. The primordial feat of arms of the archangel Michael is glorified by Jean Molinet as 'the first deed of knighthood and chivalrous prowess that was ever achieved'. From the archangel 'terrestrial knighthood and human chivalry' take their origin, and in so far are but an imitation of the host of the angels around God's throne. (1)

Because of this close connection between the social and heavenly hierarchy each secular social order tended to be valued, not according to its utility, but its sanctity - "that is to say, its proximity to the highest place".² This put an extremely high value on noble birth which thus became inseparably connected with the virtues of chivalry.

S. Painter has isolated the ideals of feudal chivalry which emerge from its function in society. He lists them as prowess, loyalty, largesse, courtesy and desire for glory.³

Courtesy applies both to social behaviour and to military etiquette, such as the rule that it is unethical to attack an unarmed man. Painter shows how this principle is illustrated in the Chansons de Geste and also how in the Arthurian works of Chretien de Troyes, the hero spares the life of the villainous knight whom he has overcome.⁴ He also points out that these courteous practices seem, in fact, to have developed less on the field of battle than on the tourney ground.⁵

Desire for glory was the spur which prompted men to acts of bravery.

¹J. Huizinga, op.cit., p.67.

²Ibid., p.58.

³S. Painter, op.cit., pp. 28-37.

⁴Ibid., p.34.

⁵Ibid., p.45.

This is not of course limited to medieval chivalry but there it was considered a virtue and played an important part. Huizinga quotes the French chronicler Froissart on this. Writing on the Combat of the Thirty arranged by Beaumanoir and Bamborough in 1351, he reports the English captain as saying, 'And let us right there try ourselves and do so much that people will speak of it in future times in halls, in palaces, in public places and elsewhere throughout the world'.¹

Although there was always a gap between the ideals professed and casual standards of behaviour, A. Ferguson points out that, as long as it was possible

to preserve, ... the myth that in knighthood alone could the community find its defense against both aggressors and transgressors, it was possible to take chivalry seriously as a code sufficient for the secular concerns of the governing class. When those concerns so far outgrew the protective function traditionally ascribed to the knight that the discrepancy became apparent even to the conservative mind of that class ... chivalry can be said to have passed over the great divide that separates medieval and modern society and to have entered that bourne of romanticism from which there is no return. (2)

The feeling of the insufficiency of feudal chivalric ideals grew out of an increasing awareness that society was more than a closed hierarchical system the preservation of which was all that was necessary for its social health. It was seen that it was a dynamic and developing, not a static organism, and that wise government involved an intelligent administration of all the resources, both economic and intellectual of all the citizens.

¹Huizinga, *op.cit.*, p.70.

²A.B. Ferguson, The Indian Summer of English Chivalry, North Carolina, 1960, p. 104.

The knight was more and more frequently called on to act as a civil administrator as well as a military protector. This gave rise to a more comprehensive conception of the duties of knighthood in which education and administrative ability were stressed besides military prowess. Thus the way was prepared for the transformation of the medieval chivalric fighting hero into the urbane renaissance courtier described by Castiglione.

Ferguson shows that the credit for this change of emphasis in the ideal of knighthood was due to the humanists, who provided an "intellectual context more suited to the needs of a new society".¹ The development of a new ideal which combined all that was of value in medieval chivalry outside the feudal system with the ideals of learning and virtue can be traced in their writings.² It comes to a climax in a man like Sir Thomas Elyot who himself both embodied this ideal and stated it clearly.

A knight hath received that honor not only to defend with the sword Christ's faith and his proper country, against them which impugne the one or invadeth the other: but also, and that most chiefly, by the mean of his dignity (if that be employed where it should be and esteemed as it ought to be) he should more effectually with his learning and wit assail vice and error, most pernicious enemies to Christian men, having thereunto for his sword and spear his tongue and his pen. (3)

This new ideal of the function of the knight was also connected with a far broader conception of nobility and virtue which is important. Ferguson points out how for the humanists, virtue was linked with learning and both were recognised, rather than gentle birth, as sources of nobility.⁴

¹Ferguson, op.cit., p.225.

²See Ibid., pp. 182-221.

³Sir Thomas Elyot, A Preservative agaynste Deth (1545), quoted by Ferguson, op.cit., pp.219-220.

⁴See Ferguson, op.cit., p.199ff.

In his translation of the life of Pico della Mirandola, Sir Thomas More stresses that nobility comes not from birth and inherited possessions but learning and virtue.

For these be the things which we may account for our own, of which every man is more properly to be commended than of the nobleness of his ancestors, whose honour maketh us not honourable. For either they were themselves virtuous or not; if not, then had they none honour themselves, had they never so great possessions: for honour is the reward of virtue. (1)

At the same time, however, there was an equally strong prejudice in favour of a theory of nobility based solely on gentle birth. This clash of ideas never seems to have been entirely resolved and is reflected in various treatises on nobility, which were common in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

In Romei's Courtier's Academie, which was translated into English by John Kepers in 1598, nobility and virtue are firmly connected with birth. Nobility is called

no other, then a good of fortune, that happeneth to man in his first originall and birth, procured vnto him, by the honorable reputation of his predecessors, and glorie of his countrie: by meanes of which it is worthyly supposed, that he is much more capable and appliant vnto vertue, then another can be, borne of mechanicall parents. (2)

He does concede that "hee may bee called absolutely noble, who shall haue lost the memory of his ignobilitie, which memorie remaineth, during the reuolution of three generations".³ He also connects learning and nobility by saying that the noble man applies himself to study and practise the

¹Sir Thomas More, English Works (ed. W. Rastell 1557), ed. W.E.Campbell, London, 1931, I, p.349.

²Count Haniball Romei, The Courtiers Academie, trans. John Kepers, London, 1598, p.186.

³Ibid., p.187.

liberal arts virtuously.¹

By liberal arts, I generally intend al those exercises, aswel of the minde, as body, which are worthy of a vertuous and ciuil man, as are al the Sciences, as wel diuine, as humane, and the arts which vnto some Sciences are annexed and subalternate, but aboue all others, the Arte of Warre, and studie of the Lawes: For the one preserueth, and the other gouerneth a Common-wealth. (2)

Under no circumstances does he allow bastards to claim "perfect nobilitie".³

Henry Peacham, on the other hand, while he says that "whosoeuer labour for their liuelihood and gaine, haue no share at all in Nobilitie or Gentry",⁴ has a far more liberal attitude. He says that

Nobilitie is the Honour of blood in a Race or Linage, conferred formerly vpon some one or more of that Family, either by the Prince, the Lawes, customes of that Land or Place, whereby either out of knowledge, culture of the mind, or by some glorious Action performed, they haue beane vsefull and beneficiall to the Common-wealths and places where they liue. (5)

He continues that "Honours and Titles...are but attendant vpon desert".⁶

He thus makes virtue and learning rather than birth, the basis of nobility and emphasises this by saying:

Neither are the truly valorous, or any way vertuous, ashamed of their so meane Parentage, but rather glorie in themselues that their merit hath aduanced them aboue so many thousands farre better descended. (7)

As regards bastards, he says that although in law they are not, in fact they can be recognised as noble, "Yea, and many times (according to Euripides)

¹ Ibid., see p.203.

² Ibid., p.203.

³ Ibid., p.216.

⁴ Henry Peacham, The Compleat Gentleman, London, 1622, pp.12-13.

⁵ Ibid., p.2.

⁶ Ibid., p.3.

⁷ Ibid., p.5.

proue better than the legitimate".¹ Peacham also insists that "Riches are an ornament, not the cause of Nobilitie".²

This uncertainty about what really constitutes nobility was stimulated by the fact that many people, Sidney included, still believed that the different social orders were divinely ordained, and certainly that preservation of the class system was necessary for social health. When Greville reports how Queen Elizabeth tried to pacify Sidney in his quarrel with Essex on the tennis court, he says that she

lays before him the difference in degree between Earls, and Gentlemen; the respect inferiors ought to their superiors; and the necessity in Princes to maintain their own creations, as degrees descending between the peoples licentiousness, and the anoynted Sovereignty of Crowns; how the Gentlemans neglect of the Nobility taught the Peasant to insult upon both. (3)

This idea is at the heart of Arcadia.

The feudal chivalric code not only failed to meet the needs of the civil function of the knight in the sixteenth century, it also proved inadequate to his military duties. Ferguson points out that in medieval times desire for peace and glory through war could go together because of the belief that peace was the result of the maintenance of justice, and that justice itself was only maintained by force of arms.⁴ "Let he who wishes to rule protect justice with blood. Arms bring peace; arms curb the rapacious".⁵ War was also associated with the individual and dynastic

¹Ibid., p.9.

²Ibid., p.10.

³Greville, op.cit., pp.67-68.

⁴Ferguson, op.cit., p.174.

⁵Gower, Vox Clamantis, Liber VI, lines 711-713, quoted by Ferguson, op.cit., p.174.

ambition for glory to which the knight's function as military protector had easily been accommodated. By the Elizabethan era, however, the issues were not quite so simple for it was increasingly obvious that wars fought for the sake of prestige were not in the national interest. There was more at stake than national glory, for war involved too much expense and risk. More and Erasmus disliked war as an instrument of international politics.¹

The Utopians counted

nothyng so muche against glorie, as glory gotten in warre. And therefore thoughte they do daylie practise and exercise themselues in the discipline of warre, and not onelie the men, but also the women vpon certen appointed daies, lest they should be to seke in the feate of armes, if nede should require, yet they neuer go to battell, but either in the defence of their owne countrey, or to driue out of their frendes lande the enemies that haue inuaded it, or by their power to deliuer from the yocke and bondage of tyrannye some people, that be therewith oppressed. (2)

Besides this, it became increasingly apparent that chivalric ideals of behaviour which still influenced military action were incompatible with successful strategic warfare. One example of the impractical side of the code of honour is seen in Froissart's report that "the knights of the Star had to swear never to fly more than four acres from the battlefield, through which rule soon afterwards more than ninety of them lost their lives".³ There was, however, a wide gap between the theory of warfare and its actual conduct. The chivalric code inspired the idea of the single combat of Princes which was often suggested as good policy only to be relinquished

¹Ferguson, *op.cit.*, p.169ff.

²Sir Thomas More, *Utopia* (1556), ed. E. Arber, London, 1869, p.132.

³Huizinga, *op.cit.*, p.98.

as impractical tactics. Philip, Duke of Burgundy, challenged Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, in 1425 "To prevent Christian bloodshed and destruction of the people, on whom my heart has compassion".¹ In spite of elaborate preparations, however, this combat did not take place, neither were his subsequent challenges to the Duke of Saxony and the Grand Turk followed up. Much later Francesco Gonzaga offered to fight Cesare Borgia with sword and dagger to deliver Italy, and Charles V in 1526 and 1536 proposed to the king of France to settle their differences by single combat.²

Another example of this persistence of chivalric ideals which were not followed for prudence sake is the fact that generals still proposed to come to an agreement with the enemy over the choice of battlefield, this was usually declined by the army holding the better position.³

This failure of the chivalric code of behaviour in both the civil and administrative spheres, does not, however, invalidate the moral values on which it is based. Huizinga says that

chivalrous ideas did not die without having borne some fruit. In so far as they formed a system of rules of honour and precepts of virtue, they exercised a certain influence on the evolution of the laws of war. (4)

He believes that the development of the law of nations owes a great deal to the chivalric code of honour which exercised a stronger hold over men than "convictions based on legal and moral principles".⁵

¹Huizinga, *op.cit.*, p.97.

²*Ibid.*, p.98.

³*Ibid.*, p.100.

⁴*Ibid.*, p.104.

⁵*Ibid.*, p.105.

When Caxton translated Lull's Book of the Ordre of Chyvalry, he did so with a definite moral purpose which becomes clear in his own epilogue to the translation. He believed that a decline in the ideals and discipline of knighthood was responsible for a corresponding decline in national fortune and that the remedy lay in the revival of these ideals. He writes:

O ye knyghtes of Englonde where is the custome and vsage of noble chyualry that was vsed in tho dayes/ what do ye now/ but go to the baynes and playe att dyse And some not wel aduysed vse not honest and good rule ageyn all ordre of knyghthode/ leue this/ leue it and rede the noble volumes of saynt graal of lancelot/ of galaad/ of Trystram/ of perse forest/ of Percyual/ of gawayn/ and many mo/ Ther shalle ye see manhode/ curtosye and gentylnesse/ And loke in latter dayes of the noble actes syth the conquest/ as in kyng Rychard dayes ouer du lyon/...and many other whoos names shyne gloriously by their vertuous noblesse and actes that they did in thonour of thordre of chyualry/ Allas what doo ye/ but slepe and take ease/ and ar al disordred fro chyualry/ ...the more pyte is/ j wold it pleasyd oure souerayne lord that twyes or thryes in a yere/ or at the lest ones he wold do crye Iustes of pees/ to thende that euery knyght shold haue hors and harneys/ and also the vse and craft of a knyght/ and also to tornoye one ageynste one/ or ii ageynst ii/ And the best to haue a prys/ a dyamond or Iewel/ suche as shold please the prynce/ This shold cause gentylnen to resorte to thauncyent customes of chyualry to grete fame and reno*mee/ And also to be alwey redy to serue/ theyr prynce whan he shalle calle them/ or haue nede. (1)

It seems fairly clear that Caxton is not advocating chivalric customs in the actual field of battle and administration, but that he sees in them a valuable training and discipline for this wider field of activity. This is indicative of a tendency to connect knighthood and chivalric ideals in a symbolic way with the ruling classes so that

instead of rendering chivalric idealism obsolete as a guide to the world of secular affairs, it had made possible the application

¹See Lull, op.cit., pp. 122-124.

of chivalric ideals to the entire politically active element in the commonwealth. (1)

This attitude towards the medieval chivalric code is at the heart of Elizabethan chivalry. Miss Yates calls it an "imaginative re-feudalization of culture" since, "though feudalism as a working social or military structure was extinct, its forms were still the vehicle of living emotions".² Arcadia is a chivalric romance precisely for this reason. As the chivalric elements in Arcadia govern most of those episodes which are not pastoral they have an important formal function; more important, however, is the fact that Sidney includes chivalric customs and ideals, slightly modified by the values of humanism, which reflect the ethos of Elizabethan chivalry and contribute to his ideal of noble virtue.

The qualifying noble is important since the chivalric episodes in Arcadia contribute to a conception of virtuous behaviour which appears to apply only to the upper classes. Although it will be shown that the actual basis of virtue in Arcadia is a rational order which must be achieved by all ranks of society, all the main characters in the book are noble. It is, therefore, especially interesting that Arcadia reflects the clash of ideals as to what actually constitutes nobility.

In the last chapter we saw that in his study of the shepherds Strephon and Claius Sidney puts forward the idea that it is open to any man to achieve noble virtue on the qualities of his own mind and nature alone. Strephon and Claius are

¹Ferguson, op.cit., p.137.

²Francis Yates, "Elizabethan Chivalry", JWCI, 20, 1957, p.22.

beyond the rest by so much, as learning commonlie doth adde to nature: for, having neglected their wealth in respect of their knowledge, they have not so much empayred the meaner, as they bettered the better. (1590.1.p27.)

Although this is a perfectly reasonable assumption, it was seen that Sidney, in fact, seems more inclined to the view that true nobility, which it must be emphasised does include virtue and learning, if not absolutely dependent on gentility of birth is at least more likely in these circumstances.

It must be remembered that this ambiguity goes deeper than a superficial snobbery. It is connected with a clash of ideologies; the old ideal of chivalry with its transcendental implications, and the new humanist ideal of learning and self-discipline as the high road to virtue and nobility.

In Arcadia the heroes Pyrocles and Musidorus embody both these ideals of nobility. They combine all that was of value in the medieval chivalric code with the accomplishments of the renaissance courtier. Their education was considered as a serious means to the end of acting virtuously.

they were so brought up, that all the sparkes of vertue, which nature had kindled in them, were so blowne to give forth their uttermost heate that justly it may be affirmed, they enflamed the affections of all that knew them. For almost before they could perfectly speake, they began to receave conceits not unworthy of the best speakers:...the delight of tales being converted to the knowledge of al the stories of worthy Princes, both to move them to do nobly, and teach them how to do nobly; ...and in sum, all bent to the making up of princely mindes. (1590.2.pp.189-90.)

Although it will become apparent that this noble action includes more than success in arms, Sidney stresses that their education combines military strategy and physical discipline as a training of the mind for virtuous action:

excellent devises being used, to make even their sports profitable; images of battailes, and fortifications being then delivered to their memory, which after, their stronger judgements might dispens, ... their bodies exercised in all abilities, both of doing and suffring, and their mindes acquainted by degrees with daungers. (1590.2.pp.189-90.)

Moreover, as soon as they are old enough and "would needs fall to the practise of thos vertues, which they before learned", the line of action they follow is to seek "adventures of armes" (1590.2.p191). They start off to find Euarchus to help him in the seige of Bizantium but when they receive news that he "was passed all the cumber of his warres" (1590.2.p206), instead of going to him to take a responsible part in government, they

goe privately to seeke exercises of their vertue; thinking it not so worthy, to be brought to heroycall effects by fortune, or necessitie (like Ulysses and Aeneas) as by ones owne choice, and working (1590.2.p206.)

The exercises that they find are, in fact, just those kinds of adventures which were expected of medieval chivalric heroes, and in them they are governed by that code of honour and desire for personal glory which is associated with the chivalric code.

Both Princes perform amazing feats of arms. They assist two knights, Tydeus and Telenor, who delighted them for their "rare bravery", against the onset of "a dosen armed Knights, or rather villains". (1590.2.p292.) In the wars of Phrygia they are only two against a whole nation. But having fought their way clear off a scaffold, they conquer the people who not unnaturally "began to be almost superstitiously amazed, as at effectes beyond mortall power". (1590.2.p200) In Pontus they dispatch two giants and kill the king. (1590.2.pp.204-205) They also rescue such distressed

ladies as Erona, Queen of Lycia, (1590.2.p232ff.) and Dido, persecuted by Pamphilus (1590.2.p262ff.). Indeed Pyrocles breaks off a duel to rescue Dido, calling to his opponent "to deferre our combate, till an other day, and now to perfourme the duties of Knighthood in helping this distressed Ladie". (1590.2.p271.)

On this occasion Pyrocles is fighting Anaxius whose challenge he had accepted because he had heard that Amphialus, considered "the best Knight in the world", had never been able to beat him. Moreover he wishes to meet him alone to establish his own reputation to act valorously without the help of Musidorus. (see 1590.2.p263.) Pyrocles behaves in accordance with a chivalric courtesy which Anaxius lacks. In the course of the fight he unhorses him and then immediately dismounts himself because he "would not be beholding to Fortune for any part of the victorie". (1590.2.p271.) The fact that Anaxius had lacked chivalry to the extent of threatening to kill his horse under him if he did not do just that does not detract from the virtue of Pyrocles's decision although it does place it in a mildly ironic light.

This sort of impractical courtesy had a dangerous fascination for Sidney. By taking off his thigh pieces so as to equalise the risk between himself and Sir William Pelham in battle, he was fatally wounded at Zutphen. It was a particularly senseless action since Pelham was a fellow leader with Sidney, and by keeping his armour he would not have taken an unfair advantage of an enemy.

Pyrocles also goes off to fight an incredible monster,

of most ugly shape, armed like a Rhinoceros, as strong as an Elephant, as fierce as a Lion, as nimble as a Leopard, and as cruell as a Tigre: (1590.2.p300)

and reports that

so was my weakenes blessed from above, that without dangerous wounds I slewe that monster, which hundreds durste not attempt.
(1590.2.p301.)

It seems as if here Sidney is quietly laughing at the convention he is using. This mild irony which is not strong enough to destroy the values over which it plays is just perceptibly present in Pyrocles's fight with Anaxius. Certainly it is there in the placing of Dorus's song on idealised pastoral life in just that position where its shortcomings in Arcadia would be plain to see. It greatly adds to the entertainment of the book without detracting from its basically serious purpose. The Princes do not represent virtue achieved and this ironic tone suggests that, although their pursuit of chivalric ideals proves their honour and valour, it is also sometimes a little immature and impractical. In at least one instance this is clearly shown to be so, and it is put in proper perspective by Euarchus, who, it will be seen, is Sidney's ideal of judge and ruler.

Huizinga showed how the chivalric ideal of a duel between Princes to decide a national issue was often suggested with the pious intentions of saving bloodshed, but never carried out, since it was unrealistic as practical policy, "It was impossible to expose the honour of the kingdom to the hazards of a single combat".¹

This is endorsed in Arcadia. During the wars of Erona, Tiridates,

¹Huizinga, op.cit., p.99.

her rejected suitor, impatient that the Princes' skill in organising her forces was prolonging the war,

made a challenge of three Princes in his retinue, against those two Princes and Antiphilus: and that thereupon the quarrell should be decided; with compact, that neither side should helpe his fellow: but of whose side the more overcame, with him the virtorie should remaine. (1590.2.p234.)

The Princes accept, and although their side wins, since they lose only one to the others' two, Tiridates cheats and continues the war by using his captive Antiphilus, Erona's lover, as a lever to make her surrender. All this indicates the inadvisability of trusting to the ideal of single combat to decide national issues.

This point is made again quite explicitly in the combat between Amphialus and Musidorus, as the black knight, in the war against Basilius. The issue is still undecided when Amphilaus's old governor comes in and unchivalrously wounds the black knight in the thigh and kills his horse. Amphialus protests and

cried to him, that he dishonoured him: You say well (answered the olde Knight) to stande now like a private souldier, setting your credite upon particular fighting, while you may see Basilius with all his hoste, is getting betweene you and your towne.
(1590.3.p393.)

This particular question is put into final perspective at the Princes' trial. There Pyrocles asks to prove his innocence against Philanax's accusations by

tryall by combat, wherein let him be armed and me in my shirt,
I doubt not Justice will be my shield, and his hart will shew
it selfe as faint as it is false. (1593.5.pl85.)

However, Euarchus who is the only male character in Arcadia who embodies

matured and achieved virtue, replies that, "since bodily strength is but a servant to the minde, it were very barbarous and preposterous, that force shoulde bee made a judge over reason". (1593.5.p189.) It will be seen that reason is the instrument by which men achieve virtue in Arcadia and Euarchus, by saying this, relates not only the question of single combat but the whole military code of chivalry to the ideal of rational virtue on which Arcadia is based. Physical courage and desire for glory, both national and personal, are to be used only in the service of a rational virtue, not for their own sakes. Euarchus himself does not pursue an aggressive foreign policy for the sake of national glory. He "would never stirre up old titles (how apparent soever) whereby the publike peace (with the losse of manie not guiltie soules) should be broken" (1590.2.ppl84-5.). The Muses favour Arcadia because of its peace-loving people

who (finding that the shining title of glorie so much affected by other nations, doth in deed helpe little to the happinesse of life) are the onely people, which as by their Justice and providence geve neither cause nor hope to their neyghbours to annoy them, so are they not sturred with false praise to trouble others quiet. (1590.1.p19.)

In fact the purpose of the Princes' adventures does not disagree with this principle. Pyrocles and Musidorus do not simply pursue their own glory and exhibit their valour and skill in arms, for their adventures are related to wider areas of meaning in the whole structure of the book. The incident with Dido is connected with the purpose of the love episodes, and the Princes' action in rescuing her is related to the analysis of virtuous love. In the battles connected with the kings of Phrygia and

Pontus, and the uprising of the Helots, the Princes prove themselves wise governors and administrators as well as knightly heroes. Thus their role as courteous and valiant knights of chivalry is connected with a more comprehensive ideal of virtue to which it contributes.

In Arcadia itself the courtly accomplishments of the Princes as well as their skill in arms is shown. When they are wooing the Princesses they have an easy command of music with which to entertain them. They hunt with Kalandar and hawk and fish with Basilius and Gynecia.

Musidorus's skill as a horseman is also celebrated. This is an accomplishment essential to a knight. In his exhortation to the knights of England at the end of his translation of Lull's book of chivalry, Caxton writes:

I wold demaunde a question yf I shold not displease/ how many knyghtes ben ther now in England/ that haue thuse and thexercyse of a knyghte/ that is to wete/ that he knoweth his hors/ and his hors hym/ that is to saye/ he beyngre redy at a poynt to haue al thyng that longeth to a knyght/ an hors that is accordyng and broken after his hand/ his armures and harnoys mete and syttyng/ and so forth/ et cetera. (1)

Thus when Musidorus, disguised as the shepherd Dorus, wants to prove his real nobility to Pamela, he gives her a riding display in which he excels himself in brilliant contrast to the boorish Dametas. Pamela describes how,

he (as if Centaurlike he had bene one peece with the horse) was no more moved, then one is with the going of his owne legges; and in effect so did he command him, as his owne limmes, for though he had both spurres and wande, they seemed rather markes of soveraintie, then instruments of punishment; ... he ever going so just with the horse, either foorth right, or turning, that it seemed as he borrowed the horses body, so he lent the horse his minde: ... Him self (which me thinkes is straunge) shewing at one

¹See Lull, *op.cit.*, pp.123-124.

instant both steadines and nimblenes; sometimes making him turne close to the ground, like a cat, when scratchingly she wheelles about after a mouse: sometimes with a little more rising before, now like a Raven leaping from ridge to ridge, then like one of Dametas kiddes bound over the hillocks. (1590.2.pp.178-9.)

In contrast,

The sporte was to see Dametas, how he was tost from the sadle to the mane of the horse, and thence to the ground, giving his gay apparell almost as foule an outside, as it had an inside. (1590.2.p.179.)

It is interesting at this point to notice that this contrast between the standards of performance expected from the nobility and from the peasant links up with Sidney's inclination towards the idea that noble behaviour springs only from noble birth, and that this is also related to another aspect of chivalry. Huizinga points out:

The ideal of the fine heroic life could only be cultivated within the limits of a close caste. The sentiments of chivalry were current only among the members of the caste and by no means extended to inferior persons. (1)

He illustrates this with an account of a combat between two burghers of Valenciennes in 1485 which was described by Chastellain with a cruel relish, and conducted with the utmost barbarity to a fatal conclusion before Philip, Duke of Burgundy, for his amusement.² This same double attitude towards rules for combat is apparent in Arcadia, which was written also to entertain. The Princes exercise courtesy to men of similar rank but in quelling the riot outside the Lodges they indulge in unpleasant cruelty. The description of how Basilius cuts off a tailor's nose and Zelmane his head, while Dorus kills, with a sword, a miller armed only with a pitchfork, is of the same

¹Huizinga, op.cit., p.101.

²Ibid., see p.102.

quality as Chastellain's description referred to above. (1590.2.p312).

This attitude is also obvious in the description of the combat of cowards who are both ignobly born. Dametas tries to kill Clinias with a knife. (1590.3.p434.)

Apart from this, however, just as Sidney insists that the strength of physical courage should be subordinated to a rational virtue, so he shows that all the Princes' courtly accomplishments are vain unless they are presented as a training of the mind for a virtue in whose service they are afterwards used.

Part of the significance of the Dido episode is that Pamphilus, her tormentor, is dangerous precisely because he has the outward accomplishments of a courtier without any integrity. He was

in conversation wittily pleasant, and pleasantly gamesome; ... delighted in al such things, which by imparting their delight to others, makes the user thereof welcome; as, Musicke, Daunsing, Hunting, Feasting, Riding, and such like. And to conclude, such a one, as who can keepe him at armes ende, neede never wish a better companion. But under these qualities lies such a poysonous addar as I will tell you. (1590.2.p266.)

In the Princes' education, however, "excellent devises" were used to make "even their sports profitable", (1590.2.pl89) and they employ their accomplishments in the pursuit of virtue, whether in honourable love or heroic action. They prove themselves not only courteous knights of chivalry but able administrators and virtuous lovers. It may thus be concluded that although Sidney does emphasise that his heroes are chivalrous knights, the qualities and values traditionally associated with this type are not uncritically endorsed. Their adventures are seen as trials of a

virtue to which chivalric ideals, joined with the more sophisticated accomplishments of the knight as courtier, only contribute.

However, Arcadia is not a romance connected with the survival of medieval chivalry simply because the Princes and knights live up to its heroic ideals of valour and courtesy, and fight mythical monsters. It preserves elaborately concrete chivalric forms as well as abstract ideals. There are accounts of two formal tournaments in the revised Arcadia, Phalantus's tourney and the Iberian yearly jousts, as well as a number of highly elaborate single combats in the wars of Amphialus in which the knights wear symbolic armour and devices. This not only reflects actual contemporary customs which were taken seriously, it is also indicative of a certain combination of seriousness and playfulness which is typical of so much Elizabethan literature, and which is, perhaps, baffling, and sometimes misleading to a modern reader.

In his brief description of the education of the Princes, Sidney says that "excellent devises" were used "to make even their sports profitable" (1590.2.p189.) This suggests a seriousness over courtly pastimes which is even more explicit in Castiglione's The Courtier. When the Lord Octavian advises on princely recreation, he says that the courtier ought to keep the Prince in knowledge of virtue and "sometime with musicke,

sometime with armes, and horses, sometime with rymes and meeter, otherwhile with communication of love, and with all those waies that these Lords have spoken of, continually keepe that minde of his occupied in honest pleasure: imprinting notwithstanding therein alwaies beside (as I have saide) in company with these flickering provocations some vertuous condition. (1)

¹Castiglione, The Book of The Courtier (trans. Sir Thomas Hoby, 1561), Everyman, 1928, p.265.

This sort of attitude goes some way to explain the extremely high standard of amateur accomplishment achieved in the sixteenth century in writing, music, (both in performance and composition) dancing and riding, and the curious combination of serious intent with an extremely sophisticated nonchalance and light-heartedness which lies behind much of sixteenth-century literature. Certainly it lies behind Arcadia as a heroic romance with a serious purpose which was at the same time written to entertain a sister and includes passages of playful irony.

Mr. Buxton seems to find these two elements difficult to reconcile. He recognises a difference between the two versions of Arcadia but seems to believe that they cannot both make the same kind of appeal. He rightly insists that "Whatever second thoughts Philip Sidney may have had he had written the Arcadia, in the first place, as a Romance to please the ladies",¹ especially that lady who was his sister, the Countess of Pembroke. However, for him the term romance seems inevitably associated with something light weight. He claims that Greville "was not predisposed to think his friend capable of the triviality of a romance".² In his biography of Sidney he pointed to the serious purpose of Arcadia and in his revised edition of the book in 1590, he insisted, by means of "brief chapter headings, on this interpretation of the Arcadia, not as a romance, but as a heroic poem".³ Mr. Buxton also claims that it was as a romance in his sense that Arcadia retained its popularity, and that the Countess of Pembroke herself could

¹John Buxton, Elizabethan Taste, London, 1963, p.253.

²Idem.

³Ibid., p.254.

not accept Greville's interpretation. Yet the fact that she eliminated Greville's (or John Florio's¹) chapter headings in her 1593 edition of the revised version is surely a question of editorial procedure, and does not warrant the assumption that it was because it "seemed to transform her romance into something of more serious purpose".² Even if

To her the book remained what it had been when her brother first wrote it, ... a romance, written for a young bride of eighteen awaiting the birth of her first child, (3)

this does not mean that she could not recognize the truth of Greville's interpretation. The distinction between heroic poem and romance is one which lacks a difference in the sixteenth century. Curiously enough Mr. Buxton acknowledges this not much further on when he says that the "question, whether the Arcadia is a romance or a heroic poem is a false one, since the one kind does not exclude the other".⁴

It is just this combination of lightness and seriousness which the Elizabethans were so much more skilful in than we are. The modern novel has its roots in the eighteenth, not in the sixteenth century. It is hard to make any definition of its form. It does seem, however, that in some way it is connected with social reality in form as well as significance. Although Arcadia also has these connections to a far greater extent than is immediately obvious, it also draws on sometimes, fantastic, often charming and elaborate artificial elements which at the same time carry a certain symbolic

¹See Francis Yates, John Florio, Cambridge, 1934, pp. 204-205.

²Buxton, op.cit., p.250.

³Idem.

⁴Ibid., p.256.

significance. Sidney's use of the pastoral convention is one example of this, his inclusion of chivalric ideals and forms another.

Just as Sidney makes heroic action and courtly accomplishments depend for their value on some inner seriousness of purpose, so the Elizabethans valued ceremonial, not only for its own splendid sake but for its emphasis on some more serious intention. Their interest in pageant and ceremony was not a decadent love of decoration for its own sake, it was connected with the establishment of a new reign in which Englishmen were becoming more aware of the sheer geographical greatness of the world they lived in, and the potentially important political part England could assume in it. It was also connected with the competition for economic survival, and administrative power, in a court where advancement was dependent on the sovereign's notice and favour. Hooker advocated the retaining of symbolic ceremonies because

We must not think but that there is some ground of reason even in nature, whereby it cometh to pass that no nation under heaven either doth or ever did suffer public actions which are of weight, whether they be civil and temporal or else spiritual and sacred, to pass without some visible solemnity; the very strangeness whereof and difference from that which is common, doth cause popular eyes to observe and to mark the same. (1)

Later he says that in themselves "titles, gestures, presents, other the like external signs wherein honour doth consist"² are "matters of no great moment", and yet, he continues, if the Lord Mayor were to be deprived of his title, "suppose we that it would be a small main unto the credit, force and countenance of his office?"³

¹ Hooker, Ecclesiastical Polity, IV, i.3, quoted by N. Sykes, Social and Political Ideas of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries, ed. Hearnshaw, 1926, p.85.

² Ecclesiastical Polity, VII, xvii, 4, quoted N. Sykes, op.cit., p.85.

³ Idem.

It is for this kind of reason that Musidorus and Pyrocles, unlike Gynecia, who is clad in rags, appear at their trial dressed in such splendour (1593.5.pl69). Sidney comments that the contrast between them and the Queen shows how to "divers persons, compassion is diversly to be sturred". Gynecia gained it by the sight of her sudden ruin. The Princes, hitherto unknown, whereas they would have been despised in humble clothes, now, using the "more violence of magnanimitye" conquered the "expectation of the lookers, with an extraordinarye vertue" (1593.5.pp.169-70). Their splendour is thus good policy. Similarly when Euarchus, the just judge and perfect ruler, takes his place to preside over the trial of the Princes at the end of Arcadia, he orders the "throne of judgement seate" which Basilius used, to be set in the middle of the green.

For Euarchus did wisely consider, the people to be naturally taken with exterior shewes, farre more then with inward consideracion, of the materiall pointes. And therefore in this newe entrie into so entangled a matter, he would leave nothing which might be eyther an armour or ornament unto him, and in these pompous ceremoneyes he well knewe a secreat of government much to consist. (1593.5.pl67.)

It is this same belief in the value of ceremonial to enforce and publicise certain values that prompted Caxton's wish that

twyes or thryes in a yere/ or at the lest ones he [the King] wold do crye Iustes of pees/ ... This shold cause gentylnen to resorte to thauncyent customes of chyualry to grete fame and reno*mee/ And also to be alwey redy to serue/ theyr prynce whan he shalle calle them/ or haue nede. (1)

His wish was, in fact, fulfilled at the court of Elizabeth in the Accession Day Tilts and other ceremonial jousts which are in turn reflected in the tilts and tournaments described in Arcadia. His readers would have seen

¹See Lull, op.cit., p.124.

the obvious parallels with the practices at the Court of Elizabeth when Sidney describes how the Queen of Corinth used

so straunge, and yet so well-succeeding a temper, that she made her people by peace, war like; her courtiers by sports, learned; her Ladies by Love, chast. For by continuall martiall exercises without bloud, she made them perfect in that bloody art. Her sportes were such as caried riches of Knowledge upon the streame of Delight. (1590.2.p283.)

R.C. Strong¹ has demonstrated the serious purpose behind the Elizabethan Accession Day celebrations generally, and Miss Yates² has shown how this applies in particular to the ceremonial tilts organized by Sir Henry Lee. She also traces the connections between these and the accounts of the Iberian yearly jousts in Arcadia. Sir Henry Lee, the Queen's champion, was responsible for the organisation of a ceremonial joust which took place every year on November 17th to mark the anniversary of the Queen's accession. Although these generally took place at Whitehall, and the first recorded one was in 1581, it is probable that they began much earlier than this. There exists a record of an entertainment given by Lee for the Queen at Woodstock in 1575, the imagery of which is closely connected with that of the later accession tilts.

The tilts were only one aspect of the celebrations connected with the day. R.C. Strong has shown that it coincided with the feast of St. Hugh of Lincoln celebrated by the unreformed church, and that this was adopted in Elizabeth's reign to celebrate the accession of a Protestant Queen and

¹R.C. Strong, "The Popular Celebration of the Accession Day of Queen Elizabeth I", JWCI, 21, 1958, pp.86-103.

²F. Yates, op.cit., JWCI, 20, 1957, pp.4-25.

the foundation of a newly established church. It was regarded as a Protestant feast day, and a special form of service was ordained to give thanks for the accession of the Queen. An important part of this service was the sermon, and Strong quotes from some to show how their basic theme is that of Elizabeth as the Imperial Virgin defending her Empire against the enemies of the Gospel, and restoring the old imperial Christianity of Constantine in the place of Catholicism and the Papacy, which was regarded as embodying the forces of Anti-Christ.

This serious, patriotic and religious theme was not confined to the religious celebrations only, it was carried over into the tilts. Hooker pointed out the value of elaborate ceremony to enforce the significance of a great event on the people. Miss Yates points out that the elaborate ceremony and mystique of the old church was discontinued after the reformation, and that therefore the cult of chivalric forms provided an "outlet for modes ^{thought} and feeling for which there was little place in the new order".¹ It also directs these thoughts and feelings in celebration of this new order, and Miss Yates shows that Lee's plan was that the imagery of the tilts should build up "in terms of chivalrous romance, the political and theological position of protestant England". The way in which this was achieved is of peculiar interest for Arcadia.

In the last chapter one of the speeches in the Ditchley Manuscript was quoted to show how pastoral and chivalric characters join to celebrate an ideal of virtuous living, but part over the subject of nobility. A knight

¹F. Yates, op.cit., p.23.

who goes to live among the shepherds because of the inherent virtue of their way of life, refuses to allow them to take part in a tournament, which is in fact an Accession Day Tilt, for "this noble exercise apperteynes not to men of your birth and bringing vp, neyther can any Just at that feast but he that is a gentleman, except he haue lycence".¹ R.C. Strong examines another speech, undated, in this manuscript, which was to be used on such an occasion. He writes:

It was spoken by a shepherd to a captain and his attendant gentlemen. He condemns men who "wold doe such vyle actes to bring ther country into such miserable bondage," for through the Queen's rule "we enjoy withall...the gospel preached amongst vs, the peace of conscience, the reconciliation betwene god and our soules." The shepherd does not wish to keep the soldiers from their "honorable exercise," implying that this was the prologue to a chivalrous display of some kind. At this point the manuscript disintegrates and begins again at what appears to be a second speech made after the exercises in which the shepherd presents them [the tilters] with favours to wear on their helmets, in honour of the Queen, and invites them to "tast of hard farr, of our pore sheperdes feasts".

Strong goes on to comment, "Here we have the homely pastoral revels with their Protestant moral which Spenser uses in his *Shepherdes Calender*".² He might equally well have added that here also is that union of pastoral and chivalric elements to celebrate a virtue grounded in religious faith which Sidney uses in his *Arcadia*.

In any argument for *Arcadia* as a serious work, it is important to remember that both Sidney and devisers of the Accession Day Tilts unite medieval chivalry and pastoral in romances which were relevant to the

¹B.M.Add.MSS. 41,499.B. pp.14-15.

²Strong, *op.cit.*, p.99.

circumstances of Elizabethan England. From other speeches in this manuscript and records of celebrations, Miss Yates has traced the connecting threads used in the imagery of the Accession Day Tilts which seem to build up a "romance lived out in scenes of pageantry"¹ in which Elizabeth's court appears as the centre of chivalric virtues which are closely connected with religious piety and political wisdom. "A romance lived out in scenes of pageantry" is a phrase which could well be applied to Arcadia.

She shows how the main characters in the romance connected with the Woodstock entertainment in 1575 reappear throughout the years until the occasion of Lee's retirement in 1590, and are then revived two years later at an entertainment Lee gave for the Queen at Ditchley.

In 1575 the occasion was built round a romance called the tale of Hermetes which is interesting as it provides another example of a conventional link between Arcadia and the form of these celebrations. It foreshadows Arcadia in mixing Greek and chivalric romance conventions.² In this tale a hermit tells how Loricus, who is Lee himself, in love with a lady of high degree, meets another lady also in search of her lover. Both are told by an oracle to go to the best country in the world with the fairest ruler and all will be well. The country is, of course, England and its ruler Elizabeth. The hermit makes it clear that at one time he, also, was a knight. This is important for in the 1590 tilt at which he retired, Lee appears again as Loricus, now an old man, who himself is about to retire and become a hermit.

¹Yates, op.cit., p.20.

²Ibid., p.12.

In a song by Peele he announces,

My helmet now shall make an hieue for bees,
And louers songs shall turne to holy psalmes;
A man-at-armes must now sit on his knees,
And feed on pray'rs, that are old ages almes. (1)

In 1592 when the Queen came to Ditchley she was reminded of both earlier occasions when a knight tells her of the knight Loricus who has now become a hermit and once had his tale told by a hermit.

This connection of the active life of the knight with the religious contemplative life is made by Lull in his book of chivalry. There the young knight is instructed in the rules of chivalry by an old hermit who was once himself a knight. It is not a purely literary phenomenon either. Ferguson points out that the elderly knight turned hermit is not only a stock figure of medieval literature but that he also figures in life. Earl Rivers who was famous for deeds of chivalry devoted his later life to the service of God,² and Stephen Scrope in the dedication of a treatise on knightly virtues to Sir John Fastolf recommends that when a knight gets old he should spend his time in

ghostly chivalry of deeds of alms spiritual, as in contemplation of moral wisdom and exercising ghostly works which that may enforce and cause you to be called to the order of knighthood that shall perpetually endure....(3)

In fact the duties of the knight are closely connected with religion. He is ordained in a ceremony which combines secular and religious elements. A squire devotes himself to the service of God and chivalry, and Lull remarks

¹G. Peele, "Polyhymnia", Works, ed. A.H.Bullen, London, 1888, II, p.283.

²See Ferguson, op.cit., p.52.

³Ibid., p.56. Quoted from The Epistle of Othea to Hector, ed. G.F. Warner, London, 1904.

"the offyce of preesthode and of chyualry haue grete concordance".¹ All the parts of his armour are allotted some religious significance; for instance the sword is shaped like a cross for as Christ overcame death for man so a knight "oweth to vaynquysshē and destroye the enemyes of the crosse by the sword".² In Arcadia too, the final ground for virtuous behaviour, as we shall see, is religious. Thus Lee in the tournaments and Sidney in Arcadia draw on the traditional stock of medieval chivalric ideals and adapt them to the needs of the sixteenth century.

Besides these formal links between Arcadia and the ceremonial of the tilt yard, there are other connections.³ That Sidney himself was closely connected with these tournaments we know from contemporary records. He appeared in an Accession Day Tilt in 1581⁴ and earlier that year at Whitsun he had taken part in the Tournament of The Four Foster Children of Desire, in "very sumptuous maner, w̄ armor part blewe, and the rest gilt and engrauen".⁵ In the Ditchley manuscript there is a note connected with a tilt on 17th of November 1586. It is headed A Remembrance of Sir Philip Sidnei Knight, and is concerned with three sets of Latin verses, the first two of which were spoken by riders, the third were apparently mounted on "the mourning horse".

In his Polyhymnia connected with the 1590 Accession Tilt, Peele says that Essex, who married Sidney's widow, appeared

Y-clad in mighty arms of mourner's dye,
 . . .
 As if he mourn'd to think of him he miss'd,
 Sweet Sidney, fairest shepherd of our green,

¹Lull, op.cit., p.76.

²Ibid., pp.76-7.

³F. Brie has also suggested some of these connections. See Sidney's Arcadia, pp. 285-310.

⁴See F. Yates, op.cit., p.6.

⁵Henry Goldwell, A briefe declaration of the shews, deuices, speeches, and inuentions, done and performed before the Queenes Maiestie, . . . London 1581. A VI.verso.

Well-lettered warrior, whose successor he
In love and arms had ever vow'd to be. (1)

Also in connection with this tournament there is a parchment cover inscribed "Sir Henry Lee delivered being champion to the Queen delivered to my Lord Cumberland by William Simons".² Surprisingly enough it contains a manuscript copy of the verses of the original version of Arcadia in the right form and order. Although G.K. Chambers supposes that they were slipped in later, Miss Yates conjectures that they were meant to be there representing the "scriptures of the perfect knight of Protestant chivalry".³ Whatever the truth may be, Sidney was certainly much in remembrance at that tilt.

In Arcadia itself, there are two specifically formal tournaments, Phalantus's tourney and the Iberian yearly jousts, but many of the individual combats in the wars of Amphialus have all the elaboration familiar in the tilt yard. On all these occasions knights appear in elaborately symbolic armour with mysterious devices, and Miss Yates shows that some of these can be traced to actual historical sources. In one case the names of the combatants can be historically identified.

In the yearly Iberian jousts one of the competitors is a

fine frozen Knight, frozen in despaire; but his armor so naturally
representing Ice, and all his furniture so lively answering
thereto, as yet did I never see any thing that pleased me better.
(1590.2.p286.)

In the tournament of the Foster Children of Desire Sir Thomas Parrat and Master Cooke speak on behalf of a knight frozen by despair who is one of the defendants.⁴ Although there seems to be no sure way of historically

¹ Peele, Works, op.cit., p.292.

² See F.Yates, op.cit., p.18.

³ Idem.

⁴ H. Goldwell, op.cit., Bii.

identifying him now, contemporary readers would surely have recognised him and identified him.

In the wars of Amphialus Phalantus appears in blue armour gilded with suns; his horse furniture is decorated like a vine, the reins are like branches which grow into clusters of grapes at the bit. (1590.3.p415.) Peele records that Lee at his resignation tilt in 1590 appeared in caparison

O'ershadowed with a wither'd running vine,
As who should say, "My spring of youth is past,"
In corselet gilt of curious workmanship. (1)

Miss Yates wonders whether Lee recognised himself in the Arcadian Phalantus and thus presented himself as the vine withered with age at his last official tilt.² This may be. Certainly, as we have seen, Arcadia and Sidney were closely connected with this tilt. It would, however, depend on his having seen a copy of the revised Arcadia in Greville's possession and published that year. Moreover, he could as easily have taken his idea from the same battle when Amphialus appears in horse furniture of withered and falling leaves. Actual historical parallels are hard to draw. Brie connects Phalantus's vine decorations with a tournament at the court of Henry VIII in 1518.³ It seems best, however, to assume that Sidney introduced "elements from various tilts in his description of the apparel and devices of the participants".⁴

There is one instance, however, where historical identification is possible. In the Iberian jousts the shepherd Philisides tilts with Lelius

¹Peele, Works, op.cit., II, p.288.

²Yates, op.cit., p.9.

³Brie, op.cit., p.296.

⁴See S.R. Watson and J.H. Hanford, "Personal Allegory in the 'Arcadia'", MP, 32, 1934, p.10.

who lets him win. It has been shown that Lelius was the name given to Sir Henry Lee by Sylvester in his translation of Du Bartas.¹ Philisides is Sidney himself. Miss Yates shows that both Spenser and Ludovick Bryskett use this name for him.² In Arcadia he is characterised as melancholy which suits what we know of Sidney's character well, and given a song to sing which he says was taught him by Languet. (1590.1.pl32 ff.) Sidney's friendship for Hubert Languet the Huguenot is well known. Moreover Philisides on this occasion carries an impresa of a "sheepe marked with pitch, with this word, Spotted to be knowne".(1590.2.p.285.) D. Coulman has traced the connection between this and an impresa described by Abraham Fraunce as belonging to "Illustrissimus Dominus Philippus Sidneius", in a Penshurst manuscript dedicated to Robert Sidney.³ It is described as "Ovis Saturni sidere notata" with the motto "Macular modo noscar". Fraunce includes some explanatory Latin verses which Coulman has translated. The first lines are

A star has marked the sheep whose fame is world-wide: the cold
star of Saturn has marked the sheep. If there were no mark, this
sheep would not have been unknown: it would have been known even
if there were no mark. (4)

The sheep would seem to refer to Sidney himself who was often described in pastoral terms. It is difficult to give a definite interpretation of the stanza, but it would seem that Fraunce is referring to Sidney's life and tragic early death.

¹Ibid., p.6.

²F. Yates, op.cit., p.5.

³"Spotted to be Known", JWCI, 20, 1957, pp.179-80.

⁴Ibid., p. 179, Note 6.

Neither the stigma of dishonour, nor the human hand, has branded this sheep that roams so mildly through the meads. The signs you see were impressed by the hand of the Sky-thundering old man: he marks this sheep as belonging by right to the gods, as belonging to him. (1)

It is not clear what the star is that marks out the sheep. In the stanza it appears to be some astrological portent. In Arcadia, however, the device 'Spotted to be known' appears to be in connection with a star who is definitely Stella. Pyrocles comments,

And because I may tell you out his concept...before the Ladies departed from the windowes, among them there was one (they say) that was the Star, whereby his course was only directed. (1590.2.p285.)

As Coulman concludes it is impossible to know whether Fraunce took his idea from Arcadia or from an impresa that Sidney actually carried at some tournament. Perhaps Sidney adapted an actual impresa in Arcadia so that the star of Saturn became also Stella, who affected Philisides as powerfully as the stars were thought to affect human destiny.² Circumstances concerning the origin of the device are not clear, but it is at least certain, that the melancholy shepherd, Philisides, is Sidney himself.

Imprese were considered very important in the sixteenth century. Samuel Daniel writes that they were created for both amorous and military purposes and

used at this day of the noble gentlemen of Europe, in adorning their glorious triumphes, or declaring their inward pretended purposes and enterprises, not by speach or any apparent maner, but shadowed under a certayne wayle of formes or figures. (3)

¹ Ibid., p.180, Note 7.

² cf. Sidney, "Astrophil and Stella", 26, Poems, ed. Ringler, op.cit., p.177.

³ The Worthy tract of Paulus Iouius, trans. Daniel, London 1585, 'To the Frendly Reader'. Aj verso.

There are many such imprese described in Arcadia, and elaborate rules were issued for their construction. A brief survey of this subject will not only show how closely Arcadia is connected with contemporary practices, it will also illustrate to perfection that curious combination of decorative entertainment and serious purpose which lies behind Arcadia and so much Elizabethan culture.

The custom of wearing imprese appears to have been copied from the French by the Italians who made it fashionable.¹ It also seems to have been popular in England. Camden lists some of the imprese he had observed at "Tilts and elsewhere",² and John Manningham records in his diary that there were "certayne devises and empresaes taken by the scucheons in the Gallery at Whitehall".³ These were unfortunately destroyed by fire in the seventeenth century.

A number of treatises on the correct devising and wearing of imprese were written in French and Italian and some of these were translated into English. The most distinguished of the writers on the subject was, perhaps, Ruscelli, whose famous Le Imprese Illustri con Espositione et Discorsi was published in Venice in 1566. Sidney knew it because on December 19th 1573 he wrote to Languet mentioning it among several other books and commenting, "All of these are interesting books".⁴ Ruscelli never, in fact, seems to have been translated but another of his compatriots, Iovio, from whom he

¹See W. Camden, op.cit., p.368 ff.

²Ibid., p.373-4.

³Diary of John Manningham, ed. J. Bruce, London, Camden Society, 1868, p.3.

⁴Correspondence of Sidney and Languet, op.cit., p.12.

differed slightly on theoretical details, wrote a tract which was translated by Samuel Daniel, tutor to the Countess of Pembroke's children.¹ The Frenchman, Paradin, also wrote a treatise, Devises Heroiques, which was translated by "P.S." as Heroical Devises and published in London in 1591. In the seventeenth century Henri Estienne compiled a symposium of different views on the subject and supplemented them by his own. This was translated by Thomas Blount in 1646.²

Most of these writers connect impresse with other symbolic forms of communication and trace their development from origins in the ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs. The terminology/^{used} is not always exact. The term device is sometimes used coextensively with impresse; more often, however, it denotes a general symbolic use of imagery and colour in the knight's trappings of which impresse are one particular example. Before going on to examine the impresse in Arcadia in relation to contemporary theory and practice, it is worth pausing on these general devices since they also throw light on the lavish decoration of the Arcadian knights.

Daniel, in his preface to the Worthy Tract of Paulus Iovius connects impresse with "Liurees" which, he says, represented abstract ideas by means of colour alone, "as representing sorowe by blacke, desire to shed blood by red, puritie by white, etc."³

In Arcadia, Musirodus forsaken by Pamela, appears all in black in the wars of Amphialus, (1590.3.p392) and Parthenia, when she comes disguised

¹The Worthy Tract of Paulus Iovius, op.cit. (hereafter referred to as The Worthy Tract).

²Henry Estienne, The Art of making Devises, trans. Thomas Blount, London 1646.

³S. Daniel, The Worthy Tract, op.cit., To the Frendly Reader, A.ij.

to revenge Argarlus's death is in black (1590.3.p445). Amphialus, forsaken by Philoclea, wears black rags (1590.3.p454). We know that Essex appeared in black mourning for Sidney at the 1590 tilt. Camden says of him, whether on this occasion or another is not clear, that when he was "cast down with sorrow, and yet to be employed in Arms [he] bare a black mourning shield without any Figure, but inscribed, 'Par nulla figura dolori'".¹ Black is, of course, the most obviously symbolic colour and as such is the one which is most often used. Daniel acknowledged that "colours alone, are now seldome used but of Mourners, or such like".² He does, however, give one example which illustrates the fantastic lengths apparently gone to over using dress and colour as a means of personal symbolism. We have already seen that Musidorus saw his shepherds' clothes as symbolic of his state of mind (1590.1.p113). Daniel tells of a man who was unlucky in love and at the same time plunged into mourning for the wife of a friend. At a certain feast he had to attend he wore black grogram and taffeta on damask, so that the damask underneath appeared darkest of all, presumably because of the quality of the material. Those who knew him personally recognised the significance immediately.

For with the uppermost blacke he represented sorowe for the dead: with that underneath he mourned for his friend: but his owne blacke appeared more and signified some greater grieffe, ... For in his opinion lesse grieffe was it to bee deprived of a wife, sith she is called to the heauens, then to stand sceluded from the fauour of a proude disdainefull dame, whilst an other enioyes the fruite of his deserued affections. (3)

¹Camden, op.cit., p.375.

²The Worthy Tract, op.cit., A.iiiij.

³Idem.

There are other examples of colours worn with a certain significance. In Whitney's Choice of Emblemes, which he presented to Leicester in 1586, he writes in the verse attached to the emblem dedicated to Edward Paston, that white "is a signe, of conscience pure, and free", and that "The man refus'd, in Taunye doth delite"¹. Argalus, who is perhaps the purest knight in Arcadia, fights Amphialus dressed in white armour. (1590.3.p422). In his own wars, Amphialus, rejected by Philoclea, goes to meet Phalantus with his horse furniture representing withered leaves

and being made of a pale cloath of gold, they did beare the strawe-coloured liverie of ruine. His armour was also of tawnie and golde (1590.3.p415.)

In the account of the tilt of the Four Foster Children of Desire it is recorded that when the four knights give in, they send a boy to the Queen "clothed in Ash colored garments in token of humble submission".² At the beginning of this challenge they had sent this boy "apparrelled in red and white, as a Martial messenger of Desires".³ The colour red is connected by the word martial with the "desire for bud" mentioned by Daniel, as well as with desire for love. Even more significant for Arcadia is the fact that in this same tilt, on the second day, the four knights enter in a chariot drawn by horses "apparrelled in White and carnation silke, beeing the colloures of Desire".⁴ In the same fight where Amphialus wears tawny, Phalantus meets him on a white horse with strawberry markings and his mane and tail dyed carnation (1590.3.p415). This fits well with Phalantus's

¹G. Whitney, Choice of Emblemes (1586), ed.H.Green, London, 1866, p.134.

²Goldwell, op.cit. C. recto and verso.

³Ibid., B.iii verso.

⁴Ibid., B.viii.

known character as a courtly lover. Earlier in Arcadia he had held a tournament in defence of his mistress's beauty (1590.1.p96 ff).

In a separate gathering at the back of The True Vse of Armorie by William Wyrley (1592) which is bound in with Henry Peacham's Compleat Gentleman (1622) there is a table of the significance of the colours used in arms.¹ It is said that "Golde in Armes" signifies among other things nobility, good will and magnanimity. Silver signifies humility, beauty, purity, clearness and innocency. Red stands for valiantness. Azure stands for renown and beauty. Sable for sorrow, and Green for honour, love and courtesy. The colours are linked with their appropriate planets and stones and shown also to signify certain humours. Silver goes with the phlegmatic type, and sable with the melancholic.

In Arcadia whenever colours are mentioned they seem in keeping with the actions and characters according to this scheme. Phalantus at the fight just mentioned wears blue. Renown and beauty are both associated with him. So is love, and the planet for blue is Venus. The two knights who assist Musidorus as the forsaken knight, when he is set upon unfairly by Anaxius's accomplices, are dressed in green and silver respectively. The knight in green is particularly interesting. The table referred to above says that green "signifieth also: Plants, Trees, Herbes, and all green thinges that groweth upon the earth".² Sidney describes his Knight's green furniture, "it seemed a pleasant garden, wherein grewe orange trees". (1590.3.p462.)

¹See Of the Matter or Substance of Armes, and Whereof they are made, A2-A3, following p.159 of William Wyrley, The True Vse of Armorie, London, 1592, in the same binding with Henry Peacham, The Compleat Gentleman, London, 1622.

²Ibid., A3. verso.

However, the virtues of honour, love and courtesy are those expected of any knight of chivalry. It is obviously difficult to interpret the use of colour in Arcadia with any certainty; but it is equally obvious that the elaborate trappings of the knights must have often carried overtones of meaning to an Elizabethan which a modern reader may miss. It is, therefore, a mistake to dismiss them as decadent ornament. It has been remarked that the Iberian yearly jousts have "no connection with the plot either by incident or character".¹ In fact they are part of the ceremonial of chivalry which contributes to the celebration of an ideal of virtue at the centre of Arcadia.

Colours alone, then, represent abstract emotions in contrast to imprese which symbolise personal intentions by means of a two part invention of pictures and words. Most writers on the art of devising imprese insist that their importance lies not simply in their decorative qualities but in their inner meanings. Iovio said that these were signified by the word, and only illustrated by the figures. He believed that the motto was to the figure as soul to body. However, Ruscelli corrected him saying that the real spirit of the imprese is the author's intention, and both figure and word must combine to make this clear. Daniel says that the imprese were used to declare the "inward pretended purposes and enterprises"² of gentlemen. Estienne points out that as the word impresa derives from the Italian *imprendere*, to undertake, the bearer of an impresa is "obliged, ever to appear to all the world, such, as he hath declared himselfe by it".³

¹J.H. Hanford and S.K. Watson, op.cit., p.6.

²Daniel, The Worthy Tract, op.cit., Aj. verso.

³Estienne, op.cit., p.15.

Thus impresse were considered as a union of words and figure which symbolised the inner intention of the wearer. In this they differ from emblems, another popular art form in the sixteenth century, which do not present a "particular conceit" but "propound some general instruction to all".¹

This does not mean, however, that impresse were not also thought of as having a moral purpose:

It is in these Devises as in a Mirrour, where without large Tomes of Philosophy and History, we may in a short tract of time, and with much ease, plainly behold and imprint in our minds, all the rules both of Morall and Civill life; tending also much to the benefit of History, by reviving the memory of such men, who have rendred themselves illustrious in all sorts of conditions, and in the practice of all kinds of Vertue. (2)

It is for this reason that Paradin says that he has collected together some of the "devices" used in his own and former times to "stirre up diuerse men to the apprehension and loue of vertue".³ The writer, N.W., of the letter to Daniel at the beginning of his translation of Iovio sums up these attitudes when he calls an impresa "that perfect Symbolum: for antiquitie to bee reuerenced: for worthinesse admired: for pleasure embraced".⁴

All writers on impresse agree that they should be worn on shields, banners or helmets, at tournaments, or in battle, to signify a military or amorous intention. They also lay down that the motto must be brief, not more than two or three words or a stanza of verse, and the corpo contain not more than two or three forms. The corpo and motto must together achieve

¹Camden, op.cit., p.366.

²Estienne, op.cit., pp.13-14.

³The Heroicall Devises of M. Claudivs Paradin, trans. PS., London 1591, "To the most worthie knight Theodot of Marze," ... ¶ 6.verso.

⁴The Worthy Tract, op.cit. *vii.recto.

a nice balance between clarity and obscurity so that they are not too easy to interpret. This rule is connected with the chivalric idea of noble birth; only noblemen were allowed to joust at tournaments and carry imprese, and thus only noblemen should be able to understand their significance which was to be hidden from the common people. Ruscelli says that the motto should never be in the vernacular, but Iovio takes the opposite view. Estienne comments that he thinks that "the Mottoes of Devises which are for continuance, ought to speak in a strange language", but that "the amorous ones and such as are for Tournaments, Maskes and Comedies, [can be] in a vulgar, or at least a knowne tongue, since they are but for a short time, and are exposed to the view of the unlearned".¹

This may well be the reason that, although in the imprese Sidney wore himself he used Latin, he only uses it once in Arcadia. In the Iberian yearly jousts a knight comes in

like a wild man; but such a wildnes , as shewed his eye-sight had tamed him, ... His Impresa was, a mill-horse still bound to goe in one circle; with this word, Data Fata sequutus. (1590.2.p286.)

The interpretation of this presumably is that his mistress forces him to concentrate all his energies and gifts on her.

It is interesting that the rustic Dametas, elevated to a position of nobility he cannot sustain, and forced into a duel which mocks the whole tradition of honorable single combat, uses a device which breaks all the rules for good impresa making. The contemporary Reader must have been alert to this as another indication of the chaos ensuing on Basilius's

¹Estienne, op.cit., p.27.

disruption of the social order. It has already been noted that in terms of the full significance of the book Dametas's device of a plough with the oxen loosed from it shows not only that he has left his pastoral pursuits, but that in doing so he has become useless. The actual form of the device is drastically overcrowded according to contemporary standards.

Then gave he order to a painter for his device; which was, a plowe with the oxen lewsed from it, a sword with a great many armes and legges cut of; and lastly a great armie of pen and inke-hornes, and bookes. (1590.3.p430.)

Far from keeping his device a secret he did not

sticke to tell the secreete of his intent, which was, that he had lefte of the plowe, to doo such bloody deedes with his swoorde, as many inkehornes and bookes should be employed about the historifying of them. (1590.3.p430.)

At first he set no word to it at all because he said that it was immediately obvious, and to add one would be "like the painter, that sayeth in his picture, Here is the dog, and here is the Hare". It was not recommended that an impresa should easily be interpreted. When he does finally add a motto it bears only a slight relation to the corpo, and is included chiefly as a sop to his shrewish wife. It reads, "Miso mine own pigsnie, thou shalt heare news o' Damaetas". (1590.3.p430.) One of the important rules of imprese making is that the motto should combine with the corpo so that each elucidates the other in interpreting the bearer's message. Dametas's is a glorious hotch-potch which reveals only one thing, his own inordinate pride.

Most of the imprese used in Arcadia are self-explanatory. When Phalantus jousts with Amphialus he does so for the sake of chivalric honour

not out of personal animosity; therefore he wears a device of

A greyhound, which overrunning his fellow, and taking the hare, yet hurts it not when it takes it. The word was, The glorie, not the pray. (1590.3.pp.415-16)

It is not easy to know whether Sidney made these imprese himself or derived them from devices in contemporary use. The task of tracing possible sources is not made any easier by the destruction of both collections of imprese shields by fire. Apart from Coulman's identification of Philisides's impresa with one of Sidney's own, there is only one impresa in Arcadia which directly corresponds to any of those described by Fraunce, Ruscelli, Paradin, Iovio and Daniel, and this one may well be a coincidence. At the end of his translation of Iovio's tract, Daniel lists a few other devices which he has collected on his own account. He refers to an Italian prelate, Hermet Stampo, who

being created Marquise of Soncino, and having married a wife, leaving his Ecclesiasticall habite: represented this devise: two Palme trees, the male and female, which neuer bring foorth fruite, vnles they are one planted by the other, adioyning thereunto this mot: Mutua foecunditas. (1)

When that perfect lover, Argarlus, is parted from Parthenia to fight against Amphialus, he wears Parthenia's sleeve on his right arm and in his shield, "(as his owne device) he had two Palme trees, neere one another, with a worde signifying, In that sort flourishing". (1590.3.p423.)

Since the ability to devise imprese was thought very highly of, (Iovio said a perfect Impresa "is a thing very difficult, and proceedeth of a sharp wit and rich inuention, nourished by the worthy writings of auncient men"²) it is probable that Sidney, the accomplished courtier,

¹S. Daniel, The Worthy Tract, op.cit., H.ij.verso.

²Ibid., B.iii.verso.

soldier and statesman devised them himself,¹ certainly he was interested in the subject. Besides his reference to Ruscelli, and Coulman's linking of Philisides's device with one of his own, there is other evidence that Sidney both read about imprese and used them himself.

They were taken seriously by the circle in which he moved. Samuel Daniel who translated the tract of Iouius, was tutor to his nephews. Abraham Fraunce also wrote on the subject² and was closely connected with Sidney who paid for his education at St. John's College Cambridge.³ There is in the Bodleian library, a manuscript⁴ in Fraunce's own hand which contains, besides a treatise on logic, forty imprese with explanatory verses addressed to Sidney. Many of these imprese are also to be found in Iouio's tract. From the evidence of the design on the cover, which depicts a scene from Virgil, when Achaemenides, escaped from Polyphemus, entreats to be taken on board ship by Aeneas, Professor Moore-Smith conjectures that Fraunce gave the manuscript to Sidney as a farewell gift before his departure abroad in either 1582 or 1584.⁵

Miss E.M. Denkinger has also drawn attention to two imprese used by Sidney. The first is shown in the portrait of him in the National Portrait Gallery. Miss Denkinger explains that it probably contains a combination of elements drawn from a French jeton made for Antoine de Navarre and a device used by Pietro de Medici. She says that Sidney probably devised it himself

¹Brie claims that Sidney was thought of as the most prominent Impresa artist of his time in this country. He says that he did much to popularise the art and was the first, with the exception of Whetstone, to use it in literature. See 'Shakespeare und die Impresa-Kunst seiner Zeit', Jahrbuch der deutschen Shakespeare-Gesellschaft, 50. Jahrg., 1914, pp.9-30. Also Sidney's Arcadia, p.298 ff.

²A. Fraunce, Insignium Armorum Emblematum Heiroglyphicum et Symbolorum, 1588

³See A. Fraunce, Victoria: a Latin Comedy, ed. G.C. Moore-Smith, Louvain, 1906, pp. xviii-xix and xxxiv.

⁴MS. Rawl. D.345.1.

⁵See A. Fraunce, Victoria, op.cit. p. xxvii.

to refer to his determination to take part in some voyages and experiments in colonisation.¹

The second is connected with a motto, 'sic vos non vobis', used with various corpi in the sixteenth century and mentioned by Ruscelli and Paradin among others. Sidney used it in the original version of Arcadia when Dorus gives Mopsa, through Pamela, a jewel depicting Pollux made a god for his brother Castor's virtue, with the motto, Sic vos non vobis. (O.V. p.103.) He omitted it in the revised version, however. Miss Denkinger accounts for this by Sidney's use of it in the meanwhile in the tilt of the Four Foster Children of Desire. On that occasion Sidney, as one of the four 'children' laying claim to the Fortress of Perfect Beauty, (Queen Elizabeth) wore the words 'Sic Nos Non Nobis' to convey to the watching French ambassadors the Queen's real intentions over the proposed French marriage. Because of this use of the impresa in the service of the Queen, Miss Denkinger believes that Sidney dropped it from his revised version.²

Camden also mentions some imprese used by Sidney. He says that

Sir Philip Sidney, to note that he persisted always one, depainted out the Caspian Sea surrounded with his shores, which neither ebbeth nor floweth, and over it "Sine refluxu". (3)

Later he reports that

Philip Sidney, who was a long time Heir apparent to the Earl of Leicester, after the said Earl had a Son born to him, used at the next Tilt-day following "Speravi" dashed through, to show his hope therein was dashed. (4)

¹'The Impresa Portrait of Sir Philip Sidney in the National Portrait Gallery', PMLA, 47, 1932, pp.17-45.

²Some Renaissance References to Sic Vos Non Vobis', PQ, x, 1931, pp. 151-162.

³Camden, op.cit., p.374.

⁴Ibid., p.384.

Another indication of Sidney's interest and familiarity with imprese is Aubrey's reference to a collection of impresa shields "of pastboard painted with their devices and emblems, which was very pretty and ingenious" at Wilton.¹

Many of the figures used in the imprese in Arcadia belong to a common tradition. The palm tree, and greyhound, sun, and stars are familiar in descriptions of imprese. Estienne says that the proper places to go for inspiration in making imprese are the works of authors

who have written of the nature and propriety of Animals, Plants, Mineralls, precious stones, of the parts of heaven and earth, of the Liberall Sciences, Mechanicall Arts and other subjects as well naturall as artificiall. (2)

These peculiarities of natural phenomena are, in fact, the sources from which Sidney drew inspiration. Musidorus gave Pamela a jewel to give Mopsa in the shape of a crab

which, because it lookes one way and goes another, I thought it did fitly patterne out my looking to Mopsa, but bending to Pamela: The word about it was, By force, not choice. (1590.2.pp.164-165.)

As the knight forsaken by Pamela, his impresa was,

A Catoblepta which so long lies dead, as the Moone (whereto it hath so naturall a sympathie) wants her light. The worde signified that The Moone wanted not the light, but the poore beast wanted the Moones light. (1590.3.p455.)

Nature was considered a hieroglyph of Divine wisdom but it can also be thus used to express human intentions. Ruscelli said that Nature sowed Imprese in the human mind.³

¹Quoted by E.K. Chambers, Elizabethan Stage, I, Oxford, 1923, p.143, n.1.

²Estienne, op.cit., p.61.

³Ieronimo Ruscelli, Le Imprese Illustri con Expositione, Et Discorsi, Venice 1566, p.7 (A2 verso)

Thus the inclusion of imprese in *Arcadia* reflects a contemporary practice which was considered a skilled art. A contemporary reader must have derived intellectual pleasure from recognising the skill with which these imprese were devised and the decorum which governed their attribution to the various knights, even the decorous lack of decorum with which Dametas devised and wore his impresa. They do not, of course, contribute directly to the analysis of virtue which is at the centre of *Arcadia* but neither are they merely decadent elaboration.

Their full significance may be lost on the modern reader for it is possible that to a contemporary they would recall actual imprese composed in circumstances which are now lost sight of. This is the point Miss Denkinger makes when she says that,

In our inability to match circumstances and impresa lies the secret of our dismissing these devices as learned "fripperies of the tilt-yard."

She shows just how seriously imprese and emblems could be taken by mentioning those connected with Mary Queen of Scots, which were suspected of treasonable interpretations.¹

Another example of this serious use to which emblems were put is Camden's reference to two imprinted by the United Provinces when there was a difference between them and England, to try and restore good relations between the two countries. One had

two Oxen drawing the plough, the one marked with a Rose for England, the other with a Lion on the shoulder for Holland, and written thereby, "Trahite aequo jugo". (2)

¹E.M. Denkinger, *PMLA*, 47, 1932, p.34, n.82.

²Camden, *op.cit.*, p.384.

It may finally be concluded that imprese are part of the symbolic trappings of the knight who had, in his original medieval capacity, become himself a symbolic figure by the sixteenth century. The Elizabethans revived chivalric pageantry and splendour as an outward sign of the political and religious strength they sought and maintained for England; and the medieval knight of chivalry, though no longer relevant as a social figure, still stood for a valid code of personal honour. For the Elizabethans the stories which exhibit this honour in action take on the same sort of symbolic validity which they intended in their pageants and tournaments.

At the same time the humanists had converted the ideal of feudal knighthood which no longer had any social foundation, into an ideal of the knight as an educated statesmanlike courtier, who was a very relevant figure indeed in the social milieu of the sixteenth century. Sidney himself was one of the finest examples of such a man.

All these aspects of knighthood, feudal, decorative and humanist, join in the phenomenon of Elizabethan chivalry; it was thus half ethically inspired symbolism drawn from the social forms of another era, and half practical idealism derived from the adaptation of those forms to meet new needs. It is this chivalry which both governs the form of Arcadia, and at the same time contributes to its central theme. It is a chivalry which Ferguson has rightly called "romantic [and] humanistically oriented".¹

¹Ferguson, op.cit., p.94.

CHAPTER III

THE LOVE STORIES IN ARCADIA AS A STUDY IN PRIVATE VIRTUE

In the first eclogue in Arcadia the shepherds, holding each other's hands, dance to the music of their own voices and answer each other in couplets.

- [A] "We love, and have our loves rewarded.
 [B] We love, and are no whit regarded.
 [A] We finde most sweete affection's snare,
 [B] That sweete, but sower despairefull care.
 [A] Who can despaire, whom hope doth beare?
 [B] And who can hope, who feeles despaire?
 [AB] As without breath, no pipe doth move,
 No musike kindly without love". (p.14)¹

This light hearted singing match brings into clear relief the emotional hazards and paradoxes of love which are explored in greater detail in the narrative episodes of Arcadia where their moral as well as emotional implications are stressed. This chapter argues that the love stories in Arcadia are concerned with the private aspect of that virtue which unifies all the elements in the book. They raise the problem of how an individual can attain in himself a scheme of values necessary for moral health and in accordance with a divine order.

J.F. Danby has already shown that Sidney moralised his material in Arcadia. He believes that in the book there are two spheres in which

¹1590.1.p126.

virtue is exercised; the external and the internal. The external is

the sphere of the heroic; the internal the sphere of what Milton called the amatorious. In the one are required the active virtues of courage, mental fortitude, command over men and events; in the other the passive and maybe unrewarded virtues - singleness, self-devotion, command over one's will and possible self-division. (1)

Danby believes that Sidney saw the universe as full of possibilities of a virtue which receives its greatest test in adversity. The external aspect of virtue fights this adversity, the internal and private aspect has to achieve a patience which is religious. "It leans on and demands the transcendent. It is the point at which the human discovers the divine."² The two aspects are of course complementary.

Sidney himself does make an explicit distinction between public and private virtue. When the Queen Gynecia is brought to trial, Euarchus says that she has offended "both in private and public respects"; (1593.5.pl75) publicly because she has killed the king, and privately because she has thus also broken the laws of marriage and killed her husband.

The inseparable relation in which public and private aspects of virtue are seen at this trial is central to Sidney's purpose. For only when an individual has achieved virtue at a personal level can he also exercise it at a public level and play a full part in bringing about a rightly ordered state. Thus inversely Basilius's lack of personal integrity results in social chaos.

As Danby points out it is the love episodes, or "what Milton called the amatorious" sphere which focus this private aspect of virtue. Many of

¹J.F. Danby, op.cit., p.51.

²Ibid., p.70.

these belong to the New Arcadia only. W.R. Davis, who develops Danby's ideas, has examined the significance of these episodes and their structural relation to the main plot.¹ It will be helpful to summarise his argument.

In the first book of the New Arcadia the stories of Argarlus and Parthenia, Amphialus and Queen Helen, and Phalantus's journey in defence of Artesia's beauty, were added to the original version. These form a prelude to the Princes' own passion by illustrating the psychological confusion into which love throws an individual. They also define the nature of the Arcadian retreat the Princes enter. Added to the second book are nine moral tragedies whose thematic centre is the tale of Plangus and Erona. These give full expression to the idea of public disorder caused by passion's overmastering reason at a private level, which underlies the main plot. This tale of Plangus and Erona is also the dividing line between two sets of tales into which these tragedies are divided. One set, told by Pyrocles, is concerned with the inner workings of passion in a character; the other, told by Musidorus, is concerned with civil strife. Thus Book two explores further the psychological confusion described in Book one in terms of self-division resulting from the war between reason and passion. Book three presents two possible conclusions to that war. If passion remains uncontrolled self-division will grow and end in tragedy. If reason grows stronger and subordinates passion, the self will emerge victorious and whole. Davis believes that the Christian patience which Danby points out that the Princesses practise in prison is "the theological equivalent of the moral imperative that Reason ... govern Passion".²

¹W.R. Davis, "Thematic Unity in the New Arcadia", SP, 57, 1960, pp.123-143.

²Ibid., p.142.

He quotes Coverdale,

The patience therefore of Christians standeth not in this, that they feel no passion, or be not fearful, heavy, or sorry; but in this, that no cross be so great, as to be able to drive them away from Christ. (1)

Davis concludes that the purpose of the love episodes is to show that passion must stand in relation to reason as subject to king.

Although this is partially true it oversimplifies what actually happens in these episodes and it is worth while looking at them in greater detail. It is true that the theme which unifies the ramifications of the love episodes in Arcadia is that of a conflict between reason and passion which ultimately has to be resolved. It does not, however, simply illustrate a moral maxim that reason must govern passion. Radical questions are asked as to what kind of passion must stand in what kind of relation to what kind of reason if moral health is to be achieved. To return to Davis's analogy, the natures of subject and king are examined and the relation in which they must stand to each other in an ideal state. Sidney also examines these questions literally when he deals with the subject of public government. If the final conclusion is that it is a moral imperative that reason govern passion, it is also apparent that this is a condition which it is far from easy to achieve.

In order to understand the structural subtlety and full relevance of the love episodes in Arcadia it is necessary to see them in relation to some of the stock arguments concerning the nature of love and the correct behaviour of lovers, in two literary traditions on which Sidney drew. One,

¹Coverdale, Fruitful Lessons ... in Works (ed. for the Parker Society, Cambridge, 1884), p.261, quoted Davis, op.cit., p.141.

the courtly love literature of the middle ages, the other, the Neoplatonic 'trattore' of the Italian renaissance.

The literature of courtly love has its roots in the love songs of the Troubadours in the eleventh century, which provided the basis of a set of conventions of behaviour in love. How far these literary conventions reflected social behaviour is uncertain. Ideally courtly love existed only outside marriage. C.S. Lewis points out that this is partly due to the fact that in feudal society marriages were made like business arrangements and did not always coincide with romantic love.¹ It is also partly due to the medieval church doctrine that passionate love is wrong even within marriage. C.S. Lewis has summarised the four distinguishing characteristics of courtly love as "Humility, Courtesy, Adultery, and the Religion of Love".² The lover worships his lady who is another man's wife and above him in social standing, and indulges for her an almost despairing passion. Often he has previously scorned ~~at~~ love and repents bitterly of his former attitude when he submits to this passion. C.S. Lewis points out that although "The idea of Love as an avenging god, coming to trouble the peace of those who have hitherto scorned his power, belongs also to the Latin tradition", it takes on a more serious significance in the love literature of the middle ages for, "The repentance of those who had been fancy free, and their self-surrender to a new deity, are touched with a quasi-religious emotion."³

The psychology of courtly love is expressed allegorically in the

¹See C.S. Lewis, The Allegory of Love, New York, 1958, pp.13-14. (Galaxy Book No. 17.)

²Ibid., p.2.

³Ibid., p.31.

French Roman de La Rose which is one of the great seminal poems of medieval literature. Chaucer translated it from the original by Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meun.¹ Guillaume's section is the simplest. In it the action takes place within the garden of the Rose, which flower symbolises the lady's love. Eternal spring flourishes there. Other considerations of time and eternity are banished since only those who are young and privileged can enter this garden and old age and poverty are excluded for ever outside its walls. Thus the framework within which the action takes place is totally unrealistic. The love story itself is worked out by allegorical characters who represent different aspects of the lover and the lady. It represents the psychological warfare which takes place before the lover can gain the lady's love. From the point of view of the Arcadian love stories it is interesting that "Resoun", one of the characters attached to the hero, is described as God's agent working in human nature.

For Nature hadde nevere such a gras,
 To forge a werk of such compas.
 For certeyn, but if the letter ly,
 God hymself, that is so high,
 Made hir aftir his ymage,
 And yaff hir sith sich avauntage
 That she hath myght and seignorie
 To kepe men from all folye;
 Those wole trowe hir lore,
 Ne may offenden nevermore. (2)

The function of "Resoun" is to oppose the lover's undertaking to win the lady in the garden of courtly love. The lover, however, ignores Resoun's objections because although he knows that they are, in a way, right, they conflict with his desires. Thus the story is of "a lover whose deepest

¹Chaucer, 'The Romaunt of the Rose', Works, op.cit., pp.564-637.

²Ibid., ll. 3207-3216.

convictions remained opposed to his love and who knew that he acted neither well nor wisely".¹ C.S. Lewis believes that had Guillaume finished the poem he would have ended with a palinode rejecting earthly in favour of heavenly love.² In the continuation by Jean de Meun, Resoun still opposes the lover but the poem becomes vastly more complex and need not be mentioned here.

In Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde, another poem in celebration of courtly love, the considerations of time and eternity are not excluded. The love story unfolds in a realistic setting and the courtly conventions which govern the lovers' actions are revealed as painfully insufficient to meet their needs. Troilus, the scorner of love who had cried of other lovers

O veray fooles, nyce and blynde be ye!
Ther nys nat oon kan war by other be, (3)

becomes the helpless captive of passion and as blind as the rest. Criseyde is all too mortal a creature to succeed in living up to the amount of loving worship lavished on her. Forced by circumstances to leave Troilus, she is unfaithful to him with Diomedes almost in spite of herself, and Troilus, the courtly lover par excellence, is overwhelmed by a suffering for which there was no remedy. However, the final perspective given to Troilus's tragedy is supernatural. From the seventh sphere, to which he has been translated after death, earthly passion assumes a relative insignificance, and the poem closes with a palinode in which Troilus exhorts young lovers to turn away from the things of the world to Christ.⁴ Troilus and Criseyde is a poem

¹C.S. Lewis, The Allegory of Love, p.122.

²Idem.

³Chaucer, Troilus and Criseyde, I, ll.202-203.

⁴Ibid., V, ll. 1835 ff.

in praise of love. The beauty of the passion which Troilus and Criseyde shared is celebrated with great tenderness, yet this same passion is also Troilus's tragedy, and, in a final perspective is seen to be in opposition to the demands of Heavenly love. This reflects the general opposition of the medieval church to the doctrines of courtly love. For sacred and profane love seem to be almost mutually exclusive.

The Neoplatonists of the Italian Renaissance attempted to formulate a philosophy within which this opposition of sacred and profane love could be resolved in a synthesis. They were inspired by Plato's ideas in the Symposium and Phaedrus of love as the force which brings order out of chaos and inspires a longing in man to unite himself with immortal beauty. Although the doctrines of the Neoplatonists are complex and vary between the different exponents, it is possible to indicate some aspects of their debates as to the right relation between reason and sense in virtuous love, which form part of the background against which Arcadia as a love story should be examined.

Sidney was familiar with Neoplatonic ideas, he draws on them in Astrophil and Stella as well as Arcadia. Since he could read Italian it is likely that he knew them at first hand. Even if this was not the case, however, many of the Neoplatonist ideas on the nature of love were expressed by Peter Bembo in Castiglione's Book of the Courtier which was translated into English by Sir Thomas Hoby in 1561 and extremely popular in England. Roger Ascham recommends its study in The Scholemaster,

To ioyne learnyng with cumlie exercises, Conte Baldesar Castiglione in his booke *Cortegiano*, doth trimlie teache: which booke, aduisedlie read, and diligentlie folowed, but one yeare at home in England, would do a yong ientleman more good, I wise, then three yeares trauel abrode spent in Italie. (1)

It was even said that Sidney "carried it ever in his pocket when he went abroad".²

Bembo was much influenced by Ficino who was the central figure in the Platonic Academy founded in Florence in the second half of the fifteenth century under the patronage of Cosimo di Medici. Ficino held the platonic belief that love was the great creator and preserver of the universe. It brought order out of chaos at the beginning of time, and rules the universe by emanating from God.

This divine quality of beauty stirs desire for itself in all things: and that is love. The world that was originally drawn out of God is thus drawn back to God; there is a continual attraction between them - from God to the world and from the world to God - moving as it were in a circle. (3)

Obviously human love has a key place in such a system. To account for it Ficino distinguishes two kinds of love. One is a heavenly love, Venus Urania, which moves the mind "to a reverential love when the beauty of a human body is presented to the eyes";⁴ the other is the generative power of the world, Venus Volgare, which at the same time is "stimulated to create a similar form".⁵ ^{Ficino insists that "each love is *that* of the divine} ~~Love is corrupted and made evil only when the second Venus becomes~~ ^{image, and each is pure".}

¹ Roger Ascham, *The Scholemaster*, ed. J.E.B. Mayor, Cambridge, 1884, p.119.

² See W.H. Woodward, *Studies in Education during the Age of the Renaissance*, Cambridge, 1906, p.295.

³ Marsilio Ficino, 'Sopra l'Amore o Vero Convito di Platone, Firenze, 1594, II,ii, trans. and quoted by J.H. Vyvyan, *Shakespeare and Platonic Beauty*, London, 1961, p.39.

⁴ *Ibid.*, II, vii, trans. and quoted by J. Vyvyan, *op.cit.*, p.48.

⁵ *Idem.*

is pure".¹ Love is corrupted and made evil only when the second Venus becomes obsessive and the "beauty of the body is judged superior to that of the soul".²

All the Neoplatonists make this distinction between two kinds of love personified in the two Venuses, placing the highest value on Venus Urania. This is because the purely intellectual love which she was thought to inspire is nearer to their ideal of a spiritual union with divine beauty. Human love was thought of as the first step on a ladder which led to this union.³ Ficino says that "The object of love is beyond the body, and the beauty of things lies in their resemblance to a spiritual pattern".⁴

In The Courtier Bembo is asked to define a love which he claims that the older courtier may feel without the pain and bitterness which accompanies the passionate love of the young man. This turns out to be free from physical passion which Bembo not only thinks unseemly in an older courtier, but a lower form of love altogether. He bases his defence on an analysis of the composition of human nature. He says

in our soule there be three manner waies to know, namely, by sense, reason, and understanding: of sense there ariseth appetite or longing, which is common to us with brute beastes: of reason ariseth election or choice, which is proper to man: of understanding, by the which man may be partner with Angels, ariseth will.

Even as therefore the sense knoweth not but sensible matters, and that which \bar{m} felt, so the appetite or coveting onely deserveth the same: and even as the understanding is bent but to behold things that may bee understood, so is that will onely fedde with spirituall goods.

¹Idem.

²Idem.

³For a more detailed account of this idea of the ascent of love, see John Vyvyan, op.cit., p.52ff and Appendix III, pp.220-221. Also, Pietro Bembo, Gli Asolani, trans. R.B. Gottfreid, Indiana University Publications, Humanities Series, 31, Bloomington, 1954, pp. 185-94.

⁴Ficino, op.cit., V, iii, trans. and quoted by Vyvyan, op.cit., p.49.

Man of nature indowed with reason, placed (as it were) in the middle between these two extremities, may through his choice inclining to sense, or reaching to understanding, come nigh to the coveting sometime of the one, sometime of the other part.

In these sortes therefore may beautie be coveted ... (1)

He believes that sensual passion holds reason back from ascending to an understanding of spiritual things, and that, therefore, reason alone must direct the love of the older courtier. Count Lewis asks how this can be since "the opinion of many is, that it is unpossible for love to stand with reason".² Bembo, arguing from his definition of love as "a certaine coveting to enjoy beautie",³ replies that,

Too unluckie were the nature of man, if our soule (in the which this so fervent coveting may lightly arise) should bee driven to nourish it with that onely, which is common to her with beasts, and could not turne it to the other noble parte, which is proper to her. ... I say therefore, that since the nature of man in youthfull age is so much enclined to sense, it may be graunted the Courtier, while hee is yong, to love sensually. But in case afterwarde also in his ripe yeares, he chauce to be set on Fire with this coveting of love, hee ought to bee good and circumspect and heedfull, that he beguile not himselfe, to bee lead willfully into the wretchednesse, that in yong men deserveth more to bee pittied than blamed: and contrariwise in old men, more to be blamed than pittied. (4)

The older courtier's passionless love moreover is a "stayre (as it were) to climbe up to another farre higher than it"⁵ in which the particular beauty of one woman is lost sight of in view of "an universall, that decketh out all bodies".⁶ Thus Bembo sets a high value on this passionless love which is felt by the older courtier.

¹Castiglione, The Book of the Courtier (tr ns. Hoby 1561), London, Everyman, 1928, pp. 303-304.

²Ibid., p.312.

³Ibid., p.303.

⁴Ibid., p.312.

⁵Ibid., p.317.

⁶Ibid., p.318.

Bembo's discourse in The Courtier is based on his earlier treatise on love, Gli Asolani. This has a charming formal setting at the court of the Queen of Cyprus at Asolo. While most of the courtiers are resting in the heat of the afternoon, three young men, Perottino, Gismondo and Lavinello, accompanied by three young ladies, retire to the garden and discuss love. On the first day Perottino abuses it beyond reason and on the second day Gismondo praises it without qualification. On the third day Lavinello answers them both before the whole court. Although he defends love as a force which is potentially good or evil according as human desires are directed, he finally endorses that ideal of passionless love which Bembo defines in The Courtier. He concludes by recalling his discussion with a hermit who had turned his thoughts from earthly beauty to a "desire of true beauty, which is not of that human and mortal kind which fades, but is immortal and divine".¹ Referring to the human love which Lavinello and his friends have been discussing, the hermit says to him,

Know, in fine, that your love is not virtuous. Granted that it is not evil like those which are mingled with bestial desires; still it falls short of virtue because it does not draw you toward an immortal object but holds you midway between the extremes of desire where it is not safe to remain, for on a slope it is easier to slide into the depths than to clamber to the summit. And is not one who trusts to the pleasures of some sense, although he does not intend to fall into evil ways, likely, at least at times, to be ensnared? for sense is full of deceits.... (2)

There is a curious mixture of realism and idealism in Bembo's work which go ill together. He seems to admit the validity of a passionate physical love with one breath, only to take away the point of this admission

¹Bembo, Gli Asolani, op.citp182.

²Ibid., p.187.

with the next by advocating an impersonal ecstasy as the highest form of human love.

It is interesting that in The Courtier his view does not pass unchallenged. The Lady Emilia Pie says with a sly irony characteristic of her, "Take heede (maister Peter) that these thoughts make not your soule also to forsake the bodie."¹ Maister Morello undermines Bembo's dismissal of physical love in favour of the "wayes that be a passage to the soule, that is to say, the sight and the hearing", through which the beloved sends "the lookes of her eyes, the image of her countenance, and the voice of her wordes, that pearce into the lovers hart, and give a witnessse of her love". Morello says bitterly that, "Lookes and wordes may be, and oftentimes are false witnesses. Therefore who so hath not a better pledge of love (in my judgement) he is in an ill assurance".²

It is illuminating to read the love stories in Arcadia against this background composed of the ideals and conventions of courtly love with their obvious limitations on the one hand, and the Neoplatonic theories as to the nature of virtuous love on the other; bearing in mind that not all these theories passed unchallenged.

At the centre of the love stories in Arcadia is a formal debate about love in which stock arguments against passionate love are dismissed with a gentle and moving irony. Just as Sidney treated idealised pastoral

¹Castiglione, op.cit., p.322.

²Ibid., p.314.

in a realistic setting to show that this ideal could only be achieved under certain conditions, so he attempts to define an ideal of virtuous love not from any theoretical standpoint but from the inescapable reality of passionate love.

Pyrocles falls in love with Philoclea and withdraws into a solitary place to disguise himself as a woman in order to gain access to her. As a rule it was considered utterly disgraceful for a man to dress himself as a woman, and the law of transvestism forbade it. In Book V of the Faerie Queene when Artegall, the knight of Justice, is taken prisoner by Radegund, he is forced to dress as an Amazon and do a woman's work as a sign of his shame. She

... made him to be dight
 In womans weedes, that is to manhood shame,¹
 . . .
 Who had him seene, imagine mote thereby,
 That whylome hath of Hercules bene told,
 How for Iolas sake he did apply
 His mightie hands, the distaffe vile to hold.²

This allusion, however, is very differently applied in the context of Pyrocles's situation in Arcadia. To show just how unashamed of his action he is, Pyrocles pins his woman's robe with a device of "A Hercules made in little fourme, but a distaffe set within his hand as he once was by Omphales commaundement with a worde in Greeke, but thus to be interpreted, Never more valiant". (1590.1.pp75-76.) Musidorus, however, is horrified to discover that his friend has fallen in love. He takes his disguise as only one more proof that love "utterly subverts the course of nature, in making reason give place to

¹F.Q., V.V.20.

²F.Q., V.V.24.

sense, and man to woman". (1590.1.p78.) Like 'Resoun' rebuking the lover in the Romaunt of the Rose, he cries out,

Remember (for I know you know it) that if we wil be men, the reasonable parte of our soule, is to have absolute commaundement; against which if any sensuall weaknes arise, we are to yeelde all our sounde forces to the overthrowing of so unnaturall a rebellion (1590.1.p77.)

He goes on to paint a dismal picture of love which is closely akin to Spenser's description of the Mask of Cupid in Book Three of the Faerie Queene. Britomart in the house of Busirane sees

Vnquiet Care, and fond Vnthriftihead,
Lewd Losse of Time, and Sorrow seeming dead,
Inconstant Chaunge, and false Disloyaltie,
Consuming Riotise, and guilty Dread
Of heauenly vengeance, faint Infirmitie,
Vile Pouertie, and lastly Death with infamie (1)

C.S. Lewis² points out that this passage embodies all the sorrows and pains of courtly love, and this is the love which Musidorus condemns to Pyrocles. He calls it "this bastarde Love (for in deede the name of Love is most unworthylie applied to so hatefull a humour)", and continues that

as it is engendered betwixt lust and illenes; as the matter it workes upon is nothing, but a certaine base weakenes, which some gentle fooles call a gentle hart; as his adjoynd companions be vnquietnes, longings, fond comforts, faint discomforts, hopes, ielousies, ungrounded rages, causelesse yeeldings; so is the hiest ende it aspires unto, a litle pleasure with much paine before, and great repentaunce after (1590.1.p78)

It is worth noting that it was 'Ydlenesse' who let the lover of the Romaunt of the Rose into the garden of love. Resoun warns him that "Hir aqueyntaunce is perilous" because she has betrayed him to the god of love and a course of action in which

The peyne is hard, out of mesure;
The joye may eke no while endure (3)

¹F.Q., III, XII 25.

²C.S. Lewis, The Allegory of Love, p.341.

³Chaucer, The Romaunt of the Rose, ll. 3229 and 3279-80.

It thus seems clear that here Musidorus takes on in Arcadia the function which Resoun has in the Romaunt of the Rose. Both oppose passionate love, and Musidorus goes on to oppose it to heavenly love,

for as the love of heaven makes one heavenly, the love of vertue, vertuous; so doth the love of the world make one become worldly, and this effeminate love of a woman, doth so womanish a man, that (if he yeeld to it) it will not onely make him an Amazon; but a launder, a distaff-spinner; or what so ever other vile occupation their idle heads can imagin, and their weake hands performe (1590.1.p78)

The lover in the Romaunt says that he hates 'Resoun', and is anyhow so helplessly enslaved by the god of love that he can do nothing to help himself, thus causing 'Resoun' to take her departure.¹ Although Pyrocles later does admit to a similar helplessness, he does not dismiss reason but counters Musidorus's attack with rational arguments. He remarks grimly that he has not yet come to that degree of wisdom, to think light of the sexe, of whom I have my life". He points out that women are "framed of nature with the same parts of the minde for the exercise of vertue, as we are". (1590.1.p79) Answering Musidorus with his own kind of argument Pyrocles continues "if we love vertue, in whom shall we love it but in a vertuous creature?" (1590.1.p80)

This attitude of respect towards women is also noticeable in The Courtier. Book three is devoted to a description of "A gentlewoman of the Palace so fashioned in all perfections, as these Lordes have fashioned the perfect Courtier".² The Lord Julian says that the courtier ought always to reverence women, "The vertue and consequently the worthinesse of whom I deeme not a jotte inferiour to mens".³ In Gli Asolani Bembo defends women's

¹Ibid., ll.3305-3332.

²Castiglione, op.cit., p.183.

³Idem.

learning, remarking that whatever contemporary criticisms they may incur, "sooner or later the world will praise the women for it".¹ Sidney would have had to look no further than his own sister, Mary the Countess of Pembroke, for whom Arcadia was written, to find an example of such a learned lady of the court. Moreover this court was itself ruled over by a Queen famed for her scholarship and frequently represented as the Virgin Astrea in whom all the virtues culminated.²

However, Pyrocles does not only defend himself by arguing the value of loving a virtuous woman. On the question of the opposition of earthly and heavenly love raised by Musidorus, he remarks:

Even that heavenly love you speake of, is accompanied in some harts with hopes, griefs, longings, and dispaire. And in that heavenly love, since ther are two parts, the one the love it self, th' other the excellency of the thing loved; I, not able at the first leap to frame both in me, do now (like a diligent workman) make ready the chiefe instrument, and first part of that great worke, which is love it self (1590.1.pp.80-81)

In fact the love which Pyrocles defends in himself and which is ultimately vindicated in Arcadia is neither the courtly love which Musidorus condemns or Platonic idealism. Its nature as a "divine power, which makes the heart finde a reason in passion", (1590.1.p98) and which far from opposing, reflects, Divine love, only becomes clear as the love theme in Arcadia is fully worked out.

For the moment Musidorus will not abandon his antagonism to Pyrocles's passion. However, the limitations of his disapproving attitude are made plain in a short dialogue. "Alas, let your own braine dis-enchaunt you (said Musidorus). My hart is too farre possessed (said Pyrocles). But the head

¹Bembo, Gli Asolani, *op.cit.*, p.148

²See Francis Yates, 'Queen Elizabeth as Astrea', JWCI, X, 1947, pp.27-82.

gives you direction. And the hart gives me life; answered Pyrocles".

(1590.1.p81) Thus the rational attitude that Musidorus opposes to love is totally inadequate as an answer to passion. He may be a subtle philosopher but he is a bad psychologist for he calls Pyrocles's love unnatural. It will be remembered that Musidorus said,

Remember (for I know you know it) that if we wil be men, the reasonable parte of our soule, is to have absolute commaundement; against which if any sensuall weaknes arise, we are to yeelde all our sounde forces to the overthrowing of so unnaturall a rebellion (1590.1.p77)

This speech has frequently been taken as evidence that Sidney endorsed the view it expresses, but this is not so.¹ The outcome of the plot in Arcadia does not bear this out. Also Philanax, upbraiding Basilius for attempting to keep his daughters inaccessible to lovers, says emphatically that "the God, which is God of nature, doth never teach unnaturalnes". (1590.1.p25) Moreover it will be seen that Musidorus later recants. It is not, therefore, desirable that Musidorus's "disenchauting" reason should guide Pyrocles's life-giving heart. However, it does become clear from the standpoint that Pyrocles adopts next, that some relationship must be achieved between reason and passion in love.

Giving up any attempt to justify his passion, he falls back on a frank avowal,

Have you all the reason of the world, and with me remaine all the imperfections; yet such as I can no more lay from me, then the Crow can be perswaded by the Swanne to cast of all his black fethers. ... I am sicke, and sicke unto death; I am a prisoner, neither is any redresse, but by her to whom I am slave. (1590.1.p82)

¹See for example W.R. Davis, op.cit., p.137; also F. Brie, op.cit., p.146ff. He believes that Sidney saw passionate love in opposition to virtue.

From this point of view love is seen as an actual physiological condition, and as such it is quite useless to employ against it the Job's comforting tactics of Musidorus.

It has been shown that according to Elizabethan medical theory, love was a species of the passion desire, and all passions were considered as physical conditions. "Erotic love is 'a Motion of the blood ... through the hope of pleasure'. It may or may not be accompanied by corresponding admirations on the intellectual plane".¹ It was thought that the passion of love, entering through the eyes, passes to the veins and liver and finally "assailleth and setteth vpon reason, and all the other principall powers of the minde... and maketh them her vassals and slaues".² According to this view, passion does become a threat to moral as well as physical health. Medical theory held that there were two stages to this malady, the first sanguine, the second melancholy.³ The second stage results from unsatisfied love and Burton said that the best cure for it was to let the lovers "have their desire".⁴ Where this was not possible, however, other mental and physical remedies were offered.⁵

It is interesting that although it is clear from the story that Sidney does not place much faith in these, he mentions some of them in the first Eclogues when the Shepherd Geron tries to rouse Philisides from his love melancholy. He discredits love, saying,

¹L. Babb, The Elizabethan Malady, East Lansing, 1951, p.128. (Babb quotes from Jacques Ferrand, Erotomania or a Treatise...of Love, or Erotique Melancholy, trans. E. Chilmead, Oxford 1640, p.28.

²Andre Du Laurens, A Discourse of the Preservation of the Sight: of Melancholike Diseases; and of Old Age, trans. R.Surphlet (London, 1599; Shakespeare Association Facsimiles, 1938), pp.14-15. Quoted by L.Babb, op.cit., p.132.

³L. Babb, op.cit., p.134.

⁴Burton, The Anatomy of Melancholy, ed.A.R.Shilleto, London 1926-27,III, 263, quoted by L.Babb, op.cit., p.138.

⁵L. Babb, op.cit., p.138.

He water plowes, and soweth in the sand,
 And hopes the flickring winde with net to holde,
 Who hath his hopes laid up in woman's hand. (p.24)

He advises Philisides to cure his sadness by physical exercise.

In hunting fearefull beastes, do spend some dayes,
 Or catch the birds with pitfalls, or with lyme,

. . .
 Let special care upon thy flock be staid,
 Such active minde but seldome passion sees. (p.26)

Philisides, as is to be expected, takes not the slightest notice of this, he is too sunk in thoughts of his Mistress. It has been seen that Philisides represents Sidney himself. Thus his refusal to recognise any cure for his state is significant in the light of Astrophil and Stella. However, it must be emphasised that the similarity between Astrophil's and Philisides's situation is probably a purely literary cross reference. Neither need refer to actual circumstances in Sidney's life. Both characters are literary self-projections. Histor who has listened to the argument between Geron and Philisides comments, "Thus may you see, howe youthe estemeth aige". (p.26)

The eclogue that follows this one is intended as a pair to it (compare their openings, "Up, up Philisides" and "Downe, downe Melampus"). In it Geron is made to pass comment on the whole situation of the previous eclogue. He rebukes his two dogs, one old and blind, the other young, who are fighting over a scrap the younger has found:

And thowe Laelaps let not pride make thee brim
 Because thou hast thy fellow overgone,
 But thanke the cause, thou seest, when he is dim (p.26)

In saying this he puts his argument with Philisides in perspective, and,

unconsciously, passes judgement on himself. Mutual charity for each other's point of view is called for, but it is Philisides, the younger, who can see, and whose insistence on the validity of his passion is right.

Pyrocles, in the same position as Philisides, has defeated Musidorus's objections to love but he has admitted also that he is sick with passion and needs help if he is to recover his health. Musidorus, forced to admit that this will not be achieved by getting reason to repress love, unlike Geron, does not try to divert him by some other activity but promises to help him find some way in which he may attain his desire. He commands Pyrocles to love Philclea "with all the powers of your mind" and promises to do all he can to help him.

However, Musidorus has still not really abandoned his position as a scoffer at love and as such, by the rules of that code which he has implicitly adopted in arguing against Pyrocles, his retribution is imminent. Chaucer warned those who scorned the power of love,

Refuseth nat to Love for to ben bonde,
Syn, as hymselfen liste, he may yow bynde, (1)

and Musidorus himself now falls in love with the Princess Pamela. Pyrocles comes across him dressed as a shepherd and challenges him on this. The disguises of both Princes indicate outwardly the inner transformation brought about by love. This transformation Musidorus now acknowledges, for he answers,

Alas ... what shall I say, who am loth to say, and yet faine would
have said? I find indeed, that all is but lip-wisdome, which wants
experience. ... can any man resist his creation? certainly by love
we are made, and to love we are made. Beasts onely cannot discerne
beauty, and let them be in the role of Beasts that doo not honor it.
(1590.1.p.113.)

¹Chaucer, 'Troilus and Criseyde', I. 11.255-256.

Musidorus has now reversed his position; far from finding his love for Pamela an 'unnaturall' rebellion of the senses he says that he is fulfilling the end of his creation, "certainely by love we are made, and to love we are made". The mention of the beasts, moreover, has a definitive purpose. It has been mentioned earlier that Bembo makes a distinction between two kinds of love roused by earthly beauty: one passionate and bestial, the other virtuous and rational.¹ Musidorus also makes this kind of distinction in self defence, and to cover his sudden change of view. It must, however, be stressed that the end he has in view is not simply an intellectual appreciation of Pamela's beauty. Pyrocles underlines the completeness of his 'volte-face' by reproving him with mock gravity:

Why how now deere cousin... you that were last day so hie in Pulpit
against lovers, are you now become so meane an auditor? Remember
that love is a passion; and that a woorthie mans reason must ever
have the masterhood. I recant, I recant (cryed Musidorus,)

and he falls prostrate on the ground. (1590.1.pp.113-4). Thus both Princes reject the stock arguments against passionate love as failing to meet the needs of a psychological situation which is regarded as incident to all men and capable of cure, but not repression by reason.

In Astrophil and Stella Sidney works out the same theme. He invokes stock attitudes only to find them inadequate in the face of human experience.

It is most true, that eyes are form'd to serve
The inward light: and that the heavenly part
Ought to be king, from whose rules who do swerve,
Rebels to Nature, strive for their owne smart.
It is most true, what we call Cupid's dart,
An image is, which for our selves we carve;

¹See Castiglioni, op.cit., p.312.

And, fooles, adore in temple of our hart,
 Till that good God make Church and Churchman starve.
 True, that true Beautie Vertue is indeed,
 Whereof this Beautie can be but a shade,
 Which elements with mortall mixture breed:
 True, that on earth we are but pilgrims made,
 And should in soule up to our countrey move:
 True, and yet true that I must Stella love. (1)

This love is not content to rest in the disembodied delight which Bembo recommended either. Having paid Stella an elaborate compliment by describing her as the personification of that virtue which the Neoplatonists taught informed all beauty, he ends with a cry,

So while thy beautie draws the heart to love,
 As fast thy Vertue bends that love to good:
 'But ah,' Desire still cries, 'give me some food.' (2)

Sidney continually builds up a fine intellectual structure informed by familiar theories of love and virtue, or the opposition of reason against passion, to pay elaborate compliment to Stella, only to undermine it at the last moment as totally insufficient to his needs as a lover. If virtue possesses Stella's essential self,

That vertuous soule, sure heire of heav'nly blisse:

 Let Vertue have that Stella's selfe; yet thus,
 That Vertue but that body graunt to us. (3)

He reproaches that friend who says that Desire has plunged his "wel-form'd soule even in the mire / Of sinfull thoughts, which do in ruine end" and continues,

If that be sinne which doth the maners frame,
 Well staid with truth in word and faith of deed,

¹Sidney, 'Astrophil and Stella', 5, Poems, ed. W.Ringler, p.167.

²Ibid., 71, p.201.

³Ibid., 52, p.190.

Readie of wit and fearing nought but shame:
 If that be sinne which in fixt hearts doth breed
 A loathing of all loose unchastitie,
 Then Love is sinne, and let me sinfull be. (1)

The outcome of the sonnet sequence, as R.L. Montgomery has pointed out, is that Astrophil is "trapped by his own adoration".² He cannot win Stella's love or rid himself of a rational criticism of his excessive adoration. His final attitude of a conventional worshipping lover unable to hope for satisfaction is "an admission of its [the convention's] hold on a mind unable to recover its independence and order. The resolution of the sequence lies in the irresolution of Astrophel."³

At the end of Booke One Pyrocles and Musidorus find themselves in this same position. The eclogues project their feelings. Dorus finds that it is neither fortune's capriciousness nor any natural disposition to melancholy which makes him sad, but love, which proclaims:

None but I, workes by desire: by desire have I kindled in his
soule
 Infernall agonies unto a bewtye devine (p.30)

Yet fortune has also reserved "him a spite" by placing him in a predicament in which he cannot declare his love. Zelmane laments,

What can justice availe, to a man that tells not his owne case?
 You, though feares do abash, in you still possible hopes be:
 Nature against we do seeme to rebell, seeme fooles in a vaine sute.
 But so unheard, condemn'd, kept thence we do seeke to abide in,
 Selfe-lost and wandring, banished that place we doe come from,
 What meane is there, alas, we can hope our losse to recover? (p.32)

However, whereas in Astrophil and Stella, Astrophil, rejected by Stella, is

¹Ibid., 14, pp.171-172.

²R.L. Montgomery, Symmetry and Sense, Austin, Texas, 1961, p.117.

³Idem.

bound by a situation in which he is not free to act, in ^{the} Arcadia, Pyrocles and Musidorus are free to work out their own salvation. They are frustrated lovers of unattainable ladies only because Basilius has shut up his daughters from access to suitors. They are free to overcome the barriers which separate them from their loves. Zelmane sings,

If mine eyes can speake to doo hartly errande,
Or mine eyes' language she doo hap to judge of,
So that eyes' message be of her received,
Hope we do live yet (p.30) (1)

Reason may criticize the wretched turmoil into which the lover is thrown;

For from without came to mine eyes the blowe,
Whereto mine inward thoughts did faintly yeeld;
Both these conspird poore Reason's overthrowe;
False in my selfe, thus have I lost the field. (p.11) (2)

It is, however, powerless to oppose love on moral grounds. It is a differently oriented reason which eventually emerges as the director of passion.

The love story of Pyrocles and Musidorus, however, is not the only level at which the love theme works in Arcadia. R.L. Montgomery finds that, although the Princes eventually find release from their predicament in marriage, this "does not alter the vision of the laments" of frustrated despair which are assigned to them and others. He thinks, however, that these poems "arrest the movement of the novel" and lead "virtually an independent life" against the background of the book.³ They represent emotional stasis. This tends to give a misleading idea of how Arcadia works. It is not a novel in which all the elements are connected in a chronological sequence. They are,

¹1590.1.p143.

²1590.1.p76.

³R.L. Montgomery, op.cit., p.62.

however, thematically connected for the poems, eclogues and subsidiary episodes are grouped as illustrations of the themes of the main plot.

The focussing point of the love stories is Pyrocles's and Musidorus's adventures in love which unfold dynamically. They progress from the psychological confusion which they express in their laments, to finding a solution to their predicament. However, our understanding of the full complexity of the situation they are in, and the nature of the love they eventually achieve, is enriched by other illustrative episodes, the eclogues and laments which amplify particular themes, and two symbolic set pieces.

One of these set pieces is the opening scene with Strephon and Claius. It sets the tone of the whole book and defines the nature of the love which is finally vindicated in Arcadia.

"It was in the time that the earth begins to put on her new apparel against the approach of her lover", when the two shepherds come to "the sandes, which lie against the Island of Cithera" where Urania, whom they love, dwells. Strephon remembers how she left them to return to her island,

Yonder my Claius, Urania lighted, the verie horse (me thought)
bewayled to be so disburnd: and as for thee, poore Claius,
when thou wentst to help her downe, I saw reverence and desire so
deuide thee, that thou didst at one instant both blushe and quake,
... And here she laide her hand over thine eyes, when shee saw
the teares springing in them, as if she would conceale them from
other, and yet her selfe feele some of thy sorrow: But woe is me,
yonder, yonder, did she put her foote into the boate, at that
instant as it were deviding her heavenly beautie, betweene the
Earth and the Sea. But when she was imbarcked, did you not marke
how the windes whistled, and the seas daunst for joy, how the
sailes did swel with pride, and all because they had Urania?
O Urania, blessed be thou Urania, the sweetest fairenesse and
fairest sweetnesse. (1590.l.p5.)

This is Urania the human shepherdess whom the shepherds love, but

she is also related to Venus Urania the Neoplatonic goddess of heavenly love of which human love can be the reflection. That she is connected with Venus is obvious from the fact that her home is Cythera, the island off the coast of the Peloponnese, which was sacred to Aphrodite. The picture, so carefully elaborated of her "deviding her heavenly beautie, betweene the Earth and the Sea", is also significant since it deliberately recalls the story of the birth of Venus. At the castration of Saturn she was created from the seeds which fell into the sea and blown by Zephyrs over foaming waves to the shore.¹ Thus her origin is heavenly but she comes from the sea to the earth. The points of correspondence between the description of Urania in Arcadia and the myth, are surely not accidental.

Professor Gombrich has pointed out that "To the Renaissance Venus is an 'ambivalent' symbol if ever there was one."² However, it is interesting to look at some of the ideas about her current in the sixteenth century in view of Sidney's treatment of this episode. Professor Gombrich quotes a letter written by Ficino to his young patron, Lorenzo di Pierfrancesco, in which he moralises the nymph Venus as Humanitas. "For Humanity (Humanitas) herself is a nymph of excellent comeliness, born of heaven and more than others beloved by God all highest."³ She sums up all the virtues.

Sidney's shepherdess also sums up all the virtues. Claius describes Urania's physical beauty but says that

no more all that our eyes can see of her (though when they have seene her, what else they shall ever see is but drie stuble

¹For an account of the versions of this myth familiar in the Renaissance see E. Wind, Pagan Mysteries in the Renaissance, London, 1958, pp.111-120, especially p.116-117.

²E.H. Gombrich, "Botticelli's Mythologies", JWCI, VIII, 1945, p.13.

³Ibid., p.17. (Gombrich quotes from Ficino's Opera Omnia, Basle, 1576, p.805.)

after clovers grasse) is to bee matched with the flocke of
 unspeakeable vertues laid up delightfully in that best builded
 folde (1590.1.p7.)

He continues that as the effect of her virtues is seen most clearly in a
 humbler subject that herself,

who can better witsse that then we, whose experience is grounded
 upon feeling? hath not the onely love of her made us (being silly
 ignorant shepherds) raise up our thoughts above the ordinary leuell
 of the worlde, so as great clearkes do not disdain our conference?
 ... hath not shee throwne reason upon our desires, and, as it were
 given eyes unto Cupid? hath in any, but in her, love-fellowship
 maintained friendship betweene rivals, and beautie taught the
 beholders chastitie? (1590.1.pp.7-8.)

It is interesting that the validity of this testimony is based on
 the fact that the lovers' experience is "grounded upon feeling" not on theory.
 Yet the effect on them of their love for her is clearly not that of the blind
 Cupid who befuddles men's intellects by arousing overmastering animal
 appetites, but of a love which sees clearly on what it is based and what it
 must aspire to.

Sidney's shepherdess is not called Urania to no purpose. It has
 already been seen that for the Neoplatonists Venus Urania inspired the
 highest kind of love in men, she represented the heavenly love which human
 love must strive to reflect.

The name Urania also had other associations. It was traditionally
 connected with the Muse of Astronomy. Besides this, however, Du Bartas, in
 his poem La Muse Chretienne L'Uranie, called the Muse of Christian poetry
 Urania, and made her "the centre of a whole doctrine of its defence".¹

¹See L.B. Campbell, 'The Christian Muse', Huntington Library Bulletin,
 No. 8, October 1935, p.44.

Sidney was the first of the English translators of Du Bartas. (His translation was entered in the stationers register on August 23rd 1588.¹) This being so the name Urania would have had specially Christian connotations for Sidney.

His Urania is remembered by Strephon and Claius at just that time of the year when "the earth begins to put on her new apparel against the approach of her lover", the spring. The courtly lover found himself outside the garden of the Rose in that same season.

That it was May, thus dremed me,
 . . .
 And than bycometh the ground so proud
 That it wole have a newe shroud. (2)

Strephon and Claius, however, do not go into the garden of courtly love. They remember Urania, the shepherdess, who gathers to herself so many associations, both Christian and Neoplatonic that she becomes if not the goddess of heavenly love, Venus Urania herself, at least the human prototype which reflects and inspires it. The attitude of her lovers indicates the ennobling influence of such a love as she inspires. However, it must be stressed that whereas in Ficino and the Neoplatonists generally she had inspired a reverential love of beauty only, Sidney's Urania is human and the love which she inspires, though ideal, is also true to natural instincts. Claius is divided between "reverence and desire".³ This is an equipoise that Pyrocles and Musidorus also maintain. However, as the subsequent laments of Strephon and Claius show, it produces only torment unless there is some framework in which this reverence

¹ Ibid., p.49.

² Chaucer, Romaunt of the Rose, ll. 51 and 63-64.

³ F. Brie also notices that Urania is connected with Venus. However, he takes the view that she represents heavenly wisdom and beauty, and thus stands for an ideal of virtuous spiritual love which Sidney opposes to physical passion. See Sidney's Arcadia, op.cit., p.150ff.

and desire can be reconciled. This framework Sidney finally shows to be the idea of Christian marriage and thus the specifically Christian overtones attached to the name Urania take on an added significance.

The opening episode thus defines the ideal nature of the love which the heroes must achieve and in which most of the characters in the subsidiary episodes are defective, with the exception of Argan^llus and Parthenia. It also stands in diametrical opposition to the other definition of love by way of a symbolic set piece, Miso's tale and poem.

This is inserted as an interruption of Philoclea's tale of how Erona, the Princess, seeing the country of Lycia devoted to the worship of Cupid, defaces his statues, and as a result is herself smitten with an overmastering passion for Antiphilus, a man quite unworthy of her. (1590.2.p232ff.) The Lycian people impute this to Cupid's revenge. Antiphilus is taken prisoner by Miridates, Erona's suitor, who is making war on her to secure her person. He threatens to kill Antiphilus unless Erona will yield to him. Her predicament is thus desperate and Philoclea comments,

Then lo if Cupid be a God, or that the tyranny of our own thoughts seeme as a God unto us. But whatsoever it was, then it did set foorth the miserableness of his effectes: she being drawne to two contraries by one cause (1590.2.pp.234-235)

Miso's interruption serves as a definition of the kind of love that torments Erona. It is given in two stages. In the first Miso recalls an old woman who asked her if she knew what love was and then produced a picture of a

foule fiend...for he had a paire of hornes like a Bull, his feete cloven, as many eyes upon his bodie, as my gray-mare hath dappels,

and for all the world so placed. This monster sat like a hangman upon a paire of gallows, in his right hand he was painted holding a crowne of Laurell, in his left hand a purse of mony, and out of his mouth honge a lace of two faire pictures, of a man and a woman, and such a countenance he shewed, as if he would perswade folks by those alurements to come thither and be hanged. (1590.2.p238.)

Miso, not unnaturally, shrieked out at this "for feare of the divell". The old woman said "this same is even Love: therefore do what thou list with all those fellowes, one after another: and it reckes not much what they do to thee, so it be in secret; but upon my charge, never love none of them". (1590.2. pp.238-9.) She then handed Miso a book of ballads of love.

This figure with the horns of a cuckold and the foot of the devil, holding the laurel and the money, represents desire both for gain of wealth and victory of one person over another. It has nothing to do with the love inspired by Urania, equally divided between reverence and desire. Lust for possession is the characteristic of this figure, and this, like the devil, corrupts. In the poem which follows, quoted from Miso's book of ballads, this is elaborated. The love of Urania gave eyes unto Cupid and threw reason on desire to signify this was no blind lust, and so for a quite different reason this figure of the god of love is not blind either.

Is he a God, that ever flies the light?
Or naked he, disguis'd in all untruth?
If he be blind, how hitteth he so right? (p.21) (1)

The reason that he throws upon desire, however, is the sort which makes it possible for man to sink even lower than the beasts. Instead of directing desire towards achieving virtuous love, it corrupts it and uses it as an

¹1590.2.p239.

instrument to achieve the ends of lust. Thus this image of the god of love is depicted as half man and half beast.

Thus halfe a man, with man he easly haunts,
Cloth'd in the shape which soonest may deceave:
Thus halfe a beast, ech beastly vice he plants,
In those weake harts that his advice receive.

. . .

To narrow brests he comes allwrapt in gaine:
To swelling harts he shines in honour's fire:
To open eyes all beauties he doth raine;
Creeping to ech with flattering of desire.

Of the love which does not base itself on what it can get, but what it gives, it knows nothing. In both kinds desire plays a part but the ends to which it is directed are different.

These two symbolic set pieces thus define the two meanings which are given to the word love in Arcadia. They represent two poles between which the struggle of reason and passion to achieve virtue takes place.

In the Diana of Montemayor which Sidney certainly knew and which influenced Arcadia to some extent,¹ the shepherd Syrenus asks Felicia, the Queen at whose temple of chastity all love problems are solved, what relation reason has to sexual love. She replies,

if ... the loue, which the louer beares to the mistresse of his affections, (although burning in vnbridled desire) doth arise of reason, and of true knowledge and iudgement, as by her onely vertues he doth iudge her woorthy to be beloued, That this kinde of loue (in my opinion,) (and yet I am not deceiued) is neither vnlawfull nor dishonest, bicause all loue being of this qualitie, doth tende to no other end but to loue the person beloued for her owne sake, without hoping for any other guerdon or effect of his true, and sincere loue. (2)

¹See T.P. Harrison, 'A Source of Sidney's Arcadia', Texas Studies in English, No. 2648, 1926, pp.53-71.

²Montemayor, op.cit., The fourth Booke of Diana, p.105.

This is the love which Strephon and Claius have for Urania, and which the Princes have to achieve for Pamela and Philoclea. In it the function of reason is to discern those qualities which merit the service of passion, and having done so to let no hope of gain or reward corrupt the unselfish nature of love. After Pyrocles has described the court of Queen Helen as the "marriage place of Love and Vertue" he cries out

what doth better become wisdom, then to discern, what is worthy the loving? what more agreeable to goodness, then to love it so discerned? and what to greatness of heart, then to be constant in it once loved? (1590.2.p284.)

Problems of a tragic seriousness arise in two situations; when passionate love is directed towards an unworthy object, or when it is rightly directed but uncontrolled. The episodes in Books one and two and the love stories of Basilius, Gynecia and Amphialus, all illustrate various aspects of these problems.

In book one Phalantus comes to Basilius's court with his challenges in defense of Artesia's beauty. He has undertaken this preposterous journey because of his extravagant but casual flattery which Artesia took seriously. Phalantus is the young courtier in love with love for want of something better to do, rather like Orsino in Twelfth Night. Basilius describes him as one who

will love for want of other business, not because they feel indeed that divine power, which makes the heart find a reason in passion: ... So therefore taking love upon him like a fashion, he courted this Ladie Artesia, who was as fit to paie him in his owne monie as might be. For she thinking she did wrong to her beautie if she were not proude of it, called her disdain of him chastitie, and placed her honour in little setting by his honouring her. (1590.1.p98.)

This pair take away all meaning from either chastity or love since, for them, the one is mere pride, the other insincere flattery. They make a mockery of love and Sidney, in Basilius's description, mocks them. Phalantus

with cheerefull lookes would speake sorrowfull words, using the phrase of his affection in so high a stile, that Mercurie would not have wooed Venus with more magnificent Eloquence. (1590.1.p99.)

Artesia, however, calls his bluff and teaches him that it is a "foolish wittnesse, to speake more than one thinkes". (1590.1.p99.)

Phalantus's dalliance which takes no account, until it is too late, of the nature of the object beloved, and Artesia's frigid pride are alien to the love which Urania inspires, based on reverence and desire. Such a love is indeed not possible on the basis of their relationship, and so significantly enough we find that Urania is among the captives in their procession. (See 1590.1.pl04.)

This idea of speech revealing the moral qualities of the speaker is interesting for it is not the only occasion on which Sidney shows a conscious interest in the problem. In the first sonnet of Astrophil and Stella his Muse scorns an artificial diction: "'Foole,' said my Muse to me, 'looke in thy heart and write'".¹ The theme is taken up againⁱⁿ the first eclogues where Dorus pleads silence as the most effective proof of his love: "Shallow brookes murmure most, deep silent slide away". (p.14) Even when he is eventually persuaded to enter into a singing contest to celebrate his lady's virtues he declines to use similes, and in so doing pays her a more elaborate compliment than any comparison could have achieved.

¹Sidney, Astrophil and Stella, op.cit., I, p.165.

Of best things then what world can yeeld confection
 To liken her? Decke yours with your comparison:
 She is her selfe, of best things the collection. (p.15)(1)

The story of Queen Helen takes the consequence of a pride like
 Artesia's a little further. It shows how it can both lead to tragedy and
 change to true love. When suitors came to woo her as a princess she scorned
 them.

I as then esteeming my selfe borne to rule, and thinking foule
 scorne willingly to submit my selfe to be ruled. (1590.1.p67.)

Only when she has learnt what it is to love without return does she realise
 the sweetness of being allowed to give and of wanting to submit. Her love
 for Amphialus who is wooing her for his friend, Philoxenus, leads to a
 chain of events which results in Philoxenus's death. When Amphialus finds
 this out he departs grief-stricken for his friend, and in revulsion from
 Helen. However, all that she wishes, is "to bring my neck unto him, if
 that may redeem my trespass and assuage his fury". (1590.1.p72.) The reversal
 of her attitude is complete. She now becomes the ideal lover that Felicia
 described in the Diana. Pyrocles later describes her as

a Diana apparelled in the garments of Venus....you may see by her
 example (in her selfe wise, and of others beloved) that neither
 follie is the cause of vehement Love, nor reproch the effect. For
 never (I thinke) was there any woman, that with more unremoveable
 determination gave her selfe to the councell of Love, after she had
 once set before her mind the worthines of your cousin Amphialus;
 and yet is nether her wisdomed doubted of, nor honour blemished.
 (1590.2.pp.283-4.)

Helen's story, in fact, ends in tragedy. Her love for Amphialus can never
 be returned since he loves Philoclea. Like Helen's his love is unanswered

¹1590.1.p128.

u/ for Philocles^a ^{Pyrocles} loves only Musidorus. Thus both Amphialus and Helen illustrate one way in which love, even properly directed, can bring sadness. Amphialus finally commits suicide, and the Queen, rushing to his body, laments:

Woe is me that thy noble harte could love who hated thee, and hate who loved thee. Alas, why should not my faith to thee cover my other defects, who only sought to make my Crowne the foote-stoole, my selfe thy servaunt? (1590.3.p497.)

W.R. Davis has pointed out that the story of Plangus and Erona in book two is the focal point on which several other stories converge.¹ Many of these illustrate the evils of ungoverned lust and selfish love. Both Plangus and Erona by their unwise love start a chain of events which eventually wreck, not only their own fortunes, but their countries' as well. It has already been seen that Erona's defacing the images of Cupid symbolises her erroneous idea that it is possible to live without passion and that consequently she is overwhelmed by it. Antiphilus, whom she loves and eventually marries, immediately betrays her and lusts after the Queen Artaxia, a sister of Erona's old suitor Tiridates. His love is based purely on desire for gain of her person and land. When she appears to encourage him "alreadie his imagination had crowned him King of Armenia, and had made that, but the foundation of more, and more monarchies". (1590.2.p331.) Artaxia, however, is insincere. She tricks Antiphilus and Erona into visiting her to discuss the matter, but once they arrive, throws them into prison. There Antiphilus is murdered and Erona given a year's grace in which her

¹Davis, op.cit., p.129 ff.

life will be spared if either Pyrocles or Musidorus will come to the court and win her life in combat. If they fail to come then she is to be burnt at the stake. She is only granted this reprieve because Plangus, a young nobleman at Artaxia's court falls in love with her and intercedes for her life. It is important to remember that Erona's plight is the result of her attempt to deny the reality of passion. She forces her reason to take no account of it and the result is, that when passion does assert itself, she loves unwisely and^{only}/then admits the validity of its hold on her.

Plangus, on the other hand, is exiled from his country, as an indirect result of his adultery with a married woman. As a punishment he was sent by his father, the king of Iberia, to the wars. In the meanwhile the king himself intrigues with the woman, Andromana, who eventually persuades him to marry her. On Plangus's return she tries to seduce him again, but on his refusing out of honour for his father she ruins him out of spite, by representing to the King that Plangus is trying to undermine his power. She engineers a plot in which it looks as if Plangus had designs on his father's life. He is exiled to Tiridates's court, where he falls in love with Erona. (1590.2.p242 ff.) Meanwhile Andromana pursues a course of profligate love which leads to her son's death and her own suicide. (See 1590.2.pp.277-288.)

The source for this complicated and unpleasant episode is in Book three of Montemayor's Diana.¹ However, in the *Arcadia* this is slightly simplified, and directly concerned also with affairs of state. The effect of this, as Davis has pointed out, is to emphasize the civil disruption

¹See Montemayor, The third Booke of Diana , p.73 ff.

which follows on the misdirection of passion. "Lycia is wasted by war and Iberia in the hands of a whore".¹ Andromana, Erona and Plangus do not simply allow their passions to get the upper hand, they love unwisely.

Connected with these stories is the episode with Pamphilus and Dido, which on first sight seems to provide some light relief. Pyrocles meets a young man, Pamphilus, being persecuted by Dido and a group of ladies who are sticking bodkins into him. The reason they give for their action is that he is inconstant and deceitful. Pamphilus is a superficially charming young courtier who trifles with others' affections and grounds his behaviour on a specious logic which seems to mock the Neoplatonic ideal of human love as a rational apprehension of beauty. He argues that since love is a desire for beauty he only delights in what is lovely.

But these constant fooles you speak of, though their Mistres grow by sicknes foule, or by fortune miserable, yet stil will love her, and so committe the absurdest inconstancie that may be, in changing their love from fairenes to foulennesse, and from lovelines to his contrarie; like one not content to leave a friend, but will streight give over himself to his mortall enemie: where I (whom you call inconstant) am ever constant; to Beautie, in others; and Delight in my self. (1590.2.p268.)

Pamphilus's superficial selfishness is not a venial fault either, he is as much a part of the dark side of Arcadia as Andromana. He illustrates both the difficulties of distinguishing between appearance and reality and the dangers of mistaking one for the other. It was seen in the last chapter that Pamphilus is dangerous because under his accomplishments lurks "a poysonous addar". (1590.2.p266.) Pyrocles trusts the faithful peace that

¹W. Davis, op.cit., p.130.

he and his servants promise to keep with Dido, only to find later that he tries to kill her in revenge for his humiliation. Whereas Phalantus was harmless because he set his worthless affection on one who repaid him in his own coin, Pamphilus's vanity and appetite are dangerous qualities because he is believed to be worthy of reasonable love and found wanting.

Basilus, Gynecia and Amphialus belong to the main plot but their particular predicaments gain in depth from being seen against the wider background of those aspects of love examined in the subsidiary episodes.

Basilus's behaviour seems to exemplify just that which Lord Gaspar had warned the older courtier to avoid in the fourth book of The Courtier.

Love frameth not with olde men, and the trickes that in yong men be galantnesse, courtesie and precisenesse so acceptable to women, in them are mere follies, and fondnesse to bee laughed at, and purchase him that useth them hatred of women, and mockes of others. (1)

Certainly Basilus's antics, trying to creep out at night to meet Zelmane and barking his shins as he goes, are ridiculous enough. (See 1593.3.p49.) Pyrocles also says of him "I was even choaked with his tediousnes. You never saw fourscore yeares daunce up and downe more lively in a young Lover". (1590.1.p93) Peter Bembo, however, took a more serious view of such behaviour. He says that whereas young men cannot help passion, the older courtier must be more circumspect for "that in yong men deserveth more to bee pittied than blamed: and contrariwise in old men, more to be blamed than pittied".²

Basilus's passion for Zelmane is to be blamed, it leads him to be willing to commit adultery. This is only not possible because his love,

¹Castiglione, op.cit., p.301.

²Ibid., p.312.

although he is unaware of this, is unnatural. As such it stresses how he has forsaken his own good nature in relinquishing his responsibilities as a king and husband. When he becomes aware of the real nature of his passion, then he also resumes his responsibilities, "waying in all these matters his owne fault had been the greatest". (1593.5.p206.)

Amphialus and Gynecia present a more serious problem. Their predicament invites sympathy and understanding. Unlike most of the characters in the subsidiary episodes Sidney does not present them to illustrate modes of behaviour which invite judgement from a moral standpoint which the author takes for granted in the reader. In the first episode with Urania, Claius is described as divided between reverence and desire because these are the two qualities on which ideal human love is based. Amphialus is also divided by reverence and desire but because Philoclea cannot love him, his desire can only be satisfied at the expense of his reverence and this he cannot allow. W.R. Davis has pointed out that his name means "between two seas".¹ He is in the agonizing predicament of seeing what is wrong with himself but being quite incapable of acting decisively on this knowledge, for good or evil. He is in love with Philoclea whom his mother captures. His love is not misdirected as to its object but it paralyses him. He knows that to gain Philoclea's love by force is wrong, on the other hand he cannot bring himself to release her. He knows that her imprisonment is an injury, yet,

¹W.R. Davis, op.cit., p.138.

by a hunger-starved affection, was compelled to offer this injurie, and yet the same affection made him with a tormenting griefe, thinke unkindnesse in himselfe, that he could finde in his hart any way to restraine her freedome. (1590.3.p369.)

Although Philoclea's words to him are "as absolute, and unresistable commaundements", he cannot grant her request for liberty.

But alas, that Tyrant Love, (which now possesseth the holde of all my life and reason) will no way suffer it. It is Love, it is Love, not I, which disobey you....I am not the staye of your freedome, but Love, Love, which ties you in your owne knots. (1590.3.pp.369-70.)

W.R. Davis says that Amphialus himself

defines his case most clearly upon his first appearance to Philoclea in the castle by wearing a jewelled collar of inter-changing pieces, one of diamonds and pearls that "seemed like a shining ice, and the other piece being of Rubies, and Opalles, had a fierie glistring, which he thought pictured the two passions of Feare and Desire, wherein he was enchaind (1590.3.p367). (1)

Davis believes that this is "a special case of the rebel Passion paralyzing Reason: because he cannot establish order by subjecting desire to fear or reverence, Amphialus, the soul of courtesy, remains to the end a self divided".² It is not Amphialus's division between reverence and desire that matters so much as his inability to act on what he knows his reverence demands. This does not seem to be so much a failure of reason to govern passion, as of will to act on what reason orders.

The force of love has brought great misery into Amphialus's life. His connection with the death of his friend Philoxenus, and the sorrows of Queen Helen has already been noticed. His own end is tragic, for his love for Philoclea finally drives him to commit suicide. The manner of his death

¹W.R. Davis, op.cit., p.138.

²Idem.

passes fair comment on his life,

there giving a pittiful spectacle, where the conquest was the conqueror's overthrow, and self-ruine the onely triumph of a battaile, fought betweene him, and himselfe. (1590.3.p494.)

In contrast to Amphialus whose inability to act results in self-division and personal tragedy, the Queen, Gynecia, is prepared to act on her desire and

seeke all loving meanes to winne Zelmane, so she would stirre up terrible tragedies, rather then faile of her entent. (1590.2.p150)

Her success would cause national, as well as personal, tragedy, since she is a queen. Sidney is careful to prepare the reader for the fact that her behaviour is the result of her disposition. He invites sympathetic understanding rather than judgement.

Kalander describes her long before we meet her, as:

a woman of great wit, and in truth of more princely vertues, then her husband: of most unspotted chastitie, but of so working a minde, and so vehement spirits, as a man may say, it was happie shee tooke a good course: for otherwise it would have beene terrible. (1590.1.pp.19-20.)

In view of what happens later this speech has a fine dramatic irony.

Gynecia's instincts are finer than her husband's. She sees through Zelmane's disguise and realising that she is a man loves him. Her predicament is clear to her from the outset:

There appeared unto the eies of her judgement the evils she was like to run into, with ougly infamie waiting upon them: she felt the terrour^rs of her owne conscience: she was guilty of a long exercised vertue, which made this vice the fuller of deformitie. The uttermost of the good she could aspire unto, was a mortall wound to her vexed spirits: and lastly no small part of her evils was, that she was wise to see her evils. (1590.2.p145.)

It appears that Gynecia has hitherto lived a virtuous life because outward

circumstances have made it easy for her to do so. Now her virtue is tested she finds the force of her desires in opposition to, and stronger than, her rational understanding of what virtue entails. Her will to act on what reason would order is thus paralysed. She even questions the actual existence of virtue at all beyond empty words.

O Vertue, where doost thou hide thy selfe? or what hideous thing is this which doth eclips thee? or is it true that thou weart never but a vaine name, and no essentiall thing, which hast thus left thy professed servant, when she had most need of thy lovely presence? O imperfect proportion of reason, which can too much forsee, and too little prevent. (1590.2.pl46.)

Now she finds no comfort in shame "but to be beyond all bounds of shame".

(1590.2.pl46.) Her psychological disorder makes her physically ill,

so deadly an overthrow given to her best resolutions, that even her bodie (where the fielde was fought) was oppressed withall: making a languishing sicknesse waite upon the triumph of passion. (1590.2.pl50.)

In her case passion as a disease is aggravated by natural temperament.

The tragedy Gynecia would have brought about is averted by Pyrocles's cunning handling of the situation. At what is supposed to be a midnight meeting with Pyrocles, she meets Basilius instead. He drinks what Gynecia had supposed was a love potion which she had prepared for Pyrocles. Its effect, however, is to send Basilius into a deep swoon in which he is believed to be dead. Gynecia's repentance is as extravagant as her former passion. She believes that only her death can atone for her misdeeds. She seeks it by a false confession to a crime she never intended to commit. Her passion has now plunged her into the sin of despair. She takes it on herself to judge herself and promote her own end instead of relying on the merciful providence

of God. When Pyrocles also despairs in prison and wishes to take his own life, Philoclea reproves him:

it is not for us to appoint that mightie Majestie, what time he will helpe us: the uttermost instant is scope enough for him, to revoke every thing to ones owne desire. And therefore to prejudicate his determinacion, is but a doubt of goodnes in him, who is nothing but goodnes. (1593.4.pl11.)

Although Gynecia's reason was actively critical of her overwhelming passion for Pyrocles, it was weak, compared with it, as an instrument to promote action. Now that she has given way to overwhelming guilt for that passion, her reason, now misguided by passionate despair, takes upon itself an ultimate judgement of the situation, and in this usurps the place of a religious faith in merciful providence. Sidney comments with sympathy:

Thus the excellent Lady Gynecia, having passed five and thirtie yeares of her age, even to admiration of her beautifull minde and body, and having not in her owne knowledge, ever spotted her soule with any wilfull vice, but her imoderate love of Zelmane, was brought, first by the violence of that ill answered passion, and then by the dispayring conceite, she took of the judgement of God in her husbandes death and her owne fortune, purposely to overthrowe her selfe, and confirme by a wronge confession, that abhominable shame, which with her wisdome, joynde to the truth, perhappes shee might have refelled. (1593.5.pl76.)

These episodes, especially the predicament of Gynecia and Amphialus, stress just how frail that balance is, which must be maintained between reverence and desire if moral health is to result. It is quite clear that Sidney regards passion, partly at least, as a physiological condition which cannot be prevented. The problem is how such a strong force can be rightly directed by reason.

In chapter one it was seen that in the pastoral elegaic lament the

shepherds question the justice of a universe where death intervenes so capriciously in human affairs. A similar doubt is voiced in the love episodes. They introduce the problem of how to achieve a balance between reason and passion, which is necessary for moral health. This in turn leads to a direct questioning of the ultimate justice of a universal scheme in which human nature is so constituted that virtue seems often impossibly hard to achieve. Gynecia in prison cries out,

O Gods...why did you make me to destruction? If you love goodnes,
why did you not geve me a good minde? Or if I cannot have it
without your gifte, why doe you plague mee? (1593.5.pl60.)

This theme is taken up by Plangus in his song, "Alas how long this pilgrimage doth last?"¹ In the original version of Arcadia it is significant that this song was among the second eclogues which deal with a conflict between reason and passion. In the revised version Sidney put the song in the narrative. Basilius overheard it and wrote it down, and Philoclea reads it to Pyrocles. Plangus is forced to the point of despair because Erona, whom he loves, is condemned to die. He cries out against the creation of a human nature where spirit and flesh so oppose each other.

Ah where was first that cruell cunning found,
To frame of Earth a vessell of the minde,
Where it should be to selfe-destruction bound?
What needed so high sprites such mansions blind?
Or wrapt in flesh what do they here obtaine,
But glorious name of wretched humaine-kinde?
Balles to the starres, and thralles to Fortune's raigne;
Turnd from themselves, infected with their cage,
Where death is feard, and life is held with paine. (p.57)

Basilius is so moved he cannot answer Plangus's grief by a stock moral response that reason must govern passion because he realises that as a moral imperative it does not really seem possible in the face of human experience.

¹1590.2.p227 ff.

Yet Reason saith, Reason should have abilitie,
 To hold these worldly things in such proportion,
 As let them come or go with even facilitie.
 But our Desire's tyrannicall extortion
 Doth force us there to set our chiefe delightfulness,
 Where but a baiting place is all our portion. (pp.60-61)

Basilus, however, does continue:

But still, although we faile of perfect rightfulness,
 Seeke we to tame these childish superfluities:
 Let us not winke though void of purest sightfulness. (p.61)

He reproves Plangus for indulging in despairing self pity both for his own
 and for Erona's case:

Betwixt the good and shade of good divided,
 We pittie deeme that which but weakenes is:
 So are we from our high creation slided. (p.62)

However, he finally turns away from this judgement in compassion,

But Plangus, lest I may your sicknesse misse
 Or rubbing hurt the sore, I here doo end.
 The asse did hurt when he did thinke to kisse. (p.62)

Arcadia is not a tale told to illustrate trite moral maxims or
 impossibly ideal standards of behaviour. In the love stories Sidney is
 concerned to explore that relation between reason and passion which is
 necessary not only for virtuous love, but also right action generally. He
 does this with a compassionate clear sightedness of the human problems
 connected with the achievement of this right relation, which is deeply
 melancholy. That Sidney was in fact a melancholy man we know from his
 letters. It has been seen that Languet wrote to him, "you are not over
 cheerful by nature";¹ later he says again, "you are somewhat serious by
 nature".² This melancholy is apparent in Arcadia in the darker episodes

¹Sidney, Languet, Correspondence, op.cit., Jan. 22, 1574, p.29.

²Ibid., p.30.

where Sidney stresses the weakness of human nature to achieve an ideal of individual virtue although it rationally understands it.

In the second eclogues which occur just after the complicated series of subsidiary episodes have been related, the theme of the opposition of reason and passion is worked out in several of the complaints at a personal level, but the two sets of opposing shepherds who open the entertainment state this theme in general terms. Since it is central to Sidney's purpose in the love episodes, it will be quoted in full.

Reason. Thou Rebell vile, come, to thy master yelde.
Passion. No, Tyrant; no: mine, mine shall be the fielde.
 R Can Reason then a Tyraunt counted be?
 P If Reason will, that Passions be not free.
 R But Reason will, that Reason governe most.
 P And Passion will, that Passion rule the rost.
 R Your will is will; but Reason reason is.
 P Will hath his will, when Reason's will doth misse.
 R Whom Passion leades unto his death is bent.
 P And let him die, so that he die content.
 R By nature you to Reason faith have sworne.
 P Not so, but fellowlike together borne.
 R Who Passion doth ensue, lives in annoy.
 P Who Passion doth forsake, lives void of joy.
 R Passion is blinde, and treades an unknowne trace.
 P Reason hath eyes to see his owne ill case.
 R Dare Passions then abide in Reason's light?
 P And is not Reason dimde with Passion's might?
 R O foolish thing, which glory doeste destroye.
 P O glorious title of a foolish toye.
 R Weakenes you are, dare you with our strength fight?
 P Because our weaknes weakeneth all your might.
 R O sacred Reason, helpe our vertuous toiles.
 P O Passion, passe on feeble Reason's spoiles.
 R We with ourselves abide a daily strife.
 P We gladly use the sweetnes of our life.
 R But yet our strife sure peace in end doth breede.
 P We now have peace, your peace we doo not neede.
 R We are too strong: but Reason seekes not blood.
 P Who be too weake, do feignd they be too good.
 R Though we cannot orecome, our cause is just.
 P Let us orecome, and let us be unjust.
 R Yet Passion, yeeld at length to Reason's stroke.
 P What shall we winne by taking Reason's yoke?

- R The joyes you have shall be made permanent.
 P But so we shall with grieffe learne to repent.
 R Repent indeed, but that shall be your blisse.
 P How know we that, since present joyes we misse?
 R You know it not: of Reason therefore know it.
 P No Reason yet had ever skill to show it.
 R P Then let us both to heavenly rules give place,
 Which Passions kill, and Reason do deface. (pp.46-47)¹

This eclogue sums up the apparently insoluble problems posed in the love stories examined so far. It shows that man does not naturally owe allegiance to reason only, since it is a fact of human experience that he is born with reason and passion, "fellowlike together borne". Passion is on the side of joy, "We gladly use the sweetnes of our life", and argues that present happiness is all that is necessary. If this argument is based on a false security Reason has no means of proving it conclusively. "No Reason yet had ever skill to show it". Therefore the only solution of their predicament is to submit to an order which is higher than either of them:

Then let us both to heavenly rules give place,
 Which Passions kill, and Reason do deface.

These "heavenly rules" are connected with the final perspective in which virtue is seen in Arcadia. This will be examined in the last chapter but some reference to it must also be made here.

In the love stories Sidney shows the disastrous consequences of ungoverned passion, but acknowledges the difficulty and pain involved in self-control. The solution he offers to this problem is a religious one, and it is two-fold. One aspect applies particularly to the reconciliation of reason and passion in love, the other applies to a more general ideal of moral virtue of which behaviour in love focusses only one aspect.

¹1590.2.p339ff.

It will be seen later that there are two conceptions of nature defined in Arcadia; one a chance conglomeration of elements which have no order, the other an expression of the order of a Divine Mind, "a Nature of wisdom, goodness, and providence" (1590.2.p408). There are also two conceptions of love. One is based on physical passion alone. This is also indicative of a more general lust for possession as is shown in Miso's picture of the god of love, and Antiphilus's relation with Artaxia. The other is a union of desire with reverence for the moral, as well as physical, beauty of the person loved. This is the love inspired by the shepherdess Urania who represents the reflection of a heavenly Venus.

However, this reverence and desire conflict and produce deep unhappiness and frustration as Sidney shows in the cases of Strephon and Claius themselves, Plangus, Philisides, Amphialus, Helen, Pyrocles and Musidorus, unless there is some framework in which they can be reconciled. This framework is marriage. In the ideal of Christian marriage formulated in the Book of Common Prayer, Sidney would have found his opposites reconciled. There marriage is considered not as a physical union only, but a union of two persons "in holy Matrimonie, which is an honourable estate, instituted of God in Paradise in the tyme of mans innocencie, signifying unto us the mysticall union that is betwixt Christ and his Church".¹

At their trial the Princes urge the force of passionate physical love as an extenuation of their behaviour. Euarchus, the ideal judge, says that to call physical passion alone 'love' corrupts the true meaning of the word. He says "if that unbrideled desire which is intituled love" can exonerate the Princes,

¹Quoted from The Booke of Common Prayer, London 1564, 'The Fourme of Solemnization of Matrimonie'. D vii recto.

surely wee shoulde have, many loving excuses of hatefull mischief. Nay rather no mischief shoulde be committed, that should not be vailed under the name of love. For as well he that steales, might alleage the love of mony, he that murders the love of revenge, he that rebells the love of greatnesse, as the adulterer the love of a woman. Since they do in all speeches affirme they love that, which an ill governed passion maketh them to follow. But love may have no such priviledge. That sweete and heavenly uniting of the mindes, which properly is called love, hath no other knot but vertue, and therefore if it be a right love, it can never slide into any action that is not vertuous. (1593.5.p197.)

This love finds fulfillment in marriage which he defines as

the most holy conjunction that falls to mankinde, out of which all families and so consequently all societies doe proceede, which not onely by communitie goods, but communitie children, is to knit the mindes in a most perfect union, which who so breakes dissolves al humanitie. (1593.5.p175.)

Here Euarchus, more or less paraphrases the Book of Common Prayer.

Marriage is

commended of Saint Paule to be honourable amonge all men, and therefore is not to be enterprysed nor taken in hande unadvisedly, lyghtly, or wantonly, to satisfie mens carnall lustes and appetites, lyke brute beastes that haue no understanding: but reuerently, discretely, aduisedly, soberly, and in the feare of God, duely consideryng the causes for whiche Matrimonie was ordayned. One was, the procreation of chylren, to be brought up in the feare and nurtour of the Lorde, and prayse of God. Secondly, it was ordeyned for a remedie agaynst sinne, and to auoyde fornication, that suche persons as haue not the gift of continencie, might marry, and kepe them selues undefiled members of Christes body. Thirdly, for the mutuall societie, helpe, and comfort, that the one ought to haue of the other, both in prosperitie and aduersitie. (1)

Cecropia, an atheist, who not only works evil to others but also brings about her own destruction, prostitutes the arguments for this virtuous love to achieve her own ends which are far from virtuous. She wishes to force a marriage between Philoclea and her son Amphialus so that he may claim Basilius's throne. Her arguments have all the more force for being true

¹Idem.

to Sidney's idea of virtue though they are not applicable to the particular situation, and she uses them with a machiavellian cunning to try to win Philoclea's consent to her plan. She says,

Have you ever seene a pure Rosewater kept in a christal glas; how fine it lokes, how sweet it smels, while that beautifull glasse imprisons it? Breake the prison, and let the water take his owne course, doth it not imbrace the dust, and losse all his former sweetenesse, and fairenesse? Truly so are we, if we have not the stay, rather then the restraint of Cristalline mariage. (1590.3.p380) (1)

The third eclogues also celebrate marriage in the terms of an orthodox Christian view. The first poem is an Epithalamium in praise, not of the loved one, but of the state of marriage.²

Let mother earth now decke her selfe in flowers,
To see her ofspring seeke a good increase,
Where justest love doth vanquish Cupid's powers
And warr of thoughts is swallow'd up in peace
Which never may decrease
But like the turtells faire
Live one in two, a well united paire,
Which that no chance may staine,
O Himen long their coupled joyes maintaine. (p.91)

. . . .

The earth is deckt with flowers, the heav'ns displaid,
Muses graunt giffes, Nymphes long and joynd life,
Pan store of babes, vertue their thoughts well staid,
Cupid's lust gone, and gone is bitter strife,
Happy man, happy wife.
No pride shall them oppresse,
Nor yet shall yeeld to loathsome sluttishnes,
And jealousie is slaine:
For Himen will their coupled joyes maintaine. (pp.93-94)

Later Geron, trying to persuade the bachelor Histor to marry, defines an ideal of marriage and its purposes.³

¹It is tempting to read the capitalised Cristalline as a deliberate pun.

²1593. 3. p63 ff.

³1593. 3. p78 ff.

Foode without fulnes, consaile without pride,
Is this sweet doubling of our single life. (p.103)

In abstaining from it Histor is failing to bring up children:

Thy common-wealth may rightly grieved be,
Which must by this immortall be preserved,
If thus thou murther thy posteritie. (p.105)

Other songs work out the nature of the ideal husband and the folly and evils of jealousy, but the best picture of Christian marriage is in the tale of Argarlus and Parthenia. They exemplify the love which, unlike Pamphilus's, is not based on mere physical beauty, and which remains constant in prosperity and adversity. Parthenia and Argarlus fall in love but are prevented from marrying by Parthenia's mother who has set her heart on her marrying Demagoras. When the mother dies, that gentleman, realising his chances of marrying Parthenia are ended, disfigures her beyond recognition. The situation thus created has a parallel in Sidney's own life. His mother was terribly disfigured by smallpox after having nursed the Queen. Sir Henry Sidney wrote to Walsingham that

When I went to Newhaven I left her a full fair lady, in mine eye at least the fairest, and when I returned I found her as foul a lady as the small-pox could make her, which she did take by continual attendance of her Majesty's most precious person (sick of the same disease), the scars of which (to her resolute discomfort) ever since hath done and doth remain in her face, so as she liveth solitarily sicut nicticorax in domicilio suo. (1)

Although Argarlus still loves her and implores her to marry him, Parthenia refuses to tie him to her. He begs her

not to make him so unhappy, as to think he had not only lost her face, but her hart; that her face, when it was fayrest, had been but as a marshall, to lodge the love of her in his minde; which

¹Letter to Walsingham, March 1, 1583. Quoted by Malcolm Wallace, The Life of Sir Philip Sidney, Cambridge, 1915, p.22.

now was so well placed, as it needed no further help of any outward harbinger: beseeching her, even with teares, to know, that his love was not so superficial, as to go no further then the skin; which yet now to him was most faire, since it was hers. (1590.1.p35)

Eventually when Argarlus's faithfulness has been tested to its limits, Parthenia is restored to him in her original beauty and they marry. Later we are granted a glimpse of this marriage. When Basilius's messenger arrives to summon Argarlus to the war, he finds them reading together.

A happy couple, he joying in her, she joying in her selfe, but in her selfe, because she enjoyed him: both encreasing 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 sacietie; he ruling, because she would obey: or rather because she would obey, she therein ruling. (1590.3.p420)

She naturally wishes to prevent Argarlus leaving her, but on learning that he must fight, "true Love made obedience stande up against all other passions". (1590.3.p421)

In Arcadia ideal love throws "reason upon our desires" and teaches "the beholders chastitie" (1590.1.p8) It finds its fulfillment in marriage, and is thus the same as Spenser's ideal of chaste love in Britomart, who is also married love, in the Faerie Queene. C.S. Lewis has pointed out how Spenser rejects the ideals of courtly love in favour of a love which finds fulfillment in marriage.¹ This idea however was not new.

In the Diana all the lovers' problems are solved by Felicia in her temple of chastity where each finds his or her partner and is married.

Delicious remarks that

I would faine know, if in the Temples of the Goddesses of chastitie it be vsuall to solemnize any marriage, bicause that mysterie is as strange to mine eares, as the reason therof to my conceit. (2)

¹C.S.Lewis, The Allegory of Love, p.344 ff.

²Montemayor, The third Booke of the Second part of Diana, p.242.

In the Diana, however, Felicia cannot solve all the lovers' problems by marriage. The shepherd Syrenus loves Diana who has been forced by her parents to marry another, and the only cure for his love melancholy is a magic potion which induces forgetfulness of his passion.¹

Sidney, however, does not resort to such a convenient solution. For those who cannot resolve the demands of reverence and desire in marriage the pain of maintaining virtue remains. The troubles of the man whose love finds no fulfillment is only one instance of a more general problem of how to behave in adversity. It is an important way of focussing this general problem, however, because the conflict between reason and passion raised by the treatment of the love theme stresses the frailty of man's ability to achieve any harmony in himself, let alone trust to its existence on a universal scale. It is at this point that the Christian patience which Danby stressed is called for.

The Princes and Princesses in prison reach that kind of situation in which Plangus had cried out in bitterness against the justice of a system in which man falls a prey both to his passionate nature and the vagaries of fortune. When Pyrocles is Cecropia's prisoner and supposes Philoclea to be dead he cries out against God (1590.3.p483); when he is a state prisoner and believes that their love will mean Philoclea's death, he wishes to kill himself in an effort to prevent this. (1593.3.p105) On both occasions Philoclea preaches to him on the necessity of submitting to faith in the working of providence even in the face of overwhelming adversity.

¹Montemayor, The fifth Booke of Diana, p.124.

it is not for us to appoint that mightie Majestie, what time he will helpe us: the uttermost instant is scope enough for him, to revoke every thing, to ones owne desire. And therefore to prejudicate his determinacion,^{ys} but a doubt of goodnes in him, who is nothing but goodnes. But when in deede he doth either by sicknes, or outward force lay death upon us, then are we to take knowledge, that such is his pleasure, and to knowe that all is well that he doth.

(1590.4.p111)

This is the Christian patience which "leans on and demands the transcendent".¹

It is an attitude that human reason cannot prove to be justified. This is the second way in which reason and passion must give way to heavenly rules. It applies to a wider range of human experience than the problems of sexual love, and a fuller examination of its implications will be made in the last chapter.

In the Arcadian love stories, then, Sidney is concerned with a definition of virtuous love, and virtuous behaviour in love. The first involves a rejection of the illicit passion of courtly love, expressed in a ritual of secular worship which mocks, and is opposed to, the Divine love. It does not, however, endorse the purely intellectual virtuous love of the Neoplatonists. Although Sidney used their arguments as a framework to which to refer, he was a realist and his Urania represents an ideal in which human and divine qualities mingle. The love she inspires is ideally expressed in marriage, a holy estate which reflects the union of Christ with his Church. To achieve this ideal marriage the lover must subdue lustful passion to a reverence for the beloved's virtue and worth. This brings into prominence the idea of the opposition of reason and passion which is a struggle at the heart of virtuous behaviour in other realms of experience besides sexual love.

¹Danby, op.cit., p.70.

Passion has power for good if directed by a reason which understands what is good and can co-operate with passion to prompt man's will to try to achieve it. This may be called a right reason. Passion has power for evil if this right reason is too weak to control it; or if it is directed by a reason already corrupted by desire for gain and possessions.

Thus there are two requirements for moral behaviour, a rightly directed reason, and a will strong enough to act on what it demands. Sidney does make an analysis of human nature similar to that made by Bembo in The Courtier.

Man of nature indowed with reason, placed (as it were) in the middle between these two extremities, [of sensual appetite and an understanding of heavenly things] may ... come nigh to the coveting sometime of the one, sometime of the other part. (1)

In the Defence of Poesie Sidney says that "our erected wit maketh us to know what perfection is, and yet our infected wil keepeth us from reaching unto it".² He would not, however, agree with Bembo that the demands of the senses are necessarily fundamentally opposed to the demands of the spirit; or that the satisfaction of the one implies a rejection of the other. Right reason does not stand in relation to passion as virtue to vice. The conflict which arises between them is due to the fact that if passion alone directs a man's course of action, he is apt to lose sight of a wider scheme of values in which its satisfaction is not of paramount importance. Reason can discern on a human level that the result is chaos when passion has ungoverned freedom, but this is as far as it can go. It cannot explain or modify the peculiar pain and seemingly undeserved suffering which may often accompany

¹Castiglione, op.cit., p.304.

²Sidney, Works, III, p.9.

submission to its commands. This sort of pain is supported only by patience based on faith that a Divine order will ultimately vindicate the human moral order achieved with such difficulty. Difficulty, because it is inherent in human nature to act on what passion desires rather than on what reason commands.

It may be concluded that since Sidney's representation of virtue, or its lack, in the love episodes in Arcadia, is valid in other areas of behaviour besides love, these episodes focus the private aspect of a more general ideal of virtue.

CHAPTER IV

JUSTICE AND GOVERNMENT IN ARCADIA, AS A STUDY
IN PUBLIC VIRTUE

In the last chapter it was seen that Sidney himself distinguishes between public and private virtue in Arcadia, and that in the love stories he focuses on its private aspect by defining the nature of a self-control which is necessary for moral health in other realms of experience besides sexual love. This idea of self-control is based on a realistic analysis of human nature.

To distinguish the public from the private nature of Gynecia's offence, Euarchus relates it to affairs of state (1593.5.pl73). This chapter will show that through the political elements in Arcadia Sidney formulates ideals of public virtue in relation to the different functions and responsibilities of men in society, and in so doing draws on subjects of vital interest to his contemporaries.

This connection between public virtue and social function is an example of the practical nature of the virtue Arcadia exists to define. It is also in agreement with Aristotle's principle that the "method of assessing virtue according to function is one that we should always follow".¹ He wrote that, "those who talk in generalities and say that virtue is 'a good condition of the soul', or that it is 'right conduct' or the like, delude themselves".²

¹Aristotle, The Politics, trans. T.A. Sinclair, Penguin Books 1952, p.52.

²Idem.

This is not to suggest that Sidney deliberately used Aristotle as a source for Arcadia,¹ but that on subjects common to them both he was much influenced by his thought. Sidney knew and admired his works. In 1574 he wrote to Languet, "Of the works of Aristotle, I consider the politics to be the most worth reading".² Later he wrote to his brother Robert, "I thinke you have read Aristotles Ethicks if you have, you will knowe it is the begyning, and foundation of all his workes, the good ende which everie man doth and ought to bend his greatest actions".³

In the political episodes in Arcadia Sidney is primarily concerned with the different responsibilities of ruler and ruled and the relation of both to the state. The first part of this chapter will examine the trial which forms the climax of the composite Arcadia, for it is closely connected with these problems. It is concerned with justice not from a philosophical but an administrative point of view, and thus introduces the question of the right relation between law and king. This leads on naturally to the other political episodes in which Sidney deals with the subject of public virtue in the rest of Arcadia.

This trial is also connected with the subject of the previous chapter since in it the two spheres of public and private virtue come together and clash. The private concerns of Queen Gynecia and the Princes Pyrocles and

¹Compare F. Brie, Sidney's Arcadia, op.cit., p.69ff. He takes the opposite view and believes that Sidney drew consciously on Aristotelian philosophy in the Arcadia. This seems unlikely for although Sidney is concerned with subjects also dealt with by Aristotle and comes to similar conclusions, these subjects were also widely discussed by contemporary political theorists.

²Correspondence of Philip Sidney and Hubert Languet, op.cit., Feb. 4th, 1574, p.33.

³See Sidney, Works, III, p.124.

Musidorus erupt into matters of state and because of this they are arraigned before a public judicial court. Gynecia is suspected of poisoning her husband and has thus offended publicly,

the Princes persons; being in all monarchall governmentes the very knot of the peoples welfare, and light of all their doinges to which they are not onely in conscience, but in necessitie bounde to be loyall, she had trayterously empoysoned him, neither regarding her contries profit, her owne dutie, nor the rigor of the lawes
(1593.5.pl75)

The Princes Pyrocles and Musidorus, having tried unsuccessfully to abduct Pamela and Philoclea, are found "guiltie of hainous ravishment. ... An acte punished by all the Gaecian lawes, by the losse of the head, as a most execrable theft". The public enormity of their offence is stressed:

For if they must dye, who steale from us our goodes, ... and if our lawes have it so in the private persons, much more forcible are they to bee in Princes children, where one steales as it were the whole state, and well being of that people, being tyed by the secret of long use, to be governed by none but the next of that bloud (1593.5.pl96)

This connection of the trial with the love stories in Arcadia has led to a discussion of its significance which tends to focus attention on it from the wrong angle, and thus to miss the central point of the whole episode. The emphasis in this trial is not on the private nature of the offences for which the accused are tried, but on their effect on a monarchical state; and on the proceedings of a just judge called in from outside to restore order to a nation state disrupted by internal factions.

However, any discussion of the trial is complicated by the fact that although Sidney did not finish the revised Arcadia, the version of the trial and the events which lead up to it in the Arcadia published by the Countess of Pembroke in 1593, differs slightly from the account in the original version.

There are some alterations in the trial itself and more substantial ones in the offences for which the Princes are tried.

In the original version Pyrocles confesses attempted rape and is condemned to be thrown from a high tower. Musidorus, although he also had attempted rape, is accused only of abduction, and is condemned to be beheaded. In the revised version neither Prince has attempted rape and although Philanax maintains that Pyrocles had confessed rape, (1593.5.p179) Euarchus says that they are both equally guilty of attempted abduction only, and therefore are to be condemned to be beheaded according to "all the Graecian lawes". (1593.5.p196) However, after a long speech on the sanctity of marriage and the nature of just laws, he, in fact, condemns Pyrocles to be thrown from a high tower and Musidorus to be beheaded as in the original version (1593.5.p198). When Basilius awakes, without any reference to a pardon for the crimes which the Princes are supposed to have committed, he marries them to his daughters, and thus makes a complete mockery of Euarchus's judgement. W. Ringler has noticed this and comments:

This completely undercuts the heroic adherence of Euarchus to 'Sacred Rightfullnes', for the princes escape punishment, not by any revelation of a change in the nature of their offence, but by coming before a less impartial and less idealistic judge.¹

Ringler has also examined the revisions in the 1593 addition to the New Arcadia.² He believes that all the alterations had been indicated by Sidney himself, and brings external evidence to support this theory by investigating the sources of the geographical references connected with them

¹W. Ringler, The Poems of Sir Philip Sidney, op.cit., p.379.

²Ibid., p.376 ff.

in the Old and New Arcadia. In the latter they are clear, detailed and accurate, whereas in the original version they are vague and incorrect. Ringler believes that the references in the later version are derived from the maps prepared by Mercator for the edition of Ptolemy's Geographiae Libri Octo published at Cologne early in 1584; in particular from Map X of Europa which provides a detailed delineation of Greece. These maps were also issued separately in 1578. Ringler points out that whereas most of the 1593 Arcadia's departures from the old Arcadia involve "no more than the deletion of material, the change of a word, or the replacing of a sentence",¹ two passages are considerably rewritten. One of these is Pyrocles's visit to Philoclea's chamber. This is extremely important since whereas in the original version he had not only gone to "satisfy his greedy desyer", (OV p.215) but had apparently done so, in the revised version he goes only to plan their escape route. Both fall asleep with their necks only "subject each to others chaste embracements". (1593.3.p61) The second of the passages which were rewritten is that of the journey of Euarchus to Arcadia. Ringler shows that these two passages are linked by a reference in each to the second uprising of the Helots which is not mentioned elsewhere in either version, and by the fact that only a person who had studied Mercator's maps would have been in a position to correct the old Arcadia's errors with reference to the two journeys mentioned. He concludes that these corrections were made by Sidney himself, and that therefore, if he was responsible for the alteration of the account of Pyrocles's visit to Philoclea's chamber, he was also responsible for the

¹Ibid., p.377.

omission of Musidorus's intended rape of Pamela, and the revisions in the trial scene.

Although the problem of who was responsible for these alterations is thus disposed of, the question of their significance still remains.

K.T. Rowe who also believes that Sidney was responsible for these revisions,¹ but on less objective evidence than Ringler, has two points to make on this subject. He suggests that the behaviour of the Princes is altered because it is inconsistent with the "energetic ideal of knighthood which Sidney intended the two heroes of the Arcadia to represent".² The actual trial, however, he sees in terms of an unresolved conflict of ethical systems.³ He believes it shows an inconsistency in the treatment of the love theme which reflects Sidney's "enthusiasm for virtue and beauty of human conduct as manifested in the varied forms characteristic of his age",⁴ that is romantic love and marriage in accordance with parental wishes. These two states rarely coincided in the sixteenth century according to Rowe's evidence. He believes that we sympathise with the Princes' aims until the time of Euarchus's judgement which embodies a theory of parental authority in marriage. "The result is that the reason is divided while the sympathies remain intact, and the Arcadia ends on an effect of ethical confusion".⁵

In fact Sidney does not appear to be primarily concerned with the personal ethics of the Princes in the trial; especially is he not concerned with the conflicting claims of romantic love and parental authority. If this

¹K.T.Rowe, 'The Countess of Pembroke's Editorship of the Arcadia', PMLA, 54, 1939, pp.122-138.

²K.T.Rowe, 'Elizabethan Morality and The Folio Revisions of Sidney's Arcadia', MP, 37, 1939, p.169.

³K.T.Rowe, 'Romantic Love and Parental Authority in Sydney's Arcadia', University of Michigan Contributions in Modern Philology, No.4, April, 1947.

⁴Ibid., p.58.

⁵Ibid., p.16.

had concerned him he would not have allowed Pamela, who is a model of virtue, and instrumental in refuting Cecropia's atheism, not only to consent to elope with Musidorus, but to give these quite particular reasons for allowing her love free rein. "Truely I would hate my life, if I thought vanitie led me. But since my parents deale so cruelly with me, it is time for me to trust something to my own judgement". (1590.2.p180) Furthermore, when she is wooed in prison by Anaxius whom she would rather have "for my hangman, then my husband" (1590.3.p507) she uses the lack of parental consent as a mere excuse to stall for time. "Pamela forced her selfe to make answeere to Anaxius, that if her father gave his consent she would make her selfe believe, that such was the heavenly determination, since she had no meanes to avoide it". (1590.3.p509. My italics.) The qualification of her intentions is all important.

Apart from the example of Pamela, in the ideal love story of Argarlus and Parthenia it is quite clear that Parthenia feels herself under no obligation to submit to her mother's wishes. She, like Pamela, judges from her own feelings.

And now Parthenia had learned both liking and misliking, loving and lothing, and out of passion began to take the authoritie of judgement; in so much, that when the time came that Demagoras (full of proude joy) thought to receive the gifte of her selfe, shee with woordes of resolute refusall (though with teares shewing she was sorie she must refuse) assured her mother, she would first be bedded in her grave, then wedded to Demagorus. (1590.1.p33)

D.M. Anderson, in reply to Rowe's article, says that his conclusions on the conflict of ethical systems in Arcadia credits Sidney "whose intellectual power is displayed on every page of his work, with a muddled mind".¹ He believes that Sidney intended to revise the trial scene, and that the important

¹D.M. Anderson, 'The Trial of the Princes in Arcadia', RES, 8, 1957, p.410.

issue in it is not "whether a young girl can run off with a lover against her father's wishes, but whether the heiress of a kingdom can do so to the endangering of the constitution".¹ This aspect of the trial is stressed by Basilius's death during the minority of the heir. Anderson believes, however, that the "real dilemma of the trial arises not from the conduct of the accused, but from that of the judge".² He thinks that Euarchus's severity comes near to a miscarriage of justice and can be defended only by a reference to his desire to restore order in Arcadia. Even allowing for this, however, he points out that there is still a difficulty in the trial. The Princes are accused of complicity in Basilius's murder about which they know nothing. Yet Euarchus says that they are "accidentall, if not principall causes" of his death and that this aggravates the general appearance of their guilt. (1593.5.p196) Anderson concludes that thus we are faced with either the "repulsive proposition that the guilt of the accused can be aggravated by a circumstance they know nothing about and are not responsible for or else the doctrine that where the existence of the state is at stake injustice to individuals does not matter".³ He traces a source for this last idea in a passage from Mornay's A Woorke concerning the Trewnesse of the Christian Religion. Sidney himself translated part of this book. This particular passage minimises the importance of death and reads:

What a number of good folke doe we see put to the slaughter, not onely good in the iudgement of vs, but also euen in the iudgement of those that put them to death? Nay rather, what is death but the

¹ Ibid., p.411.

² Idem.

³ Ibid., pp.411-412.

common passage which it behoueth vs al to pass? And what great matter makes it, whether thou passe it by Sea or by Land? by the corruption of thyne owne humors, or by the corruptnesse of thy Commonweale? Agayne, how often haue Iudges condemned some man for a cryme, whereof he hath bene giltlesse, and in the denyall whereof he hath stood euen vpon the Scaffold, and yet hath there confessed himself faultie in some other cryme? ... As for example, the Iudge condemneth them for conspiracie against the commonweale, whereas God condemneth them (perchaunce) for behauing them selues loosely in defending the commonweale. (1)

Anderson concludes with hardly any more tribute to Sidney's clarity of mind than he himself found in Rowe's article.

The course of the trial thus seems to raise issues, and to reveal confusions, more formidable than matters of personal ethics - issues, indeed, that were fundamental to the political theory of the sixteenth century. (2)

He does, however, add,

Here, however, one must emphasize that this conclusion relates only to the Old Arcadia, and can by no means, ... be transferred to the New Arcadia. What the revised trial would have been like we have virtually no evidence. We can perhaps be fairly sure that the supremacy of raison d'etat would have been maintained over the princes' private aims, however blameless; we cannot be at all sure that it would have been so maintained as to raise these particular questions. (3)

Anderson was right to focus on the political aspect of the trial and to suggest that this itself was due for revision. Ringler comes to the heart of the problems in the trial scene. He points out that Sidney's revision of the nature of the Princes' sexual offences does not alter the moral inconsistencies of the trial. They were still guilty of abduction and their pardon by Basilius makes nonsense of Euarchus's sentence. He goes on to

¹Philippe Mornay du Plessis, A Woorke concerning the trewnesse of the Christian Religion, London, 1587, pp. 193-4, quoted by D.M. Anderson, op.cit., p.412.

²Anderson, op.cit., p.412.

³Idem.

point out, however, that Sidney himself was aware of the ethical ambiguity of this scene and "as he was writing the last part of Book II of his New Arcadia he saw how to solve the problem".¹ Far from it being the case that "we have virtually no evidence of what a revised trial would have been like" Ringler points out that Sidney

revised the oracle to indicate that the charge against the heroes would be, not elopement with the princesses, but responsibility for the death of Basilius. By this change, when Basilius revives there has been no crime committed, and even Euarchus with his determination never to "chaunge the never chaunging Justice" may pardon the princes without inconsistency. But though Sidney indicated his final intention in his revision of the oracle, he did not carry through the changes in the trial scene itself". (2)

The changes in the oracle are marked. In the earlier version it reads

Thy elder care shall from thy carefull face
By princely meane be stolne, and yet not lost.
Thy yonger shall with Nature's blisse embrace
An uncouth love, which Nature hateth most.
Thowe with thy wieff adulterie shalt committ
And in thy throne, a forayne state shall sitte
all this one the this fatall yere shall hitte. (p.11)³

In the revised version the first four lines are the same, but it continues:

Both they themselves unto such two shall wed,
Who at thy beer, as at a barre, shall plead
Why thee (a living man) they had made dead.
In thy owne seate a forraine state shall sit
And ere that all these blowes thy head doo hit,
Thou, with thy wife, adultery shalt commit. (p.11)⁴

It is important to notice that if Ringler's hypothesis is correct and this change was carried out, far from radically altering the existing emphasis and significance of the trial it would stress them, and at the

¹Ringler, op.cit., p.379.

²Idem.

³Sidney, Works, IV, p.2.

⁴1590.2.p.327.

same time remove the inconsistencies. In the present trial it will be seen that the stress lies on the threat to the security of the state caused by the Princes' crimes, and on the nature of the administration of justice and international law. A change in the nature of the Princes' offences would not alter this. It would, however, remove all but one of Anderson's objections to this trial. The nature of their supposed crime would not then be out of all proportion to Euarchus's severity; nor would the accusation of a crime which they had not committed be allowed to aggravate their guilt for one they had. It is true, however, that the real innocence of the Princes would substantiate the claim that Euarchus's sentence comes near to a tragic miscarriage of justice. Yet this idea is, in fact, central in the existing trial. The revision of the trial that Ringler suggests would only bring the Princes into line with Gynecia, and the actual innocence of all three, far from destroying the whole point of the trial at all, would underline an already important aspect of its significance. A brief glance at the facts of Gynecia's trial as it stands, and the comment Sidney passes on them will make this clear.

Gynecia's trial has been virtually ignored in all the discussions of the case so far, although its course is the only one which is perfectly consistent both with the character of the prisoner, the requirements of justice in the state, and Basilius's final pardon. The important point is that Gynecia is innocent. It is her own despair which leads her to confess to the guilt for a crime which she neither intended to commit, nor has in fact committed. It is interesting to notice that if the revision of the

trial postulated by Ringler had been carried out, the Princes would not only have been brought into line with Gynecia but the significance of the parallel thus afforded would have been rich; Gynecia innocent but claiming guilt through despair of God's mercy, the Princes innocent, but knowing all the evidence to be against them tempted to despair and triumphing over it. However, although some aspects of this parallel are evident in the existing version of Arcadia, the despair which tempts all three of them belongs properly to theology and the next chapter.

On the strength of her own confession and the seemingly tallying circumstantial evidence of Philanax, Gynecia is condemned in accordance with Arcadian statutes to be buried alive. She welcomes this and the people, although astonished at first, "when they did set it to the beame, with the monstrosnes of her ouglye misdeede, they coulde not but yeeld in their hartes, there was no overbalancing". (1593.5.p175)

Apparently the requirements of justice in the eyes of the law takes no account of the psychological unlikelihood of the case pointed out by Pyrocles.

And for my part so vehemently, and more like the manner of passionate, then giltie folkes, I see, the Queene persecute her selfe, that I thinke condemnation may goe too hastely over her, considering the unlikelyhood, if not impossibilitie, her wisdom, and vertue so long nourished, should in one moment throw downe itselke, to the uttermost ende of wickednes". (1593.5.p185)

The stage is set fair for a tragic miscarriage of justice when Basilius awakes. After realising that what has happened is more his own fault than anyone's, he publicly clears Gynecia of guilt and holds her up as the "perfit mirrour of all wifely love", (1593.5.p206) though this is a little more than the

truth. Sidney's comments on the whole affair: "So uncertain are mortall judgments, the same person most infamous, and most famous, and neither justly". (1593.5.p206)

At first sight this seems an odd comment to pass on the outcome of a trial conducted under a judge whom Sidney is at pains to point out is a model of all that a ruler and judge should be. In fact it reflects on an important aspect of the episode, which is another reminder of the only too unideal nature of Arcadia. In the pastoral scenes the shepherds lament the seeming injustice of a universe in which death holds irrational sway. In the love stories the lovers question the justice of the creation of a human nature in which, if private health evidently consists in a proper balance between reason and passion and the submission of both to a faith in providence, this should be so difficult to achieve. In the trial scene it becomes all too clear that even if men can detect injustice in the universal scheme, they are only too fallible in devising a judicial system and administering it justly in society, even under ideal conditions. It is not due to a fault on Euarchus's part that justice so nearly miscarries. He gives judgement on the evidence before him according to the best of his ability, (Gynecia calls him part of what his name means, 'just judge' [1593.5.pl74]), and in accordance with the laws of the kingdom. The mistake arises out of a complication of circumstances and Gynecia's passionate despair. The point is that even given an ideally just judge human justice may miscarry.

In the Faerie Queene each book contains the adventures of a knight

exemplifying the struggle to attain a specific virtue which he represents. At some point in each book Prince Arthur, who represents the incarnation of all the virtues thus analysed, intervenes to help each particular protagonist. The intervention of Euarchus in the affairs of Arcadia may be likened to this.

Sidney indicates that he is to be thought of as the direct descendant of Alexander. He is described as King of Macedon,

a kingdome, which in elder time had such a soveraintie over all the provinces of Greece, that even the particular kings therin did acknowledge (with more or less degrees of homage) some kind of fealty thereunto (1590.2.pl84)

When Pyrocles, Euarchus's son, visits Philoclea's chamber to plan their escape, he looks forward to arriving safely with her at "the stately pallace of Pella, among the exceeding joyes of his father". (1593.3.p52) Pella was known as the birthplace of Philip and Alexander.¹

Euarchus is described as the ideal ruler, statesman, military leader and judge. Musidorus says, "I might as easily sette downe the whole Arte of governement, as to lay before your eyes the picture of his proceedings". (1590.2.pl87) Greville also stresses his ideal nature, saying that Sidney "made the integrity of this forrain King an image of more constant, pure, and higher strain, than nature makes those ordinary mouldes, wherein she fashioneth earthly Princes".²

In view of the outcome of the trial it is interesting that as an ideal judge Euarchus stresses the fallibility of human systems of justice. He has the essential humility which Sidney represents in the pastoral episodes. Unlike Basilius he does not make the mistake of trying to escape into a

¹See Ringler, op.cit., p.377.

²Greville, op.cit., pp.13-14.

pastoral retirement; indeed he comes to Arcadia to try to "withdrowe Basilus from burying himselfe alive, and to imploy the rest of his olde yeares in doing good, the onely happie action of mans life". (1593.5.p152) However, while Euarchus is aware of the dignity of kingship, he also realises that being mortal, the glory attached to the office is purely transitory, while at the same time, the responsibility is heavier because of his nature as a fallible man. When Philanax comes to ask him to assume the protectorship of pastoral Arcadia, he finds him in an attitude of symbolic significance, "taking his rest under a tree, with no more affected pompes, then as a man that knew, how soever he was exalted, the beginning and end of his body was earth". (1593.5.p153) Furthermore Euarchus only undertakes Philanax's request under certain conditions, which are in the spirit of humility which is characterised in his rest beneath the tree. He warns the Arcadian people who assemble to welcome him

not to have an overshooting expectation of mee: the most cruell adversary of all honourable doings. Nor promise your selves wonders, out of a sodaine lyking: but remember I am a man, that is to say a creature, whose reason is often darkned with error. (1593.5.p158)

He asks them not to judge his actions by their own preconceived opinions, and to lay aside their own disagreements since even the best men do not agree on all subjects but this is no more reason for anger than that "one that loves black, should be angrie with him that is clothed in white". (1593.5.p158)

The ideal judge thus stresses his awareness of human fallibility, and the purely relative value of opinions. These points are also made by the fact of Gynecia's innocence at her trial. The fairy-tale ending of Basilus's resurrection and restoration of Gynecia makes no mockery of

Euarchus's rigid adherence to law; it simply turns what bids fair to be a personal tragedy to the resolution of comedy. In the Princes' case, it also vindicates the Christian patience which they develop during their imprisonment. This happy conclusion to events in Arcadia is important, but it does not dissolve the shadow of the tragedy that might have resulted from the course of justice under a just judge.

Euarchus as the just judge is carefully explicit about the principles according to which he judges. An examination of them will show both how they contribute to an idea of public virtue, and also how close the subject matter of Arcadia is to matters of vital contemporary importance.

Euarchus then, who by this time is known as a perfect statesman, ruler and soldier, is wrecked on the coast of Laconia, and ignorant of the turmoil in Arcadia determines to rest with his friend Basilius. Philanax, who is in temporary charge of the state, welcomes his arrival as heaven sent and determines to ask him to accept the protectorship of the state and to preside over the trial of the King's murderers. He appeals to the people on the grounds that Euarchus "is both by experience and wisdom taught how to direct: his greatness such, as no man can disdain to obey him" (1593.5.pl48). They agree to "yeeld full obedience to Euarchus, so farre as were not prejudiciall to the lawes, customes, and liberties of Arcadia". (1593.5.pl49)

Euarchus consents to undertake the task, imposing the conditions listed above, and in return promising,

that to the uttermost of my skill; but in the generall lawes of nature, especially of Greece, and particular of Arcadia (wherein I must confesse I am not unacquainted) I will not onely see the

passed evils duly punished, and your weale here after established; but for your defence in it, if need shall require, I will imploy the forces and treasures of mine owne country. In the meane time, this shalbe the first order I will take, that no man under paine of greevous punishment, name me by any other name but protector of Arcadia. For I will not leave any possible culloure, to any of my naturall successors, to make claime to this, which by free election you have bestowed upon me. And so I vowe unto you, to depose my self of it assoone as the judgement is passed, the King buried, and his lawfull successor appointed (1593.5.ppl58-9)

His resolute refusal to edge himself into a power for which the people have given no consent, and which would be contrary to the laws of succession, would be especially significant to readers who had so recently witnessed the attempt of Protector Northumberland to place Lady Jane Gray, married to his son Guildford Dudley, on the throne of England. It is also indicative of the fact that wise government in Arcadia involves a hereditary ruler who governs in accordance with his people's consent.

The course of the Princes' trial emphasises Euarchus's adherence to the laws of the country even more strongly. It raises the question of whether the law or the King is supreme. This had far-reaching implications in the sixteenth century for it is connected with the problem of the nature and source of royal authority; a vital one in a period when both Catholics and Calvinists, believing in the supremacy of an ecclesiastical authority, sought theoretical grounds for undermining the authority of an Erastian Prince. Members of either creed countered the theory of the Divine right of kings with the idea that kingship is a matter of contract between subject and king liable to termination if this is broken by either side. Catholics and Calvinists both identified an unjust king with a heretic and defended the right of resistance to include tyrannicide.

Thus the Catholic Mariana and the Calvinist Beza both proclaimed in general terms the right of assassination; thus, too, when ghastly murders had taken place at the hands of devout fanatics, the horrid deeds were justified by men so eminent for piety as John Knox and Pope Sixtus V. Hence the monarchs of the period of the Wars of Religion went about in constant peril of their lives. William of Orange had survived five attacks upon his life before he fell in 1584 to the pistol of Balthazar Gerard; Elizabeth of England told a French ambassador that she had captured no fewer than fifteen emissaries of Philip II who had confessed that their mission was her murder; Henry IV of France had escaped nineteen times from assassins before he was caught by Ravallac in 1610. (1)

The connection between the political problem of royal or legal supremacy and the sanction of tyrannicide on religious grounds should not be oversimplified, since the nature of that law above the king envisaged by those who advocated rebellion on religious grounds obviously differed from that of political theorists like Bodin or Hooker. However, in order to understand the impact Arcadia would have made, and the vitality of its thought, it is important to realise how current some of its ideas were, and the correct relation between law and king concerned some of the most eminent political theorists of the time.

Jean Bodin whose Six Books of the Republic was published in 1576 tried impartially to understand the nature of political authority.

He strove to find some principle of order and unity that should reconcile liberty and subjection, define political obligation, and satisfy conscience and reason. In his doctrine of sovereignty he imagined he had found what was needed. (2)

Bodin believed that the family was the essential unit of ordered society consisting of husband, wife, children and private property. This was the

¹F.J.C. Hearnshaw, 'The Social and Political Problems of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries', The Social and Political Ideas of Some Great Thinkers of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries, ed. F. Hearnshaw, London, 1926, p.37.

²J.W. Allen, 'Jean Bodin', Social and Political Ideas of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries, op.cit., p.46.

source and basis of every political association and the state was an association of families recognising a 'puissance souveraine'. This idea will be returned to later. Although he regarded the sovereign as the law-maker, and believed that monarchy was the best form of government, since ideally sovereignty can only exist in a single will, he did not actually conceive of it as having unlimited power. Sovereignty is limited by eternal principles of right and wrong which princes must obey if there is to be a well ordered state. Bodin believed that if a sovereign orders something inconsistent with this law, then it is the duty of the officer to disobey, although Bodin would not allow him, as Hotman or Mornay would, to organise an armed revolt.

Hooker in his Ecclesiastical Polity believed that

...the law of reason which governed the thoughts of men, and the laws of conduct which bound them into political societies, were equally divine in origin and binding in character with the especial laws of religion revealed in the Bible, which directed them as members also of a spiritual society. (1)

He, like Bodin, believed the monarch should be under a law and, indeed, that the force of social and political law comes not from the will of the king alone, but from the will of the king and his people. While regarding Monarchy as potentially the best form of government, Hooker does not believe that it is divinely ordained. On the contrary he maintains that it has often happened that "to live by one man's will became the cause of all men's misery".²

This problem of sovereignty also occurs in Arcadia. W.D. Briggs in two articles³ takes up a remark made by Malcolm Wallace in his biography

¹N.Sykes, 'Richard Hooker', Social and Political Ideas of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries, op.cit., p.64.

²Hooker, Ecclesiastical Polity, I.X.5, quoted by N.Sykes, op.cit., p.79.

³W.D. Briggs, 'Political Ideas in Sidney's Arcadia', SP., 28, 1931, pp. 137-161, and 'Sidney's Political Ideas', SP., 29, 1932, pp. 534-542.

of Sidney to the effect that

It would indeed be an interesting chapter in Sidney's biography if we could give some account of his attitude toward various doctrines which were gaining currency and which were to assume great importance in the history of thought. Did he accept, for instance, the fundamental doctrine of his friends Languet and Francois Hotman, that the sovereign power has been conferred on a ruler only on condition that he fulfil certain duties? ... Of these things we know nothing. (1)

Briggs maintains that one can, in fact, learn Sidney's political ideas from Arcadia. He makes a case for Sidney supporting the view that certain sections of the community may rebel against the king when he has degenerated into a tyrant. In answer to this I. Ribner makes a case for Sidney taking the side of the absolutists who believed that in no circumstances had the people any right of rebellion.² This particular question of the right of the people to rebel will be dealt with later, what is of interest here is that the question of the right of rebellion also involves a discussion of the supremacy of law or king, and both writers use the trial scene to support their theses. Briggs concludes that the evidence of the Princes' trial points to the fact that the crown is subject to constitutional law and that a prince is sacred only in so far as he preserves civil government. He claims that Sidney shows, not only that the Princes are subject to law in Arcadia, but that, by ceasing to behave like Princes, they have forfeited the right to be treated like them.³ Ribner, on the other hand, says that the Princes are legally condemned, not by denying royal immunity to law, but solely because they are in Arcadia and may not receive the royal privilege due

¹Wallace, op.cit., pp.301-2.

²I. Ribner, 'Sir Philip Sidney on Civil Insurrection', JHI, 13, 1952, pp. 257-265.

³See Briggs, SP, 28, 1931, p.159.

to them in their own country.¹ He thus reduces the problem solely to one of international law.

It is in fact the question of the legality of the trial which takes up the greater part of the proceedings and to which, therefore, Sidney meant to draw attention.

When the Princes are first brought in for trial,

they demanded to know by what authoritie, they could judge of them, since they were not only forryners and so not borne under their lawes, but absolute Princes and therefore not to be touched by lawes (1593.5.p176)

This makes it absolutely clear that the Princes believe that royal immunity to law should be valid on an international scale.

But answere was presently made them, that Arcadia lawes, were to have their force upon any were founde in Arcadia: since strangers have scope to know the customes of a contry, before they put themselves in it: ... As for their being Princes, whether they were so or no, the beleefe stood in their own wordes, which they had so diversly falsified, as they did not deserve beleefe. But what soever they were, Arcadia, was to acknowledge them but as private men, since they were neither by magistracy nor alliance to the princely bloud, to claime any thing in that region (1593.5.p177).

Euarchus takes up the same question, when, after hearing all the evidence on the subject, he comes to give judgement.

This weightie matter, wherof presently we are to determine, doth at the first consideration yeeld two important doubttes. The first whether these men be to be judged. The second how they are to be judged (1593.5.p194).

The first question, although it involves a point of international law, also throws important light on Sidney's idea of the relation between law and king. The second deals with the function of law in the state.

¹See Ribner, op.cit., p.264.

The first doubt ariseth because they geve themselves out for Princes absolute, a sacred name, and to which any violence semes to be an impietie. For how can any lawes, which are the bonds of all humane societie be observed if the lawe givers, and lawe rulers, bee not helde in untouched admiration? (1593.5.pl94)

Part of the answer, Euarchus says, lies in the fact that they are not Princes in Arcadia. (In making this point Euarchus gives a definition of the nature of a Prince which recalls Bodin. "...betwixt Prince and subject there is as necessarie a relation, as betweene father and sonne, and as there is no man a father, but to his childe, so is not a Prince, a Prince but to his owne subjects" (1593.5.pl44).) This, however, is not the whole answer, for he says:

Yet hereto may be objected, that the universall civillitie, the lawe of nations (all mankinde being as it were coinhabitores or worlde-citizens together) hath ever required publicke persons, shoulde be of all parties especially regarded since not onely in peace, but in warre, not only Princes, but herauldes and trumpets, are with great reason exempted from injurys (1593.5.pp.194-5)

Euarches admits the validity of this point but says it is only true within certain limitations.

This pointe is true, but yet so true, as they that will receive the benefit of a custome, must not be the first to breake it. For then can they not complaine, if they be not helpt by that which they themselves hurte (1593.5.pl95).

In other words those that wish to claim the benefit of this privilege must conform to certain ideals of conduct. He goes on to drive the point home by the following example.

Yf a Prince do actes of hostilitie, without denouncing warre, if he breake his oath of amitie, or innumerable such other thinges contrary to the lawe of armes, he must take heede how he fall into their hands whom he so wrongeth (1593.5.pl95)

Although the law of arms must have been familiar to Sidney, he had

received a specific reminder of this very point in a letter from Languet who wrote to him about the question of volunteering to help the Belgians against Spain when England was not officially committed to such a policy.

It is not your business, nor any private person's, to pass a judgement on a question of this kind; it belongs to the magistrate. I mean by magistrate the prince, ... You and your fellows, I mean men of noble birth, consider that nothing brings you more honour than wholesale slaughter; and you are generally guilty of the greatest injustice, for if you kill a man against whom you have no lawful cause of war, you are killing an innocent person. The ancients, though they knew nothing of the true God, were strictly religious in this matter. Cato the elder wrote to his son on his going to Spain, and charged him not to use his sword until he had taken the oath to the commander of the army, for that as a just man, he could not do it before. And we read of a Lacedaemonian in battle, who had actually poised his weapon to kill his enemy, when he heard the trumpet sound a retreat, and drew back his hand, considering that he had no longer a right to kill the man. But this age of ours has lost all honourable discipline, and laughs at such things. It has even suffered the law of heralds to fall into disuse, which the French and English nations in ancient days observed most strictly. (1)

The similarity of the subject of this letter to Euarchus's speech is another instance of the close relation between matters treated in Arcadia and those in Sidney's own life.

Euarchus thus stresses that princes cannot benefit from a privilege which exists to protect them as givers of laws which safeguard society, if they themselves injure those safeguards. Ribner's argument that Pyrocles and Musidorus can be subject to a legal trial only because they are in Arcadia, and not by denying the immunity of royalty to law, is thus not quite true. Euarchus concludes that the Princes are to be judged not only because they are in Arcadia where they are not officially princes, but also because they have ceased to behave like princes. He emphasises that under certain conditions

¹Languet,
⁷Correspondence, op.cit., Oct. 22nd 1578, pp. 172-173.

absolute princes may be judged. "Thus therefore by al lawes of nature and nations, and especially by their owne putting themselves out of the sanctuary of them, these yong men can not in justice avoide the judgement". (1593.5.p195)

Having made this point clear Euarchus turns to his second consideration, how to judge rightly. His discussion of this question emphasises the essentially practical nature of the virtuous behaviour with which Sidney is concerned. Euarchus as ideal judge is not concerned with the philosophical implications of the idea of justice. In this particular situation it is taken that the laws are just, and the crucial problem is how they should be administered.

There resteth then the second point, howe to judge well. And that must undoubtedly bee done, not by a free discourse of reason, and skill of philosophy: but must be tied to the lawes of Greece, and municipall statutes of this kingedome. For although out of them, these came, and to them muste indeede referre their offsprunge, yet because philosophicall discourses, stande in the generall consideration of thinges, they leave to every man a scope of his owne interpretation. Where the lawes applyinge them selves to the necessary use, folde us within assured boundes, which once broken mans nature infinitly rageth (1593.5.p195)

This speech does, however, throw some light on how these laws should first be drawn up, and more about their purpose and function is made clear during the trial. Euarchus says that where a case is doubtful

we are not to take holde of the worse, but rather to be glad we may finde any hope that mankind is not growen monstrous, (being undoubtedly lesse evill a guiltie man shoulde escape, then a guiltlesse perish) (1593.5.p196)

This points to the fact that Sidney does not sympathise with the spirit of Mornay's passage which minimises the importance of death as Anderson suspected. However, it does appear that in the face of circumstantial evidence Euarchus believes that the will to commit a crime is to be taken for the deed. Pyrocles

and Musidorus are found equally guilty

though he that termes himselfe Diaphantus were sooner disapointed of his purpose of conveying away the Lady Philoclea, then he that perswaded the Princesse Pamela to flie her countrie, and accompanied her in it: yet seing in causes of this nature, the wil by the rules of justice standeth for the deed, they are both alike to bee founde guiltie, and guiltie of hainous ravishment. (1593.5.p196)

Euarchus also emphasises that because the laws exist to protect society they cannot afford to be merciful. The Princes plead for leniency on the grounds that the

lawes are not made like limetwigges, or nets, to catch every thing that toucheth them, but rather like sea markes to avoide the ship-wracke of ignoraunt passingers,

and that their crime in "the extremest interpretation is but a humaine error". (1593.5.p193)

Euarchus, however, replies that the law seeks to prevent rather than remedy crimes.

But herein we must consider, that the lawes look how to prevent by due examples, that such thinges be not done: and not how to salve such things, when they are doone. For if the governors of justice, shall take such a scope, as to measure the foote of the lawe, by a show of conveniencie, and measure that conveniencie not by the publike societie, but by that which is fittest for them which offende: young men, stronge men, and rich men, shall ever finde private conveniencies, howe to palliate such committed disorders, as to the publike shall not onely bee inconvenient but pestilent. (1593.5.p197)

Euarchus's sincerity in holding this principle is severely tested. He is directly faced with the temptation not to measure the law by a consideration of the good of society when it is revealed that the prisoners are his son and nephew. Musidorus upbraids him with unnatural behaviour as a father; and Pyrocles begs that his death might be allowed to suffice for them both. Both Princes win great public sympathy. Euarchus, however,

replies in defence of an ideal of justice which is unshaken by personal considerations.

I take witness of the immortal gods ... O Arcadians, that what this daye I have saide, hath bene out of my assured perswasion, what justice it selfe and your juste lawes require. ... leaving aside all considerations of the persons, I wayed the matter which you committed into my hands, with most unpartiall and farthest reach of reason. And thereout have condemned them to loose their lives, contaminated with so manye foule breaches of hospitalitie, civilitie and vertue. Now contrarye to all expectations, I finde them to be my onely sonne and Nephew, such upon whom you see, what guiftes nature hath bestowed. Such who have so to the wonder of the worlde heretofore behaved themselves, as might geve juste cause to the greatest hopes, that in an excellent youth may be conceived. Lastly in fewe wordes such, in whome I placed all my mortall joyes, and thought my selfe now neere my grave, to recover a newe life. But alas shall justice halte? Or shall she winke in ones cause which had Lynces eyes in anothers? Or rather shall all private respectes geve place to that holy name? Bee it so, bee it so, let my graye heares bee layde in the dust with sorrow, let the small remnant of my life, bee to me an inward and outward desolation, and to the world a gazing stock of wretched misery: But never never, let sacred rightfulness fall. It is immortal and immortally ought to be preserved. If rightly I have judged, then rightly I have judged myne own children. Unlesse the name of a child, should have force to change the never changing justice. No no Pyrocles and Musidorus I prefer you much before my life, but I prefer Justice as far before you, while you did like your selves, my body should willingly have ben your shield, but I cannot keep you from the effects of your own doing.

Musidorus finally acknowledges that Euarchus is right for after he has been pardoned he acknowledges his fault towards him.

In this trial Sidney is thus concerned with that idea of political justice which Aristotle defined as existing "only among those whose relations to one another are governed by law".¹ It is interesting that he also appears to uphold Aristotle's conclusion that

¹Aristotle, The Nicomachean Ethics, trans. J.A.K. Thomson, Penguin Books, 1955, p.156.

we will not have a man to rule over us, for a man rules with an eye to his own interest and becomes a tyrant. We will have the law for our ruler, for we consider that the function of a ruler is to be the guardian of justice. (1)

Euarchus, the just judge, administers justice not "by a free discourse of reason, and skill of philosophy" but by upholding the "municipall statutes" of Arcadia designed to protect the well-being of society. This legal justice admits of no mercy by definition, but, as will be seen later, Basilius's resurrection and pardon represent the workings of a merciful providence whose rule is higher than such justice.

Basilius's pardon as it stands, however, is inconsistent with Euarchus's sentence. This inconsistency is further emphasised by the fact that Euarchus, before grief-stricken at the thought that justice could be affected by private considerations, is now filled with "inestimable joy" (1593.5.p206) when Basilius arranges the marriage between the Princes and Princesses. Thus it seems that Basilius as the lawful prince of Arcadia to whom Euarchus surrenders his magistracy, can overthrow as he pleases the laws according to which the just judge judges. This in turn is quite inconsistent with what Sidney has to say elsewhere in Arcadia, and outside it, on the subject of the right relation between the law and the king. It would therefore appear strongly probable that Ringler's assumption about the revisions of the trial scene are correct.

This trial also reflects contemporary customs and problems and thus indicates other aspects of the topical nature of Arcadia noticed in chapter two. In 1572 when the Commons wished to persuade Queen Elizabeth to condemn

¹Idem.

Mary Queen of Scots they brought forward arguments "grounded upon Law and Reason"¹ to show that it would be better for the safety of the state if she were to deal with her after the first degree. They followed these up with legal arguments which are chiefly concerned with justification for trying a Queen. Many of these, as Briggs² has pointed out, are also used at the Princes' trial. The Commons point out that

Every person offending is to be tryed in the place where he committed the Crime, without Exception of priviledge.

A King passing through another King's Realm, or there Resident, is but a private person.

The Dignity of the Person offending increaseth the offence....

A King though not deposed may commit Treason.

Diotorus a King Confederated with the Romans was Criminally judged by Caius Julius Caesar, for that he Conspired to have slain the said Julius Caesar at a Banquet....

Great offences in the highest degree ought not to be punished for any affection of Kindred.

Justice, Equity and Common-Wealth, are to be preferred before the affection of Kindred....

An offence of the highest degree against the Prince being the Head of the Political Body, is an offence to every Member of the same, and requireth sharp punishment for preservation of the whole.

The intent of offences in the highest degree is punished with death, although the Execution of the intent doth not follow. ...

It is dangerous for the State to swerve from the Ministration of Justice and due Execution of Law.

To spare Offenders in the highest degree, is an injury to the Prince and State of the Realm. ...

The loss of life is the penalty appointed for Treason. ...

Punishment ought to be equal with the fault, and he that ministreth less punishment than the fault deserveth, doth not execute the Law according to the Rules of Justice. (3)

¹Sir Simonds D'Ewes, The Journals of all the Parliaments During the Reign of Queen Elizabeth, London, 1682, p.217.

²Briggs, S.P. 1931, op.cit., p.160.

³Sir Simonds D'Ewes, op.cit., pp.217-218.

The correspondence, even in details, between these legal principles and those by which Euarchus judges is striking. He also subdues all "affection of Kindred" to a concern for the well-being of the whole political body; and he punishes with death the intent of a crime, although its execution did not follow. He is also quite clear that the fact that the prisoners are absolute princes does not exempt them from the jurisdiction of another country, or lessen the enormity of their crime.

Other aspects of the trial also illustrate this connection of Arcadia with contemporary life. Philanax, who until the trial has behaved as a responsible and fair-minded counsellor, in his vehemence to see what he believes is justice done, becomes a most unpleasantly vindictive orator. K.T. Rowe believes that his procedure can be justified by his zeal for the safety of the state, and explained by actual cases of prosecution oratory in the sixteenth century. Among other trials he quotes that of Edmund Campion where a Mr. Anderson, Queen's Counsel,

opened with such an invective that Campion "demanded of Mr. Anderson whether he came as an orator to accuse them, or as a pleader to give evidence." The lord chief justice, Sir Christopher Wray, reminded Campion, "You must have patience with him and the rest like wise; for they being of the Queen's Council they speak of no other intent than of duty to her majesty." (1)

Rowe concludes that Philanax is to be excused for his vehemency against the prisoners since his function "was to seek a conviction; justice was the responsibility of Evarchus".² Certainly after the trial Sidney is quite specific about the favour with which Philanax was still regarded. He was

¹K.T. Rowe, 'Romantic Love and Parental Authority in Sydney's Arcadia,' op.cit., p.19. (Rowe quotes from T.B. Howell, State Trials from the Earliest Period to the Year 1783, London, 1811-26, I, 1053.)

²Idem.

for his singular faith ever held deare of Basilius while he lived, and no lesse of Musidorus, who was to inherite that Dukedome, and therein confirmed to him and his, the second place of that Province, with great increase of his living to maintain it. (1593.5.p206)

Yet Musidorus had so hated him at the trial that he "had looked rounde about him, to see whether by any meanes hee might come to have caught him in his armes, and have killed him". (1593.5.p191)

Another particularly unpleasant side of Philanax's behaviour at the trial is his treatment of Dametas and his family, and this also has an interesting contemporary parallel. This family had offended only because Basilius has raised them to a position where their ignorance could lead to disastrous consequences. Yet Philanax

caused him with his wife and daughter, to bee fettered up in as manye chaines and clogges, as they coulde beare, and every thirde howre to bee cruelly whipt, till the determinate judgement should be given of all these matters (1593.4.p102)

A parallel to this brutality is described in "The newe Navigation and discoverie of the kingdome of Moscovia, by the North-east, in the yeere 1553: Enterprised by Sir Hugh Willoughbie knight, and perfourmed by Richard Chancelor Pilot major of the voyage", which Hakluyt translated from the Latin by Clement Adams and published in his Principal Navigations. In one section the legal customs of the Muscovites are described.

If any controversie arise among them, they first make their Landlords Judges in the matter, and if they cannot end it, then they preferre it to the Magistrate. The plaintiff craveth of the said Magistrate, that he may have leave to enter law against his adversarie: and having obtained it, the officer fetcheth the defendant, and beateth him on the legges, till he bring forth a suretie for him: but if he be not of such credite, as to procure a surety, then are his hands by an officer tied to his necke, and he is beaten all the way, till he come before the Judge. The Judge then asketh him (as for example in the matter of debt) whether he oweth any thing to the plaintife. If he

denies it, then saith the Judge, How canst thou deny it? the defendant answereth, By an othe: thereupon the officer is commaunded to cease from beating of him, untill the matter be further tried. (1)

This idea of beating until some legal decision has been arrived at corresponds to Philanax's order for whipping until "the determinate judgement should be given of all these matters".

Besides the fact that Hakluyt was a contemporary and friend of Sidney's at Oxford, the account of this voyage has a particular connection with the Sidney family. It tells that Richard Chancelor, who was elected to govern the expedition, "was brought up by one Master Henry Sidney, a noble young Gentleman and very much beloved of King Edward",² who came to the ships and made an oration on the dangers Chancelor had undertaken.

He commits his life (a thing to a man of all things most deare) to the raging Sea, and the uncertainties of many dangers. ... He shall commit his safetie to barbarous and cruell people, and shall hazard his life amongst the monstrous and terrible beastes of the Sea. (3)

This Henry Sidney was Philip's father, and if he told such tales as Chancelor's adventures to his son, it is small wonder that in Arcadia shipwreck often illustrates the hazards of fortune and men's varying reaction to them.

It may thus be concluded that the issues raised in the trial scene are closely related to matters of contemporary interest and importance. More important, however, for the part it plays in Arcadia is the fact that Sidney is not so much concerned with the nature of the guilt of the prisoners, as

¹Voyages and Documents of Richard Hakluyt, selected by Janet Hampden, Oxford, 1958, p.65.

²Ibid., p.42.

³Ibid., p.43.

with an examination of the laws by which they are to be judged, and of the nature of the public virtue necessary for upholding them. Euarchus represents this public virtue. He is strongly aware of his own limitations in dealing with the affairs of others, but subdues all private passions to a concern for the order and well-being of the state. As an ideal judge he explains the principles of the laws according to which he judges, and is then tested to the limits of human endurance to show how, ideally, human justice should be maintained. The fact that in spite of his care justice nearly miscarries belongs to the darker episodes of Arcadia, and emphasises Euarchus's own warning on mortal fallibility. However, his sentence is passed only to be revoked by Basilius in the interests of another level of meaning in the plot which will be examined in the next chapter.

Sidney's concern in the trial that princes should not be able to claim privileges that might be injurious to the well-being of the state is indicative of his attitude towards the dangers of tyranny in his own time. His objections to the French Catholic marriage of the Queen with Anjou are obvious in his letter to her on that subject. He believes that it would only further the dynastic ambitions of Anjou and drive in the thin edge of the wedge for a Catholic rebellion in England.¹ Greville, in his biography, adds that Sidney thought that if this marriage was accomplished Anjou would contrive "to lift up Monarchie above her ancient legall Circles, by banishing all free spirits, and faithfull Patriots, with a kinde of shaddowed Ostracisme,

¹See Sidney, "A Discourse of Sir PH.S. To the Queenes Majesty Touching Hir Mariage with Monsieur", Works, III, pp. 51-60.

till the Ideas of native freedom should be utterly forgotten";¹ and moreover that when "he had thus metamorphosed our moderate form of Monarchie into a precipitate absoluteness"² he should attempt to undermine the Protestant religion.

Greville also reports that Sidney advocated stirring up large French towns in support of Protestantism to break the power of the French nobles. He hoped that the neighbouring Princes, sick of Spanish domination, would join them and show in France,

How that once wel-formed Monarchy had by little, and little, let fal her ancient, and reverend pillars, (I mean Parliaments, Lawes, and Customes) into the narrowness of Proclamations, or Imperiall Mandates: by which like bastard children of tyranny she hath transformed her Gentry into Peasants, her Peasants into slaves, Magistracy into Sale works, Crown-revenue into Impositions. And therein likewise published the differences between Monarchs, and Tyrants so clearly to the world, as here-after all Estates, that would take upon their necks the yoke of Tyranny, must justly be reputed voluntary slaves in the choice of that passive bondage. (3)

Similarly Greville reports that Sidney believed that the Spanish Inquisition had rooted out all "seeds of humane freedom".⁴ He thought, however, that it would ultimately work its own destruction.

In respect that these types of extremity would soon publish to the world, what little difference Tyrants strive to leave between the creation, use, and honor of men, and beasts, valuing them indifferently but as Counters, to sum up the divers, nay contrary uses, and Audits of sublime and wandring supremacy, which true glass would (in this Gentlemans opinion) shew the most dull and cowardly eye, that Tyrants be not nursing Fathers, but step-fathers; and so no anointed deputies of God, but rather lively Images of the dark Prince, that sole author of dis-creation, and disorder, who ever ruins his ends with over-building. (5)

¹Greville, op.cit., p.53.

²Ibid., p.54.

³Ibid., p.98.

⁴Ibid., pp.115-116.

⁵Ibid., p.116.

This concern with political freedom, and tyranny which rules with no reference to parliament and law, also characterises the theme of government in the political episodes in the rest of Arcadia. In these public virtue is seen as consisting in a cooperation of all members of society in an effort to achieve an order which is ideally exemplified in a monarchical state. Sidney examines the nature of this state and the conditions necessary for creating and maintaining it. He also illustrates the disastrous consequences of the loss of the order which it achieves. He is thus concerned with the responsibilities of both ruler and ruled.

Greville, who seemed to regard Arcadia primarily as a handbook of political wisdom, stresses this last point. He said that Sidney's intention was

on the Monarch's part, lively to represent the growth, state, and declination of Princes, change of Government, and lawes: vicissitudes of sedition, faction, succession, confederacies, plantations, with all other errors, or alterations in publique affaires. Then again in the subjects case; the state of favor, disfavor, prosperitie, adversity, emulation, quarrell, undertaking, retiring, hospitality, travail, and all other moodes of private fortunes, or misfortunes. (1)

This intention is carried out by means of an intricate patterning of the narrative. The characters and incidents described in the Princes' adventures, the wars of Amphialus and the activities of Euarchus as an ideal ruler, illustrate, by means of contrast or parallel, the political implications of Basilius's behaviour in the main plot.

Thus Euarchus, who as an ideal judge and ruler subdued his private feelings where these clashed with what he felt was right for the state, stands

¹Ibid., pp.15-16.

directly contrasted to Basilius who was quite unable to achieve this public virtue. It is his inability to put the good of the common-wealth before a concern for his own safety which leads to his retirement and, consequently, social chaos.

Kalander stresses Basilius's likeability as a man saying that,

though he exceed not in the vertues which get admiration; as depth of wisdom, height of courage and largenesse of magnificence, yet is hee notable in those whiche stirre affection, as trueth of words, meekenesse, courtesie, mercifulnesse, and liberalitie. (1590.1.p19)

The fact that these qualities alone are simply not sufficient to constitute a good leader has already been implied by Euarchus's behaviour at the trial. It is also quite clearly illustrated in the wars of Amphialus when Cecropia threatens to kill his daughters and Zelmane if Basilius does not lift his siege. His position is then exactly parallel to that of Euarchus in the trial, for both are tempted to put private affections before public welfare. This parallel is underlined by Philanax to whom Basilius turns for advice. He says that he is advising the king not as "these excellent Ladies father", but as a prince at war whose first duty is to outwit the enemy.

But indeede a Prince of judgement ought not to consider what his enimies promise, or threaten, but what the promisers and threatners in reason wil do: and the neerest conjecture therunto, is what is best for their own behoofe to do. (1590.3.p467)

Philanax points out that whether Basilius lifts the siege or not the enemy still have it in their power to kill his daughters. He, therefore, advises Basilius that he should not appear to be swayed by their propositions but offer them a pardon if they will make peace and surrender their captives, but otherwise ignore their threats and continue the war. "And let them

that are your subjects, trust you that are their Prince: doo not you subject your selfe to trust them, who are so untrusty as to be manifest traitors".

(1590.3.p468) The play on the word 'subject' to emphasise how completely Basilius is in danger of reversing the roles of ruler and ruled by following his own private inclinations is subtle. Philanax concludes quite openly:

In sum, you are a Prince, and a father of people, who ought with the eye of wisdome, the hand of fortitude, and the hart of justice to set downe all private conceits, in comparison of what for the publike is profitable. (1590.3.p468)

At this juncture, however, Gynecia rushes in full of anxiety for her daughters and Zelmane, and

Basilius, otherwise enough tender minded, easily granted to raise the siege, which he saw dangerous to his daughters: but indeed more carefull for Zelmane, by whose besieged person, the poore old man was streightly besieged. (1590.3.p468)

The danger of too much personal kindness in a ruler is also emphasised by the story of Leonatus the son of the "Paphlagonian unkinde King". This king is persuaded by his bastard son, Plexirtus, to mistrust and try to kill his heir Leonatus. However, Leonatus escapes, and still loving his father, cares for him after he has been degraded and blinded by Plexirtus. With the help of the Princes he overcomes his half brother and inherits the kingdom. However, his natural kindness then prompts him to trust Plexirtus's assumed repentance and pardon him in hope of his "future amendment". (1590.2.p213) This has disastrous consequences for his goodness was "as apt to be deceived, as the others craft was to deceive". (1590.2.p293) Even when Leonatus discovers that "the ungratefull man went about to poyson him" he would not

"suffer his kindnesse to be overcome, not by justice it selfe". (1590.2.p293)

He merely pardons Plexirtus and sends him off on an expedition where he can wreak more mischief. In this he is contrasted to Euarchus who did not allow kindness to overcome justice.

The lack of judgement which Basilius displays in his inability to subdue personal inclinations to public duty, also leads him to ignore the sound advice of wise counsellors. Sidney nevertheless stresses the importance of the duty of the courtier as a responsible counsellor in several episodes.

This function of the courtier was important in the sixteenth century and Sidney himself was highly estimated in this capacity. The Prince of Orange, whom he visited in 1577 in company with Fulke Greville, sent a message by that gentleman to Queen Elizabeth that he thought "her Majesty had one of the ripest, and greatest Counsellors of Estate in Sir Philip Sidney, that at this day lived in Europe".¹ This aspect of the duty of the courtier is also stressed in Castiglione's book. There it is stressed that the courtier must not flatter the prince but

when hee knoweth his minde is bent to commit any thing unseemely for him, to be bold to stand with him in it, and to take courage after an honest sorte at the favor which he hath gotten him through his good qualities, to dissuade him from every ill purpose, and to set him in the way of vertue. (2)

The flatterers are condemned for

they speake and worke alwaies to please, and for the most part open the way with lyes, which in the Princes minde engender ignorance, not of outward matters onely, but also of his owne selfe. And this may be saide to be the greatest and foulest lye of all other, because the ignorant minde deceiveth himselfe, and inwardly maketh lies of himselfe (3)

¹Greville, op.cit., p.27.

²Castiglione, op.cit., p.261.

³Ibid., p.262.

Philanax is a model of the first kind of courtier. He fearlessly voices his opinion of the folly of Basilius's action in retiring from the world. "I do (most deare Lord) with humble boldnes say, that the maner of your determination dooth in no sort better please me, then the cause of your going". (1590.1.p24) He constantly points out to Basilius that his duty lies in a return to public life, but he is disregarded. Basilius's elevation of Dametas and his family to positions of responsibility which they cannot sustain is an example, as Kalander points out, of how "Princes (whose doings have beene often soothed with good successe) thinke nothing so absurde, which they cannot make honourable". (1590.1.p22) He is supported in this dangerous absurdity by those flattering courtiers condemned by Castiglione. Basilius takes Dametas to court where "the flattering courtier had no sooner taken the Princes minde, but that there were straight reasons to confirme the Princes doing, and shadowes of vertues found for Dametas". (1590.1.p22) Basilius is deceiving himself, and his courtiers aid and abet him so that Kalander fears "my master will in the end (with his cost) finde, that his office is not to make men, but to use men as men are; no more than a horse will be taught to hunt, or an asse to mannage". (1590.1.p22)

Besides this, an example of the dangers irresponsible courtiers run on their own account is shown in the episodes with Tydeus and Telenor who serve Plexirtus. They base their service on false principles, for they had not learned to make "friendship a child, and not the father of Vertue". (1590.2.p211) Having been brought up with Plexirtus

they willingly held out the course, rather to satisfie him, then al the world; and rather to be good friendes, then good men: so as though they did not like the evill he did, yet they liked him that did the evill; and though not founcellors of the offence, yet protectors of the offender. (1590.2.pp.211-12)

In following this course of action they meet their end for Plexirtus, believing that all men are as corrupt and self-loving as himself, in a fit of suspicion leads them into a situation where one kills the other and is then himself set on by murderers. Pyrocles tells how they die recognising their mistake:

accusing their folly in having beleevd, he could faithfully love, who did not love faithfulness: wishing us to take heed, how we placed our good wil upon any other ground, then proove of vertue: since length of acquaintance, mutuall secrecies, nor height of benefits could binde a savage harte; no man being good to other, that is not good in himself. (1590.2.pp.294-295)

Their blindness in refusing to recognise Plexirtus's true nature is of the same quality as Basilius's in his promotion of Dametas. The implications of his behaviour on that occasion are further underlined in the story of Antiphilus who marries Erona. The fact that Basilius himself tells this tale just after the rebellion in his own kingdom has clearly indicated what happens when a king attempts to "make men" instead of using them as they are, has a certain dramatic irony; for in describing Antiphilus's actions he unconsciously describes the nature of his own behaviour. He tells how once Antiphilus has come to the throne he was

streight like one caried up to so hie a place, that he looseth the discerning of the ground over which he is; so was his mind lifted so far beyond the levell of his owne discourse, that remembring only that himselfe was in the high seate of a King, he could not perceive that he was a king of reasonable creatures, who would quickly scorne follies, and repine at injuries. But imagining no so true propertie of sovereigntie, as to do what he listed, and to list whatsoever pleased his fansie, he quickly made his kingdome a Tennis-court, where

his subjects should be the balles; not in truth cruelly, but licenciously abusing them, presuming so far upon himselfe, that what he did was liked of everie bodie: nay, that his disgraces were favours, and all because he was a King. For in Nature not able to conceyve the bonds of great matters (suddenly borne into an unknowne Ocean of absolute power) he was swayed withall (he knewe not howe) as everie winde of passions puffed him. Whereunto nothing helped him better, then that poysonous sugar of flatterie: which some used, out of the innate basenesse of their hart, straight like dogges fawning upon the greatest. (1590.2.p330)

Antiphilus's behaviour recalls Sidney's own comment on tyrants who value men as counters to be moved in the furthering of their own ambition.¹ Both Basilius and Antiphilus treat men as pawns in a game of which they believe themselves to have control, and both are checkmated by circumstances beyond their control. Antiphilus is murdered, and Basilius caught in the turmoil he has created both in his family and his kingdom.

Sidney's description of Basilius's behaviour is similar to his estimation of the French Henry the Third, reported by Greville.

Henry, the third of France appears to him in the likeness of a good Master, rather than a great King; buried in his pleasures, his Crown demain exhausted, impositions multiplyed, the people light, the Nobility prone to move, and consequently his country apt, through scorn of his effeminate Vices, either to become a prey for the strongest undertaker, or else to be Cantonized by self-division. (2)

This is exactly the fate of Arcadia during Basilius's retirement.

First the rebellion, and then the factions into which the kingdom splits at Basilius's supposed death, illustrate "how great dissipations, Monarchall government are subject unto". (1593.4.pl30) However, the description of oligarchy and democracy in Arcadia indicates how far Sidney

¹See Greville, op.cit., p.116.

²Ibid., p.81.

was from advocating any different form of government. He is simply concerned to analyse the evils to which a kingdom which lacks a strong leader is subject, and to show how they can be remedied. This last point is illustrated in Euarchus's behaviour at his accession to the throne of Macedonia when that country is in a state of corruption parallel to that of Arcadia after Basilius's supposed death.

The rebellion that disturbs Basilius's peace in Arcadia is caused by the common people who get drunk at a country feast and start to express their discontent at Basilius's retirement, thinking that it was because he "disdained them". They criticize a government where "none but great men and gentlemen could be admitted into counsel", and complain that "the commons (forsooth) were to plain headed to say their opinions: but yet their blood and sweat must maintain all". (1590.2.pp.322-323) However, their behaviour in front of the lodges plainly shows Sidney's opinion of their ability to have any responsible part in the administration.

Zelmane asks them to send a representative to the King bearing their demands and complaints. But they cannot agree on any policy for, like Basilius, each is more concerned for his own welfare than that of the state.

Then

never Bees made such a confused humming: the towne dwellers demanding putting downe of imposts: the country felowes laying out of commons: some would have the Prince keepe his Court in one place, some in another. Al cried out to have new councillors: but when they should think of any new, they liked them as well as any other, that they could remember, especially they would have the treasure so looked unto, as that he should never neede to take any more subsidies. At length they fel to direct contrarieties. For the Artisans, they would have corne and wine set at a lower price, and bound to be kept so stil:

the plowman, vine-laborers, and farmers would none of that. The countrimen demanded that every man might be free in the chief townes: that could not the Burgesses like of. The peasants would have the Gentlemen destroyed, the Citizens (especially such as Cookes, Barbers, and those other 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. But no confusion was greater then of particular mens likings and dislikings: one dispraising such a one, whom another praised, and demanding such a one to be punished, whom the other would have exalted. No lesse ado was there about choosing him, who should be their spokes-man. The finer sort of Burgesses, as Marchants Prentises, and Clothworkers, because of their riches, disdainning the baser occupations, and they because of their number as much disdainning them: all they scorning the countrimens ignorance, and the country-men suspecting as much their cunning (1590.2.p315)

Their lack of unity ruins their cause; they give in to Zelmane, because they are torn by internal jealousies, "the stay having ingendred division, and division having manifested their weaknes". (1590.2.p316)

Zelmane's speech to these rebels is important as it states the political principles which are finally vindicated in Arcadia. She emphasises the value of a hereditary monarchy and begs the Arcadians to take her life rather

then you (called over the world the wise and quiet Arcadians) should be so vaine, as to attempt that alone, which all the rest of your countrie wil abhor; then you should shew your selves so ungratefull, as to forget the fruite of so many yeares peaceable government; or so unnaturall, as not to have with the holy name of your naturall Prince, any furie over-maistred. For such a hellish madnes (I know) did never enter into your harts, as to attempt any thing against his person; which no successor, though never so hatefull, wil ever leave (for his owne sake) unrevenged. (1590.2.p317)

She then goes on to point out the evils of democratic government using an argument which could equally well apply to oligarchy as it is later shown in Arcadia.

Neither can your wonted valour be turned to such a basenes, as in stead of a Prince, delivered unto you by so many roiall ancestors, to take the tyrannous yoke of your fellow subject, in whom the innate meanes will bring forth ravenous covetousnes, and the newnes of his estate, suspectfull cruelty. Imagine, what could your enimies more wish unto you, then to see your owne estate with your owne handes undermined? (1590.2.p317)

Finally, she defines the ordered hierarchy of authority which she, and Sidney, believed can alone ensure a peaceful way of life.

O what would your fore-fathers say, if they lived at this time, and saw their ofspring defacing such an excellent principallitie, which they with so much labour and bloud so wisely have establisht? Do you thinke them fooles, that saw you should not enjoy your vines, your cattell, no not your wives and children, without government; and that there could be no government without a Magistrate, and no Magistrate without obedience, and no obedience where every one upon his owne private passion, may interpret the doings of the rulers? (1590.2.p317)

This speech stresses not only that a proper delegation of authority must ensure the peaceful running of a state, but also that any sudden change in a constitution is dangerous;

what would your fore-fathers say, if they lived at this time, and saw their ofspring defacing such an excellent principallitie, which they with so much labour and bloud so wisely have establisht?

It also implies that the best guarantee for preserving social order is a hereditary monarchy. This point was of vital significance to the subjects of the childless Elizabeth. This point is also made by Kalandar when he says that even a comparatively weak king like Basilius can manage to rule "so quiet a countrie, where the good minds of the former princes had set down good lawes, and the well bringing up of the people doth serve as a most sure bond to hold them". (1590.1.p19) Also, when Basilius is thought to be dead, Sidney remarks that the shepherds' sorrow witnesses to the fact that

men are loving creatures when injuries put them not from their naturall course: and howe easily a thing it is for a Prince by succession, deeplie to sinke into the soules of his subjects, a more lively monument then Mausolus Tombe (1593.4.p100)

The "innate meanes" bringing forth "ravenous covetousnes" of which Zelmane speaks is illustrated in the factions that divide the country at the supposed death of Basilius; but it is important to notice that these are also directly due to Basilius's foolish behaviour. Although Philanax's authority has been royally delegated and he stands "onely upon a constant desire of justice, and a cleere conscience", the nobles lay "his greatnes as a fault to the Princes judgement, who shewde in Damaetas he might easely be deceyved in mens valewe". (1593.4.p132) However, they cannot govern the country any better themselves for they are ignorant of matters of state, and this again is laid at Basilius's door. "Publicke matters had ever bene privately governed, so that they had no lively taste what was good for themselves". (1593.4.p130)

Thus in his description of the chaos which follows Basilius's death it seems as if Sidney is demonstrating the evil consequences of that monarchy which has "let fal her ancient, and reverend pillars, (I mean Parliaments, Lawes, and Customes) into the narrowness of Proclamations, or Imperiall Mandates"¹ which he saw in France. He likens the disorder to "a falling steeple,

the partes whereof, as windowes, stones, and pinnacles, were well, but the whole masse ruinous. And this was the generall case of all, wherein notwithstanding was an extreame medly of diversified thoughts; the great men looking to make themselves strong by factions, the gentlemen some bending to them, some standing upon themselves, some desirous to overthrowe those few which they thought were over them, the souldiers desirous of trouble, as the nurse of spoile, and not

¹Greville, op.cit., p.98.

much unlike to them, though in another way, were all the needy sorte, the riche fearefull, the wise carefull. This composition of conceytes, brought foorth a daungerous tumulte, which yet woulde have bene more daungerous, but that it had so many partes, that no body well knewe against whome chiefly to oppose themselves. (1593.4.pl31)

Although this chaos is due to Basilius's private government Sidney thus also/stresses the evils of a purely oligarchic system of government by demonstrating the envy and ambition which divide those who would form just such a government. The full measure of Philanax's incorruptibility can be seen in his willingness to hand over all his authority to Euarchus because he believes it the only way to heal the factions in the kingdom and obtain justice.

During the time of Euarchus's minority his kingdom also lapses into that state which Arcadia bids fair to achieve at Basilius's death. The Macedonian lords abuse an authority which is not properly theirs and bring in

the worst kind of Oligarchie; that is, when men are governed in deede by a few, and yet are not taught to know what those few be, to whom they should obey. (1590.2.pl85)

These lords

having the power of kinges, but not the nature of kinges, used the authority as men do their farms, of which they see within a yeere they shal goe out: making the Kinges sworde strike whom they hated, the Kings purse reward whom they loved: and (which is worst of all) making the Royall countenance serve to undermine the Royall soveraintie. (1590.2.pl85)

Their action causes widespread corruption throughout the social orders.

Men of vertue suppressed, lest their shining should discover the others filthines; and at length vertue it selfe almost forgotten, when it had no hopefull end whereunto to be directed. (1590.2.pl86)

The measures Euarchus takes to establish order are exactly those

recommended by Machiavelli when he says,

a prince, so long as he keeps his subjects united and loyal, ought not to mind the reproach of cruelty; because with a few examples he will be more merciful than those who, through too much mercy, allow disorders to arise, from which follow murder or robbery; for these are wont to injure the whole people, whilst those executions which originate with a prince offend the individual only. (1)

Euarchus was similarly

forced to establish by some even extreme severitie, not so much for the very faultes themselves, (which he rather sought to prevent then to punish) as for the faultie ones; who strong, even in their faultes, scorned his youth, and could not learne to digest, that the man which they so long had used to maske their owne appetites, should now be the reducer of them into order. (1590.2.p186)

That Sidney was familiar with this doctrine of Machiavelli we know from a playful reference in a letter to Languet on April 29th 1574.

I never could be induced to believe that Machiavelli was right about avoiding an excess of clemency, until I learned from my own experience what he has endeavoured with many arguments to prove. For I, with my usual vice of mercy, endured at your hands not only injustice, but blows and wounds; hoping that such gentleness would at last bend the most hardened obstinacy. But I am disappointed in my hopes, ... (2)

I. Ribner has shown that there is not much difference between Sidney and Machiavelli on matters of state-craft.³ Both investigate the sources of order and disorder in a state; both believe in the ability of one outstanding man to lead the people; both are concerned with problems of oligarchy and absolutism. However, whereas Machiavelli, in his investigation of what makes for a successful preservation of authority and order in the state, is not concerned with the personal morality of the ruler, Sidney rejects this.

Ribner points out that:

¹Niccolo Machiavelli, The Prince, trans. W.K.Marriott, London, 1906, p.133.

²Correspondence, op.cit., p.60.

³I. Ribner, 'Machiavelli and Sidney: the Arcadia of 1590', SP. 47, 1950, pp.152-172.

Aside from the quality of virtu,' the ability to assert human will power in the face of opposing fortune and to achieve success, there is no emphasis in Machiavelli upon the inner qualities of the prince. 'His strict observation of the laws,' he writes, 'will insure him obedience and the reputation of being virtuous; and his affability, humanity and benevolence, and other good qualities ... will make him beloved'. But it is only the reputation for virtue he need have; it is only his outer appearance which counts. (1)

In contrast to this Euarchus, after he has established order through severity, wins the love of his people:

his first and principall care being to appeare unto his people, such as he would have them be, and to be such as he appeared; making his life the example of his lawes, as it were, his actions arising out of his deedes. (1590.2.pp.186-187)

This stress on the necessity for personal morality in the governor is also evident in the contrast between Timantus and Philanax. Timantus heads one of the factions against Philanax and Sidney shows in him the evil results in public life of the actions of a man who has not attained personal virtue. He had "commendable wit, if he had not made it a servaunt to unbrideled desires". (1593.4.pl32) He is the traditional evil Machiavellian schemer for his policy is quite divorced from moral considerations. He

had placed his uttermost good in greatnes, thinking small difference by what meanes he came by it. ... In summe, a man that could be as evill as he listed, and listed as much, as any advancement might thereby be gotten. As for vertue, hee counted it but a schoole name (1593.4.pp.132-133)

In this he stands directly contrasted to Philanax,

who had limited his thoughtes in that he esteemed good, (to which he was neyther carryed by the vayne tickling of uncertayne fame, nor from which he would be transported by enjoying any thing, whereto the ignorant world geves the excellent name of goodes). (1593.4.pl33)

¹Ibid., p.171, note 82. (Ribner quotes from Machiavelli, Discourses, New York, 1940, III, xxii.)

Euarchus and Basilius are fundamentally contrasted in their knowledge of human nature and handling of men. When Amphialus is preparing his armies for war against Basilius, Sidney says that he knew that his men were

the weapon of weapons, and master-spring (as it were) which makes all the rest to stir; and that therefore in the Arte of man stood the quintessence, and ruling skill of all prosperous government, either peaceable, or military (1590.3.p373)

Basilius fails in this art because he persists in trying to mould men to his own will instead of using them as they are. Euarchus, on the other hand, succeeded where Basilius had failed. He

vertuouslie and wisely acknowledging, that he with his people made all but one politike bodie, whereof himselfe was the head; even so cared for them, as he woulde for his owne limmes: never restrayning their liberty, without it stretched to licenciousnes, nor pulling from them their goods, which they found were not imployed to the purchase of a greater good: but in all his actions shewing a delight to their welfare, broght that to passe, that while by force he tooke nothing, by their love he had all. In summe ... I might as easily sette downe the whole Arte of government, as to lay before your eyes the picture of his proceedings (1590.2.pl87)

It is important to remember, however, that although Basilius fails as a ruler, he is not a tyrant. In the rebellion in Arcadia the rebels are condemned for being ungrateful for so many years' peaceful government, and unnatural "as not to have with the holy name of [their] naturall Prince, any furie over-maistred". (1590.2.p317) There are, however, Tyrants portrayed in Arcadia; they also mismanage men and rebellion against them appears to be justified.

One is the king of Phrygia,

a Prince of a melancholy constitution both of bodie and mind; wickedly sad, ever musing of horrible matters; suspecting, or rather condemning all men of evill, because his minde had no eye to espie goodnesse.
(1590.2.pl96)

This king seeks to kill Musidorus through jealousy at the prognostications of his fame. Pyrocles appears on the scaffold and hands Musidorus a sword. Together they do battle against a seemingly overpowering number of opponents in the true style of romance, but their victory is not just an irrational triumph to prove their extraordinary prowess. It is possible only because the king has treated his people in such a way that they turn against him. The king flies from the place of execution and a quarrel breaks out among the soldiers which prompts the bravest in the city to take courage and cry "with lowde voice, Libertie; and encouraging the other Citizens to follow them, set upon the garde, and souldiers as chiefe instruments of Tyrannie". (1590.2.p200) At first it seems as if this will lead to a worse state than ever, for in the enthusiastic fight for freedom that follows many innocent people are killed. "But some of the wisest (seeing that a popular licence is indeede the many-headed tyranny) prevailed with the rest to make Musidorus their chiefe". (1590.2.p201) This again stresses Sidney's insistence on the need for one man to rule. Musidorus, however, thinks "it a greater greatnes to give a kingdome, then to get a kingdome". He hands his power over to a legitimate successor to the throne

but with such conditions, and cautions of the conditions, as might assure the people (with asmuch assurance as worldly matters beare) that not onely that governours, of whom indeed they looked for al good, but the nature of the government, should be no way apt to decline to Tyranny. (1590.2.p202)

Since Pyrocles, after he has overcomè the tyrant of Pontus, also hands the crown which he is offered to a sister of the late king, this confirms that

Sidney's ideal of government was a hereditary monarchy limited by certain laws.

The king of Pontus is "a Tyrant also, not thorow suspicion, greedines, or unrevengefulness, as he of Phrygia, but ... of a wanton crueltie". (1590.2.p202) He lacks any consistent moral sense "with like judgement glorying, when he had happened to do a thing well, as when he had performed some notable mischief". (1590.2.p203) His treatment of the giant brothers who serve him is another example of the disastrous effect of a ruler who does not excel in the "Arte of man". These giants' chief value lay in their physical courage. They were

not greatly ambitious, more then to be well and uprightly dealt with; rather impatient of injury, then delighted with more then ordinary curtesies; and in injuries more sensible of smart or losse, then of reproch or disgrace. These men being of this nature (and certainly Jewels to a wise man, considering what indeed wonders they were able to performe) yet were discarded by that unworthy Prince, after many notable deserts, as not worthy the holding.

(1590.2.pp.204-205)

The result is that they take their revenge on the king's subjects, and kill the innocent out of spite.

The examples of the kings of Phrygia and Pontus who, although they are legitimate kings have degenerated into tyrants through their own temperaments, is followed immediately by a third example, that of Plexirtus who seizes a throne he is not heir to by cunning and deceit.

And as he came to the crowne by so unjust meanes, as unjustlie he kept it, by force of stranger souldiers in Cittadels, the nestes of tyranny, and murderers of libertie; disarming all his own countrimen. (1590.2.p209)

This behaviour conforms to Aristotle's definition of the conduct of a tyrant

whose bodyguard is not formed of "citizens carrying arms" but "foreign mercenaries".¹ The Princes fight against Plexirtus and drive him from the throne

feare having bene the onely knot that had fastned his people unto him, that once untied by a greater force, they all scattered from him; like so many birdes, whose cage had bene broken (1590.2.p212)

Plexirtus is thus contrasted with Basilius and Leonatus. Just as their indiscriminate kindness untempered by severity is not sufficient to maintain order in the state, so Plexirtus ruling by fear alone is not sufficient either. Machiavelli says of just such a ruler as Plexirtus:

the usurper ought to examine closely into all those injuries which it is necessary for him to inflict, and to do them all at one stroke so as not to have to repeat them daily; and thus by not unsettling men he will be able to reassure them, and win them to himself by benefits (2)

The cases of all these tyrants raises the question of the duties of subjects and the rights of rebellion. In Arcadia the virtue of the ruler consists in subduing private inclinations and considerations of gain to a sense of public duty based on the good of the whole state. If he fails to do this are his subjects justified in rebelling against him? This question is not easy to answer. It was one discussed in varying degrees of complexity by many contemporary political thinkers but the evidence for what Sidney thought in Arcadia is not absolutely clear.

As has been seen, W.D. Briggs and I. Ribner disagree over Sidney's thought on this subject. Briggs believes that Sidney held the view that certain sections of the community may overthrow a tyrant, but Ribner thinks

¹Aristotle, Politics, op.cit., p.136.

²Machiavelli, The Prince, op.cit., p.72.

that Sidney thought civil insurrection was never justifiable. Both base their theses on the same episodes in Arcadia. For instance both cite the case of the Helots' uprising against the Lacedaemonians in which Pyrocles becomes the leader of the Helots against their oppressors. Briggs¹ takes this to mean that Sidney thought rebellion was justifiable, but Ribner² declares that the example is a bad one. The Helots are not rebelling against a legitimate king who has become a tyrant. They are fighting to regain a lost freedom which is theirs by right: "they were a kinde of people, who having been of old, freemen and possessioners, the Lacedemonians had conquered them, and layd, not onely tribute, but bondage upon them". (1590.1.p39)

Briggs also refers to Philisides' eclogue, the wars of Amphialus and the Arcadian rebellion. He points out that the chaos in Arcadia at Basilius's death because of the nobles' lack of knowledge of how to govern points to the fact that Sidney believed that this class should have some power in the state. From Philisides's eclogue and the "true common-places" with which Amphialus justifies his war against Basilius he concludes that this section of the community may take arms against the king.³ Ribner, however, interprets the eclogue differently and says that Amphialus's justifications for his war are condemned as treasonable sophistries.⁴ In view of this divergence of opinion on the same evidence it will be as well to re-examine these episodes, and the question of rebellion in Arcadia.

Certainly the rebellions in which the Princes assist offer no positive

¹Briggs, SP, 1931, p.141

²Ribner, JHI, 1952, p.259.

³Briggs, SP, 1931, pp.149 ff.

⁴Ribner, JHI, 1952, pp.260 ff.

evidence as to the subjects' right of rebellion, although they are indicative of an attitude of sympathy. Sidney does not stress the plight of the subjects so much as the Princes' valour in overcoming their tyrannical enemies and the kind of constitution they afterwards establish. It is interesting to notice that even a political theorist like Jean Bodin, who emphatically denied the right of rebellion to subjects who were governed by a sovereign prince, allowed the right of other princes to help in deposing tyrants. Concerning the right of the subject to rebel he argues, "No process of law is possible, for the subject has no jurisdiction over his prince, for all power and authority to command derives from him".¹ He concludes that "the subject is never justified in any circumstances in attempting anything against his sovereign prince, however evil and tyrannical he may be".² Yet Bodin emphasised that "I do not wish to deny to neighbouring princes the right to pursue tyrants by force of arms. I only wish to deny it to the subject".³ He says

it is highly honourable, and befitting a prince, to take up arms in defence of a whole people unjustly oppressed by a cruel tyrant. Such a one was Hercules when he went about the world destroying monsters of tyranny everywhere (4)

Such ones, also, are Pyrocles and Musidorus, but their part in deposing tyrants tells us nothing about the subjects' right to rebel.

The rebellion in Arcadia is not very good evidence for this point either. Basilius is certainly not a tyrant and the rebels are condemned. It is true that this episode points to Sidney's belief in a training in administration

¹Jean Bodin, Six Books of the Commonwealth, abridged and trans. M.J.Tooley, Oxford, 1955, p.67.

²Ibid., p.68.

³Ibid., p.69.

⁴Ibid., p.66.

for the upper classes; Zelmane's speech on the maintenance of authority being dependent on government through magistrates supports this. Yet it does not follow that these officials would have the right of armed resistance to a king. However, it does seem that since the right to govern would be shared with some subjects, Sidney would be in a position to justify rebellion on the same grounds as did the Huguenot author of the Vindiciae Contra Tyrannos. Briggs points^{this} out and summarises a passage from this which is relevant to the situation.

There are two kinds of sedition: that which defends the laws is just. A heavy obligation rests upon the officials of the kingdom to resist tyranny; otherwise they are, substantially, accomplices. One of the officials may by himself properly resist, even though all the rest of the nobles and magistrates support the tyrant. But private persons may not do so, for the care of the state is not committed to them. (1)

More direct evidence for this view comes from Amphialus's preparations for war and Philisides's eclogue although both of these have been used to prove opposite theses.

When Amphialus is making preparations to fight Basilius

he caused a justification of this his action to be written, wherof were sowed abroad many copies, which with some glosses of probabilitie, might hide indeede the foulness of his treason; and from true common-places, fetch downe most false applications (1590.3.p371)

Britts² believes that these "true common-places" sanction the right of rebellion, but Ribner³ says that they are condemned as treasonable sophistries. It is therefore important to understand the nature of these true common-places.

¹W.D. Briggs, SP, 1931, pp.146-147, note 18. Briggs summarises pp.339 ff of the Vindiciae, dealing with the question Adversus Tyrannos exercitio quantum jure concedatur. He points out that Tyranni exercitio are legitimate kings who have degenerated into tyranny. It is thought that either Languet or Duplessis Mornay is the author of the Vindiciae. See Briggs, SP, 1931, p.142, note 12.

²Briggs, SP, 1931, p.150.

³Ribner, JHI, 1952, p.262.

Amphialus begins by saying "how much the duetie which is owed to the countrie, goes beyond all other dueties, since in it selfe it conteines them all". (1590.3.p371) He then

fell by degrees to shew, that since the ende whereto any thing is directed, is ever to be of more noble reckning, then the thing thereto directed: that therefore, the weale-publicke was more to be regarded, then any person or magistrate that thereunto was ordeined. (1590.3.pp.371-372)

These are the true common-places and they correspond to the principles on which Euarchus judged. They would also seem to admit the right of rebellion. Amphialus argues that this view leads him to "set principally before his eyes, the good estate of so many thousands, over whom Basilius raigned: rather then so to hoodwinke himselfe with affection, as to suffer the realme to runne to manifest ruine". (1590.3.p372) His treason lies not in realising that Basilius's irresponsibility is ruinous to the good order of the state, but in arguing that Philanax, to whom the government has been lawfully delegated, is "a man neither in birth comparable to many, nor for his corrupt, prowde, and partiall dealing, liked of any", and that therefore the care of the kingdom belongs properly to him as the next male heir and he is justified in taking up arms. He even warns those whom he is persuading to help him, to take no notice of any contrary commands of Basilius for "he was no more to be obeied, then if he should call for poison to hurt himself withall". (1590.3.p372) He thus gives a final twist to his whole argument by declaring that all "that was done,

was done for his [Basilius] service, howsoever he might (seduced by Philanax) interprete of it: he protesting, that what soever he should doo for his owne defence, should be against Philanax, and no way against Basilius (1590.3.pp.372-373)

Thus logically his defence is sound. He argues that any magistrate appointed to office is of less importance than the welfare of the whole state. Since he argues that Basilius is no longer competent to care for the state and Philanax is a bad governor, rebellion is therefore justified. In fact, however, this account of the situation in Arcadia is not accurate. Basilius is still responsible in some degree, and Philanax is a reliable preserver of a royally delegated authority. Furthermore, although Amphialus is the next male heir, he is not the direct heir to the throne. Thus Amphialus's "true common-places" are falsely applied. Nor do they tell us much directly about the subjects' right to rebel against a tyrant since what Amphialus is justifying is rebellion against a magistrate on the grounds that Basilius himself "was no more to be obeyed, then if he should call for poison to hurt himself withall". In fact Basilius is still very much to be obeyed and it is in concealing this that the sophistry lies.

Amphialus's "true common-places" are not thus directly relevant to the subjects' right to rebel against the king. However, taken with the evidence at the Princes' trial of Sidney's views on the right relation between the law and the king, and the fact that the Princes depose tyrants and allow the citizens to help them, it does seem likely that Sidney believed in some right of rebellion.

In Philisides's eclogue¹ the whole complex question of the nature of kingship, how it degenerates into tyranny, and what safeguards can be taken to prevent this, is treated allegorically. It gathers up the separate

¹1590.1.p132 ff.
1593.3.p74 ff.

ideas about public virtue in Arcadia under one form. It has already been seen that Philisides is Sidney himself. Briggs points out that it is important to notice that this song is attributed to Languet since he belonged to that school of political thought which believed in an ultimate right of rebellion against a tyrant.¹ Philisides says:

The songe I sange old Languet had me taught,
Languet, the shepheard best swift Ister knewe. (p.99)

Philisides also tells us that the occasion for singing this song was his own oppression.

Amid my sheepe, though I sawe nought to feare,
Yet (for I nothing sawe) I feared sore.
. . .
I sate me downe: for see to goe ne could,
And sange unto my sheepe lest stray they should. (p.99)

This corresponds both to what is known of Sidney's own temperament and of his view of the grave political situation in Europe, all the more dangerous because the rulers in Germany and the Low countries would not stir themselves against the growing threat from Spain. On May 7th 1574 he wrote to Languet,

our princes are enjoying too deep a slumber; nevertheless, while they indulge in this repose, I would have them beware that they fall not into that malady, in which death itself goes hand in hand with its counterpart. (2)

The main fable in the eclogue is prefaced by a definition of virtue in musical terms which may be taken as axiomatic for the whole idea of virtue in Arcadia, for it covers both its public and private aspects. Philisides says that Languet had taught him,

To have a feeling tast of him that sitts
Beyond the heaven, far more beyond your witts.

¹Briggs, SP, 1931, pp. 152-153.

²Correspondence, ^{op/cit} p.66.

He said, the Musique best thilke powers pleasd
 Was jumpe concorde betweene our wit and will:
 Where highest notes to godlines are raisd,
 And lowest sinke not downe to jote of ill. (p.99)

This idea of virtue in which understanding and will are in harmony with a divine scheme implies a conception of human nature similar to Hooker's in his later analysis of the human faculties which are engaged in moral action.

To choose is to will one thing before another. And to will is to bend our souls to the having or doing of that which they see to be good. Goodness is seen with the eye of the understanding. And the light of that eye, is reason. So that two principal fountains there are of human action, Knowledge and Will. (1)

Hooker also believed that the whole universe was bounded by laws inspired by God through which every creature can fulfill the end of its being. That which guides human nature Hooker called the Law of Reason which "comprehendeth all those things which men by the light of their natural understanding evidently know, or at leastwise may know, to be beseeming or unbeseeming, virtuous or vicious, good or evil for them to do".² Granted then that the will to act and the understanding by which this rational law is apprehended correspond, men should naturally be able to approach a state of perfect goodness. Hooker himself had to admit that there is "no impossibility in nature considered by itself, but that men might have lived without any public regiment".³ Thus it would seem that the need for public government only arises because man has fallen from a state of grace, but this also means that any system of human government is bound to tend towards imperfection because of this inherent flaw in human nature.

¹R. Hooker, *The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, I.vii.2, Works (3 vols.) arr. J. Keble, Oxford, 1881, I, p.220.

²Ibid., I.viii.10, p.234.

³Ibid., I.x.4, p.243.

Both these lines of thought are present in Philisides's eclogue.

There virtue is defined in general terms as the cooperation of understanding and will to achieve an order in accordance with a divine system. At a personal level this means the achievement of harmony between reason and passion as has been seen. It is also important at a public level for if the ruler fails to achieve this virtue he degenerates into a tyrant by the force of his own nature. This is consistent with Sidney's picture of the temperamental tyrants of Phrygia and Pontus.

In the eclogue these themes are worked out in terms of a beast fable which enables Sidney to analyse both the components of human nature and the reasons for the rise of tyrants.

It is first of all stated that in the golden age the beasts naturally followed an order in which the strong cared for the weak.

The beastes had sure some beastly pollicie:
 For nothing can endure where order n'is.
 For once the Lion by the Lambe did lie;
 The fearfull Hinde the Leopard did kisse:
 Hurtles was Tyger's pawe and Serpent's hisse.
 This thinke I well, the beastes with courage clad
 Like Senators a harmeles empire had. (p,100)

This deliberately recalls the picture of the golden age in both Isaiah and Virgil.¹ In the golden age in this eclogue the earth is populated only with beasts, and the way in which men are referred to is significant.

Unknowne as then were they that buylden towers:
 The cattell wild, or tame, in nature's bowers
 Might freely rome, or rest, as seemed them:
 Man was not man their dwellings in to hem. (p.100)

¹Compare Isaiah, 11, 6. "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together and a little child shall lead them."²

Virgil, Eclogues, op.cit., IV.p.53 ff. "The goats, unshepherded, will make for home with udders full of milk, and the ox will not be frightened of the lion, for all his might."

This surely is a reference to the tower of Babel and the myth of the men who hoped to bridge the gap between God and themselves; an attempt which resulted in their own destruction. Ideas connected with this reference are related to the main theme of the eclogue in two ways. The first is that the pride and ambition which prompted men to build the tower of Babel is just that which Sidney believed causes kings to degenerate into tyrants. Greville reports that Sidney commented on the Spanish king, that he

both did, doth, and ever will travell (with his forefathers in Paradise) to be equall, or above his Maker; and so to imprison divine laws within the narrownes of will, and humane wisdom, with the fettred selfnesses of cowardly or over-confident Tyranny (1)

The second is that a direct result of the building of the tower of Babel was that men were divided from each other by barriers of language and some elements of this idea enter into the fable. Until the creation of the king all the beasts could speak perfectly. However, they surrender this right to man when he is created and a mutual lack of understanding follows. This is a way of pointing to the dangers of the lack of a law which binds both king and people alike in a common understanding.

The fable of the creation of man in this eclogue is not so much to account for the phenomenon of man, but the phenomena of kings; to analyse what constitutes their natures and how they become tyrants. It is interesting that the reason for electing a king at all springs from the weaker beasts' envy of the stronger.

This thinke I well, the beasts with courage clad
Like Senators a harmeles empire had.

¹Greville, op.cit., pp.114-115.

At which, whether the others did repine,
 (For envie harbred most in feeblest hartes)
 Or that they all to chaunging did encline,
 (As even in beasts their dammes leave chaunging parts)
 The multitude to Jove, a suite empertes,
 With neighing, blaying, braying, and barking,
 Roring, and howling for to have a King. (p.100)

This recalls the motives for the commons' rebellion against Basilius. Thus the reason for having a king at all is the inherent impossibility for the individual beasts to live together by reason of their inequality. The beasts thus also represent different levels of human society. Jove reluctantly agrees to give them a king who will be, in part at least, divinely inspired.

'O beasts, take heed what you of me desire.
 Rulers will thinke all things made them to please,
 And soone forget the swincke due to their hire.
 But since you will, part of my heav'nly fire
 I will you lende; the rest your selves must give,
 That it both seene and felte may with you live'.
 (pp.100-101)

Thus this human king is born with reason to understand his heavenly origin but also a liberal endowment of bestial qualities. He is thus a creature who has both the power to sink lower than any individual beast, and all the qualities of the tyrannical and immorally politic ruler if he chooses to use them.

The Foxe gave craft; the Dog gave flatterie;
 Asse, pacience; the Mole, a working thought;
 Eagle, high looke; Wolfe secrete crueltie:
 Monkie, sweet breath; the Cow, her faire eyes brought;
 The Ermion, whitest skinne, spotted with nought;
 The sheep, mild-seeming face; climbing, the Beare;
 The Stagge did give the harme eschewing feare.
 The Hare, her sleights; the Cat, his melancholie;
 Ante, industrie; and Connie, skill to builde;
 Cranes, order; Storkes, to be appearing holie;
 Camaeleon, ease to chaunge; Ducke, ease to yelde;
 Crocodile, teares, which might be falsly spilde. (p.101)

At first all goes well for the human king uses his cunning only for the good of all. Like Euarchus, he "fellow-like let his dominion slide". However, once he has made himself indispensable he starts setting the beasts against each other in order to acquire more power for himself. The iron age has succeeded the golden which indeed showed signs of disintegration as soon as the beasts could no longer agree among themselves.

But when hisseate so rooted he had found,
That they now skilld not, how from him to wend;
Then gan in guiltlesse earth full many a wound,
Iron to seeke, which gainst it selfe should bend,
To teare the bowels, that good corne should send. (p.102)

The king drives the strong beasts away by inflaming them with jealousy for his favour to the weak beasts. These ignorantly rejoice at the fate of their superiors. He then forces the noble beasts into such a position that they kill each other to keep alive, and uses this as an excuse to kill them. Having thus rid himself of the strong beasts he turns his attention to the weak and not only deprives them of their liberty but also kills them wantonly.

At length for glutton taste he did them kill:
At last for sport their sillie lives did spill. (p.103)

Philisides concludes,

But yet o man, rage not beyond thy needs:
Deeme it no gloire to swell in tyrannie.
Thou art of blood; joy not to see things bleede:
Thou fearest death; thinke they are loth to die.
A plaint of guiltlesse hurt doth pierce the skie.
And you poore beastes, in patience bide your hell,
Or knowe your strengths, and then you shall do well.

W.D. Briggs interprets this last couplet in favour of a justification of armed rebellion.¹ Ribner says that this need not be true since it may

¹Briggs, SP, 1931, p.152 ff.

very well refer to the power of God, not armed rebellion.¹ In terms of the fable it is true that the only beasts left are the weaker sort, the commons, who, it seems Sidney, in Arcadia, certainly excluded from any right of rebellion. However, it is important to notice that Philisides has broken out of the framework of the fable into direct invocation. He is now reviewing the whole situation and appealing to all the beasts oppressed by tyranny; thus to know their strengths would be to realise the responsibility of the stronger beasts to defend them all against the tyrant. In historical terms this appeal would be to all those oppressed by Spanish or French rule to rely on their officials to resist the growing threat of tyranny.

This idea corresponds with the passage from the Vindiciae Contra Tyrannos summarised by Briggs:

A heavy obligation rests upon the officials of the kingdom to resist tyranny; otherwise they are, substantially, accomplices. ... If there are no properly qualified persons to lead resistance to tyranny, then the people as private persons must endure, and pray God for better times. If, however, there be only one duly qualified person to head rebellion, then let all the people flock to him. (2)

It would thus seem to be the case that Sidney does allow the right of a certain section of the community to rebel against tyranny although the evidence for this in Arcadia is not very straightforward. Indeed, as Ringler points out,

in this poem Sidney is dealing, not with the question of the lawfulness or unlawfulness of rebellion, but with the kind of government - a monarchy limited by a strong aristocracy - that will prevent the development of tyranny (3)

¹See Ribner, JHI, 1952, p.261.

²Briggs, SP, 1931, pp.146-147, note 18.

³Ringler, op.cit., p.415.

It may be concluded that for a man to achieve public virtue in Arcadia, he must have personal integrity and a realisation of the responsibilities peculiar to his particular station in life. For it is shown that different ideals of public behaviour are demanded according to social station. The common people must obey their rulers. The sovereign power must be placed in the king but authority should also be delegated to officials chosen from the upper classes who must act responsibly, and even resist the king if he transgresses against these laws which both sovereign and magistrate exist to uphold. These laws are made to preserve the good of the whole community.

Sidney evades the more difficult question of what constitutes personal liberty and how far this should be curtailed in the interests of the whole community, by simply making his ideal ruler never interfere with his subjects' liberty and goods without they found that they were "employed to the purchase of a greater good". (1590.2.p.187)

Thus as the private aspect of virtue in Arcadia is fundamentally concerned with an order in which reason and emotion achieve an equilibrium necessary for moral health, so the public aspect is also concerned with an order which is necessary for the health of society. This is achieved by a hierarchical delegation of authority headed by the king. Philisidés's eclogue makes it clear that both these orders are in accordance with a divine plan by which, as will be seen in the next chapter, Sidney believed that they would ultimately be vindicated.

In his Booke Named the Gouvernour published in 1531, Sir Thomas Elyot sums up the ideal of public virtue with which Sidney would agree.

If thou be a gouernour, or haste ouer other soueraygntie, knowe thy selfe, that is to saye, knowe that thou arte verely a man compacte of soule and body, and in that all other men be equall unto the. Also that euery man taketh with the equall benefite of the spirite of life, nor thou haste any more of the dewe of heuyn, or the brightnes of the sonne, than any other persone. Thy dignitie or autorite, wherin thou onely differest from other, is (as it were) but a weighty or heuy cloke, fresshly glitteringe in the eyen of them that be poreblynde, where unto the it is paynefull, if thou weare hym in his right facion, and as it shal best become the. And from the it may be shortely taken of him that dyd put it on the, if thou use it negligently, or that thou weare it nat commely, and as it appertaineth. Therefore whiles thou wearest it, knowe thy selfe, knowe that the name of a soueraigne or a ruler without actuall gouernaunce is but a shadowe, that gouernaunce standeth nat by wordes onely, but principally by acte and example; that by example of gouernours men do rise or falle in vertue or vice. And, as it is said of Aristotell, rulers more greuously do sinne by example than their acte. ... (1)

In semblable maner the inferior persone or subiecte aught to consider, that all be it (as I haue spoken) he in the substaunce of soule and body be equall with his superior, yet for als moche as the powars and qualities of the soule and body, with the disposition of reason, be nat in euery man equall, therefore god ordayned a diuersitie or pre-eminence in degrees to be amonge men for the necessary derrection and preseruacion of them in conformitie of luyinge. Whereof nature ministreth to us examples abundauntly, as in bees, ... cranes, redde dere, wolves, and diuers other foules and bestis, whiche herdeth or flocketh, (to longe here to be rehersed), among whom is a gouernour or leader, towarde whome all the other haue a vigilant eye, awaytinge his signes or tokens, and according therto preparinge them selfe moste diligently. (2)

¹Sir Thomas Elyot, The Boke Named the Gouernour (1531) . . .
Everyman, London, 1907, p.203.

²Ibid., pp. 204-205.

CHAPTER V

RELIGION IN ARCADIA

In the previous chapters it has been claimed that Arcadia is fundamentally a serious book dealing with problems which were often of particular urgency to Sidney's contemporaries. All the elements in the book are organised round a central unifying theme which is concerned with a practical ideal of virtue and how it can be achieved. The pastoral-chivalric setting is not simply decorative, it stands for certain values which contribute with fine economy to the ideal of public and private virtue which Sidney builds up through the love stories, the adventures of the Princes and their trial.

Every line of approach which has been taken in analysing this ideal of virtue in Arcadia, however, has led to a point in the story where the particular aspect of virtue under discussion is threatened by some force over which man has no control. This seems to make nonsense of any hard won achievement of moral order and even implies a universal scheme which amounts to moral chaos.

An examination of the pastoral element in Arcadia led to the lament for the death of a king which, because of the widespread disorder which follows, raises at its deepest level the problem of the seemingly irrational and purposeless sway of death in a universe in which it seems that chaos is the norm, not order.

Justice, justice is now (alas) oppressed:
 Bountifulnes hath made his last conclusion:
 Goodnes for best attire in dust is dressed.
 Shepherds bewaile your uttermost confusion;
 And see by this picture to you presented,
 Death is our home, life is but a delusion. (p.128) (1)

This idea of a universal moral chaos is returned to when Pyrocles, believing Philoclea to be dead, cries out,

O tyraunt heaven, traytor earth, blinde providence; no justice,
 how is this done? how is this suffered? hath this world a
 government? (1509.3.p483)

In the love stories Sidney deals with that relation between reason and passion which is necessary for the achievement of moral order. This in turn leads to a questioning of the justice of a universe where the very composition of human nature should make this order so difficult to achieve.

Plangus cries out,

Ah where was first that cruell cunning fond,
 To frame of Earth a vessell of the minde,
 Where it should be to selfe-destruction bound?
 What needed so high sprites such mansions blind?
 Or wrapt in flesh what do they here obtaine,
 But glorious name of wretched humaine-kind? (p.57) (2)

Gynecia in prison laments,

O Gods ... why did you make me to destruction? If you love
 goodnes, why did you not geve me a good minde? Or if I cannot
 have it without your gifte, why doe you plague mee? (1593.5.p160)

In the trial of the Princes it becomes clear how easily, even under ideal conditions, human justice can miscarry with tragic consequences.

However, this idea of an apparently chaotic universal scheme which continually either frustrates man's efforts to achieve and maintain a moral

¹1590.3.p501.
 1593.4.p142.

²1590.2.p227.

order, or remains completely indifferent to them, is not final in Arcadia. The subject of this last chapter is the final perspective of the book which must be called religious since it is concerned with a faith in a divinely ordered universe which, far from remaining indifferent to the human struggle to achieve moral order, finally vindicates it. In terms of the story it is shown that this world indeed has a government and that providence is not blind. In this way some hope and comfort can be offered in the agonising predicaments just referred to. By the possession or lack of this faith characters stand or fall.

The religious element in Arcadia cannot possibly be ignored in this study since it is the ground in which Sidney's ideal of virtue is rooted. It also governs the framework of the main plot, for it is Basilius's mistaken attitude to providence which leads him to retire from public life and^{to} set in motion that chain of events which nearly leads to complete disaster. However, from ~~th~~th ~~from this~~ there finally emerges a right view of the ordering of human events.

An examination of religion in Arcadia also brings into the foreground Sidney's concern with the subjects of death, the after life, and proof of the existence of God and shows how these are connected with two~~o~~pposing views of natural phenomena. J.F. Danby has shown how King Lear can be regarded as a play dramatising different meanings of the single word, nature.¹ King Lear has affinities with Arcadia which run deeper than the plot parallelism between the story of the Paphlagonian unkinde King (1590.2.p206 ff) and the Gloucester Edgar Edmund episodes, as will be seen. The human and moral implications of

¹J.F. Danby, Shakespeare's Doctrine of Nature A Study of King Lear, London, 1961. (Hereafter referred to as Danby, King Lear.)

two contrary philosophical views of nature which are worked out in such fullness in dramatic terms in King Lear, are also found in the narrative of Arcadia. Here, through the religious element in the book, Sidney reaches the final standpoint which Cordelia represents for Shakespeare. This will be examined in more detail later.

Arcadia has a pre-Christian setting. The religious theme is, therefore, worked out in non-Christian terminology and the faith which is finally vindicated, although it agrees with a Christian outlook is not based on revelation. This is important to remember since it helps to avoid a misunderstanding of the significance of the superstitious elements in Arcadia.

M.S. Goldman believes that Arcadia contains a vigorous protest against the superstitions of sixteenth-century England and that Sidney confounds the credulous by arguing that "the utterances of oracles, the predictions of diviners, and the horoscopes of astrologers are either pure fraud or the revelations of an inexorable destiny".¹ Thus those who seek to know the future and avoid unpleasant events are either gulled, or caused much needless extra anxiety.

No man or woman, royal, noble, or simple, is able in the Arcadia, to help himself in any way by the interpretation of dreams and prophecies or by having^{some} 'skilful man' draw up a horoscope, and all of the admirable characters who express an opinion protest against the folly of seeking to peer into the future. It is clear that Sidney ... meant to lead his readers as far as possible from the consultation chambers of astrologers and diviners of every sort (2)

This may be all very true but it does not exhaust the significance of the superstitious elements in Arcadia.

¹M.S. Goldman, 'Sidney and Harington as Opponents of Superstition', JEGP, 54, 1955, p.534.

²Ibid., pp.536-537.

In further support of his view Goldman demonstrates that Sidney himself did not believe in astrology. He dismisses the evidence of Dr. Dee's diary where that gentleman records that Sidney visited him twice, by suggesting that Sidney went either out of politeness, to accompany friends, or to consult the Doctor, not as an astrologer but in his capacity as political spy, cartographer, metallurgist or authority on navigation.¹ He rightly points out that the sonnet in Astrophil and Stella where Sidney claims that "Though dustie wits dare scorne Astrologie", he knows that "those Bodies high raigne on the low",² is not sufficient evidence to prove a personal belief in astrology since the whole poem is no more than an elaborate compliment to Stella's eyes.³ In further support of his claim Goldman quotes the following passage from Sir Thomas Moffet's life of Sidney.

Astrology alone (which only chance and vanity have made an art) he could never be so far misled as to taste, even with the tip of his tongue. Nay, he seemed purposely to slight it, among all accepted sciences, even with a certain innate loathing. In fact, as a young man precisely excellent and inspired with true religion, he feared lest, too receptive to the fables of soothsayers, he might in rashness diminish the Divine Majesty (always held in reverence) and tie down Divine Providence (everywhere and always the disposer of all things) to particular modes and means (4)

However, whether or not Sidney thought astrology a creditable science is of no importance for understanding the full significance of the oracles and portents in Arcadia. On the level of an examination of secular behaviour it is true that Sidney does preach the virtue of self-reliance and is against trying to see into the future. But the further significance of the oracles

¹ Ibid., p.530.

² Astrophil and Stella, 26, ed. Ringler, pp.177-178.

³ Goldman, op.cit., p.533.

⁴ Thomas Moffet, Nobilis or A View of the Life and Death of a Sidney, trans. V.B. Heltzel and H.H. Hudson, Huntington Library, San Marino, California, 1940, p.75. Quoted by Goldman, op.cit., p.532.

and portents which Goldman does not deal with is to make explicit the workings of providence, and to evolve in non-Christian terminology a faith which agrees with that of Christianity.

The superstitious episodes that Goldman quotes are not all of a piece. Although it is true that none of the characters can help themselves by recourse to superstitious practices in only one case is the prediction which is believed a deliberately fabricated lie to play on the credulity of the ignorant. That is when Musidorus persuades Mopsa to climb into a tree and wait for Apollo to come and grant her a wish while he and Pamela make good their escape. In all the other cases the dreams and portents prove true, which is important, although it is also true that the characters' attitudes towards them are condemned. The point of the episodes with the dreamers at the rebellion and the wars of Amphialus is exactly that which Goldman indicates. In the rebellion outside the Lodges Musidorus cuts in half a man "who the night before had dreamed he was grown a couple, and (interpreting it he should be married) had bragd of his dreame that morning among his neighbors". (1590.2.p313) In Amphialus's wars there is a man whom nothing made bolder

then a certaine prophecie had beene tolde him, that he shoulde die in the armes of his sonne, and therefore feared the lesse the arme of anemie. But nowe, when Amphialus sworde was passed through his throate, he thought himselfe abused; but that before he died, his sonne, indeede, seeing his father beginne to fall, helde him up in his armes (1590.3.pp.388-389)

In both cases there is an extremely unpleasant, almost triumphantly ironic, tone of exultation over the folly of those who so wrongly interpreted their

dreams. Yet the fact remains that their dreams were true in some prophetic way.

The superstitious episodes connected with Basilius and the King of Phrygia have far wider reaching implications. Basilius by raising Dametas to a position for which he is unfit goes against the natural social order and tries to mould men to his own will instead of using them as they are. This attempt leads to disaster, and the lack of judgement involved turns out to be symptomatic of a far more dangerous attitude which leads him to try to alter the whole universal scheme to suit his own convenience.

Having consulted an oracle in which he believes as to the future, he takes enormous pains to avoid its predictions. He retires from public life and his duties as a king into the country. There he lives avoiding all but rustic company and forbidding his daughters to marry. This attitude towards his daughters, as Philanax points out, is unnatural:

what shall I say, if the affection of a father to his owne children,
cannot plead sufficiently against such fancies? once certaine it is,
the God, which is God of nature, doth never teach unnaturalnes
(1590.1.p25)

The whole course of Basilius's action is, in fact, an unnatural attempt to escape the hazards of change and fortune which every man must reckon with:

the cause of all, hath beene the vanitie which possesseth many, who
(making a perpetuall mansion of this poore baiting place of mans
life) are desirous to know the certaintie of things to come; wherein
there is nothing so certaine, as our continual uncertaintie (1590.1.p26)

His behaviour is clearly not consonant with virtue either, since it involves an evasion of public responsibility which is followed by a collapse of private morality.

Thus virtue is by implication a natural quality. As will be seen later it is achieved, according to Sidney, when man develops and fulfills the highest potentialities of his nature. When this happens moral virtue and religious faith complement each other.

Basilus's behaviour is unnatural, unvirtuous and irreligious and Philanax reproves him on all three counts. The first we have seen: earlier in his letter he writes,

Most redouted and beloved prince, if aswel it had pleased you at your going to Delphos as now, to have used my humble service, both I should in better season, and to better purpose have spoken: and you (if my speech had prevayled) should have beene at this time, as no way more in danger, so much more in quietnes; I would then have said, that wisdome and vertue be the only destinies appointed to man to follow, whence we ought to seeke al our knowledge, since they be such guydes as cannot faile; which, besides their inward comfort, doo lead so direct a way of proceeding, as either prosperitie must ensue; or, if the wickednes of the world should oppresse it, it can never be said, that evil hapneth to him, who falles accompanied with vertue: I would then have said, the heavenly powers to be revered, and not searched into; and their mercies rather by prayers to be sought, then their hidden counsels by curiositie. These kind of soothsayers (since they have left us in our selves sufficient guides) to be nothing but fansie, wherein there must either be vanitie, or infalliblenes, and so, either not to be respected, or not to be prevented (1590.l.p24)

Philanax here states theoretically the ideal of virtuous behaviour and the religious attitude on which it is based which is developed in detail in the rest of Arcadia.

The oracle Basilus consults proves to be true. However, Sidney is not so much concerned with the futility of trying to escape its consequences by ironically making it work out just where it is least expected, as with the attitude of mind which leads Basilus to consult the oracle in the first

place. For this prompts him to act in a way which proves both his moral and religious values to be wrong.

Basilus consults the oracle twice, and the second time this ultimate concern with the moral and religious implications of the situation is quite clear. During the war with Amphialus Basilus seeks advice from the oracle as to whether Pamela should marry Anaxius. The main point of the oracle's reply is that both Basilus and Philanax should be forced to realise a right attitude to supernatural government. Basilus is told to "keepe on his solitary course, till bothe Philanax and Basilus fully agreed in the understanding of the former prophecie". (1590.3.p510) Through obeying this order Basilus comes to realise that running away from danger is no way to escape, that in fact there is a purpose behind the seeming muddle of human affairs, and that the only evil in the situation has arisen out of his own attitude towards them. When he comes round from his death-like swoon, he remembers the oracle "which now indeede was accomplished (not as before he had imagined) considering all had fallen out by the highest providence, and withall waying in all these matters his owne fault had been the greatest". (1593.5.p206) Philanax, on the other hand, although he had rightly reprov'd the King for searching too curiously into the heavenly powers, in this second consultation of the oracle is made to acknowledge that too great a reliance on human reason as a guide can also be a mistake. This trait in his otherwise admirable character is developed in the trial scene where his accusation of the Princes, based on a seemingly rational deduction from the evidence, is so disastrously wide of the mark. The oracle commands Philanax "from thence forward to give tribute, but not oblation, to humane wisdom".

He acknowledges in response, "that reason cannot shewe it self more reasonable, then to leave reasoning in things above reason". (1590.3.p510) So far it is clear, then, that the oracle has a true knowledge but that this is beyond the scope of human reason and not to be meddled with.

The King of Phrygia's fate points a more grim example of the dangerous element in Basilius's folly. He, like the Arcadian king, is over concerned for his own safety and has no faith in a wise providence, or his own ability to act well. He interprets the portents of Musidorus's coming fame to mean that his own throne is threatened, and takes just those steps to avoid such an event which bring it about. At Musidorus's birth,

there were found numbers of Southsayers, who affirmed strange and incredible things should be performed by that childe; whether the heavens at that time listed to play with ignorant mankind, or that flatterie be so presumptuous, as even at times to borow the face of Divinitie (1590.2.p188)

The doubts cast on the truth of the soothsayers need not be taken seriously when it is remembered that Musidorus is here telling his own tale. They can be taken as mere self-depreciation. Similarly at Pyrocles's birth there were

tokens of the comming forth of an Heroicall vertue. The senate house of the planets was at no time to set, for the decreeing of perfection in a man, as at that time all folkes skilful therin did acknowledge (1590.2.p189)

In both cases the prognostications are true. In the case of Musidorus, however,

the King of Phrygia (who over-superstitiously thought him selfe touched in the matter) sought by force to destroy the infant, to prevent his after-expectations: because a skilful man (having compared his nativity with the child) so told him. Foolish man, either vainly fearing what was not to be feared, or not considering, that if it were a worke of the superiour powers, the heavens at length are never children (1590.2.p188)

This last remark agrees with Philanax's comment on soothsayers, but in the event it is the second alternative which is proved correct.

Musidorus and Pyrocles between them destroy the Phrygian King, but they are only able to do so because of his attitude towards the portents. Just as Basilius, by trying to escape the predictions of the oracle, runs straight into them, so the Phrygian King's very superstitious fear sets him on a course of action which brings about his own ruin. Pyrocles is wrecked on his shore and the King, believing Musidorus to be already drowned thinks to rid himself finally of fear by killing Pyrocles also. As it happens Musidorus is not drowned and offers himself in exchange for Pyrocles's life. The latter, in his attempts to rescue Musidorus on the scaffold, causes a riot among the King's own people. The King gathers an army but is slain by Musidorus.

The point of these two episodes is not simply to show that consulting oracles is a superstitious waste of time and incompatible with self-reliant virtue, though it is certainly this as well. It is to show that such acts are indicative of an attitude of mind which is morally and spiritually maladjusted.

In Basilius's case, in spite of appearances to the contrary, the predictions ultimately work out for the good of all concerned. This implies in terms of the narrative that the ultimate ordering of events is governed according to a plan by a wise providence. This is certainly argued explicitly elsewhere. Nor is this conclusion invalidated by the fact that the Phrygian King finds that the portents work to his own ruin. Again purely in terms

of the story, this is poetic justice. Sidney is at pains to point out through Kalander that Basilius is basically a good man:

Though he exceed not in the vertues which get admiration; as depth of wisdom, height of courage and largenesse of magnificence, yet is hee notable in those whiche stirre affection, as trueth of worde, meekenesse, courtesie, mercifulnesse, and liberalitie (1590.1.p19)

The Phrygian king, on the other hand, is basically evil, "condemning all men of evill, because of his minde had no eye to espie goodnesse". (1590.2.p196) He is prepared to go much further than a passive shirking of responsibility to gain his ends; he has no compunction whatever over murder. These parallel stories of kings who, by trying to avoid predictions of future events run straight into them, afford another example of the careful patterning of Arcadia. The narrative is purposely complicated to throw light on all the facets of a complex idea.

Basilius's attitude to the oracle which provides the framework of the plot thus serves two purposes. It demonstrates that behind the seemingly capricious working of fortune there is a wise and ordered providence. It also points by implication to an ideal of behaviour which is based on a right attitude towards that providence. This ideal involves taking decisions and acting on them with a firmness of mind which springs from a faith that even seemingly adverse circumstances, are, in fact, providentially ordered. The first part of this requirement involves a degree of self-confidence which seems to acquire a moral respectability from the tradition of Aristotle's magnanimous man. The second part involves an outlook on life which agrees with that of Neo-Stoic philosophy whose chief exponent was Justus Lipsius, a man fairly closely acquainted with Sidney. The idea of providence which

Lipsius elaborates corresponds closely to the idea of providence and its relation to human affairs which Sidney works out in Arcadia.

The fact that in Arcadia there exists side by side with the idea of an all-wise plan of human affairs, the ideal of responsible and therefore free decisions does not necessarily point to an inconsistency in Sidney's thought. Lipsius also worked out and reconciled the two ideals. It will be helpful to pause at this point and look briefly at the revival of interest in Stoic philosophy during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and in particular at the work of Lipsius who attempted to explain and reconcile it with Christianity. An understanding of this clarifies the religious faith with which Sidney is concerned.

During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries an interest in Stoic philosophy was stimulated first by printed editions of classical Stoic writers, and then by their translation into English.¹ Seneca's Epistles were printed at Strasburg in 1475. Cicero's works had appeared in 1471. Epictetus's Manual was published in 1493 and Plutarch's Morals in 1509. In 1558 The Meditations of Marcus Aurelius were printed. At the end of the fifteenth and during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries these philosophers were translated into the vernacular with the idea that an understanding of them would help men to lead virtuous lives. In 1481 Caxton printed an anonymous translation of Cicero's De Senectute which, he says, "is moche behoeffful to be knowen to euery man vertuous and wel disposed of what some euer eage reasonable that he be".² Much later in 1567 when James Sanford issued his

¹For a more detailed account of this process see, Iustus Lipsius, Two Bookes of Constance, trans. Sir John Stradling, ed. R. Kirk, Rutgers University Press, New Jersey, 1939, pp.13-32.

²Cicero, Tullius de Senectute, printed by William Caxton, 1481, (Morgan Library copy) Sig. 12b-13. Quoted by Kirk, op.cit., p.23.

translation of Epictetus's Manuell he wrote that it would be a great support in trying to lead a Christian life for a man will find "nothing more godly to be taughte and shewed vs, than the summe of thys Boke". Sanford says that the author "although he were an Ethnicke, yet he wrote very godly and christianly".¹ In 1578 Arthur Golding, who on Sidney's instructions had completed his translation of Mornay's Woorke Concerning the Trewnesse of the Christian Religion translated Seneca's On Benefiting. He wrote of it that this writer's "principles and preceptes are in substaunce, Diuine; in forme, Philosophicall; in effect, frutefull."²

R. Kirk, in his edition of Lipsius, points out that although these writers adopted aspects of Stoicism which correspond with Christian thought, they did not explain the whole philosophical system and show how it might be reconciled with Christian teaching. This was left to Justus Lipsius in his treatise De Constantia.³

At the time when he wrote this book he was a Professor at Leiden University and as such a member of the Anglo-Dutch circle of men of letters who had a common literary and humanist interest, and who were brought into more immediate contact by the Anglo-Dutch alliance formed in 1585.⁴ There is more evidence that Sidney was on friendly terms with Lipsius than the mere fact that while he was in Leiden in 1586 he stayed just opposite the Professor.⁵ J. Van Dorsten thinks it probable that they first met in March

¹The Manuell of Epictetus, trans. Ia Sanford, London 1567, Dedication: "To the most high and vertuous Princesse, Elizabeth," quoted by Kirk, op.cit. p.28.

²Reprinted by Henry Burrowes Lathrop, Translations from the Classics into English from Caxton to Chapman 1477-1620, Madison, 1923, pp.204-205, quoted by Kirk, op.cit., p.28.

³See Kirk op.cit., p.33.

⁴See J.A.Van Dorsten, Poets Patrons and Professors, London, 1962, p.77 ff.

⁵Ibid. See J.Van Werven's copy (1744) of the original plan of Leiden by Liefvrick (1574-76) facing p.109.

1577 when Sidney visited Louvain where Lipsius was then teaching, since Sidney was accompanied on that occasion by Daniel Rogers, a common friend.¹ Certainly they had met before September 1585 when Dousa, who was Director of the University at Leiden, and leader of the Dutch representatives, came to England. On that occasion Lipsius wrote to Dousa wishing him to "please convey all my respects and love to Burghley, Sidney, and Dyer".² Further evidence of a close connection and an esteem which was mutual is afforded by Domenicus Baudius, a Dutch poet whom Dousa and Rogers had introduced in to the Sidney circle. When Sidney came to Flushing in 1585 Baudius saw this as an opportunity for advancing himself. From Flushing he wrote to Lipsius asking if he would recommend him personally to Sidney, "I tell you, there is nobody more accessible to you than he is, for he burns with admiration for you".³

In 1586 Sidney came to Leiden in company with his uncle, the Earl of Leicester, to whom Lipsius presented an Autographed copy of De Constantia. He also dedicated his treatise De recta pronunciatione Latine linguae dialogus to Sidney who had asked him about the matter.⁴ In addition, then, to the fact that Lipsius was one of the most prominent scholars in Europe, and as such would be almost certain to be known in some degree by Sidney, there is evidence that the two men knew each other personally. This evidence is not produced to claim that De Constantia is in any way a direct source for Arcadia.

¹Ibid., p.120.

²J. Lipsius to J. Dousa, Leiden, 1 September, 1585. (EM. MS. Burney 370, f35) quoted by Van Dorsten, op.cit., p.79.

³D. Baudius to J. Lipsius, Flushing, (Nov/Dec 1585, Leiden Univ. Library, MS. B.P.L. 885, copied 'E Codice Parisino Nouv.acq Lat. 1554, p.10') quoted by Van Dorsten,op.cit., p.94.

⁴See Van Dorsten, op.cit., p.119.

It appeared too late for that. However, since there was a revival of Stoic philosophy and a direct attempt to reconcile it with Christian teaching, it is interesting that Arcadia, which evolves a Christian ethic in non-Christian terms, should draw heavily on Stoic ideas. As with every aspect of the book examined here, it places it in the centre of serious contemporary thought and provides more evidence for the vital and essentially serious nature it must have assumed in its own time.

In general terms, the central aim of Stoic philosophy is the development of a rational detachment from earthly change and passion. Christianity also preaches a certain peace of mind in the face of instability based on faith in a God who controls the changes of fortune. Certain aspects of stoicism, then, support Christian doctrine, but, as Lipsius pointed out, the two philosophies cannot agree over the ideas of destiny, natural causation, chance and free will. According to the Stoics, providence is an operation of God, but a God who is neither all³knowing nor all powerful, but subject to the necessary promptings of Fate. This leaves no room for the conception of an all-wise governor, or the freedom of the human will as a necessary postulate for responsible moral action, both of which are integral to Christian belief. The Stoics believed in a closed system of cause and effect rigidly controlled by Destiny which is quite inconsistent with Christian teaching.

Lipsius, however, believed in an all-powerful Creator to whom providence is related as "A Power and facultie in God of seeing, knowing and gouerning all things".¹ Destiny is the aspect of providence which is worked out at a

¹Lipsius, op.cit., p.118.

human level. Lipsius also maintained the coexistence of an all-wise governor and the freedom of the human will; holding that God allowed for this in his plan and even knows how man will choose, although his choice is free.

Destinie is as the first man that leadeth the round in this daunce of the world: but so as we daunce our partes to, in willing, or nilling, and no further, not in doing, for there is left to man onely a free-wil to striue and struggle against God, and not power to perfourme the same. As it is lawfull for me to walk vp and downe in a shippe and to runne about the hatches or seates, but this stirring of mine cannot hinder the sailing of the ship: So in this fatall vessell wherein we all sayle, let our willes wrangle and wrest as they list, they shal not turne her out of her course, nor anie thing hinder the same. That highest will of all willes must holde and rule the raynes, and with the turne of a hande direct this chariot wither soeuer it pleaseth. (1)

In fact, this idea seems to make nonsense of human free will but it must be remembered that Lipsius is dealing with two orders of knowledge, human and divine, and the latter is beyond the scope of human reason to comprehend. That Lipsius himself felt that he was getting into deep water over the problem is clear from the fact that he acknowledges that "reason cannot show it self more reasonable, then to leave reasoning in things above reason". (1590.3.p510)

He writes

Euclides being demanded many thinges touching God, answered fitly, Other things I know not, but of this I am assured, yt he hateth curious persons. Euen so I thinke of destiny, which must be looked vnto; not into: and be credited, not perfectly known (2)

Having made clear his own position with regard to the differences between Stoicism and Christianity, Lipsius develops the theme of constancy by which he believed that man can lead his life virtuously with "a right and immouable strength of the minde, neither lifted vp, nor pressed downe with externall

¹Ibid., p.123.

²Ibid., p.124.

or casuall accidentes".¹ With this quality he says "thou maist challenge to thy selfe that great title, the neerest that man can haue to God, To be immooueable".² By strength of mind Lipsius explains that he means "a stedfastnesse not from opinion, but from iudgement and sound reason".³ By sound reason he means a proper understanding and trust in the nature of that providence which he has already elaborated. "RIGHT REASON is A true sense and iudgement of thinges humane and diuine".⁴ It is just this reason which Sidney advocates as the ground of virtuous behaviour in Arcadia.

It was seen that in the love episodes Sidney does not regard reason as an instrument to eliminate passion, as the Stoics did, but as a complement to it. Virtue is achieved by a harmony of the two. In the episodes with the oracle he shows that this human reason must in turn be prepared to acknowledge its own inadequacy to judge of heavenly things. Thus the virtuous harmony to be achieved between reason and passion must be supplemented by another quality, faith in an ultimate right ordering of the universe. Because Plangus lacks this faith his life becomes intolerable to him. He understands in what moral health consists, but lacks the faith which makes the achieving and maintaining of it bearable.

In the eclogue in which Reason opposes Passion, they finally agree to unite; and having done so conclude,

Then let us both to heavenly rules give place,
Which Passions kill, and Reason do deface. (p.47) (5)

¹Ibid., p.79.

²Ibid., p.83.

³Ibid., p.79

⁴Idem.

⁵1590.2.p340.

This reason which gives way to faith is the ground of virtuous behaviour in Arcadia. It is also the same as the Right Reason of Lipsius, which is a "true sense and iudgement of things humane and diuine" and it is exemplified in the behaviour of the heroes and Pamela in adversity.

Greville affirms that it governed Sidney's own life also, and this is another example of how Sidney took his own experience as a starting point for Arcadia. Greville writes,

that after mature deliberation being once resolved, he never brought any question of change to afflict himself with, or to perplex the business; but left the success to His will, that governs the blinde prosperities, and unprosperities of Chance; and so works out His own ends by the erring frailties of humane reason and affection. (1)

This, although Christian, also corresponds exactly^{to} the idea behind the resolution of the main plot in Arcadia. When Euarchus arrives to judge the Princes, Sidney comments that it was

the strange and secreate working of justice, had brought him to be the judge over them, in such a shadowe, or rather pit of darkenes, the wormish mankinde lives, that neither they knowe how to foresee, nor what to feare: and are but like tennisballs, tossed by the racket of the hyer powers (1593.5.p177)

So it appears from an unenlightened worm's eye view, but, in fact, Sidney believed, and it turns out in Arcadia, that the balls are tossed by the higher powers to some purpose.

The self-confidence reinforced by faith of which Greville writes brings us to the point where the Stoical-Christian ideal joins with the Aristotelian virtue of magnanimity. However, before turning to this there are other aspects of Neo-Stoical thought in Arcadia which must be examined. The argument that it is consciously used in the book is reinforced by the

¹Greville, op.cit., p.28.

fact that an acquaintance with Neo-Stoical doctrine helps to clarify at least one rather puzzling reference.

In Plangus's complaint¹ Basilius, though deeply moved by Plangus's sorrow at the frailty of human nature, does attempt to point out that reason is an instrument of control for the passions and that a continual dwelling on sorrow only aggravates the position. He comments,

Betwixt the good and shade of good divided,
We pittie deeme that which but weakenes is:
So are we from our high creation slided (p.62)

The platonic reference to the good and the shade of good between which man is divided, defines the human situation in which man has an imperfect knowledge of an absolutely good Creator. However, because the goodness of a corrupt world is the only guide to the absolute goodness of an incorrupt world, and as this goodness is too often eclipsed by evil, or cut off by death, men are always an open prey to despair. Yet Basilius says in this situation,

We pittie deeme that which but weakenes is:
So are we from our high creation slided.

This is puzzling. Pity for oneself is weak, but Plangus is bowed down with pity for Erona, and Basilius seems to be saying that the emotion of pity for others or self is a weak denial of all that is best in man. It becomes clearer when we read of Lipsius's attitude to pity. He is discussing just such a situation as Plangus complains of, and he adopts the same attitude as Basilius does. He writes,

What then? are we so vnkind and voyd of humanitie, that we would haue no man to be moued at anothers miserie? Yes, I allowe that we be moued to help them, not to bewaile or waile with them.

¹1590.2.p227 ff.

I permit MERCY, but not pittying I call MERCY, An inclination of the minde to succour the necessitie or miserie of another. (1)

It is an emotion of compassionate sorrow which leads to a passive submission, rather than an active resistance and help, that both Lipsius and Sidney condemn. In order to follow his highest self man must adopt a constancy towards accidents of fortune which leads to action on the faith that although things appear to be disastrous they do in fact have some purpose. Lipsius holds this view and Basilius puts it forward in this same song.

To harme us wormes shold that high Justice leave
His nature? nay, himselfe? for so it is.
What glorie from our losse can he receive?
But still our dazeled eyes their way do misse,
While that we do at his sweet scourge repine,
The kindly way to beate us on to blisse. (p.59)

The Princes express the same faith in prison. Musidorus tells Pyrocles that that there is "nothing done by the unreachable ruler of them, [the heavens] but hath an everlasting reason for it". (1593.5.pl64) They sing,

Our owly eyes, which dimm'd with passions bee
And scarce discerne the dawne of coming day,
Let them be clearde, and now begin to see,
Our life is but a step in dustie way.
Then let us holde the blisse of peacefull minde,
Since this we feele, great losse we cannot finde. (p.131) (2)

They adopt this attitude even in the face of death, and death plays an important part in Arcadia.

Professor Panofsky has shown that in the visual arts the expression Et In Arcadia Ego in connection with the appearance of death in idyllic pastoral surroundings underwent a change of meaning. From a Memento Mori that even in Arcadia death held sway, it changed to the elegaic sentiment

¹Lipsius, op.cit., p.99.

²1593.5.pl66.

of Poussin's second version of the Et In Arcadia Ego theme. There the Arcadians are not so much warned of an "implacable future" as absorbed in contemplation of a tomb of one who also used to be in Arcady. Thus the words come to be a sort of comment on mortality, "I too lived in Arcady".¹

Sidney's Arcadia parallels the earlier paintings. Death is very present. It is a fact which most of the main characters have to come to terms with before the plot is resolved. It thus forms a sort of focal point round which contrasting reactions are grouped, and from which there emerges more fully the last dimension of the idea of virtue with which Sidney is concerned. Death is the great disrupter and herald of chaos in Arcadia. The shepherds, when they believe Basilius to be dead, lament,

As in his health we healthfull were preserved,
So in his sicknesse grew our sure infection.
His death our death. (pp.128-129) (2)

In the New Arcadia this is also sung by Amphialus's followers at his death. The threatened deaths of Erona and Philoclea lead Plangus and Pyrocles to question the justice of the whole universal scheme. Death carries off those two ideal lovers, Argarlus and Parthenia; it cuts down Philoxenus in his prime and thus drives Amphialus on to a solitary course of action which ends in suicide. It sweeps away whole crowds by shipwreck and war. The whole book is turned from tragedy to comedy only by averting death and its consequences in the resurrection of Basilius. Thus Gynecia, Pyrocles and Musidorus are saved from destruction and Euarchus and the Princesses from an intolerable grief. This, however, is far from being an arbitrary romantic solution. It is conscious artistry, for the plot embodies at one level a

¹E. Panofsky, "Et in Arcadia Ego: Poussin and the Elegaic Tradition", Meaning in the Visual Arts, New York, 1955, pp.295-320.

²1590.3.p502.
1593.4.pl43.

philosophy which is argued explicitly at another. It thus takes on the quality of myth. The working out of the plot shows that the final arbiter of human affairs is not irrational death but a wise providence working for human good. The Princes and Princesses achieve a faith in this providence when there seems least justification for doing so and their attitudes and arguments make explicit what is implicit in the plot. This unity between the outline of the plot and the central theme of Arcadia is another example of the carefully patterned structure of the whole book.

At the beginning of their story the Princes set out on their adventures with an attitude of courageous commitment to virtuous action even if this leads them to death. Although they are perfectly sincere, this attitude is untried. By the time they appear for trial before Euarchus, the just judge, however, their implications of their attitude have been tested at the deeper levels of human experience, and they still maintain it.

The shipwreck they suffer on the way to Bizantium on their first journey from their childhood home is more than an exciting episode. It is partly allegorical and charts the whole course of the Princes' later action in Arcadia. As young men they put to sea from Thessalia "and were received thereon with so smooth and smiling a face, as if Neptune had as then learned falsely to fawne on Princes". (1590.2.pl91) For one day and one night they had

as pleasing entertainment, as the falsest hart could give to him he meanes worst to.

By that the next morning began a little to make a guilden shewe of a good meaning, there arose even with the Sun, a vaile of darke cloudes before his face, which shortly (like inck powred

into water) had blacked over all the face of heaven; preparing
(as it were) a mournfull stage for a Tragedie to be plaid on.
(1590.2.p192)

In fact the whole episode represents man's predicament at the mercy of fortune. The idea becomes explicit when all the other ships are lost except that "wherein the Princes were (now left as much alone as proud Lords be when fortune fails them)".

The idea of man on the sea in a vessel of some sort is a common literary image for human life at the mercy both of fortune and its own corrupt nature. Sidney is thus working in a common tradition. The Dreamer in Piers Plowman on his way to find Dowel asks the advice of two Franciscan friars and one of them tells him a parable.

Lat brynge a man in a bote . amydde a brode water,
The wynde and the water . and the bote waggynge
Maketh the man many a tyme . to falle and to stonde;
For stonde he neuere so styf . he stombleth 3if he moeue;

Ac 3it is he sauf and sounde . and so hym bihoueth,
For 3if he ne arise the rather . and ~~rouste~~ to the stiere,
The wynde wolde, wyth the water . the bote ouerthrowe;
And thanne were his lyf loste . thourgh lacchesse of hym-self.

And thus it falleth,' quod the frere . 'bi folke here on erthe;
The water is likned to the worlde . that wanyeth and wexeth,
The godis of this grounde aren like . to the grete wawes,
That as wyndes and wederes . walweth aboute.
The bote is likned to owre body . that brutel is of kynde,
That thourgh the fende and the flesshe . and the frele worlde
Synneth the sadman . a day, seuene sythes. (1)

When Criseyde has deserted Troilus, he laments,

The gydyng of thi bemes bright an houre,
My ship and me Caribdis wol devoure. (2)

¹Langland, The Vision of William concerning Piers the Plowman, ed. W.Skeat in Three Parallel Texts, London (1886) 1924, B Text, Passus VIII, ll.30-44, pp. 254-256.

²Chaucer, Troilus and Criseyde, V, ll.643-644.

In Henryson's The Taill of the Paddock and the Mous the Paddock offers to swim the mouse over the river although he really intends to drown him. They have a tussle in midstream, the mouse struggling for survival, but both are carried off finally by a Kite. Henryson then explains the story.

The Paddock, usand in the flude to duell,
Is mannis bodie swymand air and lait
In to this warld, with cairis Implicate,
Now hie, now law, quhyllis plungit up, quhyllis doun,
Ay in perrell, and reddie for to droun. (1)

The Mouse is the soul of man and the kite is death.

The watter is the warld, ay welterand,
With mony wall of tribulatioun:
In quhilk the saull and body wer steirrand,
Standand rycht different in thair opinioun. (2)

To take an example from Sidney's own time, one of Whitney's Emblems in the book which he dedicated to Leicester in 1586 is a picture of a ship foundering and the verses;

The gallante Shipp, that cutts the azure surge,
And hathe both tide, and wissed windes, at will:
Her tackle sure, with shotte her foes to vrge,
With Captaines boulede, and marriners of skill,
With streamers, flagges, topgallantes, pendants braue,
When Seas do rage, is swallowed in the waue.

. . .
Which warneth all, on Fortunes wheele that clime
To beare in minde how they haue but a time. (3)

The shipwreck episode in Arcadia has the same sort of symbolic significance. Although it is not openly explained, the reference to Fortune and the description of the storm blowing up when it is least expected all point to the same end. However, Sidney is not so much concerned with the

¹R. Henryson, "The Taill of the Paddock and the Mous", Poems and Fables, ed. H. Harvey Wood, London, 1958, p.101.

²Ibid., p.102.

³G. Whitney, Choice of Emblemes, op.cit., p.11.

treachery of fortune as with man's attitude to it.

There was to be seene the diverse manner of minds in distresse: some sate upon the toppe of the poupe weeping and wailing, till the sea swallowed them; some one more able to abide death, then feare of death, cut his owne throate to prevent drowning; some prayed, and there wanted not of them which cursed, as if the heavens could not be more angrie then they were. But a monstrous crie begotten of manie roaring vowes, was able to infect with feare a minde that had not prevented it with the power of reason. (1590.2.pp193-194)

The Princes, however, use "the passions of fearing evill, and desiring to escape, onely to serve the rule of vertue, not to abandon ones selfe".

(1590.2.p194) Death is not to be feared, neither is it to be courted. Every effort to save oneself for further action must be made. As in the case of Basilius's evasion of the predictions of the oracle, so here, virtuous and natural behaviour are equated. The Princes "employed all industrie to save themselves, yet what they did was rather dutie to nature, then hope to escape". (1590.2.p192) The special view of nature which lies behind this will be examined later.

At the beginning of the story, which is also the beginning of the Princes' active part in life, their rule is to pursue virtuous action as long as there is any possibility of so doing, but not to fear death, indeed to suffer it rather than do anything dishonourable. Thus when Musidorus obtains Pyrocles's release from the death sentence by offering to sacrifice his own life, Pyrocles

well shewed, that he thought himselfe injured, and not releevd by him: asking him, what he had ever seene in him, why he could not beare the extremities of mortall accidentes as well as any man? and why he shoulde envie him the glorie of suffering death for his friendes cause, and (as it were) robbe him of his owne possession? (1590.2.p198)

At this stage of the story the issue is fairly clear cut. In facing death the heroes are committed to nothing but their own honour. As soon as they fall in love the whole issue becomes more complex because the emotional involvement and commitment to someone else through love makes it less easy for them to see in what direction this single minded devotion to duty lies. It also often makes the adherence to virtue almost impossibly difficult to achieve.

One aspect of this complication is stated when Pyrocles is joined in prison by Musidorus and is more grieved for his friend's fate than his own. The reason given is

that the resolute man, having once digested in his judgement the worst extremitie of his owne case, and having either quite expelled, or at least repelled, all passion, which ordinarilie followes an overthrowne fortune, not knowing his friendes minde so well as his owne, nor with what pacience he brookes his case, (which is as it were the materiall cause of making a man happie or unhappie) doubts whether his friend accomptes not him selfe more miserable, and so indeede bee more lamentable. (1593.4.pp.128-129)

However, Pyrocles has some way to go before he becomes that "resolute man". When he believes Philoclea to be dead he cries out against heaven and accuses providence of "blind injustice". There is no thought now of serving the rule of virtue not to abandon oneself. All he wishes to do is to avenge Philoclea and die. Philoclea then appears to him, although he does not recognise her, and reproves him for his attitude. Her argument seems almost unbelievably hard-hearted unless it is remembered that her intention is to arouse Pyrocles from a state where the possibility of sane action is ruled out because his passion has completely overwhelmed his reason and his faith. Also Philoclea knows that she has the ultimate power to restore Pyrocles to

himself since she is, in fact, alive. With this knowledge she says

See the folly of your passion ... as though you should be nearer to her, you being dead, and she alive; then she being dead, and you alive: and if she be dead, was she not borne to die? what then do you crie out for? not for her, who must have died one time or other; but for some fewe yeares: so as it is time, and this world that seeme so lovely things, and not Philoclea unto you, (1590.3.p486)

This argument is stoical. Seneca in his treatise of comfort says that the mourner must ask himself,

Whether am I sorrowfull in respect of my selfe, or in regarde of him that is deceased? if for the loue of my selfe, it is in vaine that I perswade my selfe, that I am a good brother, and the grieffe which beginneth is excusable, because it is honest and estranged from piety in this, because it hath regard to profite. (1)

Not unnaturally this line of argument is powerless in the face of actual grief. The theory does not stand the test of practice and Pyrocles can only be comforted by Philoclea's revelation of herself. Reason is powerless to work in direct opposition to passion and it is not in Sidney's ethical scheme that it should do so. Pyrocles's first encounter with a death other than his own makes this clear. There is, however, a possibility of a solution when reason can give way to faith, and it is this faith that Pyrocles finally comes to.

When his efforts to escape with Philoclea have been thwarted and he is faced with a trial which will result in the death penalty for both of them because it appears that they are lovers, Pyrocles, in line with his old argument of better death than dishonour, resolves to kill himself to save Philoclea's life and reputation. He tries unsuccessfully to do this with an iron bar, but it is obvious in his preceding prayer that he feels uncertain about the rightness of his action. He prays that God will not be offended

¹L.A. Seneca, "Of Comfort!" Works, trans. T. Lodge, London, 1614, p.697.

that I do abandon this body, to the government of which thou hadst placed me, without thy leave, since how can I know but that thy unsearchable minde is, I should so doe, since thou hast taken from me all meanes longer to abide in it? And since the difference stands but in a short time of dying, thou that hast framed my soule enclined to do good, howe can I in this smal space of mine, benefit so much all the humane kinde, as in preserving thy perfittest workmanship, their chiefest honour? O justice it selfe, howsoever thou determinest of me, let this excellent innocency not bee oppressed (1593.4.pp.105-106)

Philoclea tries to argue on moral grounds that Pyrocles is wrong.

She argues that

killing ones selfe is but a false coloure, of true courage; proceeding rather of feare of a further evil, either of torment or shame.
(1593.4.p108)

However Pyrocles counters this argument successfully by saying that nobody can finally assert what motives prompt suicide and that, in fact, to die in order to avoid evil is often a matter of wise judgement. He argues,

truly I do not see, but that true fortitude, loking into al humaine things with a persisting resoluti[on], carried away neither with wonder of pleasing things, nor astonishment of the unpleasaunt, doth not yet deprive it selfe, of the discerning the difference of evill, but rather is the onely vertue, which with an assured tranquillitye shunnes the greater by the valiant entring into the lesse. Thus for his countries safety he wil spend his life, for the saving of a lym, he will not niggardly spare his goods; for the saving of all his body, hee will not spare the cutting of a lym, where indeed the weake harted man will rather dye, then see the face of a surgeon: who might with as good reason saye, that the constant man abides the painefull surgery, for feare of a further evill: but he is content to waite for death it selfe, but neither is true; for neither hath the one any feare, but a well choosing judgement; nor the other hath any contentment, but onely feare; and not having a harte actively to performe a matter of paine, is forced passively to abide a greater damage. (1593.4.pp.109-110)

Philoclea had also pointed out that to kill oneself means to abandon all hope and therefore it must be done from cowardly fear. Pyrocles maintains in answer to this that to hold by either fear or hope

shewes but a feeble reason, which must be guided by his servaunts;
and who builds not uppon hope, shall feare no earthquake or despaire.
(1593.4.pl18)

This position is again one of stoic detachment. The insufficiency of such an attitude to meet actual human needs has already been illustrated in the interview between Pyrocles and Philoclea after he supposes her to be dead. Involvement by emotion is an inescapable human experience and an advocacy of detachment is no answer to either the pain or joy involved. This argument between Pyrocles and Philoclea, however, goes further than Pyrocles's stoic answer. They are in fact, talking at cross purposes since the hope of which Philoclea speaks is not that rooted in possible changes of fortune, but in a wise providence. It is this faith which was advocated by Lipsius as the ground of true courage, and by this argument Pyrocles is finally halted. Philocles has argued that God

appointed us Captaines of these our boddylie fortes, which without treason to that Majestie, were never to be delivered over till they were redemaunded. (1593.4.pl08)

Pyrocles confesses himself uncertain on this score:

it is the only thing, that at all bred any combate in my minde. And yet I do not see, but that if God hath made us maisters of any thing, it is of our owne lives; ... And if we be Lieutenants of God, in this little Castle, do you not thinke we must take warning of him to geve over our charge when he leaves us unprovided, of good meanes to tarrye in it? No certainelie do I not answered the sorrowfull Philoclea, since it is not for us to appoint that mightie Majestie, what time he will helpe us: the uttermost instant is scope enough for him, to revoke every thing to ones owne desire. And therefore to prejudicate his determinacion, is but a doubt of goodnes in him, who is nothing but goodnes. But when in deede he doth either by sicknes, or outward force lay death upon us, then are we to take knowledge, that such is his pleasure, and to knowe that all is well that he doth. That we should be maisters of our selves, we can shewe at all no title, nor clayme; since neyther we made our selves, nor bought our selves, we can stand upon no other right but his guift, which he must limit as it pleaseth him. (1593.4.pp.110-111)

Thus the position which Philoclea adopts is that of Lipsius's constant man who achieves a detachment from the accidents of fortune, not based on an attitude of hopeless endurance, but through Right Reason, which is really faith, for it is "A true sense and iudgement of thinges humane and diuine". Philoclea also brings Pyrocles firmly back to that moral standpoint with which he had started life, to pursue virtuous action in the face of all odds and only when there is no other alternative to face death bravely. She says

Neyther is there any proporcion, betwixt the losse of any other limme and that, [ie life] since the one bends to the preserving all, the other to the destruction of all; the one takes not away the minde from the actions for which it is placed in the world, the other cuts off all possibilitie of his working (1593.4.pl11)

This moral position adopted by the heroes at the beginning of the story is finally vindicated by them. It is not an attitude which they have glibly adopted and easily held; it is worked out in the face of great suffering. Musidorus and Pyrocles are finally committed to prison for trial and Pyrocles greets Musidorus by crying

let not our vertue now abandon us; let us prove our mindes are no slaves to fortune, but in adversitie can tryumph over adversitie.

Musidorus replies,

feare not, I have kept too long company with you to want nowe a thorowe determination of these things, I well know there is nothing evill but within us, the rest is either naturall or accidentall.
(1593.4.pl29)

This anticipates Basilius's admission that the only evil in the events the oracle had predicted was of his own making.

Virtue thus consists in an attitude of mind which results in action which is fearless of danger. This implies a self-confidence which despises

fortune because it has faith in an order which transcends it. This self-confidence is manifested in Musidorus's speech in prison in which he gives the final justification for living his virtuous life.

We have lived, and have lived to be good to our selves, and others: our soules which are put into the sturring earth of our bodyes, have atchieved the causes of their hether comming: They have knowne, and honoured with knowledge, the cause of their creation, and to many men (for in this time, place, and fortune, it is lawfull for us to speake gloriously) it hath bene behovefull, that we should live. Since then eternitie is not to be had in this conjunction, what is to be lost by the separation, but time? which since it hath his ende, when that is once come, all what is past is nothing: and by the protracting nothing gotten, but labour and care (1593.4.pl64)

This self-confidence with which Musidorus justifies speaking of himself gloriously is not only recognisable as Aristotle's virtue of magnanimity, Sidney himself calls it this.

In his Ethics Aristotle talks about a virtue which is called "'Magnanimity,'" or "'greatness of soul,'" and he says "what we mean by a great-souled or superior man is one who claims, and is entitled to claim, high consideration from his fellows".¹ In fact it is a sort of justifiable pride based on the fact that the magnanimous man unites all the virtues.

As for the superior man, since nothing is too good for him, he must be the best of men. For the better a man is, the more he deserves, so that he who deserves most is the best. Therefore the truly superior man must be a good man. Indeed, greatness in all the virtues is surely what stamps him for what he is (2)

Miss Garaway³ has shown that this conception of magnanimity was familiar in the Renaissance, if not from Aristotle himself, then from Cicero, Seneca or Plutarch, all of whose works were familiar then. It has already been seen

¹Aristotle, Ethics, op.cit., p.120.

²Ibid., p.121.

³M. Garaway, "Sources and applications of the Aristotelian concept of magnanimity in late Elizabethan poetry and drama." M.A. Thesis, London, 1962.

that Sidney was familiar with Aristotle. It is likely that he was also familiar with the works of Plutarch since on December 19th, 1573, he wrote to Languet saying

I wish you would send me Plutarch's works in French, if they are to be bought in Vienna; I would gladly give five times their value for them, and you will be able to send them no doubt by the hand of some trader (1)

The ideal of magnanimity which Sidney endorses corresponds to both Aristotle's and Plutarch's use of the idea, in that it is displayed chiefly in adversity and its characteristic is a justified self-esteem.

Sidney says that to be fully prepared against trouble one must have both a brave spirit and material weapons. "For indeed the confidence in ones self is the chiefe nurse of magnanimitie, which confidence notwithstanding doth not leave the care of necessarie furnitures, for it". (1593.4.pl03)

Pamela displays this quality in prison. Although she endured her lot with "a vertuous mildenes , yet the knowledge of her selfe, and what was due unto her, made her hart full of a stronger disdain, against her adversitie". (1593.5.pl62) When she is at Cecropia's mercy she prays that "calamitie [may] be the exercise, but not the overthrowe of my vertue". (1590.3.p383)

Magnanimity then, is the name given to the secular aspect of that virtue which is fundamentally grounded in a religious view of life. It is not distinct from the virtuous behaviour examined in the earlier chapters. It includes it and, in a sense, is the spirit which sustains a man in it.

¹Sidney, Correspondence, op.cit., p.12.

Aristotle said that "greatness in all the virtues"¹ was the hall mark of the magnanimous man. In Sidney, however, it springs from a faith in a providential ordering of the universe which gives courage to act virtuously in a private and public capacity and to remain constant in that line of action. This is what Sidney means by the rule of virtue "not to abandon ones self".

It is not only a quality which he justifies in literature. In a letter to Sir Francis Walsingham from Utrecht, when the English had at last joined the Dutch in an offensive against Spain, Sidney reveals that this ideal of behaviour underlay his own life also.

For me thinkes I see the great work indeed in hand, against the abusers of the world, wherein it is no greater fault to have confidence in mans power, than it is to hastily to despair of God's work. I think a wyse and constant man ought never to greev whyle he doth plai as a man mai sai his own part truly though others be out but if him self leav his hold becaws other marrin[ers] will be ydle he will hardli forg[ive] him self his own fault. For me I can not promis of my own course ... becaws I know there is a hyer power that must uphold me or els I shal fall, but certainly I trust, I shall not by other mens wantes be drawne from my self (2)

In view of the context of Neo-Stoicism with which Sidney was familiar, the use of the term "constant" is significant.

Basilus lacks this magnanimity and is drawn from himself to abandon his responsibilities. He only becomes himself again when he regains his faith and resumes his position as king. Gynecia also lacks this quality. Her position in prison is directly parallel to Pyrocles's, but she illustrates the reverse side of the attitude which he is persuaded to adopt. She is unjustly accused and tempted to despair. Unlike Pyrocles, however, she has

¹Aristotle, *Ethics*, *op.cit.*, p.121.

²Sidney, *Works*, III, pp. 166-167.

made no attempt to govern her passion reasonably and her emotional state tempts her to a course of action which is not only untrue to herself and makes a mockery of justice, but also lacks this religious faith which could sustain her in this predicament. She was brought

by the violence of that all answered passion, and then by the dis-
payring conceite, she took of the judgement of God in her husbandes
death and her owne fortune, purposely to overthrowe her selfe, and
confirme by a wronge confession, that abhominable shame, which with
her wisdome, joynde to the truth, perhappes shee might have refelled
(1593.5.p176)

The argument between Pamela and Cecropia makes explicit the basis of this religious faith which is the ground of virtuous behaviour in Arcadia. So far it has been seen that reason is the instrument through which virtue is to be understood and achieved. On a private level it must direct passion if moral health is to be achieved. This health is reflected ideally at the level of public government by the rule of a king over his people. A reasonable control is hard to maintain unless this is sanctioned by some religious faith. The king who lacks this faith collapses morally at a private level and thus causes that chaos in the state which the subordination of reason to passion causes in the individual. Yet often, although men may struggle to maintain a state of virtue, they come to grief through circumstances beyond their control so that it seems that men are "like tennisballs, tossed by the racket of the hyer powers". (1593.5.p177) In terms of the plot, however, Sidney makes it clear that he believed that there is a plan behind human affairs.

The almightie wisdome evermore delighting to shewe the world,
that by unlikeliest meanes greatest matters may come to conclusion:
that humane reason may be the more humbled, and more willinglie geve
place to divine providence (1593.4.p83)

Yet if reason, the instrument for the achievement of moral virtue, must give way to faith in divine providence, it is also the instrument for perceiving the grounds for this faith.

The argument between Pamela and Cecropia lays the foundation of a system of natural rational theology. This, curiously enough, endorses Sidney's view of human reason as a fallible instrument by showing that reason itself can postulate a wisdom which is above it, and before which it must give way.

D.P. Walker has set the whole of this episode in a context of contemporary theological argument and has shown Sidney to be ranging himself with a liberal group of thinkers.¹ Walker examines the attitude adopted towards atheists in the sixteenth century and he finds that they were regarded in two ways. One, they were considered as supernaturally blinded in much the same way as Ulysses' men were enchanted by Circe, and were thus not open to conversion. Two, it was considered possible to convert them on grounds other than revelation; by finding points of common rational agreement and pointing to the evidence of natural phenomena it was possible to build up a system of natural theology. Those who took the first point of view tended to be Protestant and illiberal, stressing the saving nature of grace at the expense of free will. Those who took the second point of view were more liberal and many of them, like Ramus, and Mornay, were Sidney's friends. Mornay, in his Preface to A Woorke Concerning the Trewnesse of the Christian Religion, says that he is trying to combat two schools of thought.

¹D.P. Walker, 'Ways of Dealing with Atheists', Bibliothèque D'Humanisme et Renaissance, 17, 1955, pp.252-277.

The one are such as say that Religion cannot be declared unto Infidels or unbelievers by reason. The other sorte are those whiche uphold, that although reason doo somewhat inlighten it, yet it is neyther lawfull nor expedient to doo it (1)

Against the first sort he urges that it is possible to find in philosophy and a study of nature, common points to lead unbelievers to conversion.

It is nowhere suggested that reason should encroach on faith. The object of reason is to show that natural truth is in harmony with revealed truth, though the last transcends the first.

These liberal theologians used a body of writings called the Prisca Theologia, a collection of pre-Christian texts in conformity with Christian doctrine, which could be used in arguments against atheists to prove the rational basis of religion. Walker points out that often those who use such texts are no less concerned to combat atheism than to integrate Platonism and Christianity.² Many believed that there was, in fact, a pre-Christian Gentile, as well as Jewish, revelation. As the law was to the Jews, so was philosophy to the Greeks, an education to lead them to Christ. That Sidney approved of this line of argument seems likely not only from Arcadia, where there are technical reasons for so arguing, but from Greville's account of his death bed. He asked the ministers standing round

to deliver the opinion of the ancient Heathen, touching the immortality of the soul; First, to see what true knowledge she retains of her own essence, out of the light of her self; then to parallel with it the most pregnant authorities of the old, and new Testament, as supernatural revelations, sealed up from our flesh, for the divine light of faith to reveal, and work by. (3)

¹Sidney, Works, III, p.191.

²Walker, op.cit., p.260.

³Greville, op.cit., p.137.

Walker, having examined these lines of thought turns to Arcadia itself and is "bitterly disappointed" that Pamela, in a pre-Christian romance, does not quote the authority of the Prisca Theologians in her argument with Cecropia.¹ However, he points out that she does not because she is herself a 'prisca theologus' who has reached the truth by natural reason.² Walker further points out that to quote authorities to Cecropia would be no answer to her, since she could retort that they were using a religious fiction for their own ends.³ Here he comes to the heart of the matter. Far from being disappointing, Pamela's attitude is just what one would expect in a book which celebrates Reason as the instrument of moral control and the quality which divides man from the beasts. Had Pamela quoted authority the final case for reason giving way to divine providence would have lost much of its force. Nowhere in Arcadia are generally accepted judgements and ways of acting allowed to pass unquestioned and untested, and it is the same with religious faith.

Pamela adopts a perfectly orthodox attitude that it is possible through reason and the book of nature to reach God. Vives says that "natural reason is not so corrupted that we cannot reach God".⁴ Mornay remarks on this point:

It is a strange case, that these men which ordinarily speake of nothing but the world, will not see in the world, the thing which the world sheweth and teacheth in all parts. For, let us begin at the lowest, and mount up too the highest; and let us consider it whole together or in his parts; and wee shall not finde any thing therein, so great or so small, which leadeth us not step by step untoo a Godhead. (5)

¹Walker, op.cit., p.264.

²Idem.

³Ibid., p1269.

⁴Ibid., p.265. (Walker refers to Luis Vives, De Veritate Fidei Christianae, Basileae, 1543, VIII.25.)

⁵Sidney, Works, III, p.205.

Pamela takes her stand among those who believe that man has a natural inclination to truth which can be discerned from nature and philosophy. Her argument with Cecropia has a rich philosophical background as Professor Greenlaw and others have shown¹ in attributing the various lines of argument to Lucretius, Plutarch and Cicero. It also brings into the open two opposing views of nature which imply different standards of moral behaviour.

Danby has shown that this opposition is also at the heart of King Lear. He points^{out} that this play is dramatised round two meanings of the word nature. One is that of Hooker and the natural theologians who believed that the natural world reflects a divine order. This order can be achieved in human nature through reason which can proceed from an understanding of natural phenomena to God. Danby quotes Bacon on this point.

Thus Homer's famous chain of natural causes is tied to the foot of Jupiter's chair; and indeed no-one can treat of metaphysics, or of the internal and immutable in nature, without rushing at once into natural theology. (2)

Reason is thus a common sense since it "implies a content on which all men agree".³ Just as the natural world is a rational arrangement obeying its own natural law to maintain itself, so man acting on his reason strives to achieve in himself an ideal way of life which will fulfill his own nature made in the image of God. On this view human nature "is not a structure laid down. It is an absolute shape to be realized".⁴

¹See E. Greenlaw, "The Captivity Episode in Sidney's Arcadia", Manly Anniversary Studies, op.cit., pp.54-63; C.M. Syford, "The Direct Source of the Pamela-Cecropia Episode in the Arcadia", PMLA, 49, 1934, pp.472-489; R. Levinson, "The "Godlesse Minde" in Sidney's Arcadia", MP, 29, 1931, pp.21-26; L. Whitney, "Concerning Nature in The Countesse of Pembrokes Arcadia," SP, 24, 1927, pp.207-222.

²Bacon, Advancement of Learning, Bohn Edition, pp.101-102. Quoted by Danby, King Lear, p.23.

³Danby, King Lear, p.43.

⁴Ibid., p.33.

The other view of nature is that of Hobbes, Descartes, and Newton, a closed mechanical system of cause and effect which in fact is much more familiar to us. On this view nature becomes a "given structure instead of normative pattern".¹ It has nothing to do with the values which Hooker, and others like him, called human and natural. Reason, instead of being the instrument through which a divine pattern is realised, becomes a "calculator of the means to satisfy the appetites with which we were born".² Common sense thus becomes a competitive race for self-satisfaction.

Danby shows that in King Lear Edmund, Goneril, and Regan all adopt this mechanical view of nature, not simply as a scientific explanation, but as a justification for their actions. The result is a nightmare world in which human values have no place. They are motivated solely by greed and a desire for power, and they bring about their own destruction. Lear holds the view of nature as reflecting an ideal order, but the order of the corrupt world falls so far short of that of the ideal that he is reduced to madness. Cordelia realises the values which Hooker's school had seen as natural.

She is the norm by which the wrongness of Edmund's world and the imperfection of Lear's is judged. ... Cordelia, however, stands for no historically realizable arrangement. Her perfection of truth, justice, charity requires a New Jerusalem (3)

In Arcadia Cecropia is motivated in the same way as Edmund, Goneril and Regan. She imprisons the Princesses in an attempt to marry one of them

¹Ibid., p.36.

²Ibid., p.38.

³Ibid., p.138.

to Amphialus and secure for him the Arcadian throne to which he was direct heir before Basilius's marriage. Her motives are thus greed to acquire possessions, and glory. She, also, justifies her actions by an irreligious mechanical view of nature and brings about her own destruction. Pamela argues theoretically against her for a view of nature which is the ground of the virtue she embodies.

L. Whitney has pointed out that Sidney attaches different meanings to the word nature in Arcadia. She says that this does not point to a muddled mind on Sidney's part because he discriminates morally between those people who hold the different views.¹ This is shown especially in the episode with Pamela and Cecropia. Having failed to win Philoclea for Amphialus Cecropia turns to Pamela. The Princess plays for time by saying that she has not got her parents' consent. This is the starting point for Cecropia to try to undermine the whole system of moral behaviour which is rooted in piety. She argues that religion is a fiction devised to enforce social order and that since everything happens through a system of natural causes

it is manifest inough, that all things follow but the course of their own nature, saving only Man, who while by the pregnancie of his imagination he strives to things supernaturall meane-while he looseth his owne naturall felicitie. (1590.3.p406)

This is not the nature a study of which leads man to theology. Nor is it the fallen nature of theology which is ultimately redeemed. She continues,

Be wise, and that wisdom shalbe a God unto thee; be contented, and that is thy heaven: for els to thinke that those powers (if there by any such) above, are moved either by the eloquence of our prayers, or in a chafe by the folly of our actions; carries asmuch

¹See L. Whitney, op.cit., p.214.

reason as if flies should thinke, that men take great care which
of them hums the sweetest, and which of them flies nimblest.

(1590.3.pp.406-407)

There has been a great deal of critical discussion as to whether Pamela in her reply draws on the views discussed by Lucretius, Plutarch, or Cicero. R.B. Levinson has shown that at least one passage derives directly from Cicero's De Natura Deorum.¹ It is that where Pamela refers to a certain "godlesse minde", which, driven to acknowledge that intelligent men presuppose an intelligent universe, went on to argue that the "worlde must have in it a spirite, that could write and be reade to, and be learned; since that was in us so commendable". (1590.3.pp.409-410) From this evidence Levinson,

in opposition to Greenlaw, concludes that since Sidney is not absolutely accurate in reproducing Lucretian views and never mentions the word 'atom', he, in fact, owes nothing directly to Lucretius.² C.M. Syford, on the other hand, argues that the episode owes to Plutarch's Morals.³

Sidney was an eclectic thinker. Whether he knew Lucretius first, or second hand, is not so important for this study as the fact that he clearly grasped the implications of his view of the universe and argues against it.

However, one interesting pointer to the fact that Sidney was familiar with Lucretius is found in Plangus's song. He laments,

The child feeles that; the man that feeling knowes,
With cries first borne, the presage of his life,
Where wit but serves to have true taste of woes. (p.57) (4)

¹Levinson, op.cit., pp.21-26.

²Ibid., pp. 24-26.

³Syford, op.cit., pp.472-489.

⁴1590.2.p227.

This is echoed in King Lear,

Thou know'st the first time that we smell the air
 We wawl and cry. I will preach to thee;
 mark. ...
 When we are born, we cry that we are come
 To this great stage of fools. (IV.VI.11.181-185)

Whether or not Shakespeare took the hint from Arcadia, and there is plenty of evidence in King Lear that he was extremely familiar with that book,¹ it is difficult to say. Both Sidney and Shakespeare had a common source in Lucretius.

The human infant, like a shipwrecked sailor cast ashore by the cruel waves, lies naked on the ground, speechless, lacking all aids to life, when nature has first tossed him with pangs of travail from his mother's womb upon the shores of the sunlit world. He fills the air with his piteous wailing, and quite rightly, considering what evils life holds in store for him. (2)

Whether Sidney went direct to Lucretius or not, Pamela argues against a Lucretian materialism. Cecropia, in fact, never admits to his view that the world came into being by chance. Pamela, however, assumes that since, in the manner of the Lucretians, she has dismissed religion as a useful social fiction devised by lawgivers and believed through fear, she must necessarily adopt the rest of their views. She sets out to refute these.

First she shows that the idea that the world was created out of some eternal substances by chance is not logical. She then turns to argue that the design of the natural world presupposes a wise creator.

Lastly, perfect order, perfect beautie, perfect constancie, if these by the children of Chaunce, or Fortune the efficient of these, let Wisedome be counted the roote of wickednesse, and eternitie the fruite of her inconstancie. But you will say it is so by nature, as much as if you said it is so, because it is so. (1590.3.p408)

¹See J. Danby and K. Muir, 'Arcadia and King Lear', Notes and Queries, 195, 1950, pp.49-51.

²Lucretius, The Nature of the Universe, trans. R.E. Latham, Penguin Books, 1951, pp.177-178.

Here Pamela reaches the heart of the matter, for in what she and Cecropia mean by nature lies the whole difference between them. Pamela argues that if there were not a guiding principle behind the world the contrary elements of which it is made would destroy each other.

For that contrary things should meete to make up a perfection without a force and Wisedome above their powers, is absolutely impossible; unles you will flie to that hissed-out opinion of Chaunce againe. But you may perhaps affirme, that one universall Nature (which hath bene for ever) is the knitting together of these many partes to such an excellent unitie. If you meane a Nature of wisdom, goodnes, and providence, which knowes what it doth, then say you that, which I seeke of you, and cannot conclude those blasphemies, with which you defiled your mouth, and mine eares. But if you meane a Nature, as we speake of the fire, which goeth upward, it knowes not why: ... it is but still the same absurditie subscribed with another title. (1590.3.pp.408-409)

She goes on with an analogy which illustrates how Sidney's ideal of virtue, concerned with order at a private and public level, reflects a divine order.

For this worde, one, being attributed to that which is All, is but one mingling of many, and many ones; as in a lease matter, when we say one kingdome which conteines many citties; or one cittie which conteines many persons, wherein the under ones (if there be not a superiour power and wisdom) cannot by nature regarde to any preservation but of themselves: no more we see they doo, since the water willingly quenches the fire, and drownes the earth; so farre are they from a conspired unitie: but that a right heavenly Nature indeed, as it were unnaturing them, doth so bridle them. (1590.3.p409)

Pamela has come to the point where her reason leads her to postulate a God. Although she in fact prays to this God in almost Christian terms elsewhere, here she does not refer to him as God. She says,

This worlde therefore cannot otherwise consist but by a minde of Wisedome, whiche governes it, which whether you wil allow to be the Creator therof, as undoubtedly he is, or the soule and governour therof, most certaine it is that whether he governe all, or make all, his power is above either his creatures, or his government. (1590.3.p410)

L. Whitney has pointed out the similarity of this to a passage in Cicero's Tusculan Disputations, (1.70) Cicero writes,

And so, when we contemplate these and countless others [natural phenomena] can we doubt that there is in charge of them some creator, if, as Plato thinks, they have been created, or perhaps some governor of the great structure of the universe [tanti operis et muneris] if, as Aristotle holds, they have always existed. (1)

Pamela is only concerned with pointing out the reasons for believing in any sort of God, although she makes it clear that she herself adheres to the Christian idea of God the creator.

Finally she proceeds to show how this God's power, knowledge and goodness must be infinite;

for infinitenes of power, and knowledge, without like measure of goodnesse, must necessarily bring foorth destruction and ruine, and not ornament and preservation. (1590.3.p410)

This also recalls a passage by Mornay to the same effect.

Finally, forasmuch as to Bee, to Live, to Understand, and to be mightie, the higher that they be, are so much the lesse to be esteemed, if good also abound not on all partes. ... They call him Good, exceeding good, and the goodnesse it selfe. (2)

Pamela ends on an emotional note trying to terrify Cecropia into submission. Walker points out that this tactic was commonly used against atheists.³

I say, ... that the time will come, when thou shalt knowe that power by feeling it, when thou shalt see his wisdome in the manifesting thy ougly shamelesnesse, and shalt onely perceive him to have bene a Creator in thy destruction. (1593.3.p410)

Cecropia is often described in terms of bestial imagery that implies

¹Whitney, op.cit., p.210.

²Sidney, Works, III, p.254.

³Walker, op.cit., pp.273 ff.

the idea referred to earlier on, that the atheists were supernaturally blinded. Now in her refusal to acknowledge the truth of Pamela's argument, Sidney describes how,

Cecropia, like a Batte (which though it have eyes to discerne that there is a Sunne, yet hath so evill eyes, that it cannot delight in the Sunne) found a trueth, but could not love it.
(1590.3.p411)

In fact it is clear that Pamela regards Cecropia's reason not as blinded but as perverted. Her beliefs are refutable on rational grounds. When Pamela shows how foolish she is to suppose that an unchangeable natural law excludes the idea of a God, she says,

You say yesterday/^{was}as today. O foolish woman, and most miserably foolish, since wit makes you foolish. What dooth that argue, but that there is a constancie in the everlasting governour? (1590.3.p407)

In this episode, then, Sidney gives the rational grounds for a faith which is in conformity with Christian revelation and which is the final ground of the rational virtue which is at the centre of Arcadia. It is peculiar to the revised Arcadia and in writing the episode Sidney draws on arguments which were known to, or used by, many of his thoughtful contemporaries. From this theological discussion there also emerges a discussion of two views of natural phenomena which inspire two different ways of behaviour. Cecropia's idea of nature which excludes the divine justifies her ethical naturalism. She maintains that not to follow her ideas will lead to a loss of worldly joy;

so as it is manifest inough, that all things follow by the course of their own nature, saving only Man, who while by the pregnancie of his imagination he strives to things supernaturall, meanwhile he looseth his owne naturall felicitie. (1590.3.p406)

Yet Pamela maintains that nature herself witnesses to the supernatural, and man in apprehending this through reason, and striving towards it, is fulfilling his own highest nature. It is this conception of nature which lies behind that ideal of behaviour grounded in religious faith which ^{is} called a natural virtue in Arcadia. Basilius's action in retiring from his responsibilities is thus unnatural. The Princes when they refuse to abandon themselves to despair are said to be following the rule of nature.

In connection with this there is one other aspect of Sidney's picture of natural virtue which must be mentioned. All through Arcadia Sidney is insistent that virtue is a quality which must be maintained by a struggle against the forces of evil. Virtue is an active quality based on right knowledge. "O no; he cannot be good, that knowes not why he is good, but stands so farre good, as his fortune may keepe him unassaied". (1590.1.p26) In the attaining of and acting on this knowledge, man fulfills his highest nature. Yet at the same time virtue, although natural, is also a struggle to achieve because nature is corrupted through original sin. The natural theology for which Pamela argues is deduced from a fallen nature which is, nevertheless, part of a divine plan. All this is of course perfectly orthodox Christian teaching.

Philoclea is the only exception to this idea.

The sweete minded Philoclea was in their degree of well doing, to whom the not knowing of evill serveth for a ground of vertue, and hold their inward powers in better forme with an unspotted simplicitie, then many, who rather cunningly seeke to know what goodnes is, then willingly take into themselves the following of it. (1590.2.pl69)

Her goodness is also rooted in religious faith. Like Pyrocles she does not

fear to die; "not knowing why she should feare to deliver her unstayned soule to God". (1593.4.p107) Philoclea first appears in pastoral dress. In the first chapter it was pointed out that she embodies at the level of the court the qualities which the pastoral setting represents, and which are an essential part of Sidney's ideal of virtue. She has, however a further level of meaning in this highly patterned narrative. Pastoral is connected with dreams of a golden age. Both Virgil and Isaiah describe a return of this primeval innocence in pastoral imagery. Sidney shows in his pastoral Arcadia that this idyllic state can only be approximated to in a world of fallen nature through virtue which consists in private and public order. Philoclea, however, is called a "sweet and simple breath of heavenly goodnesse". (1590.2.p169) She stands for that ideal of human nature from which men have fallen but which, through virtue, they struggle to regain. Sidney points out "What smal difference in the working there is. betwixt a simple voidnes of evill, and a judiciall habit of vertue". (1593.4.p107) Philoclea thus has a symbolic as well as a narrative function in Arcadia. However, the symbol is shaded very naturally into the story with a certain sad realism. Her innocency cannot survive in a world of fallen nature

because it hath not passed through the worldlie wickednesse, nor feelingly found the evill, that evill carries with it; so now the Ladie Philoclea ... when now she came to appoint, wherin her judgement was to be practized, in knowing faultines by his first tokens, she was like a yong faune, who coming in the wind of the hunters, doth not know whether it be a thing or no to be eschewed
(1590.2.p169)

In the light of this, and what has been said in the preceding chapters, it is possible to understand more exactly what Philanax means when he says that,

wisdome and vertue be the only destinies appointed to man to follow, whence we ought to seeke al our knowledge, since they be such guydes as cannot faile; which, besides their inward comfort, doo lead so direct a way of proceeding, as either prosperitie must ensue; or, if the wickednes of the world should oppresse it, it can never be said, that evil hapneth to him, who falles accompanied with vertue. (1590.1.p24)

Wisdom is the reason which understands what is good and has a "true sense and iudgement of thinges humane and diuine". Virtue is the active maintaining of that state which reason sees to be good. It can never said on Sidney's world view that "evil hapneth to him, who falles accompanied with vertue", since this virtue is finally to be vindicated by a divine providence. This all-wise providence can be partially apprehended by reason which must then give way to faith. So Philanax says

I would then have said, the heavenly powers to be revered,
and not searched into; and their mercies rather by prayers to
be sought, then their hidden counsels by curiositie. (1590.1.p24)

Pyrocles and Musidorus, however, faced with the possibility of an unjustly inflicted death do more than affirm a faith in a divine plan behind human affairs. They also declare a belief in an after-life in which the reason or intelligence by which a man may discern virtue and reach a faith in God, is freed from this state of partial knowledge in an imperfect world. It is this state which Plangus, who lacks faith had lamented.

Ah where was first that cruell cunning found,
To frame of Earth a vessell of the minde,
Where it should be to selfe-destruction bound?
What needed so high sprites such mansions blind? (p.57) (1)

Pyrocles says that after death

Neither do I thinke, we shall have such a memorye, as nowe we
have, which is but a relicke of the senses, or rather a print

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¹1590.2.p227.

the senses have left of things passed, in our thoughtes, but it shall be a vitall power of that very intelligence; which as while it was heere, it helde the chiefe seate of our life, and was as it were the last resorte, to which of all our knowledges, the hiest appeale came, and so by that meanes was never ignorant of our actions, though many times rebelliously resisted, alwayes with this prison darkened: so, much more being free of that prison, and returning to the life of all things, where all infinite knowledge is, it cannot but be a right intelligence, which is both his name and being, of things both present and passed, though voyde of imagining to it selfe any thing, but even growen like to his Creator, hath all things, with a spirituall knowledge before it. ... wee shall not see the cullours, but lifes of all things that have bene or can be: and shall as I hope knowe our friendship, though exempt from the earthlie cares of friendship, having both united it, and our selves, in that hye and heavenly love of the unquenchable light. (1593.5.pp.165-166)

Sidney's final stand is the same as Spenser's in the Mutability cantos of the Faerie Queene. Nature includes change, through which any ideal of human virtue must be worked out and sustained. Indeed it is only in the hazards of fortune that this quality can be manifested. The faculty which understands the ideal of virtue to be acted on is itself part of a corrupt and changing nature yet it can point to a divine order beyond the reaches of change and time. So Spenser writes,

Then gin I thinke on that which Nature sayd,
 Of that same time when no more Change shall be,
 But stedfast rest of all things firmly stayd
 Vpon the pillours of Eternity,
 That is contrayr to Mutabilitie:
 For, all that moueth, doth in Change delight:
 But thence-forth all shall rest eternally
 With Him that is the God of Sabbaoth hight:
 O that great Sabbaoth God, graunt me that Sabaoths sight. (1)

So Pamela in Sidney's Arcadia affirms a faith in the "constancie" of the "everlasting governour", (1590.3.p407) and Pyrocles and Musidorus achieve in themselves a virtue grounded on this faith, believing that eventually

¹Faerie Queene, VII. VIII. 2.

they will see not "the cullours, but the lifes of all things that have bene or can be."

Far from being a totally unrealistic romance, "a trifle, and that triflinglie handled", Arcadia is a highly patterned work in which all the parts contribute to a central theme. The pastoral-chivalric setting, the working out and resolution of the main plot, and all the subsidiary episodes contribute to an analysis of an ideal of virtue rooted in religious faith which imposes a unity on the whole work.

ABBREVIATIONS

- JEGP. The Journal of English and Germanic Philology.
- JHI. The Journal of the History of Ideas.
- JWCI. The Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes.
- MP. Modern Philology.
- PMLA. Publications of the Modern Language Association of America.
- PQ. Philological Quarterly.
- RES. Review of English Studies.
- SP. Studies in Philology.

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