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SIR PHILIP SIDNEY AND THE PASTORAL VIA JACOPO SANNAZARO: AN ANALYSIS OF *THE OLD ARCADIA*

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Alla mia famiglia,
Da sempre.

Abstract

In questa tesi viene considerata la relazione che esiste tra *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia (The Old Arcadia)* di Sir Philip Sidney e *L'Arcadia* di Jacopo Sannazaro, due opere pastorali fondamentali nello sviluppo del genere che alternano sezioni in prosa e egloghe.

Dopo un'analisi generale delle caratteristiche tipiche del genere pastorale e di come questo sia nato e in seguito si sia evoluto, in Italia e Inghilterra, verrà considerata l'influenza di Sannazaro all'interno del genere. Quest'ultimo infatti attraverso la sua opera riuscì a introdurre dei cambiamenti significativi alla tradizione precedentemente iniziata da Teocrito e Virgilio. Sannazaro verrà a sua volta preso come punto di riferimento da Sidney, che lo definì esplicitamente come uno dei principali autori pastorali da cui prendere ispirazione.

Le opere di questi due autori, oltre ad avere lo stesso titolo, rendendo in questo modo chiaro fin da subito il genere d'appartenenza, condividono anche lo stesso paesaggio. L'idilliaco scenario pastorale ideato da Sannazaro viene ripreso da Sidney all'interno delle sue egloghe, creando così un luogo ideale dove i pastori possono vivere in tranquillità la loro vita. L'egloga in cui si può davvero vedere come Sidney fosse a conoscenza del lavoro precedentemente svolto da Sannazaro è 'Ye Goat-Herd Gods'. Questa sestina riprende i temi trattati in 'Chi Vuol Udire i Miei Sopriri', copiando anche lo stesso schema di ripetizione delle parole alla fine dei versi in ogni stanza.

Alla fine si arriverà a capire come queste due opere siano profondamente legate da molteplici aspetti, sia tematici che strutturali, e come il genere crei delle connessioni in secoli diversi tra i due Paesi.

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1. Introduction

The pastoral genre appears an accessible concept at first glance, and many readers and critics have an idea of what it represents. However, many definitions exist that attempt to explain what it is, describe its characteristics and how it can be employed. From each of these definitions, something different can be learned about the pastoral genre, one of the most versatile genre in literature. The more one tries to categorize the genre, the more it becomes confined in a circle that restricts its possibilities. As Greg stated, the only thing that we can be sure of is that 'pastoral literature must not be confounded with that which has for its subject the lives, the ideas, and the emotions of simple and unsophisticated mankind, far from the centres of our complex civilisation'.[1]

Instead, the pastoral genre deals with more enlightened themes and structures. It contemplates the duality and the contrasts between nature and society, two opposing worlds depicted by writers who aimed to both critique and escape from their societies through allegory. They 'create a world of the imagination, invested with urban longing for an ideally simple life in nature'.[2] In this sense, the pastoral genre was extremely attractive to writers. The shepherds, protagonists of the pastoral, are poets and lovers expressing sophisticated sentiments.

The origins of the pastoral genre lay in ancient times with Theocritus and Virgil. They started a tradition that would expand throughout Europe over the centuries. It is necessary to have a general view of how the pastoral genre originated and how it evolved over the time to really understand its importance.

The genre played a fundamental role in the development of the Italian literature and the English Renaissance period. The chief representatives of the pastoral genre in Italy include Giovanni Boccaccio, Jacopo Sannazaro and Torquato Tasso. Sannazaro, among the others, is an author

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[1] Walter W. Greg, '*Pastoral Poetry and Pastoral Drama: A Literary Inquiry, with Special Reference to The Pre-Restoration Stage in England*' (London: A.H. Bullen, 1906), p. 3.
[2] Sukanta Chaudhuri, *Renaissance Pastoral and Its English Developments* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), p. 1.

extremely important for his work *Arcadia* (1504), which marked a turning point in the genre. His innovative literary contribution brought significant changes in the use of the pastoral genre, influencing in this way later writes who will imitate him.

Regarding English pastoral authors, the most noteworthy figures were Alexander Barclay, Sir Philip Sidney and Edmund Spenser. When discussing about the English pastoral tradition it is important to note that it developed almost a century later than the Italian one. Therefore, it was influenced by the Italian works that were already part of an established tradition. Sir Philip Sidney, in particular, drew inspiration from Sannazaro for one of his most significant works, *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia (The Old Arcadia*) (1577-80).

Sidney used the same title as Sannazaro and managed to recreate the same landscape. He also replicated the organization and structure of the eclogues in his work. Recognizing these similarities is essential because they highlight Sidney's awareness of earlier pastoral traditions, especially the Italian one. This connection underscores the continuity of the pastoral genre and the impact that each writer had on the subsequent generations.

In this thesis I will argue that a close relationship exists between Sir Philip Sidney's *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia (The Old Arcadia)* and Jacopo Sannazaro's influential masterpiece *Arcadia*. This thesis aims to conduct an analysis of the connections that exists between the two works, highlighting the profound and intricate influence that Sannazaro's work had on Sidney. Specifically, my analysis centers on how *Arcadia* was used as an inspiration in depicting Sidney's Arcadian landscape, which provides an idyllic background for the narrative. It also examines its role in shaping the structure and content of Sidney's eclogues, with particular attention on the sestina 'Ye Goat-Herd Gods'.

In chapter 1, I will provide general information about the pastoral genre. As previously mentioned, it is not possible to give a specific definition of the genre; however, outlining the styles and forms it encompasses is useful to help the reader understand what it is and why it gained

popularity. I will also give an overview of its ancient origins and how it developed in Italy and England.

Starting from Ancient Greece, when Theocritus of Syracuse, the real originator of the pastoral genre, introduced the dream of the country, followed by Virgil who translated this world from Greece to Rome and called it 'Arcadia', I will then shift the focus to Italy. Here Dante Alighieri, Francesco Petrarca and Giovanni Boccaccio reintroduced the genre in literature. Finally, I will explore its development in England where writers such as Alexander Barclay, Barnabe Googe and Edmund Spenser wrote pastoral works before and after Sidney.

In chapter 2, I will analyze in depth the figure of Jacopo Sannazaro, his life, and his *Arcadia.* Having received an education influenced by great humanist writers from an early age, Sannazaro soon entered the Academia Pontaniana, which significantly influenced his writing style. I will explain the changes that he introduced to the pastoral genre according to his vision and the traditions that he decided to consider. The chapter will also focus on his *Arcadia,* its structure, themes and plot.

In chapter 3, I will initially focus on Sir Philip Sidney and *The Old Arcadia.* I will explain how the work was developed by Sidney and how he conceived of the prose sections and the eclogues. Then, I will delve into its relationship with Sannazaro's *Arcadia.* The comparison between the two Arcadias will explore different aspects of the works. First of all, it will look at how the landscape depicts an immersive environment that the characters could inhabit. Sidney clearly recalled Sannazaro's work and expanded on it. Furthermore, I will analyze the internal structure of the work, particularly the organization of the eclogues, in which Sidney engaged a dialogue with Sannazaro. The 'Ye Goat-Herd Gods' eclogue can be regarded as the apex of this exchange, particularly considering the words employed and the feelings expressed by the shepherds.

2. The pastoral genre

When we think about the pastoral genre the first thing that comes to our mind is an idyllic landscape inhabited by shepherds that live their life isolated from the rest of the world and in contact with nature. It seems that nothing can spoil the harmony of this place, where time flows separately from the ordinary one and spring persists. This is the image of the Golden age and portrays the ideal way of life for many classical writers.

However, the pastoral genre cannot be identified with that simple vision. Starting with Homer's *Iliad* and the Hebrew Scriptures, a tradition developed through the centuries leading to a modification of the genre, so that it started comprehending a huge variety and amount of literary works that can be considered pastoral. It includes many styles and forms, involving different types of characters. Therefore, the genre is hard to define, as it is difficult to find a definition that can satisfy everyone or include every literary work. However, a distinction between the three major definitions of the term 'pastoral' needs to be made. First, we can refer to it as a genre, the pastoral genre, whose origins lay in the Greek and Roman poems about shepherd's 'life in the country'.[3] Secondly, pastoral can also be referred to an area of content: 'in this sense pastoral refers to any literature that describes the country with an implicit or explicit contrast to the urban'.[4] Lastly, we can refer to the term as the 'simple celebration of nature'.[5] We can consider these definitions as a starting point, although there are many others, each one with its own facets.

This versatility of the pastoral genre is also one of the reasons of its popularity among authors. It is a genre that allows a choice between different styles and forms and includes contradictions as it combines refined emotions and rural nature; court life and the life of the shepherds; people and nature. The possibility to bring something new to the genre or stick to the structures that were established by

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[3] Terry Gifford, *Pastoral* (London: Routledge, 1999), p. 1.
[4] Gifford, p. 2.
[5] Gifford, p. 2.

ancient authors satisfy every writer's aspiration. They are not forced to express their personal style as they can stick to the pre-established forms. Moreover, they can write about something they know as the main topic regards personal emotions and experiences.

The main purposes of pastoral literature range from showing an ideal life to criticizing the ordinary one, to creating a model for humans' life.

'The pastoral world in this sort of work is not a separate world but a microcosm: it is not set apart from some other way of life for purposes of comparison; it stands instead for ordinary life, magnified so that the scale of values and emotions differs from what we have become accustomed to'.[6]

The pastoral genre comprehends many sub-genres like the lover's complaint, rustic satire on the affairs, the singing context, etc. Each of these can be distant from the classical tradition or strictly related to it. While some subgenres became remarkably famous, others were used less.

Because of its flexibility the pastoral genre cannot be defined unequivocally, and an evaluation of the elements that form a literary work is a useful method to understand if it can belong to the genre.

I will now consider the developments of the pastoral genre from the classics to the Renaissance in Italy and England. As we will see, the genre followed different paths in its evolution. An initial focus on the vision of Ancient Greek and Roman authors is fundamental to understand the origins of the pastoral setting and the main themes involved.

2.1 Origins

Starting from Greek poetry seems reasonable when talking about the origins of the Pastoral genre. The period in which Homer (c. VIII B.C.) wrote his *Iliad* (750 B.C.) is when the genre really started taking off. In the author's vision, nature and the divine share the leading role. The setting is always an idyllic space where death and anxiety do not exist, and spring persists. The scene that the

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[6] Andrew V. Ettin, *Literature and the Pastoral* (New Heaven: Yale University Press, 1984), p. 31.

author creates is 'always an inhabited nature[:] it makes no difference whether the inhabitants are gods or men'.[7] The shepherds, who are the main characters, spend their time composing poetry under trees and playing primitive musical instruments; their 'tutelar deity is the spirit of the flocks, Pan'.[8] All this can be identified as the initial context that would be a fundamental motif in the pastoral tradition. It helped setting a stereotype that would be accepted and recreated by later generations of writers.

However, Theocritus of Syracuse (315 B.C.-260 B.C.) is the true originator of pastoral poetry. He was born in Syracuse, where he lived his childhood and adolescence, and then moved to Alexandria, where he found a patron and died. In his application of the pastoral genre the shepherds' life is tied to a specific setting: pastoral Sicily, later called 'Arcadia'.[9] By remaining faithful to the real Sicilian landscape, the author made his poetry ideal. In this way the Syracusan poet was able to escape from the civilization of Alexandria and return somehow to the beloved and idyllic land of his childhood. However, by doing this, Theocritus changed Homer's view, as irony took the place of illusion and innocence in his poetry, as he represented the 'townsman's'[10] dream of the country, and nothing else. The return in the Sicilian countryside it is not the real desire of the author. Everything, indeed, is based on a realistic representation of life and on an attachment to a land that becomes a background for human emotions and actions, which are the real center of his *Idyls* (c. III B.C.).

The passage from Alexandria to Rome caused various changes to the pastoral genre, which lost its original purity and saw the introduction of the 'Golden Age' conception. It represented the nostalgic celebration of past times, when human life was completely devoted to contemplation rather than ambition.

Virgil (70 B.C.-19 B.C.) had a huge role in the changing process of the genre, making it part of the Western tradition. Starting by taking Theocritus as a model, he later opted for a more personal

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[7] Ernest R. Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, trans. by Willard R. Trask (New Jersey: Princeton), p. 186.
[8] Curtius, p. 186.
[9] Curtius, p. 187.
[10] Peter V. Marinelli, *Pastoral*, (London: Methuen, 1971), p. 39.

style. First of all, he changed the setting, moving from southern Italy to the land 'that borders on Sparta',[11] the Arcadia. This area, detached from the rest of the world, was also known for being Pan's home, and became Virgil's ideal place. In Arcadia poets could withdraw from the city and the lust for gain, and dedicate the rest of their life creating their art. The main theme was the love-complaint. Virgil also introduced his personal life and Roman history in his pastoral world. Virgil's use of the pastoral genre is rather complex, as he has a tendency to make everything allegorical. A clear example of this can be found in the *Aeneid,* in which 'a conversation between shepherds becomes an expression of gratitude to the emperor for the restitution of his villa […] an apotheosis of Julius Caesar'.[12] It is also important to notice that in the poem in question Virgil first introduced 'the convention of the golden age into pastoral verse'.[13] In this way the author became a model for the future generations of writers. However, it is important to consider the linguistic context in which he lived, as Latin was a very widespread language, and this really helped him achieve success.

After all this elaboration on the genre by ancient Greek and Roman authors, the Pastoral genre was considered to be dead as few literary works were produced during the following decades. 'During the Middle Ages the stream of pastoral production, though it nowhere actually disappears, is reduced to the merest trickle'.[14]

Later, the genre was revived during Pre-Humanism in Italy with a series of eclogues. The writers that we need to take in consideration are iconic when talking about Italian literature.

Dante Alighieri (1265-1321) was the first one, as in the first decades of the 14th century he exchanged eclogues with Giovanni del Virgilio (before 1300-1327). He also introduced Christian Pastoralism in his *Divina Commedia* (1304/7-1314). It was a whole new vision of the classical pastoral tradition, as the Church was at the center and glorified. Despite the tragic end of the Roman Empire, Rome was still considered the center of civilization, since the seat of the Church was there.

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[11] Marinelli, p. 41.
[12] Greg, p. 16.
[13] Greg, p. 16.
[14] Greg, p. 18.

This led to the creation of a 'poetic form that […] reflected the glories of imperial Rome […] the visible emblem on earth of the spiritual empire of Christ',[15] giving the Pastoral genre a new connotation. In this sense, it is important to remember that Dante placed Brutus, Cassius and Judas in 'the innermost circle of hell'.[16]

Francesco Petrarca (1304-1374) also wrote various eclogues in Latin hexameters: he opted for a classical setting and created dialogues between shepherds. He is the 'first to renew the pastoral tradition, broken for some ten centuries.[17] Even Petrarca, like Dante before him, introduced in his literary work various references to the Church, denouncing ecclesiastical corruption.

Next to those two major authors we should mention Giovanni Boccaccio (1313-1375). He introduced in his eclogues the *terza rima*, a rhyming verse-form consisting of three-line stanzas with an interlocking three-line rhyme scheme, which became the standard verse-form for the pastoral genre in Italy. His themes were completely pastoral without any allegorical signification.

Jacopo Sannazaro's (1458-1530) literary production is another example of the revival process of the Pastoral genre during Renaissance. His most important work, *Arcadia* (1504)*, will have a huge success in Europe and will be taken as a model by many authors. It is a pastoral poem consisting of an alternation of prose and poetry, which story gather around Sincero, the protagonist, who decides to leave Naples and move to Arcadia because of love pain. To his work Italian literature owes the name of the Arcadian Academy, founded in the 18th century. His work will be explored more in depth in Chapter 3 of this thesis.

From the classical eclogues there was eventually a natural transition to the pastoral romance and then a natural development which led to the creation of pastoral drama. It is now important to focus on the pastoral romance and its development in Italy. It consists of a narration of prose and verse in which it is introduced a sensual pagan paradise, where the feeling of love dominated the

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[15] Greg, p. 21.
[16] Greg, p. 21.
[17] Greg, p. 22.

relationships between characters. This became a recurrent theme in many literary works of pastoral drama. Historically, the most important example of pastoral romance is Boccaccio's *Commedia delle Ninfe Fiorentine* (1341-42), in which he mixes the 'pagan and Christian motifs'[18] and hides behind the characters of real people who lived in that time: friends, courtiers, all in a pastoral atmosphere. Ameto, the protagonist, is 'led to the knowledge of the divine essence'[19] thanks to the power of love, becoming a civilized man.

In 1508 Baldassarre Castiglione (1478-1529) and Cesare Gonzaga (1476-1512) performed an eclogue, *Tirsi* (1508), at the court of Urbino. It was the first one to depend only on the pastoral form and to introduce the allegorical pastoral for the stage. Through this kind of minor literary works, we can really see the evolution of pastoral drama, which was not developed 'through the infusion of the Arcadian ideal into pre-existing dramatic forms but through the actual evolution of a new dramatic form from the pre-existing non-dramatic pastoral'.[20]

The internal structure of pastoral drama, which developed from pastoral eclogues, started showing a dramatic tendency and the dialogues became extremely relevant, typically with two people alternatively speaking. Gradually, more speakers were included and the *terza rima* was substituted by *rime sdrucciole*, a rhyming scheme where the rhyme occurs on the third last syllable of each line, and *ottava rima*, which is a rhyming system consisting of eight iambic lines. The structure of the pastoral drama comprehended a chorus, the use of confidants, the introduction of messengers and descriptive passages and five acts.

Pastoral drama took inspiration from different genres that were pre-existent to it. One was based on the imitation of the classics written by Latin authors like Virgil and Theocritus; Mythological drama with its classical myths, which 'supplied the pastoral with its peculiar imaginative atmosphere';[21] and then a rural influence on the pastoral genre that led to the creation of the *drammi*

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[18] Greg, p. 41.
[19] Greg, p. 43.
[20] Greg, p. 155.
[21] Greg, p. 171.

rusticali genre. This had some brief success in the first half of the 16th century, and owed their origin to 'the fashion of rustic composition set by Lorenzo De' Medici [1449-1492] in his *Nencia* [1469-73] and may this in their origin have been related to the courtly eclogue'.[22] After several attempts by different authors, two plays that had a huge success and to which we can refer to as truly belonging to Pastoral drama, were: Torquato Tasso's (1544-1595) *Aminta* (1753), and Giovan Battista Guarini's (1538-1612) *Pastor Fido* (1580-83).[23]

2.2 Developments of the pastoral genre in early modern England

In England the pastoral genre developed principally from spontaneous and popular impulse, and also from foreign influences from countries where the genre had already expanded. 'To this double origin may be ascribed a certain noticeable vitality that characterizes English pastoral composition'.[24]

The first native pastoral genre that needs to be considered is the pastoral ballad, in which the adopted point of view is the one of the 'peasant maiden to whom the high-born suitor plays his court'.[25] A clear example can be identified in *The Broom of Cowdenkows* (1625), where a gentleman falls in love and marries a farm girl. Another native composition that developed in this early period is religious drama, in which the rustic life of shepherds is essential in representing the authenticity of the characters.

After these early developments, it is possible now to focus on the regular pastoral tradition in early modern England. English eclogues appeared in the 16th century, and they were dialogues between shepherds, often on love or poetry, set in a rustic landscape. Their origins can be traced back

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[22] Greg, p. 172.
[23] These two authors wrote literary works for the court of Ferrara. This city was extremely important for the development of the Pastoral drama.
[24] Greg, 69.
[25] Greg, p. 70.

to two important dates and events: 1498, when Baptista Mantuan (1447-1516)[26] wrote *Eclogues,* and then 1512 when Virgil's eclogues were first printed in England. These two texts were used by Elizabethan pastoral writers as a model for their literary production.

In this context three authors are important to take into consideration: Alexander Barclay (1475-1552), Barnabe Googe (1540-1594) and Edmund Spenser (1552-1599), who in 1579 wrote *The Shepheardes Calendar,* thanks to which he took credits for introducing the eclogues into early modern English literature and was imitated by many writers.

However, it is important to consider also the previous attempts by Barclay and Googe. Their representation of the figure of the shepherd recalled Virgil's and Mantuan's. In this way this character is changed from the previous medieval tradition, where he is allegorically seen as a priest guiding his sheep (who allegorically represent his congregation). This new vision can be considered as a literalization of the shepherd's figure, who is not allegorical anymore.

Barclay's eclogues are 'pastiche of medieval literary modes',[27] however he can be located in a transitionary space. Three of the five eclogues he created recall the medieval features of *Miseriae Curialium* by Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini (mid-15th century treatise), a work that is not considered pastoral, but which Barclay transformed into a pastoral eclogue. The other two eclogues 'adapt Mantuas's fifth and sixth eclogues';[28] they are extremely detailed in their depiction of the shepherds' life. 'Barclay's interest in the material realities of shepheards life seems to threaten pastoral conventions',[29] in particular the otium one (a state of leisure that is considered to be typical of shepherds and of pastoral from its origins), as he focuses a lot on their working life.

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[26] Baptista Spagnuoli, commonly known as Mantuan in England since the Renaissance, wrote ten eclogues 'accepted as a model of pastoral composition.[…]. His poems were what, through the changing fashions of centuries, men had come to expect of bucolic verse. […] Spagnuoli was noted for the elegance of his Latin verse'. Greg, p. 26-27.
[27] Katherine C. Little, *Transforming Work: Early Modern Pastoral and Late Medieval Poetry,* (University of Notre Dame Press, 2013), p. 54.
[28] Little, p. 54.
[29] Little, p. 58.

In contrast, Googe sets aside all these details about 'sheperdly labour'.[30] In his eclogues the shepherd has a lover identity (six of the eight eclogues deal with love) and the other two can be considered moral eclogues. So, he rewrites 'the countryside as a place of leisure, where the primary activity of shepherds is speaking poetically'.[31]

As concerns Spenser, his major work *The Shepherd's Calendar* has a historical importance. Spenser

'was qualified for the task by a knowledge of previous pastoral writers from Theocritus and Bion down to Margot, and deliberately ranged himself in line with the previous poets of the regular pastoral tradition'.[32]

This literary work first appeared in 1579 and was dedicated to Sir Philip Sidney (1554-1586). The originality of the structure is something that needs to be highlighted as the author tries to connect different eclogues into a 'connected series'.[33] The title of the work represents the design of the opera, as it is divided into 12 parts, one for each month of the year. Greg claims that 'the attempt at uniting a series of poems into a single fabric is Spenser's chief contribution to the formal side of pastoral composition'.[34]

'After the appearance of the *Shepheard's Calendar* some years elapsed before English poetry again ventured upon the domain of pastoral, at least in any serious composition'.[35]

Occasionally it is possible to find some authors' translations of foreign pastoral works, which helped the development of the pastoral genre by making foreign literary works easier to understand. An example of this is Googe's translation of two songs of Jorge Montemayor's (1520-1561) romance *Diana* (1559).

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[30] Little, p. 74.
[31] Little, p. 75.
[32] Greg, p. 83.
[33] Greg, p. 84.
[34] Greg, P. 91.
[35] Greg, p. 110.

However, when one looks for original compositions, the poets that emerge are the ones around Sir Philip Sidney's court circle. In this sense, Sidney and his *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia (The Old Arcadia)* (1577-80) had an important role in the development of the pastoral romance in Early Modern England. Robin Kirkpatrick notes that 'Sidney reveals himself as the primary influence in such cases. But the formulae of the genre had already been established in Sannazaro's *Arcadia*' of 1504'.[36] From him Sidney took inspiration for his own work, even though some differences exist. Printed many times during the years after his death, Sidney's literary work comprehend two distinguished worlds, 'the prose world of the books and the poetic world of the eclogues',[37] a method previously used by Sannazaro in his *Arcadia*. So, it is now fundamental to focus on Sannazaro's revival of the pastoral genre in Italy, to better understand the implications that his use of the genre and his major work *Arcadia* had for Sidney's *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia (The Old Arcadia)*.

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[36] Robin Kirkpatrick, *English and Italian Literature from Dante to Shakespeare: A Study of Sources, Analogue, and Divergence* (New York: Longman, 1995), p. 146.
[37] Robert E. Stillman, *Sidney's Poetic Justice: The 'Old Arcadia', Its Eclogues, and Renaissance Pastoral Tradition* (New Jersey: Associated University Press, 1986), p. 81.

3. Sannazaro and His Influence on the Pastoral Genre

Jacopo Sannazaro's interest in the pastoral genre derives from its variety and flexibility, as it comprehends different styles, modes and genres. For Sannazaro, as a humanist, the rediscovery of the genre was a way to understand antiquity. Such rediscovery required significant philological work. Because the language of the pastoral genre and its 'rhetorical conventions lay embedded in ancient roots, any attempt to appropriate them entails a study of the syntax and semantics of the ancient language'.[38] Sannazaro's interest in the ancient times was aimed to rediscover the 'pure Arcadian textuality.'[39]

Sannazaro can be considered as the master of the pastoral genre, he represents the apex of southern Italian renaissance humanism. The author was born in the Kingdom of Naples on 28 July 1458, at the end of the reign of Alfonso I, from a noble family. When his father died, he moved near Salerno with his family, where he was educated by humanist scholars. The nature and landscape of the place had a huge impact on him and would inspire several literary works, including *The Arcadia* (1504). In 1475 Sannazaro moved back to Naples and became part of the Accademia Pontaniana, with the name 'Actius Sincerus'.[40] The academy, which gathered around Giovanni Pontano (1426-1503), was the center of humanistic studies in the kingdom of Naples, and Sannazaro became one of its greatest exponents. This group of scholars, their works and their relationship with Sannazaro will have a huge impact on his poetic development.

The author served at the court of Naples from the reign of Alfonso II to that of Federigo d'Aragona, with whom he had a more intimate relationship. Due to the loss of the reign of Naples to Spain, Federigo was sent into exile and Sannazaro decided to go with him. Here he discovered that on 14 June 1502 his *Arcadia* was published without his consensus. When his patron died in 1504, he

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[38] William J. Kennedy, *Jacopo Sannazaro and the Uses of Pastoral* (London: University Press of New England, 1983), p. 2.

[39] Kennedy, p. 7.

[40] Greg, p. 28.

decided to return to Naples with a new version of *The Arcadia*, which comprehended two new chapters. Until his death in 1530, Sannazaro wrote many Latin compositions, like *De Partu Virginis* (1513), a short Latin poem about the motherhood of Mary and the birth of Jesus, and had an epistolary relationship with Pietro Bembo (1470-1547). In the years after his death his friends revised and published many editions of his works. Thanks to them Sannazaro gained fame in Italy and Europe in the sixteenth century.

Sannazaro dedicated the first part of his life to the vernacular production written in Neapolitan dialect, which later in the years he will revise and change into the Tuscan vernacular, following the rules proposed by Bembo in his *Prose della volgar lingua* (1525). However, in Sannazaro's sonnets and songs a major influence from Petrarch can be seen. Kennedy claims that the author recalled 'Petrarch's rhetorical strategies with some measure of their own complexity. Those strategies in turn proved useful for developing amatory motifs in the pastorals'[41] that can be found also in the songs of *Arcadia*. All sonnets, songs, madrigals, sestinas, laments, etc. composed in his youth were gathered in the collection *Rime* and published a few months after his death. The collection is dedicated to Cassandra Castriota (1480-1569), who hosted Sannazaro during the last days of his life, and it is divided into two parts, clearly recalling the Petrarchan model of *Rime sparse* (1336-1374). The narrative follows the evolution and maturation of Sannazaro's literary production, from the vernacular compositions to the Neo-Latin ones, including an interest in reviewing all of them.

When he returned to Naples from the exile in France, Sannazaro dedicated himself to his Latin compositions until his death. His intention was to recreate what Nash defines a 'facsimile' of the sound and sense of the old Latin poems. He had various models to follow, especially from the pastoral tradition. These compositions include epigrams, odes, elegies and some narratives.

Epigrams are the one that he wrote the most, as this kind of short poems allow the use of a huge variety of topics and lengths. Epigrams aim at a 'concision and wit that Sannazaro would employ

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[41] Kennedy, p. 37.

to great advantage in his pastorals'.[42] In his epigrams the author developed classical themes like friendship, love and blame. While some of his epigrams were dedicated to Federigo, Alfonso, humanists of the Accademia Pontaniana and used to commemorate special events, others criticize popes and members of important families on different aspects: social, moral and political, and for this reason they were censored. 'The form of the epigram has particular affinity for the kind of satire that pervades the pastoral mode, […] [and] derives its highest power from judicious irony':[43] the aim is to make the victim understand that the epigram refers to him, but not to admit it. All of Sannazaro's epigrams were collected in three books which comprehended a variety of tones and themes, from mythological to historical, amatory to funeral and adulatory to satiric.

Before his exile in France, he wrote also eight odes, a noble kind of poetry treating important themes, which were not so much fundamental for Sannazaro's poetic development, but to 'expand his prosodic ability'.[44]

In his production it is also possible to find some elegies, that is poetry of serious reflection, in which he dramatizes the life of a humanist in the Italian Renaissance. The elegies through a 'mosaic method'[45] represented a world constantly evoking past times by echoing phrases and lines from the Roman poets.

His extensive literary production, both in vernacular and Latin, including his *Arcadia,* was not planned to be published. Every work that he composed was useful to show him the versatility of the modes and genres that he explored during the years. This experience allowed him to apply that versatility to his major work and longer pastoral.

3.1 *The Arcadia*

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[42] Kennedy, p. 60.
[43] Kennedy, p. 64.
[44] Kennedy, p. 69.
[45] Ralph Nash, *The Major Latin Poems of Jacopo Sannazaro* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1996), p. 98.

After considering what formed Sannazaro's literary knowledge and ability it is possible now to focus on his major pastoral work *The Arcadia,* through which he profoundly influenced the reception of the pastoral genre by his successors.

Sannazaro started writing *The Arcadia* in 1480, and the first manuscript was completed in 1489, with ten chapters written in Neapolitan dialect. They constitute the first vernacular pastorals composed according to classical models. The very first edition was published in 1502, when the author was in exile in France with Federigo of Aragon, without his consensus. For this reason, it does not include the changes that Sannazaro made to the initial version. He had, in fact, added two chapters, an epilogue dedicated to '*A la Sampogna'*, a conclusion to the story, and changed the language into Tuscan according to the rules set by Bembo, including also some Petrarchan and Boccaccian Latinisms. All this will appear in the publication of 1504, that he approved.

The structure of the work consists of twelve chapters of prose discourse, each ending with a poetic eclogue. Poetry is alternated with prose, and both have different functions and audiences. Prose is used to simply describe or narrate episodes and addresses a casual reader; poetic forms, like eclogues and madrigals, offer compliments, complaints and deal with social and political problems in a satiric way and addresses a more attentive reader. A prose prologue and a prose epilogue frame the entire work.

The work can be divided into three main sections: the first one (from chapter 1 to 6) focuses on 'uncomplicated images of pastoral life',[46] the second one (from chapter 7 to 10) concentrates more 'on the character of the first-person speaker and his account of amatory tribulation'[47] and the last one (chapters 11 and 12) concludes the work giving to the reader a life lesson based on the experience of the protagonist. However, the structure of *The Arcadia* is 'deceptive'.[48] Despite being organized like a prose narrative Sannazaro's prose does not carry a continuous narrative. The twelve eclogues are

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[46] Kennedy, p. 97.
[47] Kennedy, p. 97.
[48] David Kalstone, *Sidney's Poetry Contexts and Interpretations* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1965), p. 24.

connected to each other by the constant presence of Sincero, the protagonist, but they can be read independently.

The story takes place in six days, from 20 to 25 of April (days of feast in honor of Pales, the goddess of the shepherds) and revolves around Sincero, the protagonist and Sannazaro's alter ego, who decides to abandon Naples and moves to Arcadia, because 'love has driven him to separate himself from his lady',[49] Phyllida. Here he lives with the inhabitants of the place, who are shepherds that spend their life happily singing and playing musical instruments. The songs are the twelve eclogues which describe the landscape of Arcadia. At the end Sincero, lamenting for being far from his home and his beloved woman, decides to return to Naples. After a mourning dream he meets a nymph who leads him to the subterranean source of the earth's rivers, where he discovers that Phyllida is dead. From there he follows the Sebeto river to Naples. The whole story features characters and events which recalls friends, family and acquaintances of Sannazaro, real events, and even some critics to the society where he lived.

In the epilogue the author 'warns his sampogna, or shepherd's pipe, that the audiences may be unreceptive to it, and concludes *The Arcadia* declaring that soon he will publish a nobler kind of poem.

The experience of the protagonist in *Arcadia* follows a clear path, which is typical of prose romances: the disintegration, the education and rebirth. At the beginning of the story Sincero is in the real world and in pain because his love is not corresponded; then he moves to Arcadia, disguised as a shepherd. Here he lives with the shepherds and is educated about unhappy love and death by listening to their songs; finally, after a mourning dream, he decides to return to Naples and to his true identity.

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[49] Kennedy, p. 101.

Sannazaro's knowledge of the tradition from which was created and developed the pastoral genre was remarkably rich for if considering the fact that not all classical pastoral texts had been rediscovered yet, and that the rediscovery of the genre had hardly begun.

His use of the pastoral genre detached from the golden age concept and the sophisticated experience of the past times; he inserted in his work social tensions and political conflicts. In this scenario the shepherds try to 'cope with their social and emotional problems'.[50] Their life recalls the author's one with many analogies, as he created a world deeply connected to the real one. From an external point of view, the society in which the characters live can be identified in the one where the author was living in thanks to many elements of connection. It is possible to find the same connection also from an internal point of view, as the feelings and inner conflicts of the shepherds evoke those felt by the author himself. He is 'trying to develop his own personal talent in response to whatever tradition he may be aware of'.[51]

Virgil is one of the most important authors, as he was the one who named the shepherds' world 'Arcadia'. Through some changes, the Neapolitan poet offered a new vision of the Arcadian landscape and life, and developed a version of it that was closer to the century's taste and exercised a wide influence. In this sense it is possible to highlight some differences between the two authors. The location of Arcadia is one of them, as Sannazaro changes it from central Peloponnesus to a place near Naples. Then there is a major difference in the representation of the landscape in Arcadia. Virgil uses the setting as an introduction to the songs. Sannazaro, instead, elevates the role of setting and by doing this he expands on Virgil's traditional landscape.

Another difference regards the 'association between pastoral wandering and thinking about love'.[52] While Virgil's symbolic use of the landscape is combined with a clear direction to his faithless woman that suggests 'a richness in pastoral love if she only join him'[53] even though she will not;

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[50] Kennedy, p. 29.
[51] Kennedy, p. 29.
[52] Kalstone, p. 16.
[53] Kalstone, p. 15.

Sannazaro's setting is nostalgic, the details are not presented as settings for love but rather as 'springs for the memory'.[54]

Despite these fundamental changes made by Sannazaro, some points in common between him and Virgil still persist. Sannazaro's approach to the psychological perspective of the characters was deeply influenced by Virgil as his speakers discuss about their feelings in the eclogues. Sannazaro also imitated the irony used by Virgil. The many Virgilian commentaries that were done by different authors clearly influenced Sannazaro's reception of Virgil's eclogues.

Sannazaro also undoubtably took inspiration from Petrarch's poetry, in developing a landscape that 'echoes with the complaints of unhappy lovers'.[55] The influence that Petrarch had on Italian literature in the Renaissance and on Sannazaro is the reason 'for the difference that a reader immediately senses between a Virgilian eclogue and the graceful laments of Sincero in the Italian *Arcadia*'.[56] From Petrarch Sannazaro took some Latinisms like 'incurabile', 'deserte piaggie' and 'nocturne stelle',[57] and also the pastoral retirement concept of the lover in a 'valle chiusa'.[58] In this valley Sannazaro's shepherds complain about their life.

Many Neo-Latin pastorals scholars wrote after Petrarch, like Boccaccio and Matteo Maria Boiardo (1441-1494). From them Sannazaro took inspiration for the external world depicted in his work, which is rich of allegories that recall real life and criticize society. Boccaccio, especially, was important for the revival of the pastoral romance, a genre that 'allows colorful, complicated events and marvelous heroic achievements'[59] by emphasizing the pastoral setting, which was extremely important for Sannazaro. He took all these elements from different pastoral traditions and mixed them, creating a work that imitates the classical eclogues of the ancient authors and the prose romance developed by Boccaccio.

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[54] Kalstone, p. 15.
[55] Kalstone, p. 11.
[56] Kalstone, p. 16.
[57] 'incurable', 'deserted beaches', 'night stars'.
[58] Kalstone, p. 18. 'Enclosed valley'.
[59] Kennedy, p. 35.

Sannazaro's *Arcadia* was imitated in Spain, France and England, capturing the attention of poets, like Sir Philip Sidney. In his *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia (The Old Arcadia)* Sidney makes some clear references to Sannazaro's *Arcadia*, in terms of the structure used, the theme treated and the use of *sestina*. The life of Sir Philip Sidney, his Arcadia and these similarities will be analyzed in the following chapter.

4. Sir Philip Sidney and The Pastoral Genre

Born on November 30, 1554, at Penshurst in Kent, from a noble family, Sir Philip Sidney can be considered the ideal English Renaissance man. He was a statesman, a soldier and one of the greatest Elizabethan poets of his time, even though writing for him it was just an interlude occupation. When he was 10, he entered Shrewsbury School and here he met his lifelong friend and biographer Fulke Greville (1554-1628). Then, from 1568 he attended Christ Church, which he left in 1571 without a degree, to travel Europe, where he learned French, Latin and Italian. He also had the opportunity to know many European politicians and became acquainted with many of Europe's leading statesmen.

In 1575, he returned to England and entered the court of Queen Elizabeth I (1533-1603) where he became cupbearer.[60] He was assigned a fundamental task, as he was sent to Germany to sound out the princes' attitude toward the formation of a Protestant league. Sidney was also involved in politics, serving as a member of Parliament for Kent in the early 1580s. Later he became interested in and supported the idea of establishing the American colony of Virginia.

Despite his main focus on politics, he was very interests in art, and became patron of many scholars and men of letters, among whom Edmund Spenser, Abraham France (1559-1592) and Thomas Lodge (1557-1625).

Because the Queen did not give him further important roles, he decided to turn to literature as an outlet for his energies. Sidney wrote many literary works like *The Lady of May* (1598), a one-act courtly entertainment performed before queen Elizabeth I, *Astrophel and Stella* (1591), a sonnet sequence, and *An Apology for Poetry (or The Defence of Poesy)* (1595), a work of literary criticism.

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[60] A cupbearer was an officer of high rank in royal courts, whose duty was to pour and serve drinks at the royal table. On account of the constant fear of plots and intrigues, the cupbearer had to be regarded as thoroughly trustworthy to hold the position. He would guard the Queen's cup from poisoning.

He used to share his works with his closest friends, but never allowed them to be published during his lifetime.

Finally in 1585, Sidney was appointed governor of the Dutch town of Flushing and was given command of a company of cavalry. His campaigns were not successful. On September 22, 1586 he fought in a battle against the Spanish, during which was hit by a bullet and died some days later. Sidney was buried at St. Paul's Cathedral in London on February 16, 1587.

Sidney wrote many works of various importance. Among his minor works it is possible to find the Psalms, completed by his sister Mary in 1586, some translations and *The Lady of May*. From the literary works which were extremely influential we understand that he was a great writer, as was able to excel in three diverse literary genres.

One is *Defence of Poesy*, the first work of English literary criticism, written around 1580 and published in 1595. In this essay, Sidney defends poetry against the attacks to it. He exalts the 'role of the poet, the freedom of imagination, and the moral value of fiction'.[61] It was written in response to Stephen Gosson's (1554-1624) *Apology of the School of Abuse* (1579), which attacked the figure of the poet and poetry for their 'deplorable effect in the manners and morals of the age'.[62] Sidney argues that poetry's aim is the delightful teaching, and that the poet makes the reader 'swallow the pill of morality by coating it with sugar'.[63] He stresses the didactic element. Sidney's aim is to point out that poetry is more effective than history and philosophy in encouraging readers to virtue, and to give also some important opinions about Spenser's works and the Elizabethan stage.

His secondary major literary work is *Astrophel and Stella*. Composed in the 1580s, it is the first Elizabethan sonnet sequence alternated with songs. It contains 108 sonnets and 11 songs. Potentially, Stella can be identified as Penelope Deveraux, as Sidney was in love with her and there are some references to her and her husband in the sequence. By reading the sonnets, it is clear that

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[61] Stephen Greenblatt, *The Norton Anthology of English Literature* (New York: W.W. Norton&Company, 2019), p. 504.
[62] Kenneth Muir, *Sir Philip Sidney* (London: F. Mildner & sons, 1960), p. 8.
[63] Muir, p. 10.

the author took inspiration from Petrarch's *Canzoniere* (1336-1373/4). In this work Sidney expresses his feelings but a fiction component is present so we cannot be sure whether it can be considered an expression of his love and biographical details or if it is just a work of art. For sure, 'he was determined at least to give the impression of a man deeply in love'.[64]

Finally, the third is *The Old Arcadia*, the very first English pastoral romance which is the center of this thesis and that will be analyzed in the next section.

4.1 *The Old Arcadia*

Sidney began writing *The Countesses of Pembroke's Arcadia (The Old Arcadia)* after his return from Germany in 1577 and finished it at the end of 1580, the next year some manuscripts began circulating in England. In 1584 he decided to revise the work, which will be called *The New Arcadia,* and to expand it. He got half way through the third book, without making any use of the original ones, but died before finishing it. After his death Fulke Greville and William Ponsonby (1577-1603) finished the revision and published it in 1590. Later Sidney's sister decided to publish again the work, but in a different version: she took the first two books of *The Old Arcadia* and the last three books of *The new Arcadia.* The folio was published in 1593. The original manuscripts of *The Old Arcadia* were then lost until 1907, when Bertram Dobell (1842-1914) acquired them.

From the letter 'To my dear lady and sister the Countess of Pembroke', at the beginning of the work, it is possible to understand that he dedicated it to his sister Mary, (1561-1621), who became Countess of Pembroke while Sidney was in Germany, and to some of his closest friends.

> But you desired me to do it, and your desire to my heart is an absolute commandment. Now it is done only for you, only to you; if you keep it to yourself, or to such friends who will weight errors in the balance of goodwill. […] Your dear self can best witness the manner, being done in loose sheets of paper, most of it in your presence, the rest by sheets sent unto you as fast as they were done. [65]

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[64] Muir, p. 28.

[65] Sir Philip Sidney, *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia (The Old Arcadia),* ed. by Jean Robertson (Oxford: Claredon Press, 1973), p. 3.

Sidney spent a lot of time at Pembroke, and it was thanks to these pastoral surroundings and the request of the Countess that he decided to write *The Old Arcadia.*

The work can be considered as a tragicomic romance divided into five Acts or Books. In each of them, prose sections and eclogues are alternated establishing a rhythm that goes from the general context to the individual sentiments. The prose sections serve to follow the course of the events in the main plot and include the narrator's comments, which are fundamental to understand how the characters act and feel. Stillman states that Sidney's 'narrative presses on toward conclusions, illuminating the intricate psychological connections between events and responses to events. The verses in the eclogues, which are at the end of each Book or Act, are used by Sidney to 'give concrete expression to moral and intellectual abstractions'[66] in order to better understand the ideas of the characters. This constant alternation reflects also the existence of two different worlds in *The Old Arcadia:* one full of complications and problems and one governed by shepherds who act according to the pastoral values.

The Old Arcadia can be considered the most important English work of prose fiction of the sixteenth century and is much more than a simple love story. At the beginning the Arcadia can be regarded and is described as the perfect pastoral place, however the reader soon discovers that it is not. There are a series of events which contrast with the initial idyllic place of Arcadia, making everything very realistic.

The Old Arcadia begins with a description of the Duke of Arcadia, Basilius, as a

> prince of sufficient skills to govern so quiet a country where the good minds of the former princes had set down good laws, and the well bringing up of the people did serve as a most sure bond to keep them.[67]

Curious about which future awaits his family, he goes to an oracle, which predicts only disgrace for him: his wife Gynecia will cheat on him, his first daughter Pamela will escape and his second one Philoclea will have an undesirable love affair. In order to avoid all this, he leaves temporarily the Kingdom to his counselor Philanax, and decide to escape into a desert with his family and his servants.

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[66] Stillman, p. 92.
[67] Sidney, *The Old Arcadia,* p. 4.

After this opening section, which explain why the characters are in Arcadia, the two princes Pyrocles and Musidorus enter the story. Pyrocles falls in love with Philoclea and decides to disguise himself as an Amazon warrior named Cleophila and to go with Musidorus at Basilius' lodge to meet his beloved. After this encounter Basilius falls in love with him. At this point Musidorus also falls in love with Pamela and disguises himself as a shepherd named Dorus to get closer to her. One day, while listening to the shepherds' songs, the characters are attacked by a lion and a bear. Cleophila defends Philoclea from the lion and kills it. When this happen Gynecia becomes doubtful about the actual gender of the Amazon warrior: she suspects she might be a man and feels enticed by him. Dorus faces the bear to protect Pamela though she is clearly not interested in him. For this reason, after this episode, he decides to give his attention to Mopsa, Basilius' servant daughter, although making his love for Pamela obvious to her. Finally, Dorus confesses to the princess that he is a prince, and they decide to escape together. Even Cleophila reveals to Philoclea that he is a prince, and they decide to get married. The princes confess their plan each other, but while Musidorus manages to escape with Pamela, Pyrocles does not, as he is constantly controlled by Philoclea's parents. Moreover, Gynecia threatens Pyrocles that if he does not sleep with her, she will confess his real identity. In order to avoid all this Pyrocles tricks both Gynecia and Basilius so that they share the bed with each other and not with him. After the sexual intercourse, which partially fulfills the prophecy, Gynecia gives to his husband a love potion to drink, and he dies. Philanax, Basilius' counselor, arrives in Arcadia to investigate about Basilius' death: Pyrocles and Musidorus are accused to have seduced the princesses and to conspire with Gynecia against the king. For this reason, the two princes are imprisoned, and when they are about to be executed Basilius awakens. At the end Philoclea marries Pyrocles and Pamela Musidorus.

The entire work follows the romance practice by inducing contrast between pastoral and heroic themes in the narration. The plot is divided into different phases following the romance path: first of all, the disintegration, then the analysis, the education and finally the reintegration of the characters in the Arcadian world.

The main love plot is enriched with turbulences that at the end lead the characters to regaining their natural sense of justice. In this sense, the aim of the romance is not just the final happiness of the characters, but the representation of the elevation of their soul. And this moral elevation is determined in different ways. All the political, social and love problems represented in the work are allegories of real human experiences.

The narrator is Sidney himself, telling the story to his sister and friends. He has two different roles as a narrator. On the one hand, he comments on what he sees from his point of view, like gesture, pose and expressions: 'in this way, his interruptions could be said to heighten the dramatic vividness, not to detract from it'.[68] However, he is omniscient because he already knows what is going to happen as he wrote and is part of the story. So, at the same time, he seems close to the characters' feelings as if their story was created by someone else.

Sidney used the pastoral romance as a vehicle for exploring problems of moral philosophy by having the heroes discussing about them. In particular, the issues regarding love in relation to virtue and the contraposition between the active and contemplative life.

In his work Sidney stresses the need for 'active virtue',[69] this indicate that it is not necessary to exclude one of the two possibilities, a life between action and contemplation is possible. From the need for virtue Sidney arrives to the other main issue of the work:

'Sidney's compendious treatment of love in Arcadia is all the more impressive for the fully truthful and therefore complex attitude he takes toward it'.[70] Love is essential for a contemplative life.

4.1.1 *The Old Arcadia* and the Pastoral Genre

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[68] Davis, p. 319.
[69] Davis, p. 173.
[70] Davis, p. 174.

Like many authors before him, Sidney wanted to adapt the pastoral genre to his personal vision and style. From his *Defence of Poesy* it is possible to understand which elements and traditions are fundamental in the development of his vision.

> Is it then the Pastoral poem which is misliked? For perchance where the edge is lowest they will soonest leap over. Is the poor pipe disdained, which sometimes out of Meliboeus' mouth can show the misery of people under hard lords or ravening soldiers? And again, by Tityrus, what blessedness is derived to them that lie lowest from the goodness of them that sit highest; sometimes, under the pretty tales of wolves and sheep, can include the whole considerations of wrongdoing and patience; sometimes show that connection for trifles can get but a trifling victory: where perchance a man may see that even Alexander and Darius, when they starve who should be cock of this world's dunghill, the benefit they got was that the afterlivers may say,
> *Haec memini et victum frustra contendere Thirsin: Ex illo Corydon est tempore nobis.*[71]

Sidney defines pastoral in two different ways: 'on one occasion, [Sidney] […] writes as a critic taking measure of the pastoral hedge; on the other he writes as a poet inspired by high conceits'.[72] Starting from a previously established tradition, these two ideas explain what pastoral is by including some changes in the genre. In the passage above the author makes clear how the pastoral genre should be employed, even identifying specific traditions from which taking inspiration. In this sense, he does not consider all the ways in which the genre can be employed, but only the 'right' manner in which it is properly used, leaving aside all the other forms and styles that it includes.

The main tradition from which Sidney takes inspiration is that developed by Virgil. The author makes various references to Virgil's eclogues in the passage. By doing this he wants to make clear that, according to his vision, he is the founder of what Stillman defines as the 'ethical function' of the pastoral genre. Sidney makes clear that he knows the importance of political problems in the genre and wants to show how they mix with fortune and how people are subjected to them. In response to this, a major quality and attitude to employ is patience. It is the central pastoral virtue. So, the ethical pastoral employs the shepherd as a moral critic. The shepherds 'enforce a set of ethical notions about how man ought to adjust his private and his public lives to the lures and snares of fortune'[73]. In this sense Sidney's vision is inclusive of all the experiences and events that can happen.

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[71] Sir Philip Sidney, *Defence of Poesy, Otherwise Known as An Apology for Poetry,* ed. by Albert S. Cook (Boston: Ginn&Company, 1890), p. 26.
[72] Stillman, p. 64.
[73] Stillman, p. 66.

The 'right use' of the pastoral genre proposed in this definition it is possible to understand the description of Arcadia that he made at the beginning of *The Old Arcadia*.

> Arcadia among all the provinces of Greece was ever had in singular reputation, partly for the sweetness of the air and other natural benefits, but principally for the moderate and well tempered minds of the people who (finding how true a contentation is gotten by following the course of nature, and how the shining title of glory, so much affected by other nations, doth indeed hello little to the happiness of life) where the only people which, as by their justice and providence gave neither cause nor hope to their neighbors to annoy them, so were they not stirred with false praise to trouble others' quest, thinking it a small reward for the wasting of their own lives in ravening that their posterity should long after say they had done so. Even the muses seemed to approve their good determination by choosing that country as their chief est repairing place, and by bestowing their perfections so largely there that the very shepherds themselves had their fancies opened to so high conceits as the most learned of other nations and imitate their cunning. In this place some time there dwelled a mighty duke named Basilius, a prince of sufficient skill to govern so quiet a country where the good minds of the former princes had ed down good laws, and the well bringing up of the people did serve as a mot sure bond to keep them.[74]

In this passage Sidney describes the landscape in which the story is set. By recalling the past pastoral traditions, particularly Sannazaro (Sidney's relation with him will be deepened in the next section), Virgil and Theocritus', Sidney wants to develop his own vision and tradition:

> 'That same framing of his style to an old rustic language I dare not allow; since neither Theocritus in Greek, Virgil in Latin, nor Sannazaro in Italian, did affect it.'[75]

By doing so Sidney wants to be included among the company of the most learned pastoralists, but also makes clear to the reader that his Arcadia is the 'real one'. For this reason, he borrows the names of the characters from the earlier poets, even though not using them as merely products of other writers but as they were inspired by some muses. These muses indicate that pastoral 'not only makes accessible sophisticated literary skills and literary skills grounded in nature, but, more important still, it allows access to the very source of creative expression'.[76]

From the introduction of *The Old Arcadia* Sidney derived his definition of the pastoral genre that he wrote in the *Apology*.

Starting from historical sources is important for stating Sidney's improvements in *The Old Arcadia.* His setting is not just a landscape where the action takes place but is enriched with political elements combined with fortune and patience to face the 'wrongdoings'. The Arcadia is presented as

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[74] Sidney, *The Old Arcadia,* p. 4.
[75] Sidney, *Defence of Poesy,* p. 47.
[76] Stillman, p. 68.

a 'combination of justice and contentment'.[77] Another improvement regards the role given to the poetry, which is important for the pastoral genre and life, as the shepherds sing songs. In this sense, according to Sidney's vision 'in the romance, poetry is immediately established as an experiment of central importance'.[78]

4.1.2 The Arcadian Landscape

It is clear at this point that in writing his *Arcadia* Sidney took inspiration from different traditions and authors that created and developed the pastoral genre before him. The author that will be taken into consideration in this sub-chapter and that is fundamental in this thesis is Jacopo Sannazaro. His major work *The Arcadia* was analyzed in chapter 3, and here it will be compared with Sir Philip Sidney's *The Old Arcadia*, as the two works have some interesting points in common. Sidney names him even in his *Defence of Poesy* by referring to him as one of the authors to take inspiration from when writing the pastoral genre.

From Sannazaro, Sidney resumes the title of the book, declaring in this way the genre of the work and the setting in which the story takes place. Moreover, the two compositions share the typical structure of the pastoral romance, an alternation of prose and poetry in each one of the five acts.

The eclogues that can be found in Sidney's poetry sections have a close relation with the eclogues of Sannazaro, as they take up the exact landscape of *The Arcadia*. Sidney's eclogues create a world inhabited by shepherds who do not belong to the main plot. They live in a separate world which gives to the reader the idea of being in an idyllic place and is also able to take a break from the problematic world described in the prose, the one in which the main plot takes place. A world rich of love and politic problems that constantly recall the reality.

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[77] Stillman, p. 69.
[78] Stillman, p. 68.

By analyzing the landscape, we can identify one of the points in common between Sannazaro and Sidney's *Arcadia*. Sannazaro's *Arcadia* is a landscape constantly removed from time and space, where shepherds are polite to each other and praise the beauty of the songs they sing. 'The shepherds' interests are primarily aesthetic not societal',[79] and this is pointed out by the fact that the shepherds live in this place under false name, but no one seems interested or curious about it. Sincero assumes this name after moving into Arcadia. The same atmosphere can be easily found in Sidney's eclogues, where he created an ideal world. In this sense, it can be considered the perfect setting for pastoral poetry. Sidney accepts Sannazaro's 'mise-en-scène'[80] as a natural refuge for the lover in pain. This ideal landscape that in Sannazaro is constantly present, in Sidney is a matter of interlude from the chaotic main plot. The initial description of the setting and how this world is so easily governed helps Sidney in the creation of an idyllic surface. It is possible to see it in the description of Basilius' lodge:

> And Basilius, according to his determination, retired himself into the solitary place of the two lodges, where he was daily delighted with the eclogues and pastimes of shepherds. [81]

The apex of the idyll is reached in the description of the 'meadow', where the group was attacked by both a lion and a bear:

> Came into the fair meadow appointed for their shepherd is here pastimes. It was, indeed, a place of great delight, for through the minds of it there ran a sweet brook which did both hold the eye open with her beautiful streams and close the eye with the sweet purling noise it made upon the pebble-stones it ran over; the meadow itself yielding so liberally all sorts of flowers that it seemed to nourish a contention betwixt the color and the smell whether in his kind were the more delightful. Round about the meadow, as if it had been to enclose a theatre, grew all such sorts of trees as either excellently of fruit, stateliness of growth, continual greenness, or poetical fancies have made at any time famous. In most part of which trees there had been framed by art such pleasant arbours that it became a gallery aloft, fro the one tree to the other, almost round about, which below yielded a perfect shadow, in those hot countries a great pleasure.[82]

Here Sidney recreates Sannazaro's *Arcadia*:

> Le silvestre canzoni vergate nelle rivede corteccie de' faggi dilettino non di meno a chi le legge, che li incolti versi scritti nelle rase carte degl'indorati libri; e le incerate canne de' pastori porgano per le fiorite valli forse più piacevole suono, che li tersi e pregiati bossi de' musicisti per le pompose camere non fanno. E chi dubita, che più non fia alle

[79] V. L. Forsyth, "The Two Arcadias of Sidney's Two 'Arcadias.'", *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, 1 (2009), P. 6.
[80] Kalstone, p. 60.
[81] Sidney, *The Old Arcadia*, p. 9.
[82] Sidney, *The Old Arcadia,* p. 46.

umane menti aggradevole una fontana, che naturalmente esca dalle vive pietre, attorniata di versi erette, che tutte le altre ad arte fatti di bianchissimi marmi, risplendenti per molto oro?[83]

By confronting Sidney's description and Sannazaro's prologue it is immediately evident how the two passages are similar to one another. They both cite the same natural elements. Sidney wrote: 'grew such sort of trees', 'there ran a sweet brook', 'all sort of flowers', and 'sweet purling noise it made upon the pebble-stones'; and Sannazaro before him declared 'corteccie de' faggi', 'aggradevole una fontana, che naturalmente esca dalle vive pietre' and 'per le fiorite valli'.[84] All these elements in the setting create the typical idyllic pastoral landscape.

So, despite being a temporary and artificial Arcadia, as both Basilius and the group in the 'meadow' are brought back to the reality, it is clear how Sidney is aware of the pastoral tradition. He took the Sannazaran setting as an example from which developing his own. Frosyth defines Sidney's Arcadia as seductive, because even Musidorus and Pyrocles decides to abandon their heroic role to enter this reign to gain the love of the princesses, and end up by seeing the Arcadia as Sannazaro depicted it: a place surrounded by beauty, tranquility and happiness. According to Hamilton, Arcadia has become a state of mind rather than a place, as at this point they feel the need to be there.

Sannazaro ends his Arcadia with the 'erotic and poetic [image of Sincero who] follows a nymph in the river to the underground source of all the rivers':[85]

Così di passo in passo, non sapendo io stesso ove andare mi dovessi, guidandomi la Fortuna, pervenni finalmente una falda di un monte, onde un gran fiume si movea con un ruggito […]. In un punto mi si offerse una giovane donzella nell'aspetto bellissima […]. Costei venendo ver me, e dicendomi: *Seguita i passi miei, ch'io son Ninfa di questo luogo* […] mi posi a seguitarla […] e mi condusse dentro al fiume […]. Venimmo finalmente in la grotta, onde quella acqua tutta usciva; e da quella in poi in un'altra, le cui volte, siccome mi parve di comprendere, eran tutte fatted i scabrose pomici; tra le quali in molti luoghi si vedevano pendere stilled i congelato cristallo […].[86]

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[83] Jacopo Sannazaro, *Arcadia del Sannazaro* (Venice: Aldo Manuzio, 1514), p. 10.
'Woodland songs carved on the rugged barks of beeches no less delight the one who reads them than do learned verses written on the smooth pages of gilded books. And the waxbound reeds of shepherds proffer amid the flower-laden valleys perhaps more pleasurable sound than do through proud chambers the polished and costly boxwood instruments of the musicians. And who has any doubt that a fountain that issues naturally from the living rock, surrounded by green growth, is more pleasing to the human mind than alla the others made by art of whitest marble, resplendent with much gold?'. Jacopo Sannazaro, *Arcadia and Piscatorial Eclogues,* trans. by Ralph Nash (Detroit: Wayne University Press, 1966), p.29.
[84] 'Rugged barks of beeches', 'a fountain that issues naturally from the living rock', 'flower laden valleys'.
[85] A. C. Hamilton, 'Sidney Arcadia as a Prose Fiction: It's Relation to Its Sources', *English Literary Renaissance,* 1 (1972), p.36.
[86] Sannazaro, *Arcadia,* p. 75.

This underground cave is fundamental in the story and can be found also in Sidney, even though with a different role. In *The Old Arcadia* the cave is at the center of the romance, it is used by Pyrocles, disguised as Cleophila, to trick Gynecia and Basilius, a turning point that will lead to a series of consequences:

> But that you may see I do not set light your affection, if tonight after your wife [Gynecia] be assuredly asleep (whereof by your love I conjure you to have a most precise care) you will steal handsomely to the cave unto me, there do I grant you as great proportion as you will take free conference with me, ever remembering you seek no more, for so shall you but deceive yourself, and forever lose me. […]

> But with smiling eyes, and with a delivered-over grace (feigning as much love to her as she did counterfeit little love to Philoclea), she began with more credible than eloquent speech to tell her that, with much consideration of a matter so nearly importing her own fancy and Gynecia's honour, she had now concluded that the night following should be the fittest time for the joining together their several desires, what time sleep should perfectly do his office upon the duke her husband; and that the one should come to the other into the cave. […] [87]

In this way Sidney recalled the Sannazaran landscape and then made it disappear by bringing it back to reality.

4.1.3 'Ye Goat-Herd Gods'

As already stated, the eclogues are situated at the end of each Book or Act, on the model of the *intermedii,* an elaborate entertainment used for performance between the acts of a comedy. Sidney's eclogues have a different function to those of the traditional pastoral romance. He used them to create a separate world in his book. The main form used by Sidney was the sonnet because it was useful 'to clarify the psychological states of his characters, but also because it is brief enough to punctuate the narrative movement without regarding its flow'.[88]

'Thus step by step, with Fortune my guide – I myself not knowing where I should go – I came at last to the slower slope of a mountain whence a great river ran with a marvellous rumbling and roaring. […] All at once there presented herself before me a young damsel most beautiful of features […]. This creature coming toward me and saying to me – "Follow my steps, for I am the Nymph of this region" – […] I set myself to follow her […] she took my by the hand and guided me into the river […]. At last we came to the caver whence all that water issued; and from that one then to another whose vaulted walls, as I seemed to apprehend, were all made of rough pumice stones; amid which in many places could be seen hanging drops of congealed crystal […].' Sannazaro, trans. by Ralph Nash, p. 135.

[87] Sidney, *The Old Arcadia,* p. 221-222.

[88] Stillman, p. 86.

In the eclogues the characters express their opinions about different themes like love, and the nature of the cosmos. Here the narrator is absent, giving the reader the opportunity to make his own judgments without being influenced. Stillman states that, as Sidney in his *Arcadia* wants to teach to the reader how to judge by commenting in the prose, his absence in the poetry gives to the reader the possibility to put in practice what he has learnt.

Another important thing to consider, that was already pointed out in the previous section, regards the second world that Sidney created in the eclogues. He has the chance to develop a secondary fiction that is detached from the main narrative and the reality of the landscape. The prose parts focus on the actions of the characters and the consequences. However, in the eclogues 'we move from the realm of events to the realm of ideas',[89] and this can be seen even from the fact that each eclogue takes place in the evening or in the morning, indicating their separateness from the main plot. In this sense, the eclogues' world inhabited only by shepherds who do not act in the main plot, narrated through the prose parts. However, these characters can be considered an expansion of the one of the main plot, even though not expanding the story. In this way, the reader has the possibility to know more about the inner feelings of the main characters. This method employed by Sidney allows a considerable number of experiences and perspectives upon the story.

It is still important to consider the fact though despite Sidney created a new pastoral romance model that reflect his vision and style, he paid special attention to the eclogues. In writing them he relies upon Sannazaro and his *Arcadia,* presenting each eclogue as a 'dramatic unit'[90] based on his model. The landscape represented in the eclogues of *The Old Arcadia* can be considered as a matter of interlude from the main plot, and for this reason the eclogues represent a different world.

Sannazaro's influence upon Sidney is best represented in the fourth book of *The Old Arcadia*, where the fourth eclogue can be compared to Sannazaro's fourth eclogue. After Basilius' death, the

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[89] Stillman, p. 87.
[90] Kalstone, p. 60.

fourth eclogue begins, with the sestina[91] 'Ye Goat-Herd Gods'. This makes a 'virtue of the unflinching abstraction that characterizes the laments of Pyrocles and Musidorus'.[92] It was created to illuminate their situation, although it is not sung by them, but by two disguised shepherds, Strephon and Klaius. Before the beginning of the sestina Sidney introduces them to the reader and explain why they are in Arcadia. It is useful to understand why the two shepherds' experience can be compared to the one of Pyrocles and Musidorus. We can see it in the following passage:

> 'Strephon and Klaius would require a whole book to recount their sorrows and the strange causes of their sorrows – another place perchance will serve for the declaring them. But in short two gentlemen they were both in love with one maid of that country named Urania, thought a shepherd's daughter, but indeed of far greater birth. For her sake they had both taken this trade of life, each knowing others love, but yet of so high a quality their friendship was that they never so much as brake company one from the other, but continued their pursuit, like two true runners both employing their best speed, but one not hindering the other. But after many marvellous adventures, Urania never yielding better that hate for their love, upon a strange occasion had left the country, giving withal strait commandment to there two by writing that they should tarry in Arcadia until they heard from her'.[93]

It is clear how the experience of the two shepherds parallels the one of Pyrocles and Musidorus. They are all in Arcadia for a love that might be required or not.

The sestina is filled with the destructive power of love upon the two lovers. This theme is one of the things that Sannazaro and Sidney's eclogues have in common. It was indeed Sannazaro who realized that the form of the sestina could signify the unavoidable pain of love in the pastoral wold.

'Ye Goad-Herd Gods' is a dialogue between Strephon and Klaius, both lamenting about the love pain that afflict them. For the first ten stanzas they praise the gods to help them and remember the good old days of happiness when they were free from this consuming pain. Klaius declares 'Shamed, I hate myself in sight of mountains, / And stop mine ears lest I grow mad with music.',[94] and Strephon 'Long since, alas, my deadly swan is music / Hath made itself a crier of the morning'.[95] They both have a pessimistic tone and mourn about what they have lost that makes them cry. Strephon

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[91] A sestina is a complex verse that contains unrhymed lines of six stanzas having six lines in each stanza with a final three-line envoy.
[92] Kalstone, p. 71.
[93] Sidney, *The Old Arcadia*, p. 328.
[94] Sidney, *The Old Arcadia*, p. 330.
[95] Sidney, *The Old Acadia*, p. 329.

lament by tapping on natural elements expresses his feelings with many references to the nature by talking about mountains, valleys and animals; while Klaius' lament is more on a spiritual level, as he uses expressions like scent and music. At the end, the reason for this mourning is the loss of Urania, who has left Arcadia. The sestina ends with the three-line coda that reiterates the permanence of their sorrow.

The same theme can be identified in Sannazaro's sestina 'Chi Vuol Udire I Miei Sospiri in Rime'. Here Logisto and Elpino struggle with love pain and cry over their life. The melancholic aspects of the lover's exile are emphasized.

When reading the two sestinas together, the first thing that is highlighted is the device of repetition used in every stanza. In the following stanzas it is possible to see it clearly:

Logisto. Chi vuol udire i miei sospiri in rime,
Dorme mie care, e l'angoscia so pianto,
E quanti passi tra la notte e 'l giorno
Spargendo incarno vo per tanti campi:
Lègga per queste quercine e per li sassi,
Che n'è già piena ormai ciascuna valle.

Elpino. Pastori, uccel né fiera alberga in valle,
Che non conosca il suon delle mie rime:
Né spelonca o caverna è fra gli sassi,
Che non rimbombe al muro continuo pianto;
Né fior né erbetta nasce in questi campi,
Ch'io non la calchi mille volte il giorno.[96]

Strephon. Ye goat-herd gods, that love the grassy mountains,
Ye nymphs, which haunt the springs in pleasant valleys,
Ye satyrs, joyed with free and quiet forests,
Vouchsafe your silent ears to planning music
Which to my woes gives still an early morning,
And draws the dolour on till weary evening.

Klaius. O Mercury, foregoer to the evening,
O heav'nly huntress of the savage mountains,
O lovely star, entitled of the morning,
While that my voice doth fill these woeful valleys,
Vouchsafe your silent ears to planning music,
Which oft hath Echo tired in secret forests.[97]

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[96] Sannazaro, *Arcadia,* p. 18.
Logisto. He who is willing to hear my sight in rhyme, / my dear ladies, and my anguished plaint, / and how many steps between the night and the day / I squander in vain amid so many fields, / may read among them among these oaks and among these rocks / for I have filled with them ere this each valley.
Elpino. Shepherds, nor bird nor beast dwells in the valley / that does not know the harmony of my rhyme, / nor is there cave or grot among the rocks / that does not echo my continual plaint; / nor flowers nor bush is growing in these fields / that I do not trample a thousand times a day. Sannazaro, trans. by Ralph Nash, p. 53.
[97] Sidney, *The Old Arcadia,* IV, 23-34.

The shepherds express their sense of lament against the confinement in Arcadia. The final word of each verse is repeated in the following stanza in a different order. In Sannazaro we can find *'rime', 'pianto', 'giorno', 'campi', 'sassi', valle'.*[98] Each world was carefully selected to end the verses: '*rime*' and '*pianto*' indicate the lovers' activity in song; '*campi*, *'sassi*' and '*valle*' are used to characterize the repeated bleakness of experience in the recurring landmarks of the enclosed valley. In Strephon and Klaius' stanzas the words selected by Sidney are similar: *'mountains', 'valleys', 'forests', 'music', 'morning', 'evening',* and as for Sannazaro, they have specific meanings.

Both sestinas begin with a memory of the past joys, followed by a moment of despair:

Elpino. Molti selve fontane piagge e sassi
Vo cercand'io, se pur potessi un giorno
In parte rallentar l'acerbo pianto;
Ma ben veggio or che solo in una valle
Trovo riposo alle mie stanche rime,
Che mormorando van per mille campi.

Logisto. Fiere silvestre, che per lati campi
Vagando errate, e per acuti sassi,
Udiste mai sì solo rose rime?
Ditel per Dio. Udiste mai alcun giorno
O pur in questa ovver in altra valle
Con sì caldi sospiri sì lungo pianto?[99]

Klaius. I that was once delighted every morning
Hunting the wild inhabiters of forests,
I that was once the music of these valleys,
So darkened am that all my day is evening,
Hearth-broken so, that molehills seem high mountains,
And fill the vales with cries instead of music.

Strephon. Long since, alas, my deadly swannish music
Hath made itself a crier of the morning,
And hath with wailing strength climbed highest mountains.
Long since my thoughts more desert be than forests.
Long since, I see my joys come to their evening,
And state thrown down to over-trodden valleys.[100]

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[98] 'Rhyme', 'plaint', 'fields', 'rocks', 'valley'.
[99] Sannazaro, *Arcadia,* p. 18.
Elpino. Ye mountains forests fountains plains and rocks, / I go in search if ever I may some day / in part alleviate my bitter plaint; / but well I see now only in one valley / I do find respite for my weary rhyme, / that makes its way murmuring through a thousand fields.
Logisto. Ye forest beasts, that over the broad fields / go wandering, and over sharpest rocks, / have ye heard ever so sorrowful a rhyme? / Before God tell me. Hast heard on any day / or yet in this or in some other valley / with sighs so burning such a long complaint?. Sannazaro, *Arcadia* trans. by Ralph Nash, p. 54.
[100] Sidney, *The Old Arcadia,* IV, 9-20.

From Klaius' verse 'I that was once delighted every morning' it is possible to see that the shepherds profoundly miss their previous life. Then, from the verses 'Rallentar l'acerbo pianto' of Elpino, Logisto's 'Con sì caldi sospiri sì lungo pianto?' and Strephon's 'Long since, I see my joys come to their evening' an absolute moment of despair takes place in the stanzas. It is evident how much they want their joyous life back.

Each sestina ends with a sort of relief for finding the reason of the pain: for Elpino and Logisto this relief is death. Logisto declares 'Allora io cheggio che sovente il giorno / il mio sepolcro onori in questa valle' and Elpino responds 'Ch'un lieto fausto avventuroso giorno / S'apparecchia a voltarti in riso il pianto'. For Strephon and Klaius the reason is a woman who left them alone in arcadia. They hope that her return will make everything better. Strephon says 'For she, whose parts maintained a perfect music / […] By taking her two suns from these dark valleys' and Klaius after him says 'For she, with whom the Alps compared are valleys / […] Turning to desert our best pastured mountains'.

> *Logisto.* Allora io cheggio che sovente il giorno
> Il mio sepolcro onori in questa valle:
> E le ghirlande colle a' verdi campi,
> Al center muto dia con le tue rime,
> Dicendo: *alma infelice, che di pianto*
> *Vivesti un tempo, or posa in questi sassi*
>
> *Elpino.* Logisto, odanlo i fiumi, odanlo i sassi,
> Ch'un lieto fausto avventuroso giorno
> S'apparecchia a voltarti in riso il pianto;
> Se pur l'erbe ch'io colsi alla mia valle
> Non m'ingannaro, e l'incontrate rime,
> Che di biade più volte han privi i campi.[101]
>
>
> *Strephon.* For she, whose parts maintained a perfect music,
> Whose beauties shined more than the blushing morning,
> Who much did pass in state the stately mountains,
> In straightness passed the cedars of the forests,
> Hath cast me, wretch, into eternal evening,
> By taking her two suns from these dark valleys.

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[101] Sannazaro, *Arcadia,* p. 19.
Logisto. Then I request that you, a many a day, / honor my sepulchre within this valley; / and that with garlands gathered in green fields / you deck my silent grave along with your rhyme, /saving: "Unhappy spirit that full of plaint / lived once, now rest thyself among there rocks."
Elpino. Let it be heard by the rivers, heard by the rocks, / Logisto, a joyous a blithe and lucky day / is coming to turn to laughter all your plaint / if that the herbs I gathered in my valley / do not deceive me, and the charmed rhyme / that oftentimes of grain has robbed the fields. Sannazaro, trans. by Ralph Nash, p. 54.

Klaius. For she, with whom compared the Alps are valleys,
She, whole least word brings from the spheres their music,
At whose approach the sun rase in the evening,
Who, where she went, bare in her forehead moring,
Is gone, is gone from there our spoiled forests,
Turning to desert our best pastured mountains.[102]

In the next passage we can see the image of a '*valle chiusa'*, that to the speaker is like a prison:

Logisto. Lasso, ch'io non so ben l'ora nè 'l giorno,
Che fui rinchiuso in questa alpestre valle;
Nè mi ricordo mai correr per campi
Libero o sciolto; ma piangendo in rime
Sempre in fiamme son vissuto; e col mio pianto
Ho pur mosso a pietà gli alberi e i sassi.[103]

Strephon. I that was once free burgess of the forest,
Where shade from the sun, and sport i sought in evening,
Am banished now among the monstrous mountains
Of huge despair, and foul affliction's valleys,
Am groun a screech-owl to myself each morning.[104]

As Logisto says 'Che fui rinchiuso in questa alpestra valle', Strephon sings 'Am banished now among the monstrous mountains'. Sannazaro's eclogue is based on the '*valle chiusa'* concept. What was once free love towards a woman now has become a prison and is identified in the pastoral scenario.

Ultimately, Sidney sees in Sannazaro's organization of the sestina a great example of structure and themes to replicate and then to expand. From him Sidney recreates a double sestina and structured it as a dialogue between shepherds.

[102] Sidney, *The Old Arcadia,* IV, 19-30.
[103] Sannazaro, *Arcadia,* p. 18.
Logisto. Alas, I know not well the hour or day / that I was shut within this mountain valley; / nor ever do I recall running through the fields / free or unbound; but making complaint in rhyme / I have lived ever in flames; and with my plaint / I have moved to pity the very trees and rocks. Sannazaro, trans. by Ralph Nash, p. 53.
[104] Sidney, *The Old Arcadia,* IV, 3-8.

5. Conclusion

The exploration of the pastoral genre has illuminated its origins and evolution during the centuries. It also provided a general idea of what can be considered a pastoral literary work based on the different interpretations that characterize the genre. Through this initial analysis, the versatility of the genre becomes evident, each writer who approached it could easily express himself and change it according to his vision and style.

Jacopo Sannazaro's *Arcadia* can be considered fundamental in the evolution of the pastoral genre: by taking inspiration from ancient poets like Virgil Sannazaro created a harmonious fusion between nature, love and society. His life experience in the humanistic Neapolitan court shaped his vision and influenced the changes that he brought to the pastoral genre. In particular, he detached from the 'golden age' concept of the past and inserted social tensions and conflicts in his work. In this way, there were many analogies with real life and society, hidden through allegories.

Like in Sannazaro, Sir Philip Sidney's exploration of the genre reflected the complexities of his society. The multiple worlds created in his *The Old Arcadia,* the proses' one and the eclogues' one, expressed the genre adaptability as they combined pastoral elements with the courtly problems and the heroic theme. Like the authors before him, Sidney wanted to adapt the genre according to his style. He expressed his vision in his *Defence of Poesy,* in which he outlined the right use of the pastoral genre based on his previous work, *The Old Arcadia.* Like for Sannazaro, Virgil was his starting point to delineate what the pastoral genre was for him. The Roman author was considered the originator of the ethical function of the pastoral genre. Sidney also determined the greatest pastoralists from which taking inspiration: among these he named Sannazaro. In this way, a comparison between the two masterpieces seems necessary. Although they originated from different centuries and cultural contexts, the authors were both aware of previous pastoral traditions. Sidney demonstrated to know well Sannazaro's *Arcadia*.

A comparative analysis of Sidney's and Sannazaro's works, particularly focusing on the landscape and the eclogues, shows that the two *Arcadias* go in the same direction. The sense of harmony and tranquility given by the landscape of a typical pastoral setting is a constant in Sannazaro's work, while in Sidney's eclogues it is a way to detach from the problems of the main narrative. The 'Ye Goat-Herd Gods' sestina can be considered as the one in which it is really possible to see that Sidney knew and took inspiration from Sannazaro, the two sestinas share the same device of repetition of the words at the end of each verse and the feelings expressed by the shepherds.

In conclusion, comparison between Sir Philip Sidney's *The Countess of Pembroke's (The Old Arcadia)* and Jacopo Sannazaro's *Arcadia* offers the opportunity to understand how literature, specifically the pastoral genre, constantly connected different countries in the early modern period.

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