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**Moonlight on Endymion: In Search of “Arcadian Opera,” 1688–1721**

## **Abstract**

A paradigm of the earliest operatic endeavors of the Arcadian Academy, the myth of Endymion and Diana, inspired librettos by Christina of Sweden and Alessandro Guidi, Francesco de Lemene, and Pietro Metastasio. All of these efforts emerged as reactions to the “Baroque,” yet their dramaturgical and intellectual underpinnings appear to stand in such contrast to each other that the very notion of “Arcadian opera” demands critical revision, at least with respect to its initial stage. The aforementioned librettos are juxtaposed with contemporary tracts by Gian Vincenzo Gravina and Giovanni Antonio Mezzabarba, concluding that Arcadia indeed adopted polymorphic traits at first, but that most conflicts dissolved within the towering oeuvre of Pietro Metastasio.

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### 1. Introduction

**1.1** On 5 October 1690, fourteen intellectuals gathered in a garden near San Pietro in Montorio, Rome, to establish a society with which they hoped to return Italian culture to its Renaissance glory. This *Accademia degli Arcadi* (or *dell’Arcadia*), as their brainchild was baptized, would gradually mutate from a local club into a pan-Italian institution counting dozens of “colonies” and well over two thousand members.<sup>1</sup> Regardless of whether Arcadia’s first *custode generale*, Giovan Mario Crescimbeni, envisaged such a wholesale approach from the very beginning, it proved helpful in overcoming the “provincialism”—the lack of unity and centralization—endemic to Italian academicism.<sup>2</sup> For although Italy had long been replete with learned societies, and this without the need of support (or interference) from the church or universities, the peninsula’s political-geographic instability had so far prevented it from creating a competitor to hegemonic mastodons like the Académie française. With the arrival of Arcadia, matters changed dramatically.

**1.2** The new academy sought to reinstate the egalitarian, pacifist communities exemplified in Renaissance pastorals such as Sannazaro’s *L’Arcadia* (1504). Thus, in order to allow maximum freedom of speech, the members disassociated themselves from their real-life identities by assuming bucolic pseudonyms, meeting in open spaces, and establishing bylaws. Not that anyone disputed the society’s central mission: to “cultivate the study of the sciences and to resuscitate good taste in the humanities, most of all in Vernacular Poetry.”<sup>3</sup> What the Pastori longed for, in particular, was a clarified poetic language that avoided *barocchismi* and aspired towards the grandeur of antiquity.<sup>4</sup> In the opinion of several Pastori, however, the whole Arcadian utopia resulted in little more than “pastoral chit-chat, little sonnets and songs,” “nearly always devoted to the elaboration of the grand affairs of love.”<sup>5</sup>

**1.3** To be sure, Arcadia failed to enter history as an expression of higher learning, as some of its representatives had wished. Still, that did not prevent it from proposing bold alternatives to the so-called “Bacchanalian excesses” of the Seicento.<sup>6</sup> Its representations of love offer a case in point. For rather than channeling amorous desire through sensualist or satirical strategies, as had become standard in Baroque poetics, Arcadian sonnets, operas, and paintings staged lovers as faint-hearted beings for whom eroticism constituted a threat, rather than a welcome sensation. Its archetypes were the weak-kneed shepherds and nymphs from Guarini’s *Il pastor fido*, the lovesick deities from Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, or any other “timid lover” (*amant timide*), as Gabriel Maugain termed them:

Quand survient celle qui occupe sa pensée, il fuit ou garde le silence. Il s’approche d’elle pendant qu’elle sommeille, mais il redoute alors de la réveiller; il supplie la brise et les ruisseaux de se taire.<sup>7</sup>

[When she who occupies his thoughts arrives, he flees or keeps silent. He approaches her while she is asleep, but then fears to wake her. He begs the breeze and the streams to be silent.]

**1.4** One story became paradigmatic of Arcadia’s “timidity”: the myth of Diana and Endymion. This century-old tale relates how the virgin goddess Diana is punished for contesting Cupid’s presence in her chaste realm. Struck by one of Cupid’s darts, Diana herself becomes infatuated with the handsome shepherd Endymion and is forced either to forsake her principles, or to banish

her love interest. A different solution is found: Endymion is immortalized through perennial sleep, which enables the goddess to contemplate his beauty eternally and in all secrecy.

**1.5** The frequency with which the Pastori returned to the Endymion topos is astonishing, to say the least. In 1688, two years before the Academy's actual foundation, Queen Christina of Sweden and Alessandro Guidi joined in the creation of an *Endimione* that never reached the operatic stage, but was issued in print together with a well-known *Discorso* by Arcadian co-founder Gian Vincenzo Gravina. In 1692 Francesco de Lemene published a similarly titled *favola per musica* that succeeded precisely where Christina and Guidi's failed, enjoying success as a musical drama. Nine years later, though, Lemene's *Endimione* sparked a cabal at Turin that was recorded by a local Arcadian, Giovanni Antonio Mezzabarba, in an informative tract dedicated to Pietro Antonio Bernardoni, the *procustode* of Arcadia's Modenese chapter. Either in 1698 (Modena) or 1706 (Vienna), Bernardoni revised Lemene's libretto for Giovanni Bononcini, who graced it with some of the era's most captivating music. The story continues through the pen of another Bononcini, Giovanni's brother Antonio Maria, who in 1721 provided a new setting of Lemene's drama for the Neapolitan Teatro San Bartolomeo. Only two weeks later, Naples witnessed the emergence of Arcadia's most enduring contribution to the Endymion legacy in the form of a serenata by Gravina's heir, Pietro Metastasio.<sup>8</sup>

**1.6** But all topical and institutional similarities aside, the aforementioned librettos differ sharply in dramaturgical and philosophical terms. Whereas Guidi's fable carries the hermetic program of a torchbearer of Catholicism, emphasizing the Neoplatonic dimension of a shepherd's love for a goddess (or god), Lemene's opera hinges on visual spectacle and wit, while Metastasio's serenata steers a more worldly, enlightened course. From a generic point of view, furthermore, the narrative metamorphosed from an erudite closet drama into a tragicomedy, only to become a miniature opera. Such bewildering contrasts invite overall reassessment of the notion of "Arcadian opera," at least as regards its earliest phase.<sup>9</sup> Let us begin by taking a glance at Endymion's pre-Arcadian legacy.

## 2. The Endymion legacy

**2.1** By the end of the seventeenth century, the myth could reflect upon a rich past comprising two millennia and a broad range of variants.<sup>10</sup> One thread of the legend, reported in Apollodorus's *Library*, teaches us that Endymion was the first King of Elis, a polis in the northwest of the Peloponnese. When the moon goddess Selene fell in love with him, Zeus made Endymion immortal so that she might contemplate his beauty forever.<sup>11</sup> The story was soon transferred eastwards, from Elis to Caria in Asia Minor, as well as to Arcadia, a barren, mountainous land in the Peloponnese that since Polybius had come to be regarded as a paradise inhabited by virtuous, artistic shepherds.<sup>12</sup> Selene in turn came to be identified with Artemis, the protectress of virginity whom the Arcadians worshipped in zealous fashion.

**2.2** The ancient Romans, too, perceived their goddesses of the moon and hunting, Luna and Diana (or Cynthia), as equivalents, yet at the same time believed that Endymion had been a shepherd who had slept during the day in order to hunt in the moonlight. Pliny the Elder built upon this rationalist explanation to advance the idea that Endymion had been an astrologer who stayed awake at night to study the phases of the moon.<sup>13</sup> Latin poets, on the other hand, uncovered the erotic dimensions of the story, for instance pointing to the fact that Endymion "was naked when he enraptured Phoebus's sister [Diana] and slept with the goddess, who was also naked."<sup>14</sup>

**2.3** Early modernity rediscovered the Endymion tale from material artefacts, such as Roman murals and sarcophagus reliefs, as well as from the *Phaido*, Plato's illustrious dialogue on the nature of death. In it, Plato had deployed the emblem of Endymion's sleep to argue for the immortality of the soul. Renaissance court poets capitalized on this analogy when eulogizing their

“immortal” patrons. Thus, in his tragedy *Endimion, the Man in the Moone* (London, 1591), John Lyly had a boy actor evoke the unearthly, everlasting beauty of Queen Elizabeth:

ENDIMION. Tell mee Eumenides, what is hee that having a Mistris of ripe yeeres, & infinite vertues, great honours, and unspeakable beauty, but woulde with that shee might grow render againe? Getting youth by yeeres, and never decaying beauty, by time, whose fayre face, neyther the Summers blase can scorch, nor Winters blast chappe, nor the numbring of yeeres breede altering of colours. Such is my sweete Cynthia, whom tyme cannot touch, because she is divine, nor will offend because she is delicate.<sup>15</sup>

**2.4** Most seventeenth-century librettists, by contrast, erased Diana’s spiritual persona in favor of more playfulness and satire, conveyed through *concetti* culled from myth, pastoral, and *commedia dell’arte*. In Giovanni Faustini’s *La Calisto* (Venice, 1651), for example, the love plot between Endymion and Diana shares the stage with the erotic affairs of Jupiter and Callisto, the jealousy of Juno, the roguish interventions of satyrs, and the sorrows of an old nymph, Linfea.<sup>16</sup> Almerico Passarelli’s *Endimione* (Ferrara, 1655) has the story unfold against the backdrop of the Spartan court, where “Queen” Diana is surrounded by courtiers (Crisi, Arante, Alda, Lidio, and Eurillo) and personifications of her own passions (Gelosia, Furore, and Amorini). And in the anonymous set of intermedi *Gli amori della Luna con Endimione* (Bologna, 1681), Bacchus summons the shepherds to set up “orgies and bacchanals with rustic display,” while Endymion does his best to ward off Luna’s improper advances in vain, for he is tricked into her arms as liquor is spilt on his face and he falls asleep.<sup>17</sup> At the end of the jolly spectacle, the Olympic deities leer over Diana’s love-play, cannily remarking that “she who nourishes a lascivious flame in her bosom wants to be the goddess of decency.”<sup>18</sup>

### 3. A Swansong for Neoplatonism

**3.1** Ironically, it was Diana onto whom Christina of Sweden (1626–89) projected her legendary unwillingness to marry. Already during her Swedish reign (1632–54), Queen Christina danced the lead in the ballet *Diane victorieuse, ou Le vaincu de Diane* (Stockholm, 1649), a transparent allegory of her resistance to love.<sup>19</sup> On entering Rome, in 1656, she had a medallion minted displaying her as Diana taming four “lions,” that is, the four cardinal passions (distress, fear, lust, and delight) of stoic philosophy (see [Figure 1](#)).<sup>20</sup> Christina’s interest in the Endymion episode—not exactly the most explicit confirmation of chastity—can be traced back to her first Roman residence, the Palazzo Farnese, the ceiling of which was adorned by a sumptuous fresco cycle by Annibale Carracci, *The Loves of the Gods* (1597–1604). Among the various groupings of mythical characters, one *quadro* represented Diana in fond embrace with Endymion. Its sensual imagery may have inspired the former Queen to commission a semi-musical tragedy, *Les amours de Diane et d’Endimion* (1657), from her French secretary, Gabriel Gilbert.<sup>21</sup> Curiously, the play concludes on a tragic note: with Endymion’s assassination by Apollo, Diana’s jealous brother. The odd departure from tradition has been explained as an allusion to the fate of Christina’s *cicisbeo*, Marquis Gian Rinaldo Monaldeschi, whom she had executed for betraying her political ambitions (the seizure of the Neapolitan crown) to Oliver Cromwell.<sup>22</sup>

**3.2** In 1688, Christina’s mythological alter ego had another, if less tragic, rendezvous with Endymion in a three-act libretto by her last poet-in-residence, Alessandro Guidi (1650–1712). In the flowery preface to the published version of this *Endimione* (1692), Guidi spared no words in pointing out who exactly had selected the subject:

Mà le belle ferite,  
Onde Cintia si vide  
Per le selve di Caria or mesta, or lieta,

L'alta Reina a versi miei commise;  
 E in così care guise  
 Il nostro canto accolse,  
 Che nel fulgor l'avvolse  
 De' suoi celesti ingegni.<sup>23</sup>

[But the lofty Queen dedicated to my verses the beautiful injuries, with which Cynthia is seen in the woods of Caria, now sad, then happy. And in such a dear guise, our chant welcomed that which wrapped it in the splendor of her celestial talents.]

**3.3** Unhappily, the illness and death of Guidi's "lofty Queen," in 1689, prevented his *favola pastorale* from becoming a true opera, which accounts for the absence of a musical setting. Shortly afterwards, however, Arcadia absorbed Christina's *Accademia Reale* (1674–89) together with its habitués, including Guidi and Crescimbeni, while Cardinal Giovanni Francesco Albani (the future Clement XI) took over Christina's patronage of Guidi.<sup>24</sup> On 10 June 1691, *Endimione* became officially part of the Arcadian canon, being recited by three Pastori at the garden of Christina's Palazzo Riario (today Corsini) to celebrate Guidi's admission to the Academy as Erilo Cleoneo.<sup>25</sup> Probably at the instigation of Crescimbeni, the *favola* appeared in print the following year in a five-act version enhanced with choruses and an apologetic *Discorso* by Gravina.<sup>26</sup> What did the Arcadians find so intriguing about the libretto?

**3.4** The plot of *Endimione* can be summarized as a rhetorical duel between the guiding forces of love (Cupid) and chastity (Diana). In the opening scene, Cupid stresses the fertility and sensuality of the Arcadian landscape, which Diana for her part perceives in an emotionally inward way:

AMORE.  
 Felici piagge, avventurosi colli,  
 Non perche di bei fiori April v'adorna;  
 Ma perche in voi soggiorna  
 In nove forme, e in sì leggiadro velo  
 Cintia scesa dal cielo.

CINTIA  
 Ombre solinghe, alti silenzi, ò quanto  
 Grave sento su'l cor vostra quiete,  
 Or che'l terror de l'universo, e'l grande  
 Nemico di mia pace in seno avete.<sup>27</sup>

[*Cupid*. Happy shores, fortunate hills, not because April adorns you with lovely flowers, but because Diana, descended from heaven, resides in you, in new forms and under such a beguiling veil. *Cynthia*. Solitary shadows, deep silences, oh how gravely do I feel your tranquility (pressing) on my heart, now that you hold the terror of the universe and the great enemy to my peace in your bosom.]

**3.5** Diana begs her enemy to carry his bow and torch to royal palaces, that is, to the world of tragedy, yet Cupid prefers to stay in her realm so that he can enrapture the hearts of her subjects. In his first aria, "Ne la Reggia, e dentro 'l bosco," he boldly crowns himself king of the universe.<sup>28</sup> His statements provide the catalyst for Diana's defensive aria "Il ruscel, che al mar s'invia," whereby she compares her will to an unstoppable brook that strives to reach the sea, a recurrent metaphor in Arcadian poetry and in *Endimione* librettos in particular.<sup>29</sup> Cupid swears to punish her vanity and foresees her downfall in an illicit relationship with a shepherd.

**3.6** The male victim is introduced in the second act, venting his one desire: to avoid all things and places affected by love. Apparently Endymion's heart, too, has been set ablaze by passion, for



Diana, as it will turn out. The latter of course dismisses his fear and cowardice, yet as soon as the handsome shepherd has left the scene, she admits that she fled the heavenly spheres precisely to escape from love's power.<sup>30</sup> Eager to avenge her hypocrisy, Cupid promises Endymion to assist him in the conquest of Diana's heart.

**3.7** Before the latter happens, both lovers confront the dark side of passion. Endymion all of a sudden exclaims that death is more dear to him than love, while Diana depicts Cupid's menace as a shadow, looming over her woods.<sup>31</sup> As the third act draws near its close, however, Endymion throws off his pastoral garb and acquires the eloquence necessary to win over a being of higher, immortal status:

ENDIMIONE

Io ch'al prato, al monte, al bosco  
Vissi povero Pastore,  
Cangio stato, e mi conosco  
Pien di novo alto valore.

[In the meadow, on the mountain, in the wood, I once lived as a poor shepherd, (but now) I change status and find myself full of new, lofty valor.]

**3.8** This "new, lofty valor" will be reflected by a series of metaphoric addresses to Diana, from the fourth act on.<sup>32</sup> Still, Diana cannot respond to these utterances, unless she, too, undergoes a mental metamorphosis that lowers her cosmic status to that of her beloved. It is Cupid who initiates this transformation through deception:

AMORE

Del mio sì grave affanno  
Sola cagion tu sei.

CINTIA

Meco tu scherzi Amore.

AMORE

Come potesti mai  
Drizzar il fero strale entro il bel seno  
Del più vago Pastor di queste selve  
Mia gloria, e mio diletto,  
E che solo dovea da tuoi begli occhi  
Sentire aprirsi il petto.

CINTIA

Che Pastor? che ferite? e quando rea  
Fù la mia Deità di colpa atroce?

AMORE

E ver, che l'arco tese  
Elpinia per ferir Fera fugace,  
Ma s'udi pria, che liberasse il dardo,  
Ben tre volte invocar tuo nome, e disse.  
Cintia, tu guida il colpo, e 'l colpo giunse  
Ahi furezza! ahi pietate!  
Nel sen d'Endimion, che non lontano  
Stava pensoso tra solinghi orrori  
Su l'aspra istoria de' suoi tristi amori.

CINTIA

In nome de le furie uscì da l'arco  
L'empia saetta, ch'il mio ben trafisse.  
Or dunque giace il bel Pastore estinto?

AMORE

Estinto nò: ma da crudel ferita  
Languè piagato a morte.<sup>33</sup>

[*Cupid*. You are the sole reason for my deep distress. *Cynthia*. You are mocking me, *Cupid*. *Cupid*. How could you ever plant the fierce arrow in the fair bosom of the most handsome shepherd of these woods, my glory and delight? You were only supposed to understand “opening his chest” by means of your beautiful eyes. *Cynthia*. What shepherd? What injuries? And when has my deity been guilty of an atrocious misdeed? *Cupid*. It is true that Elpinia (one of Diana’s nymphs) bent the bow to wound a fugitive beast, yet prior to letting go of the arrow, your name was heard being invoked three times, and she (Elpinia) said: “Cynthia, guide the shot,” and so the shot hit—oh pride! oh pity!—the breast of Endymion, who was standing in the midst of his solitary horrors, thinking of the bitter history of his sad loves. *Cynthia*. The villainous arrow that pierced my beloved escaped from the bow in the name of the furies. Does the handsome shepherd now lie dead? *Cupid*. Not dead, but afflicted by the cruel stroke, he languishes, mortally wounded.]

### 3.9 Overcome by grief and guilt, Diana rejects her mortality and reveals her true feelings:

CINTIA

Ricuso d'esser Dea,  
E d'esser viva ancor, se mi s'invola  
Il vago Endimione,  
Che viver non vorrei,  
Senza 'l caro splendor de' lumi suoi.

AMORE

Or cèl amor, se puoi.

[*Cynthia*. I refuse to be a goddess and to be still alive, if you rob me of my beautiful Endymion. I would not like to live without the dear splendor of his eyes. *Cupid*. Now (try to) conceal love, if you can.]

### 3.10 Although Diana has now officially become a *donna mortale*, the fifth and last act displays her conjunction with Endymion *in heaven*, where “light” and “blessing” symbolically substitute for the “shadows” and “dark clouds” of the past. To Endymion, she says:

CINTIA

Segui Amor, ch'a tanta luce  
Ti conduce  
Per sì nova alta ventura,  
Di bearti ei prende cura;  
Nè sprezzar d'Amore 'l dono;  
Spesso sono  
Suoi seguaci accolti in cielo  
Nel consorzio de gli Dei.

[Follow Love, who leads you to so much light, to such a new, lofty venture. He takes care of blessing you; do not scorn his gift, (for) his followers are often received in

heaven within the council of the gods.]

**3.11** Burdened with fear, however, Endymion conjures up ill-fated lovers from the *Metamorphoses*, as if gazing from his own pictorial frame towards the neighboring tableaux in Carracci's ceiling:

ENDIMIONE

Pur gl'eventi acerbi, e rei  
Io di Semele pavento  
Dal suo Giove incenerita:  
E ben sento,  
Che d'Adon l'aspra ferita  
Và turbando i pensier miei:  
Raffiguro il bel Giacinto  
Di mortal pallor dipinto:  
Veggio Psiche amata amante  
Gir sospinta a rischi indegni  
Per disdegni.

[Still do I dread the bitter, wicked adventures of Semele, incinerated by Jupiter. And I deeply feel how Adonis's harsh injury is troubling my thoughts. I imagine the fair Hyacinth, painted with mortal pallor. I see Psyche, loved and in love, wandering about, exposed to unworthy risks because of her disdain (for love).]

**3.12** Diana quickly dispels Endymion's last discomfort by soothing and carressing him. Then, the two join in a duet in which Endymion declares that he feels "more blessed than the deities themselves."<sup>34</sup> In fresco-like fashion, the glorified duo ascends to heaven.

**3.13** In terms of action, Guidi's plot is stilted on account of its limited cast (three characters with a fairly redundant chorus) and lack of visual interest. Even a sleep scene, so natural to the story, remains tantalizingly absent. According to Gravina, this purified, "sublime design" had "sprung from the mind of the incomparable Christina."<sup>35</sup> Crescimbeni likewise reported that "the fable of Endymion" had been "conceived" by the ex-Queen in this "new manner," and that Guidi had merely versified her scenario, though "with such delight of Her Majesty, that she herself wanted to add value to the work by enriching it with some of her own verses, which one sees indicated in the printing."<sup>36</sup>

**3.14** The close collaboration between patron and poet has led several scholars to assume that *Endimione* must contain deeper allegorical levels pertaining to the personal lives of either Christina, Guidi, or both. Bruno Maier for instance suggested that Guidi (alias Endymion) composed the libretto as an expression of gratitude towards Christina (Diana), whose patronage (love) elevated his poetry to Arcadian classicism.<sup>37</sup> Annemarie Maeger, on the other hand, held that *Endimione* unveils Christina's inner conflict between her public image as celibate ruler and her hidden amorous desire for a Catholic "shepherd," Decio Azzolino, the cardinal who arranged her affairs, introduced her to Guidi, and became her sole heir.<sup>38</sup>

**3.15** For all their biographical interest, Maier's and Maeger's hypotheses cannot fully convince in the absence of contemporary evidence testifying to such allegorical intentions. It is telling, in this respect, that the Arcadians themselves did not make any associations between *Endimione* and the alleged love affair of their spiritual protectress. What intrigued them, instead, was the libretto's dramaturgical style and its innovative, spiritual representation of amorous desire. Thus, on the very day of its premiere, 10 June 1691, Pastore Lacrito Scotaneo (Giuseppe Maria Cascina) extolled the "chaste," "modest," "elevated," and "sublime" thoughts of Guidi's "most charming *favola Boschereccia*."<sup>39</sup> In his biography of Guidi (1726), furthermore, Crescimbeni praised the



poet for having “reconciled pastoral simplicity with the grandness and sublimity of thoughts and style,” as well as for having “dealt with amorous subjects in a heroic way.”<sup>40</sup>

**3.16** The precise implications of these appraisals can be deduced from the rich documentary legacy of Arcadia and its immediate forerunner, the Accademia Reale. First of all, Christina’s *Table des sujets sur lesquels on doit traiter dans l’Academie* and her maxims (*Sentimens*), both of which are undated, provide valuable insights into the philosophical ideas lurking behind amorous subjects in late seventeenth-century Rome.<sup>41</sup> Of a total of fifty-seven propositions, twenty-nine in the *Table des sujets* deal with love in a way that holds particular relevance for *Endimione*. Thus the omnipotence of love, suggested by its plot and conclusion (see [Figure 2](#)), is stressed by Subject XXIII: “We are made to love, it is impossible not to love” (Nous sommes faits pour aimer; il est impossible de n’aimer pas). A *sentiment* confirms this idea, stating that “It would be desirable for princes [i.e., rulers of both sexes] to abstain entirely from love, yet *I believe it almost impossible*” (my emphasis) (Il seroit à souhaiter que les Princes s’abstinsent entièrement de l’amour, mais je le crois presque impossible).<sup>42</sup> Whether or not Christina’s encounters with Monaldeschi and Azzolino inspired her to consider amorous abstinence to be untenable, it remains telling that she at least acknowledged the ultimate vanity of chastity.

**3.17** All the same, the message advanced by number XXVIII in the *Table des sujets*, “The true object of love is God, the soul is made for loving Him and for possessing Him eternally” (Le Véritable Objet de l’amour est Dieu, l’ame est faite pour l’aimer, & le posséder éternellement), propels our understanding of *Endimione* in a different direction.<sup>43</sup> It suggests that the pagan myth might allegorize, not so much the untenability of celibacy, but rather the unfettered religious devotion of a converted Protestant. Although such a reading may seem problematic in view of the contemporary doctrines that disconnected “true religion” from ancient mythology, it was not so in post-Tridentine Rome, where Neoplatonism continued to furnish the common currency.<sup>44</sup>

**3.18** One of the primary scholars to further Renaissance philosophy in Rome was the German Jesuit to whose *Wunderkammer* Christina paid frequent visits, Athanasius Kircher (1602–80).<sup>45</sup> In one of his books, *Œdipus Aegyptiacus* (1652–4), Kircher in effect explained ancient mythology in terms of a *prisca theologia*, a monotheistic precursor to all religions which, as had occurred with language during the construction of the Tower of Babel, had diffracted into various beliefs. The “wisdom of the Egyptians,” he contended, “was nothing other than this: to represent the science of Divinity and Nature under various fables and allegorical tales of animals and other natural things.”<sup>46</sup> In other words, pagan myths, too, contained the seeds of Christian religion, since “not only the Prophets, Apostles, and other holy men of God, but also the Gentiles, Poets, Priests, and Prophets” had been inspired by the “Divine Numen” of the Holy Spirit.<sup>47</sup>

**3.19** Among the Arcadians, it was co-founder and *enfant terrible* Gian Vincenzo Gravina (1664–1718) who staunchly championed Kircher’s perspective.<sup>48</sup> In the *Discorso sopra l’Endimione* (1692), for example, he asserted that the mythmakers of antiquity, above all Homer, had merged truth and fiction in a so-called “poetic science” (*scienza poetica*).<sup>49</sup> By deploying a “long string of [pagan] gods,” these ancient wizards had not sought to deceive the superstitious crowd, as a growing number of rationalists (e.g. Bayle or Fontenelle) began to claim, but rather represented the “causes and movements of nature”<sup>50</sup> through figments of the mythical imagination that did not only impart the “image of truth,” but also stirred up the modern reader’s attention, lifting his “soul above himself ... withdrawing it from earthly matters,” and liberating it “from the bonds with which our corporeal nature ... delays our flight toward the contemplation of the pure and eternal,” hence to God.<sup>51</sup>

**3.20** Gravina published another tract in order to tackle the issue of pagan mythology from the Neoplatonic stance, *Delle antiche favole* (1696).<sup>52</sup> In its opening paragraph, he contended that

“truth” contained the “complete knowledge of that about which a judgment is made,” while “untruth” contained “either a part or nothing of it.”<sup>53</sup> The statement may appear vapid on first reading, yet it should be noted how it overthrows the *tertium non datur*, the basic principle of causal logic whereby a proposition can be either true *or* false, but not both. The assumption that forms of knowledge might be simultaneously false *and* partly true defies Cartesianism, the doctrine in which Christina of Sweden and most of the Arcadians were steeped, and opens the doors to hermetic exegesis, generating a fluid continuum between pagan contrivances and Christian truths.<sup>54</sup>

**3.21** Despite the fact that she was Descartes’s last pupil, Christina could not help but perceive myths as divine truths cloaked by allegorical veils. In a maxim, she held that “wise and heroic antiquity worshipped the author of nature [God] under diverse shapes and names of deities” (La sage et héroïque Antiquité adorait l’auteur de la nature sous les diverses figures et noms de ses dieux).<sup>55</sup> These “shapes” and “names” imparted theories about issues that were themselves too obscure or abstract to be comprehended as such, for instance the ideal nature of love. Vice versa, modern thinkers could formulate their views on like matters through mythological parables, such as the story of Diana and Endymion.

**3.22** The kind of amorous desire that Guidi’s *Endimione* enshrines is heavily indebted to Neoplatonic thought. For Endymion and Diana learn that their amorous bond should not give way to sexual consummation, but rather to sublimation to a purely spiritual level mirroring the devotion to God. This platonic purification was referred to in countless Arcadian tracts through a plethora of terms: *amore onesto*, *amore gentile*, *amore eroico*, *amore razionale*, and so on. Gravina, for instance, defined “rational love” as a passion whereby the physical beauty of the lovers did not fulfill “an end, but an occasion,” beauty being “allied to the souls,” “separated from the bodies,” and “fed by its resemblance to the common virtues.”<sup>56</sup> The latter “virtues” could be “transferred from lover to beloved” like a “stream of honesty” that “partakes in the divine” and enables amorous souls to merge “peacefully in a single flame that grasps the spiritual substance.”<sup>57</sup> Lovers could escape their physical restraints and transfuse their passion so that God became, in Christina’s words, “the true object of love.”

**3.23** The Florentine humanist Marsilio Ficino may have been the first to theorize platonic love; still it was Petrarch, the “prince of Tuscan lyric poets,” who had turned it into a literary commonplace.<sup>58</sup> Christina revered Petrarch to such an extent that she, according to Muratori, “reopened” his “school” and by so doing made the most enduring contribution to Arcadianism.<sup>59</sup> Not by chance, the lion’s share of Arcadian poetry was made up of Petrarchan sonnets centering around the issue of platonic love. The “sublime” tone characteristic of these poems (and so sharply contrasting with the sensualism of previous decades) may be seen as symbolizing the effects of platonic love on behalf of the Arcadian poet. Love, Christina declared in Subject XXXI of her *Table*, “makes the non-eloquent eloquent” (L’amour rend éloquent, les gens non éloquent), and so it is Cupid who endows Endymion with the poetic inspiration necessary to conquer Diana’s heart:

AMORE  
Or la tua mente  
In ogni suo pensier, s’erge, e sfavilla,  
Nè più ragiona in pastorali accenti;  
Ma in note alme, e leggiadre.

[Now your mind rises up and sparkles in all its thoughts. Nor does it longer argue in pastoral words, but rather in lofty, pleasing terms.]

**3.24** In brief, it seems irrelevant whether or not Guidi’s *Endimione* constituted a poet’s tribute to

his illustrious patroness, or a queen's hidden confession of her amorous escapades. After all, the fable represented the ascetic lifestyle of an *entire* generation to whom the "Pastore" epithet meant more than a playful disguise. The Arcadian league, it is generally known, was spearheaded by *abati* such as Crescimbeni, cardinals such as Albani, not to mention the *Pastore massimo*, the Pope. These clerics were sufficiently initiated in Neoplatonic doctrine to learn the truth about divine love from a mythological libretto. Those lacking such knowledge, on the other hand, must have been annoyed by the drama's *maniera antica*, seeking out an alternative with more action, fun, and opportunities for music.

#### 4. Golden Arrows, Dogs, Trees, and Birdcatchers

**4.1** The libretto that made up for Christina and Guidi's shortcomings was Count Francesco de Lemene's (1634–1704) *Endimione, a favola per musica* that was first performed in Lodi in June 1692.<sup>60</sup> Lemene and Guidi had no small number of things in common. In 1661–2, Christina of Sweden offered the former the scenario for *L'Eliata*, a libretto about a Muslim's conversion to Catholicism.<sup>61</sup> Miraculously recovered from a severe illness, Lemene in 1680 embarked upon a poetic pilgrimage leading to two celebrated collections of theological poems, *Dio* (1684) and *Il Rosario* (1691), and to an oratorio commissioned by Pietro Ottoboni, *Giacobbe al fonte* (1694). In 1695, hence four years after Guidi, Lemene joined Arcadia as Arezio Gateatico, to the joy of Crescimbeni and his fellows.<sup>62</sup>

**4.2** Surprisingly, though, Lemene's *Endimione* is a far cry from Christina's and Guidi's paean. Apart from being cast in the traditional three-act mold of the *dramma per musica*, the libretto makes numerous concessions to seventeenth-century operatic convention. Thus it features newly invented subplots involving such generic characters as a shepherd called Thyrsis (Tirsi), a nymph called Aurilla, and a jesting satyr, Sylvanus (Silvano).<sup>63</sup> With the exception of the latter buffoon, these secondary characters get stuck in love triangles with the protagonists, Thyrsis falling in love with Aurilla, and Aurilla with Endymion (to Diana's consternation). The expanded plot allowed Lemene to concoct a respectable sixty-six scenes, sixty-two lyrical numbers, fifteen scene changes, and several interventions of machinery.

**4.3** The sharpest contrasts with Guidi's libretto, however, occur on the level of characterization. Lemene portrayed Diana as an ambiguous ruler who possesses little if any of the stoic graveness characteristic of Guidi's goddess. Feeble-minded, she for example contrasts her soul to the twisting, fickle Meander, only to admit afterwards that her thoughts are betraying her (I, 7).<sup>64</sup> In the second scene, she proclaims the main theme, or "edict," of the opera:

DIANA  
O del Latmo frondoso  
ornamento e terror, ninfe e pastori,  
so che in cor generoso  
voi non date ricetta  
ad amoroso affetto;  
pur, perché più sicura ogn'alma sia  
da peste così ria,  
questo editto io promulgo. Attenti udite  
di questa legge mia l'alto tenore:  
"Pena la vita a chi ricetta Amore."

[Oh nymphs and shepherds, ornament and terror of the shadowy Latmos, I am aware that you do not open your generous hearts to amorous passion. Still, I pronounce this edict, so that every soul shall be more secure from a pestilence so wicked. Pay attention and listen to the high tenor of this law: "Death (is) the penalty for he who receives love."]

As can be expected, the law will be rigorously observed by Endymion, applied to Thyrsis and Aurilla, but violated by the judge herself. In the opera's final sentence, Diana cannot but pervert it into "Death is the penalty for he who *chases away* love" (Pena la vita a chi *discaccia* Amore).

**4.4** Lemene rendered Endymion as a naive sleepyhead whose favorite (and only) pastimes are hunting and sleeping. Unlike Guidi's title character, he remains unaffected by love and does not even show the slightest inclination to respond to amorous proposals. In Act III, scene 4, he remains literally "mute" to the echoes of Aurilla's feelings:

AURILLA  
cangiati dunque, Endimione, ed ama.

ENDIMIONE  
Mi consigli ad amar, quando l'amare  
fia che per legge de la nostra dea  
col morir si punisca?  
Ninfa non v'è, non v'ha pastor, che ardisca  
nodrir nel casto seno  
amoroso desio.

AURILLA  
Parmi un'eco sentir risponder: io.

ENDIMIONE  
Io nulla sento; or dunque,  
quand'ardess'io d'un amoroso foco,  
qual ninfa in questo loco  
già mai riarderebbe a l'arder mio?

AURILLA  
Parmi un'eco sentir risponder: io.

ENDIMIONE  
Io nulla sento ancor.

AURILLA  
Sordo sei tu.

ENDIMIONE  
Questa ancor c'è di più.  
Cinzia mi dice amante, e sordo Aurilla,  
e così mi ritrovo in un istante,  
e pur io nol sapea, sordo ed amante;  
che vuol poi dir, se ben ripenso meco,  
mi trovo e sordo e cieco.  
Che destino è mai questo?  
Quando mai finirà?  
Deh mi dica chi 'l sa, dormo o son desto?

[*Aurilla*. Then change, Endymion, and love. *Endymion*. You advise me to love, even though loving is punished by death according to the law of our goddess? No nymph, no shepherd, longs to nourish amorous desire in his chaste bosom. *Aurilla*. I seem to hear an echo respond: "I do." *Endymion*. I do not hear anything. Now, suppose I would burn with an amorous fire, which nymph in this place would ever return (literally: "burn back to") my burning? *Aurilla*. I seem to hear an echo respond: "I

would.” *Endymion*. I still hear nothing at all. *Aurilla*. You are deaf. *Endymione*. This is too much. Cynthia calls me a lover, Aurilla calls me deaf, and so I find myself in one and the same instant deaf and in love, and yet I hadn’t known it. What does this mean, if I ponder well, to find myself deaf and blind? What fate is this? When will it stop? Please, whoever knows (the answer), tell me: am I asleep or awake?]

**4.5** Unfortunately for him, Endymion gets trapped in a web of misunderstandings spun around three props: a golden arrow, a dog, and a tree. The arrow is given by Diana in his sleep, subsequently stolen by Sylvanus, and then given to Aurilla, who returns it to Endymion as a token of her love. The hunter unconsciously insults Diana by declaring, so as to confirm his obedience to her law, that the love of the one who has given him the arrow—Aurilla, not Diana, he believes—is less dear to him than his dog (I, 18):

ENDIMIONE

Amante non son io, né mai lo fui,  
Né amante mai sarò. Scritto ho nel core:  
“Pena la vita a chi ricetta Amore.”

DIANA

E s’io, che fei la legge,  
da la legge ti scioglio?

ENDIMIONE

Né pure amare io voglio.

DIANA

E se chi ’l dardo ti donò, donasse  
un ben dovuto amore al merto tuo?

ENDIMIONE

Più m’è caro un mio can, che l’amor suo.

DIANA

Villan, così mi sprezzi?  
Così parli, villan? Non so perché...  
Lasciami il dardo. Va’, parti da me.  
Teco d’esser gentile io mi vergogno.

ENDIMIONE

O Diana vaneggia o questo è un sogno.<sup>65</sup>

[*Endymion*. A lover I am not, nor have I ever been, nor shall I ever be. I have it written in my heart: “Death is the penalty for he who receives love.” *Diana*. And what if I would release you from the law I made? *Endymion*. I would still not want to love. *Diana*. And what if the one who gave you the dart, would give a love (that is) due to your merit? *Endymion*. My dog is more dear to me than her (Aurilla’s) love. *Diana*. You villain, do you scorn me thus? Do you talk like that? I don’t know why... Leave the arrow to me. Go, go away from me. I feel ashamed of having been nice to you. *Endymion*. Either Diana is delirious, or this is a dream.]

**4.6** The second misunderstanding revolves around Endymion’s dog Dorinda, which, like Silvio’s Melampo in Guarini’s *Il pastor fido*, runs away.<sup>66</sup> In his search for the pet, Endymion describes it in an aria to Sylvanus, who mistakes it for a girl and alarms Diana.<sup>67</sup> The Modena 1698 revival added credibility to Sylvanus’s suspicion by having Endymion lament the lost animal.<sup>68</sup> For the Viennese staging of 1706, furthermore, Giovanni Bononcini crafted the aria in question, “E’



sempre inquieto quel core infelice,” into an enchanting G-minor cantilena with a plaintive chalumeau part (see [Example 1](#)).<sup>69</sup>

**4.7** The third and last imbroglio emerges from a tree trunk on which Thyrsis and Aurilla carve the names of their loves: Thyrsis carves Aurilla’s, Aurilla Endymion’s (II, 13). The discovery of both names so infuriates Diana that she punishes Aurilla by transforming her, like Daphne, into a tree (III, 14), and Thyrsis by having him tied to the “Aurilla tree” in order to be shot (III, 18). Luckily, Endymion and Cupid arrive in time to cancel the execution and to undo Aurilla’s metamorphosis (III, 21–3).

**4.8** At the end of all these tribulations, Endymion is himself hit by an arrow, whereupon he promptly understands the mechanics of love.<sup>70</sup> Without the need for an ethical *tour de force*, metaphoric interventions, or platonic sublimation, all misunderstandings are solved, chastity is reconciled with passion, and Endymion wedded to Diana:

AMORE

Or questa mano, Endimion, tu prendi.

ENDIMIONE

Io la man d’una dea, mortal pastore?

AMORE

Ogni disuguaglianza agguaglia Amore.

[*Cupid*. Now take this hand, Endymion. *Endymion*. I, mortal shepherd, (take) the hand of a goddess? *Cupid*. Love evens out any inequality.]

In courtly fashion, Cupid elucidates the moral lesson to the ladies of Lodi:

AMORE

A voi, donne de l’Adda,  
or proseguo il mio volo e so che a voi,  
or che pudico io son, sarò più caro:  
ma quando a voi fia giunto, o dee terrene,  
questo trionfo mio, vo’ che si mostri  
su luminose, armoniose scene,  
o belle, agli occhi vostri. Al[I]or sarete,  
o saggie donne e belle,  
pudiche sì, ma non d’Amor rubelle,  
ché dal trionfo mio chiaro vedrete,  
che mal si fugge Amore e che tal ora  
chi più sdegna d’amar, più s’innamora.

[To you, ladies of the Adda (river running through Lodi), I now proceed in my flight, knowing that, now that I am chaste, I will be more dear to you. But when this triumph of mine will reach you, earthly goddesses, I want it to be shown to your eyes, dear beauties, on luminous, harmonious scenes. Then you shall indeed be chaste, learned and beautiful ladies, but not rebellious to Cupid, for you will see clearly from my plain triumph that one can hardly flee love and that at times someone who refuses to love, becomes even more infatuated.]

**4.9** As foretold, Lemene’s *Endimione* would indeed appear on various “luminous, harmonious scenes,” enjoying revivals in Mantua, Modena, Vienna, Hamburg, and other cities.<sup>71</sup> In addition, it would be printed in bibliophile editions bearing the Arcadian stamp. Arguably one of the main elements contributing to this success was Sylvanus, Lemene’s eclectic mixture of Venetian and

Lombardian buffoonery. A hero of the simple life, the satyr excels, like other operatic birdcatchers, at gluttony, greed, cowardice, and above all stupidity. Thus, in Act II, scene 7, he relates the amorous misdemeanors of his pigeon and donkey to Diana, and requests her permission to kill both animals on account of their disobedience to the anti-love edict. Too busy violating the law herself, Diana does not lend her ear to Sylvanus's "great case," but instead creates an exception for Endymion, which Sylvanus hilariously misunderstands:

SILVANO *che parla a Diana*  
Senti, Cinzia, un gran caso. Una colomba  
un bel piccione amava,  
e lasciva il baciava.

DIANA *che parla fra sé*  
Or s'ella è innamorata

SILVANO  
Innamorata?

DIANA  
Mora la sventurata.

SILVANO  
Se il tuo core altro non brama  
l'ho già morta e l'ho mangiata,  
e giovandomi il proclama  
io l'ho tutta ben pelata.

DIANA  
Che strano caso, o dio!

SILVANO  
Or quest'altro più strano. Un mio somaro,  
cioè un asino mio  
(parlando con le dee si parla chiaro)  
questa mese di maggio è innamorato.  
Si sente tutte l'ore  
cantar versi d'amore.  
Or io sono imbrogliato:  
fin che tu non decida  
se anch'egli sia compreso ne la grida.

DIANA  
Ma s'egli è innamorato, ah! che farò?

SILVANO  
Consigliarti non so.

DIANA  
Ah, s'egli è innamorato

SILVANO  
È innamorato

DIANA  
Vo' dichiarare altrui  
che questa legge mia non è per lui.

[*Sylvanus, talking to Diana*. Listen, Cynthia, to a great case. A pigeon loved a good-looking turtle dove and kissed it lasciviously. *Diana, talking to herself*. Then she (Aurilla) is in love. *Sylvanus*. In love? *Diana*. May the unhappy one die. *Sylvanus*. Since your heart does not wish it otherwise, I've already killed and eaten it, and availing myself of the proclamation, I've skinned it well. *Diana*. What a strange case, my God! *Sylvanus*. Now here's another, even stranger one. An ass of mine, that is, one of my donkeys (one must speak clearly when talking to goddesses), has fallen in love this month of May. It is heard every hour singing love verses. Now I'm confused, until you decide whether he, too, is included in the proclamation. *Diana*. But if he (Endymion) is in love, oh dear, what shall I do? *Sylvanus*. I cannot advise you. *Diana*. Ah, if he is in love... *Sylvanus*. He is in love. *Diana*. I want to declare to others that this law of mine does not count for him.]

The stunned buffoon can only react to Diana's new decree with an aria on the happy fate of amorous donkeys, "Gli asini han gran fortuna" (II, 8).

**4.10** Sylvanus's presence in the plot had far-reaching musico-dramatic repercussions. Giovanni Bononcini, for instance, distinguished the part from the remainder of his cast by resorting to a simplified style akin to that of *intermezzi* or *commedie per musica*.<sup>72</sup> In his set designs for the Teatro Regio in Turin (1699), moreover, Ferdinando Galli Bibiena sketched Sylvanus's hut in unusually rustic fashion (see [Figure 3](#)).<sup>73</sup> Interestingly, controversy arose during the latter reprise of *Endimione* over Sylvanus's coarse image. In a highly revealing, but overlooked, *Discorso in difesa dell'Endimione* (Turin, 1699), the local lecturer in philosophy Giovanni Antonio Mezzabarba reported that Lemene's "base style" provoked fierce reactions from intellectuals. "[I]n the critics' opinion," he wrote, "poor Sylvanus ... should be, to art's disgrace, ridiculous with majesty."<sup>74</sup> According to Mezzabarba, by contrast, the poet "would have contravened tradition if he had introduced Sylvanus in more elegant fashion."<sup>75</sup> For Sylvanus was modeled after the "ancient satyrs," who blended the "serious with the mordant and comic."<sup>76</sup> Moreover:

non sò come possa avere il parlar sì pulito, & ornato un povero Villano, che altro Ateneo non frequentò, che la sua capanna, & altro circolo non fece, che dall'Ovile al Prato; dal Prato al Fonte; dal Fonte al Tugurio. Silvano è, come lo dinota il nome, figlio delle selve, e della solitudine ... onde non è da stupirsi, se parla da plebeo.<sup>77</sup>

[I don't know how a poor Boor—who visited no other College than his hut, nor made a tour other than that from the Sheep Fold to the Meadow, from the Meadow to the Spring, and from the Spring to the Hovel—can speak in so refined and ornate a way. For Sylvanus is, as his name indicates, a son of the woods and of solitude ... and it should therefore not surprise that he talks like a plebeian.]

**4.11** Lemene's satirical depiction of Diana, too, reaped the scorn of the Turinese intelligentsia. Even though her hypocrisy, jealousy, and anger made her the ideal operatic fury, as Bononcini's setting illustrates (see [Example 2](#)), her mundane traits prevented some spectators from recognizing her as a deity. Mezzabarba rebuffed their rigid viewpoint as follows:

Se Diana non parla da Dea; il Poeta non la colloca come Luna in Cielo, ma come Diana ne' boschi del Latmo; non nel magnifico Tempio di Efeso, ma nelle deliziose selve di Caria. Di più: parla da innamorata, e, se, come tale, parlasse con sublimità di frase, pecherebbe contro il verisimile.<sup>78</sup>

[If Diana does not talk like a Goddess, the poet has not placed her as Luna in Heaven, but rather as Diana in the woods of the Latmos; not in the magnificent Temple of Ephesus (one of the seven Wonders of the World), but rather in the delicious woods of Caria. Moreover, she speaks like a woman in love and if, as such,

she had spoken with sublime phraseology, she would have violated verisimilitude.]

By “verisimilitude,” he understood

Quello, che per se stesso è atto à parer tale alla maggior parte degli Uditori, quale è il popolo civile, ne troppo dotto, ne troppo ignorante: Non del tutto idiota; perche possa godere, in parte, degli artificij poetici, non troppo scienziato, che voglia, con ragioni filosofiche, e rigore da cattedra, ricercarne l’essenza e cagione fondamentale. Da ciò voglio dedurre questa verissima conseguenza, e dire, che i Critici son troppo addottrinato [*recte*: addottrinati], e troppo metafisici speculano sùl preteso inverisimile, che non è stato trovato tale dagli altri uditori d’Italia, come d’intelletto più moderato.<sup>79</sup>

[That which in itself is apt to appear true to the majority of the Listeners, that is, the civilized people, (who are) neither too knowledgeable, nor too ignorant, not entirely idiotic, given their ability, to some extent, to enjoy poetic artifices, and not too scientific in wanting, with philosophical explanations and the rigor of the cathedra, to search out its (verisimilitude’s) essence and fundamental cause. From the above I want to deduce this very true consequence, saying that the Critics are too indoctrinated and too metaphysical when speculating on this supposed inverisimilitude, which has not been found to be such among the other listeners of Italy, they being of more moderate intellect.]

**4.12** Mezzabarba’s notion of verisimilitude signals a vital breach in Arcadian discourse, and in late seventeenth-century poetics in general, as regards the function and status of poetry. The central issue of disagreement was: should art cater to the demands of connoisseurs, or should it serve the needs of the broader classes? Put simply: what is “true-seeming,” and to whom? According to Gravina, only intellectuals were able to derive the truth from poetry and myth, whereas “vulgar minds” were misguided by their imagination.<sup>80</sup> It was thus pointless to discard hermetic doctrines, since doing so debased the intrinsic quality of the science of poetry. Mezzabarba had a different view, as he demanded that musical drama please the average spectator by including recognizable characters such as a shepherd who perhaps lacks tragic stature,<sup>81</sup> but at least takes the kinds of long naps opera composers needed in order to trot out the *sommeil* topos (see [Example 3](#));<sup>82</sup> a cherub who flies around (I, 1 and III, 25), sits on a plant (I, 5 and II, 18), gets trapped in birdcatchers’ nets (II, 21), and is locked up like a parrot (III, 8); a lovesick virago who revokes her own laws, hides behind the moon (III, 1), and descends on a cloud (III, 2–3); a disobedient nymph who is transformed into a tree (III, 14) and returned to human condition (III, 23). All of these gimmicks may have been questionable from the intellectual’s point of view, yet they answered the composer’s and scenographer’s needs.

**4.13** That it was the Roman *Endimione* that Lemene’s detractors had in mind in uttering their criticism, can be inferred from the following passage in Mezzabarba’s text:

Poco felice ebbero la nascita i due Endimione, concepiti, & usciti alla luce nello stesso tempo, quello, dissi, di Erilo Cleoneo sù le sponde del Tevere, e questo d’Arezio Gateatico sù le fiorite rive dell’Adda. Il primo si meritò per difensore Bione Crateo; il secondo, già recitato con applauso sù le scene d’Italia, e ricevuto con ammirazione da tutti quelli, che gustando del buono, applaudono al merito dell’Autore, sembrava, che ormai avesse fuggito quello scoglio, nel quale sono facili ad urtar le grand’opre, cioè una maledica invidia; ma ora la critica altrui gli risveglia una tempesta, dalla quale spero di farlo uscire con onore.<sup>83</sup>

[Far from happy was the birth of the two Endymions, conceived and published at the same time (1692), that is, the one by Erilo Cleoneo (Guidi) on the banks of the Tiber

(i.e., in Rome), the other by Arezio Gateatico (Lemene) on the flowery banks of the Adda (in Lodi). The former enjoyed Bione Crateo (Gravina) as its defender; the latter, which has already been successfully performed on the stages of Italy and received with admiration by all those who, tasting its goodness, applauded the Author's merit, appeared to have avoided that obstacle on which masterpieces easily stumble, that is, accursed envy; today, however, the criticism of others rouses a tempest, from which I hope to help it escape with honor.]

**4.14** Mezzabarba apologized for his hero through a genuinely “Arcadian” strategy: namely, by disparaging the metaphoric conceits in Christina and Guidi's version. Thus he confirmed the idea that “love made eloquent,” yet was quick to add that love “does not give way to the high-flown.”<sup>84</sup> For love, he argued,

Insegna l'espressioni per muovere, non le ben' ordinate dicerie, per lusingare: detta alla per fine quei pensieri, che, accompagnati dalla naturalezza violentino la volontà, non quelle ricercate locuzioni, che, inorpellate dall'arte, pascano l'intelletto.<sup>85</sup>

[teaches the expressions with which to move, and not the well-ordered chatter with which to deceive: for this purpose (to move), it dictates those thoughts which, accompanied by naturalness, abuse the will, but not those far-fetched statements that, made deceptive by art, feed the intellect.]

**4.15** All the same, Lemene's intrigue does contain a number of Arcadian “conceits” reminiscent of the Roman *Endimione*, more particularly in the subplot around Aurilla and Thyrsis. At the start of the action (I, 2), the two Arcadians are self-declared enemies of love, the latter promising Diana to avoid Cupid at all costs, the former pledging to combat the “blind god”—all in vain, for by Act I, scene 6, Thyrsis begins to feel something for Aurilla<sup>86</sup>:

TIRSI  
In questo seno io provo  
di novo un non so che.  
Sarà forse dolcezza,  
che nasce da bellezza;  
amor (guardimi il cielo) amor non è.<sup>87</sup>

[In my bosom, I experience a new *je ne sais quoi*. It will maybe be sweetness, burgeoning from beauty. Love, may heaven guard me, it is not love.]

**4.16** Eight scenes later, Aurilla duels with Cupid in person, is struck by an arrow, and falls in love with the first male being she beholds: sleeping Endymion. Bononcini translated the pathological effects of her burning passion into the kind of *recherché* harmonies for which his chamber cantatas were renowned (see [Example 4](#)). Aurilla's love for Endymion then turns into painful jealousy when she finds out that Diana is her rival in love (II, 4). After a second duel with Cupid, however, she grasps love's virtues, accepts Cupid's friendship, and joins in a recitative with the archer (II, 18):

AMORE & AURILLA *a due*  
Non è crudele Amore.  
Quindi s'un core incatenato il prega  
che lo sciolga, ei nol nega.  
Ma l'ostinato core,  
schiavo di buona voglia,  
non vuol ch'Amor lo scioglia.  
Dunque a torto d'Amore il cor si duole:



si duol dei lacci, e libertà non vuole.

[Love is not cruel, for when an enchained heart begs to be freed, it (love) does not deny it. But the obstinate heart, a slave of goodwill, does not want love to free it. The heart thus unjustly deplores love, regrets its ties, and yet does not want liberty.]

Thyrsis, too, understands the nature of love, acquiring the courage to reveal his passion for Aurilla in more elevated language. When standing up against Diana's tyranny, however, he becomes a martyr.

**4.17** Lemene thus blended operatic tradition with Arcadian moralism, relying on scenic marvels in order to propel the action, while at the same time exploring dimensions of love that were chaster than was usual for the *dramma per musica*. His portrayals of Diana and Endymion may have stood miles apart from the sublimated renderings of Guidi and Christina, not to mention his *servo faceto*, Sylvanus, whose presence would have appeared unthinkable to the former Pastori, still his Thyrsis and Aurilla resembled the "timid lovers" of Roman Arcadianism, whose language (and even music) they thoroughly rehearse. This balance between the Baroque and Arcadianism would prove successful in the short term, that is, between 1692 and 1729, when Lemene's libretto saw various stagings, yet in the longer term, the scale and requirements of his *favola* would prove less viable. Vulnerable to the heroic-historicist course of *opera seria*, pastoral frivolities and mythological plots were increasingly expelled to smaller-scale, occasional genres. In fact, after a last appearance at Bologna, in 1729, Lemene's *Endimione* disappeared from the stage.

## 5. Endymion Demythologized

**5.1** The *Endimione* that fully eclipsed Lemene's was that of Artino Corasio, alias Pietro "Metastasio" Trapassi. Commissioned in 1720 by Marianna, Countess Althann, a lady-in-waiting to Empress Elisabeth Christina, the two-part *serenata* was premiered at Naples on 30 May 1721 to celebrate the marriage of Althann's brother Antonio Pignatelli with Anna Francesco Pinelli di Sangro.<sup>88</sup> Its cast fused the traditional core cast of Cupid, Diana, and Endymion with Lemene's Aurilla, here rebaptized Nysa (Nice).<sup>89</sup> The latter nymph experiences a *non so che* for Endymion straight from the beginning. Quite naturally, she is chastised by her sovereign, though less severely than Aurilla:

DIANA

Più le fere non curi,  
Sempre pensi e sospiri, e porti impressi  
I nuovi affetti tuoi nel tuo sembiante:  
O Diana non sono, o Nice è amante.

NICE

Amante!

DIANA

Il tuo rossore,  
Più sincero del labbro, accusa il core.  
Non ti celar con me;  
Un certo non so che  
Nel tuo rossor mi dice  
Che Nice arde d'amor.  
[Sei rea, se amante sei;  
Ma nel celar lo strale  
Fai con delitto eguale  
Oltraggio al tuo candor.

[*Diana*. Nor is the chace thy care. Whence is that thoughtful gloom? Why bursts the sigh incessant from thy breast? Thy ev'ry look conscious betrays the change in thy affections. Oh Nysa! Surely as Diana lives, her vot'ress is become the slave of love. *Nysa*. Of love! *Diana*. Nysa, too true, thy red'ning cheek, less fraudulent than thy tongue, arraigns thy heart. Think not, fond maid, with vain disguise to 'scape Diana's searching eyes; the tell-tale blush too plainly proves that Nysa burns, that Nysa loves. Guiltless she cannot love; from me her love withdraws her loyalty: like outrage must her candour feel if she the guilty flame conceal.<sup>90</sup>]

**5.2** As in Guidi's version, Cupid (love) and Diana (chastity) confront each other in direct fashion. Disguised as a shepherd called Alceste,<sup>91</sup> the former asks Diana to join her company of hunters but remains unwilling to respect her law of virginity. When the two contenders begin to discuss the pros and cons of love, their discussion gives way to "bellicose" language:

DIANA  
Or tu l'armi prepara,  
Pronto mi siegui, e le mie leggi impara.

AMORE  
E quai son le tue leggi?

DIANA  
Chi delle selve amico  
Volge a Diana il core,  
Siegua le fere e non ricetti Amore.

AMORE  
E perché tanto sdegno  
Contro un placido nume,  
Per cui solo ha la terra ed han le sfere  
E vaghezza e piacere?

DIANA  
Se de' mortali in seno  
Ei versa il suo veleno,  
Fra' bellicosi sdegni  
Ardono le città, cadono i regni.

[*Diana*. Haste thee, prepare thine arms, thy bow, thy spear, and follow me alert. But, above all, observe my laws. *Cupid*. What are thy laws, fair Queen? *Diana*. Whoe'er, addicted to the woodland sports, inclines his heart to join Diana's train, must totally devote him to the chace, renouncing wanton Cupid's giddy sway. *Cupid*. Why all this rancour, this invet'rate hate, against so mild a deity, to whom the Earth and ev'n the mansions of the gods owe all they have of beauty and delight? *Diana*. Because, when once his poison is infus'd thro' mortal veins, straight in the waste of war, cities are burn'd, and realms and states subverted.]

**5.3** Given that Diana remains, at least for the moment, untouched by love, it is Cupid, not the goddess, who sings the obligatory *aria di paragone* on the river.<sup>92</sup> Here the song is enhanced with a "nightingale" episode and molded into a joyful plea for liberty:

AMORE  
Quel ruscelletto  
Che l'onde chiare  
Or or col mare

Confonderà,  
 Nel mormorio  
 Del foco mio  
 Colle sue sponde  
 Parlando va.

Quell'augelletto  
 Ch'arde d'amore,  
 E serba al piede  
 Ma non al core  
 La libertà,  
 In sua favella  
 Per la sua bella,  
 Che ancor non riede,  
 Piangendo sta.

[That rill which hastes its limpid stream to mingle with the main, purls to its banks and all its theme is Cupid's potent reign. That little songster of the grove who am'rous hops from spray to spray, captive of heart, tho' free of wing; seems to its heedless mate to sing some plaint of unrewarded love, a pity-moving lay.]

**5.4** Metastasio's Endymion somehow resembles Lemene's ignorant youngster in that he, too, is equipped with knowledge of how to catch animals, but not the slightest notion of love. In his first aria, "Dimmi, che vaga sei," for instance, he bids Nysa not to mention the word love.<sup>93</sup> In contrast to Lemene's blockhead, however, he leaves his door ajar and assures Nysa that he might eventually forsake hunting in favor of love, if only to please her:

NICE  
 Se provassi una volta  
 Il piacer che ritrova  
 Nell'esser riamato un core amante,  
 Ti scorderesti allora  
 Fra quei teneri sguardi  
 E le selve e le fere e l'arco e i dardi.

ENDIMIONE  
 Quando l'arco abbandoni,  
 O non pensi alle fere un sol momento,  
 D'amar sarò contento.

[*Nysa*. Had'st thou once tasted the supream delight of mutual love, thou quickly would'st forget thy former self; and, in the bland exchange of tender glances, soon the woods, the game, the bow and shafts wou'd be absorpt and lost. *Endymion*. When I forsake the bow, or cease, one instant, to think of game, I'll then consent to love.]

**5.5** After the nymph's exit, Endymion invites the waters of the Lethe to wash his face so that he can rest for a while.<sup>94</sup> Diana beholds him in his sleep and instantly feels a "pleasure which at once delights and pains me" (piacer che diletta, ed è tormento). Roused from his dream by her presence, Endymion equally perceives something unknown. When Diana lets him speak for himself, he turns into a Cherubino, armed with a seductive song:

DIANA  
 Lascia, lascia il timore,  
 E se amante tu sei, parla d'amore.

## ENDIMIONE

Non so dir se sono amante,  
 Ma so ben che al tuo sembiante  
 Tutto ardore pena il core,  
 E gli è caro il suo penar.  
 Sul tuo volto, s'io ti miro,  
 Fugge l'alma in un sospiro,  
 E poi riede nel mio petto  
 Per tornare a sospirar.

## DIANA

Non più, mio ben: son vinta.

[*Diana*. Cast off these vain debasing fears, and if thou be'st a lover, own thy passion.  
*Endymion*. Novice in love, I cannot tell whether, what for thy charms I feel be love,  
 or no; but with fierce fires my spirits glow, which tingling shoot from vein to vein,  
 and there's a kind of pleasure in the pain. To thy celestial eyes, wasted on sighs, my  
 soul enraptur'd flies; but meeting there no rest, flies back to its own breast: thence  
 soon, delighted with its chain, to thine returns, to pant and sigh again. *Diana*. Thou  
 hast prevailed, my love.]

**5.6** Unlike Lemene's character, Metastasio's Endymion does appear to possess the *savoir-faire* with which to interact with female creatures. And in clear contrast to Guidi's version, it is the hunter himself, not Cupid, who is responsible for making Diana "fall" in love through words and music; it is "Non so dir" that initiates Diana's transformation from chaste divinity into mortal lover. As in Guidi's version, however, her metamorphosis entails a discursive shift, though not from pastoral simplicity to metaphoric extravagance, but rather from the stately to the infantile. The *innamorata* does in effect appropriate the diminutives and imagery of Cupid's "Quel ruscelletto":

## DIANA

Semplice fanciulletto  
 Se al tenero augelletto  
 Rallenta il laccio un poco,  
 Il fa voler per gioco,  
 Ma non gli scioglie il piè.  
 Quel fanciullin tu [Endymion] sei,  
 Quell'augellin son io:  
 Il laccio è l'amor mio  
 Che mi congiunge a te.

[The boy who, to his captive bird, slackens the cord in wanton play; suffers it just to ply the wing, but gives not all the string, to let it fly away. That boy art thou, that bird am I, and the restrictive twine that will not let me fly, is this fond love that draws my soul to thine.]

**5.7** Endymion's shy, timid utterances in turn become oratorical declarations of love, complete with the "love-flame" metaphor so dominant in Guidi's libretto. In the opening scene of the second part, he flatters Diana to such extent that she establishes a legal exception for him:

## ENDIMIONE

Ovunque io mi rivolga,  
 Cintia, bella mia dea,  
 Sempre di grave error quest'alma è rea.  
 Se da te m'allontano,

Se al tuo splendor m'accendo,  
O la tua fiamma o le tue leggi offendo.

DIANA  
Quai leggi, quale offesa?

ENDIMIONE  
Condanna le tue leggi  
Chi strugge il core all'amoroso foco.

DIANA  
Io dettai quelle leggi, io le rivoco.

[*Endymion*. O Cynthia, lovely goddess of my soul! Whitherso'er I turn me, do I find this heart still guilty of some grievous error. For, whether from thy presence I withdraw me, or near thy splendour catch new fires, I sin either against thy statutes or thy love. *Diana*. What sin? What statutes? *Endymion*. Thy too rig'rous statutes condemn the heart that wastes in Cupid's flame. *Diana*. 'Twas I who dictated, and I revoke them.]

**5.8** Cupid, still mocking Diana's hypocrisy, kindles her jealousy by confiding to her that Endymion is in love with Nysa. The nymph, for her part, is infected by the poison of jealousy when learning that Endymion is Cupid's rival in love for Diana. Unaware of all the scheming, Endymion further dashes Nysa's hopes for a relationship, while Diana reprimands Nysa. Cupid deceives both ladies in one stroke, bringing the *infausta novella* that Endymion lies wounded near Sylvanus's (!) cave:

AMORE  
Giace vicino all'antro  
Dell'antico Silvano,  
Pallido e scolorito,  
Endimion ferito.

[Hard by the mossy cave of old Sylvanus bloodless and pale Endymion wounded lies.]

**5.9** Struck by sadness and pain, Diana promptly throws off her immortal status, after the example of Guidi's goddess:

DIANA  
Aimè! Qual freddo gelo  
M'agghiaccia il sangue e mi circonda il core!  
Pietà, spavento, amore  
Vengon col lor veleno  
Tutti in un punto lacerarmi il seno.  
Crudo mostro inumano,  
Rendimi la mia vita.  
Giove, se giusto sei, lascia che possa  
In queste infauste rive  
Anch'io morir, se il mio bel sol non vive.

[Ah, woe is me! What sudden icy chillness freezes my blood, and creeps about my heart! Pity, affright and love with all their pangs at once assail and rend my tortur'd bosom. O savage monster, give me back my life! If thou hast justice, Jove! Permit, that I turn'd mortal on these fatal banks expire; unless that life, wherein I live, be sav'd!]



Of course, Endymion returns alive and well, inspiring Diana to revoke her law. Now that the power of love has been established, Cupid addresses the newlywed Neapolitans as the “greatest ornaments” of his victories.

**5.10** Metastasio’s serenade can certainly be dismissed as (in Jacques Joly’s words) a “style exercise in the *topoi* of the genre,” that is, of pastoral poetry.<sup>95</sup> Even so, his fusion of the moral and textual purity of Guidi’s and Christina’s parable with the musico-dramatic functionality of Lemene’s farce bridges a wide gap between the intellectual gravity of the former example and the popular tone of the latter. With Metastasio, in fact, a new phase is reached in Arcadia’s history. Here we encounter a poetic worldview whereby moral edification hinges on mellifluous finesse, rather than on Neoplatonic sophistry, and whereby sensory delight pairs with cognitive enlightenment. The myth is furthermore transposed into the realm of humanity, no longer involving celestial tableaux or scenic miracles, but rather unfolding in the “woods of Caria,” a context reproducible against virtually any backdrop, celestial or terrestrial, or no backdrop at all. The deities, finally, are stripped of their supernatural attributes, Cupid taking on the garb of a *pastorello*, instead of a flying cherub, Diana that of a passionate but tolerant queen, rather than of an unattainable sovereign, and Nysa that of the archetypal Metastasian nymph, always blushing and sighing, but not transforming into a tree.<sup>96</sup> Endymion himself may reflect Metastasio’s galant self as Arcadian *abate*, whose courtly *modus vivendi* sets an implicit example to noblemen and ladies. And so it would do, for Metastasio’s “occasional” piece would hold the stage for the remainder of the eighteenth century.

## 6. Endymion in Arcadia: Concluding Remarks

In their search for antidotes to the satire and licentiousness of the Baroque, the Arcadians deployed pastoral tales to explore chaster types of love. The kaleidoscopic image propagated by this quest for purity has increasingly perplexed modern scholars.<sup>97</sup> As our juxtaposition of the three *Endimione* librettos demonstrates, Arcadianism *did* hold univocal aspirations in the field of opera, namely, to cleanse poetry of superfluities and immorality, yet at the same time it could not but produce heterogeneous results that coexisted in the best case, and clashed in the worst. Christina and Guidi countered the ironical view of Diana’s emblematic status with a sophisticated play bathing in hermeticism. Their drama was read by a large group of connoisseurs, but not performed with music. Lemene opted for a delicate equilibrium between operatic stock convention and ethical depth, composing an amusing fairy tale that found favor among the “less knowledgeable” spectators, but displeased the highbrow. Metastasio learned from both examples, inventing a dramaturgical style that met the demands of savants and non-savants alike. Although his version triumphed, it should not obscure the fact that “Arcadian opera” needed three decades of experimenting in order to overcome its growing pains.

## References

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<sup>1</sup> Details in Michele Maylender, *Storia delle accademie d’Italia* 5 vols. (Bologna: Cappella, 1926–1930), 1:232–81; Amedeo Quondam, “L’istituzione arcadia: sociologia e ideologia di un’accademia,” *Quaderni storici* 23 (1973): 389–438; Maria Teresa Acquaro Graziosi, *L’Arcadia: trecento anni di storia* (Rome: Palombi, 1991).

<sup>2</sup> The term is Walter Binni's, in "Caratteri e fasi della letteratura italiana nel Settecento," *Storia della letteratura italiana*, ed. Emilio Cecchi and Natalino Sapegno 9 vols. (Milan: Garzanti, 1965–1969), 6:309–460, 312.

<sup>3</sup> Giovan Mario Crescimbeni, *Storia dell'Accademia degli Arcadi istituita in Roma l'anno 1690* (Rome, 1712), quoted from Ayana Okeeva Smith, "Opera in Arcadia: Rome, Florence and Venice in the Primo Settecento" (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 2001), 22 n. 35: "Per maggiormente coltivare lo studio delle scienze, e risvegliare in buona parte d'Italia il buon gusto nelle lettere umane, ed in particolare nella Poesia Volgare."

<sup>4</sup> The perception of Arcadianism as a reaction against barocchism stems from Benedetto Croce's epochal essay "L'Arcadia e la poesia del Settecento," *La letteratura italiana del Settecento*, 8th ed. (Bari: Laterza, 1971), 2:225–34. Although it was deftly countered in Carlo Calcaterra, *Il barocco in Arcadia e altri scritti sul Settecento* (Bologna: Zanichelli, 1950), 1–34, it has continued to be rehearsed in, for example, Vernon Minor, *The Death of the Baroque and the Rhetoric of Good Taste* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

<sup>5</sup> Gian Vincenzo Gravina, *Scritti critici teoretici*, ed. Amedeo Quondam (Rome: Laterza, 1973), 472: "L'altra cagione di questa segregazione [split of Arcadia in 1711] è stata che cercando molti ridurre quella ragunanza dalle cicalate pastorali e dai sonettini e canzoncine a qualche più solida e più profittevole applicazione"; and Lodovico Antonio Muratori, "I primi disegni della repubblica letteraria d'Italia (1703)," *Opere tutte tanto edite che inedite* 13 vols. (Arezzo: Belletti, 1767–1773), 8:2: "Argomenti per lo più assai leggieri, perchè quasi sempre destinati a trattar de' grandi affari d'amore."

<sup>6</sup> I refer to Wendy Heller, *Emblems of Eloquence: Opera and Women's Voices in Seventeenth-Century Venice* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 298.

<sup>7</sup> Gabriel Maugain, *Étude sur l'évolution intellectuelle de l'Italie de 1657 à 1750 environ* (Paris: Hachette, 1909), 320.

<sup>8</sup> Not mentioned in this essay are three further musical dramas of Arcadian descent: Alessandro Scarlatti's serenata *Endimione e Cintia* (Rome, 1705), not to be confused with his *Diana ed Endimione* (Rome, ca.1679–1685); Leonardo Leo's *Diana amante* (Naples, 1717); and Francesco Gasparini's *L'oracolo del fato* (Barcelona, 1709). Bibliographic details can be retrieved from the entry "Endymion" in my database *Greco-Roman Mythology in Opera, 1690–1800: a Survey*; <http://www.brunoforment.be/mythopera>.

<sup>9</sup> Essential studies on the phenomenon include Nathaniel Burt, "Opera in Arcadia," *Musical Quarterly* 41, no. 2 (1955): 145–70; Walter Binni, *L'Arcadia e il Metastasio* (Florence: La Nuova Italia, 1963); Robert S. Freeman, *Opera Without Drama: Currents of Change in Italian Opera, 1675–1725* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1981); Ellen T. Harris, *Handel and the Pastoral Tradition* (London: Oxford University Press, 1980), especially chapter 2; Anna Laura Bellina and Carlo Caruso, "Oltre il Barocco: la fondazione dell'Arcadia, Zeno e Metastasio: la riforma del melodramma," *Storia della letteratura italiana*, ed. Enrico Malato (Rome: Salerno, 1998), 6:239–312; Melania Bucciarelli, *Italian Opera and European Theatre, 1680–1720: Plots, Performers, Dramaturgies* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2000), 1–31; Smith, "Opera in Arcadia."

<sup>10</sup> They are summed up in Wilhelm Heinrich Roscher, *Ausführliches Lexikon der griechischen und römischen Mythologie* (Hildesheim: Olms, 1965), 1:1246–8; and *Paulys Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*, ed. Georg Wissowa, rev. ed. (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1905), 5:2558–9. Overviews of artistic applications are given in Andor Pigler, *Barockthemen: Eine*

*Auswahl von Verzeichnissen zur Ikonographie des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts*, 2nd ed. (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1974), 2:160–5; and Jane Davidson Reid and Chris Rohmann, *The Oxford Guide to Classical Mythology in the Arts 1300–1990s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 1:373–82.

<sup>11</sup> Apollodorus, *The Library*, trans. James George Frazer (1921); <http://www.theoi.com/Text/Apollodorus1.html> (accessed 5 February 2007), I.9.5: “Calyce and Aethlius had a son Endymion who led Aeolians from Thessaly and founded Elis. But some say that he was a son of Zeus. As he was of surpassing beauty, the Moon fell in love with him, and Zeus allowed him to choose what he would, and he chose to sleep for ever, remaining deathless and ageless.” Endymion’s relationship with Selene either resulted in an impressive progeny, or simply never existed, according to Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, trans. W. H. S. Jones and H. A. Ormerod (1918); <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/cgi-bin/ptext?lookup=paus.+1+1+1> (accessed 5 February 2007), V.1.3–4: “The Moon, they say, fell in love with this Endymion and bore him fifty daughters. Others with greater probability say that Endymion took a wife Asterodia.”

<sup>12</sup> See Polybius, *The Histories*, trans. Evelyn Shirley Shuckburgh (1889); <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/cgi-bin/ptext?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0234&query=head%3D%23297> (accessed 5 February 2007), IV.20.1 (“The Arcadian nation on the whole has a very high reputation for virtue among the Greeks, due not only to their humane and hospitable character and usages, but especially to their piety to the gods”) and IV.20.8 (“It is a well-known fact, familiar to all, that it is hardly known except in Arcadia, that in the first place the boys from their earliest childhood are trained to sing in measure the hymns and paeans in which by traditional usage they celebrated the heroes and gods of each particular place”).

<sup>13</sup> See Pliny the Elder, *The Natural History*, trans. John Bostock and Henry Thomas Riley (1855); <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/cgi-bin/ptext?lookup=Plin.+Nat.+toc> (accessed 5 February 2007), II.43. His theory was rehearsed in Vincenzo Cartari, *Le imagini de i dei de gli antichi* (Venice: Ziletti, 1571), 126 (“Plinio scrive, che Endimione fu il primo, che intendesse la natura della Luna, e che perciò fu finto, che fossero innamorati insieme.”), and alluded to in various Baroque poems, most notably Canto X of Marino’s *Adone* (1623), the third act of Parisani’s libretto *Diana schernita* (Rome, 1629), and the first act of Giovanni Faustini’s *La Calisto* (Venice, 1651).

<sup>14</sup> Sextus Propertius, *Elegi* (15 B.C.); <http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/prop2.html#15> (accessed 5 February 2007), II.15, ll. 15–6: “Nudus et Endymion Phœbi cepisse sororem / dicitur et nuæ concubuisse deæ.”

<sup>15</sup> John Lyly, *Endimion, The Man in the Moone. Playd before the Queenes Maiestie at Greenewich on Candlemas Day at Night, by the Chyldren of Paules* (London, 1591), Act I, scene 1. The same, encomiastic tone prevails in various court spectacles on the subject, such as Pio’s *Gli amori di Diana e di Endimione* (Parma, 1628) and Pariati’s *L’oracolo del fato* (Vienna, 1709 and 1719); in the latter, for instance, Fate declares that the beauty of Emperor Charles VI and Elisabeth Christina surpasses that of Diana and Endymion.

<sup>16</sup> The juxtaposition of the Callisto and Endymion tales with the nymphomaniac Linfea would be rehearsed in the anonymous libretto to Benedetto Marcello’s *Calisto in orsa* (Venice, ?1725).

<sup>17</sup> Anonymous, *Gli amori della Luna con Endimione* (Bologna, 1681), Prologo: “Sù venite ò Pastori / Con pompe rusticali / Celebrate pur l’Orgie, e i Baccanali.”

<sup>18</sup> “Chi nutre nel sen fiamma lasciva / Vuole dell’honestade esser la Diva.”

<sup>19</sup> This ballet was composed by Hélié Poirier (French version) and Georg Stiernhielm (Swedish

version, as *Then fångne Cupido*).

<sup>20</sup> The medallion's motto, "nec sinit esse feros," is derived from Ovid's *Letters from Pontus*, II.9.47–8: "Ingenuas didicisse fideliter artes, emollit mores, nec sinit esse feros" [A faithful study of the liberal arts humanizes the character and does not permit it to be turbulent]. It was explained in Johan Arckenholtz's *Mémoires concernant Christina reine de Suède, pour servir d'éclaircissement à l'histoire de son règne et principalement de sa vie privée, et aux événemens de l'histoire de son tems civile et littéraire*, 4 vols. (Amsterdam: Mortier, 1751–60), I:518, as follows: "NEC SINIT ESSE FEROS, que de Meiern [Johann Gottfried von Meyern, antiquarian, 1683–1745] explique en faveur de la Reine, comme s'étant vaincuë elle-même & aiant remporté en résignant la Couronne, la plus grande victoire sur les quatre passions les plus fortes."

<sup>21</sup> Gilbert's letter of dedication to Cardinal Mazarin points out that *Les Amours de Diane et d'Endimion* was composed "en Italie par le commandement d'une personne Auguste pour qui V.E. a beaucoup de respect." This "august person" could only have been Christina, whom Mazarin invited to Fontainebleau in 1656. It was only in 1658, however, that she first heard Gilbert's tragedy performed by the Hôtel de Bourgogne troupe.

<sup>22</sup> In 1669, the Dutch playwright Daniel Lindelbach translated Gilbert's play as *De liefde van Diana en Endimion*, noting in the preface that "the fictitious love of Diana and Endymion" covered "a sense that alluded to crowned personages known in our [seventeenth] century" (de verdichte liefde van Diana en Endimion, een zin bedekt, welke op gekroonde Personagien, in onze eeuw bekennt, slaat). In 1681, Charpentier composed new incidental music and songs for *Les amours*; see Charles Whitfield, "Une tragédie-pastorale de Gabriel Gilbert et Marc-Antoine Charpentier, *Les Amours de Diane et d'Endimion* (1681)," *Littératures classiques* 21 (1994): 125–37.

<sup>23</sup> All passages from *Endimione* are cited from Alessandro Guidi, *L'Endimione di Erilo Cleoneo Pastore Arcade con un discorso di Bione Crateo* (Rome: Komarek, 1692). For a modern edition, see Alessandro Guidi, *Poesie approvate*, ed. Bruno Maier (Ravenna: Longo, 1981), 95–155. The "beautiful injuries" symbolize Diana's amorous affliction by Cupid's arrows, while the "sad woods of Caria" should be understood as a metaphor for the garden of Christina's Palazzo Riario, where *Endimione* was premiered shortly after Christina's demise (see below).

<sup>24</sup> In the preface to *Endimione*, Guidi addressed his new patron as the "new hope" for literary life in Rome:

Ò grande Albano,  
A te, chi sì sovente  
Innanzi a l'alta Donna [Christina] eri presente! ...  
Mà Tu, Signor, de chiari genj erede  
Asciugasti il lor pianto [for Christina's demise], e a nova speme  
Tu richiamasti i carmi, & or ti porto  
Quei, che un tempo ti fur dilette, e cari.

<sup>25</sup> See Giovan Mario Crescimbeni, *Poesie d'Alessandro Guidi non più raccolte con la sua vita novamente scritta* (Verona: Tumermani, 1726), xviii–xix: "La prima comparsa in questa Accademia [Arcadia] volle egli [Guidi] farla col suo *Endimione*, il quale non avendo avuto fortuna d'esser pubblicato in tempo della Regina di Svezia, egli prima di darlo alle stampe, ottenne d'esporglo al giudizio di Roma nel luogo delle Ragunanze degli Arcadi, che allora era appunto il giardino del Palazzo abitato già della stessa Regina. Se ne fece il recitamento da tre de' principali Pastori, ad ognuno de' quali fu assegnata una parte, e vi concorse numerosissima, e sceltissima udienza, la quale restò grandemente maravigliata della nuova maniera adoperata dal Guidi in sì fatta spezie di Poesia." Documentary evidence for this performance can be found in Barbara

Tellini Santoni's *Inventario dei manoscritti (1–41) dell'Accademia letteraria italiana Arcadia* (Rome: La Meridiana, 1991), 13 (nos. 129–31).

<sup>26</sup> Crescimbeni, *Poesie*, xix: “Questa favola [*Endimione*] nel suo nascimento fu composta di tre atti; e tale anche fu recitata in Arcadia, come si vede nel suo Archivio [at the Biblioteca Angelica] dove se ne conserva una copia [ms. 1, fols. 204r–235v] sottoscritta dallo stesso Autore; ma poi essendo cessata la ragione, per la quale distacossi il Guidi dalla divisione di cinque atti, la quale fu, perchè la Regina aveva intenzione di farla rappresentare coll’ornamento della Musica, al qual’effetto volle, che vi fossero inserite anche delle arie musicali; egli si mise a riformarla alla maniera antica, dandole divisione di cinque atti, con la giunta dal Coro in fine di ciascheduno.” Crescimbeni must have welcomed the adaptation, for he himself would advocate five-act pastorals with choruses in his *Comentarii alla sua istoria della volgar poesia*, 2nd ed. (Venice: Basseggio, 1730–1), 288 and 296.

<sup>27</sup> A similar conflict is played out in the opening scene of Apostolo Zeno’s *Il Narciso* (Anspach, 1697):

*Cidippe*. Ben mi pareva ch’oggi più bella e chiara  
l’alba sorgesse, e più dell’uso il colle  
fiorisse; or che ti veggo,  
mia delizia e mio sol, gentil Narciso.

*Narciso*. E a me pareva che nube impura intorno  
togliesse agli occhi miei  
la primavera o il giorno, or che ti veggo,  
mio tormento e mio orror, ninfa importuna.

<sup>28</sup>

Ne la Reggia, e dentro ’l bosco  
Io conosco  
D’esser Nume, e Nume grande:  
Gloriosa intorno spande  
La mia face i raggi suoi,  
O se infiamma i nobil cori  
De’ Pastori,  
O se accende i grandi Eroi.

<sup>29</sup>

Il ruscel, che al mar s’invia,  
Come vuole il suo destino,  
Non desia  
Di fermarsi in suo camino:  
E se bene ei move i passi  
Sol fra sassi;  
Pur’ invano a far dimora  
Il lusinga Aprile, e Flora.

On the sea metaphor, see my article “Dall’ ‘effeminato’ al ‘virtuoso’: modelli d’identità di genere nel ‘Telemaco’ (1718) di Alessandro Scarlatti,” *Rivista italiana di musicologia* 40, nos. 1–2 (2008): 85–111.

<sup>30</sup>



Son fuggita da le sfere,  
 Per fuggirti, ò crudo Amore;  
 Nè mi val seguir le fere,  
 Nè star chiusa in chiuso orrore;  
 Che ver me dispieghi l'ali,  
 E mi giungi co' tuoi strali.

[31](#)

*Endimione*: Ombre placide serene  
 Del soave amico Lete  
 Care siete  
 Al mio duolo, a le mie pene;  
 Ma più care anco[r] sareste,  
 Se foste del mio fato ombre funeste.  
 Ombre rigide di Morte  
 Voi potreste consolarmi,  
 E recarmi  
 La felice intera sorte.  
 V'aspettò l'alma sovente;  
 Or giace stanca, e al suo destin consente.

*Cintia*: Or che queste  
 Alme foreste  
 Fà sua Reggia il fero Dio,  
 Tutto è pena al guardo mio.  
 Orrid'ombra sparge il bosco,  
 E sol tosco  
 Versa il fonte, e corre il rio.  
 Tutto è pena al guardo mio.

[32](#) In one such address, he exclaims:

Amor m'hà date l'ali  
 Non per cose mortali, e 'l tuo bel lume  
 Di raggio in raggio m'avvalora, & erge.  
 Io per lui poggio a sì sublime stato,  
 Che per me stesso non saria giamai.  
 Salito a tal ventura,  
 Or tu, cortese Dea, prenditi cura  
 Di quella fiamma, che da te discende:  
 E a te stessa perdona  
 La colpa, che t'offende.

[33](#) Bruno Maier (Guidi, *Poesie approvate*, 34) has read this passage as a tribute to Tasso's *Aminta*, more particularly to the episode in which the nymph Silvia is tricked into love when learning about Aminta's death.

[34](#)

Più beato  
 Io saria de' Numi stessi.

<sup>35</sup> Guidi, *L'Endimione*, 67–8: “La presente favola dell’Endimione, sublimo disegno nato nella mente della Incomparabil CRISTINA & espresso con vive, e rare maniere da un’ industrie fabbro.”

<sup>36</sup> Giovan Mario Crescimbeni, *Istoria della volgar poesia*, 3rd ed. (Venice: Basseggio, 1730–1), 2: 512: “Ordinò vestire di poesia la favola d’Endimione da lei in nuovo modo ideata, il che egli feci con tal compiacimento di S[ua]. M[aestà]., che ella medesima volle aggiugner pregio all’Opera con arricchirla di alcuna suoi versi, come veggonsi contrassegnati nell’impressione.” Christina’s contribution, seventy-three lines in all, were marked in early editions through italics or *virgole*.

<sup>37</sup> Guidi, *Poesie approvate*, 33.

<sup>38</sup> *Poesie approvate*, 7–12. The “hard evidence” regarding Christina’s feelings for Azzolino is restricted to a few love letters dating back to the 1660s and published in *Christine de Suède et le cardinal Azzolino: Lettres inédites (1666–1668)*, ed. Carl Bildt (Paris: Plon, 1899).

<sup>39</sup> Tellini Santoni, *Inventario*, 13 (no. 132): “Lacrito Scotaneo ad Erilo Cleoneo avendo sentito la sua leggiadrissima favola Boschereccia degl’Amori di Endimione, e Diana cantata con versi, e sentim[en].ti quanto quasti, e pudichi, altrettanto alti, e sublimi.”

<sup>40</sup> Crescimbeni, *Poesie*, xix: “Egli fu il primo, che tentasse d’accordare con la semplicità pastorale la grandezza, e la sublimità de’ sentimenti, e dello stile, e trattasse fra Pastori eroicamente materie d’amore.”

<sup>41</sup> The *Table* is reproduced in full in Arckenholtz, *Mémoires concernant Christina*, 4:33–5; the *Sentimens* are in Christina of Sweden, *Apologies*, ed. Jean-François de Raymond (Paris: Cerf, 1994).

<sup>42</sup> Arckenholtz, *Mémoires concernant Christina*, 4: Appendix, 39 (no. 4:31).

<sup>43</sup> A variation on this phrase can be found in her maxims; see *Mémoires concernant Christina*, 4: Appendix, 26 (2:82): “L’Amour et l’ambition doivent avoir Dieu pour objet: ce n’est qu’en lui seul qu’elles peuvent trouver de quoi se satisfaire abondamment & dignement.”

<sup>44</sup> This issue is discussed *in extenso* in Bruno Forment, “‘La terra, il cielo e l’inferno.’ The Representation and Reception of Greco-Roman Mythology in *opera seria*” (Ph.D. diss., Ghent University, 2007); <https://archive.ugent.be/handle/1854/8232>, 7–50.

<sup>45</sup> Susanna Åkerman, *Queen Christina of Sweden and her Circle. The Transformation of a Seventeenth-Century Philosophical Libertine* (Leiden: Brill), 260.

<sup>46</sup> Quoted from Jocelyn Godwin, *Athanasius Kircher. A Renaissance Man and the Quest for Lost Knowledge* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1979), 56.

<sup>47</sup> Godwin, *Athanasius Kircher*, 19.

<sup>48</sup> In 1696, Gravina disputed the authorship of the *Leges Arcadum* with Crescimbeni. Their row would be a run-up to the schism of 1711, on which Gravina left the Academy to found an *Arcadia Nuova* (or “anti-Arcadia”), the future *Accademia dei Quirini* (1714). According to Vernon Lee (Violet Piaget), “Gravina was constitutionally in contradiction with his times, and his conceit and obstinacy rendered him doubly contradictory.” (*Studies of the Eighteenth Century in Italy*

[London: Satchell, 1880], 148.) On Gravina's discontent, see also Francesca Santovetti, "Arcadia a Roma Anno Domini 1690: accademia e vizi di forma," *Modern Language Notes* 112, no. 1 (1997): 21–37.

<sup>49</sup> Guidi, *L'Endimione*, 57: "Chi guarderà fisso dentro la tessitura di quegli ordigni, osserverà, che il vero stà dentro le favole, e troverà, che alle volte le istorie di veri nomi tessono false cose, e finti fatti; e all'incontro le favole per lo più sotto finti colori, e falsi nomi delineano eventi veri, e naturali affezioni, & esprimono i veri genj de' Principi, de' Magistrati, e d'ogni persona."

<sup>50</sup> Gravina, *Scritti critici*, 210: "Fu propagata una larga schiera di numi, sotto l'immagini de' quali furono anche espresse le cagioni e i moti intrinseci della natura."

<sup>51</sup> Guidi, *L'Endimione*, 53: "E tali invenzioni non solo ne' Poemi sono lodevoli; ma altresì necessarie, per la novità, e maraviglia, che generano, con la quale eccitando l'attenzione, e traendo l'animo dalle terrene cose, lo sollevano sopra se stesso, sicché si rende più libero, e spedito da quei legami, co' quali la natura corporea avvolgendoci, ritarda il nostro volo verso la contemplazione del puro, e dell'eterno."

<sup>52</sup> *Delle antiche favole* was reissued in 1708 as the first volume of *Della ragion poetica*, available in modern edition in Gravina, *Scritti critici*, 195–258.

<sup>53</sup> *Scritti critici*, 200: "Il vero contiene la cognizion intera di quel che si giudica; il falso ne contiene o parte o nulla."

<sup>54</sup> The implications of the *tertium non datur* for causal versus hermetic rationale are analyzed in Umberto Eco, *I limiti dell'interpretazione* (Milan: Bompiani, 1990).

<sup>55</sup> Also worth mentioning here is the following statement from Benedetto Menzini, member of the Accademia Reale: "Le plus beau sujet qui puisse tenter un poète, ce sont les louanges de la cause première. Qu'on chante donc des hymnes à Cérès, à Pomone, à Bacchus, au bienfaisant Apollon, qui font sortir les semences cachées dans le sein de la terre. *Ne voit-on pas, sous leurs noms, on célèbre Dieu lui-même?*" (quoted, with added emphasis, from Maugain, *Étude sur l'évolution intellectuelle*, 396).

<sup>56</sup> Gravina, *Scritti critici*, 191: "Servendosi della bellezza altrui non per fine, ma per occasione dell'amore, alimentato poi dalla somiglianza delle comuni virtù, colle quali separatamente dai corpi, restano legati gli animi."

<sup>57</sup> *Scritti critici*, 191–2: "Piacevolmente ardenti in una sola fiamma, che appigliatasi alla sostanza spirituale, vive colla vita degli amanti, libera affatto ed immune dai cangiamenti del corpo. Questo amore prodotto dalle comuni virtù che scambievolmente dall'amante nell'amato si trasfondono, e che per esser rivolo dell'onestà partecipa del divino."

<sup>58</sup> *Scritti critici*, 191: "Verrà poscia il prencipe de' lirici toscani, Francesco Petrarca, poeta gentile ugualmente e sublime, il quale ha portato nella poesia un affetto novello, il quale è l'amore onesto."

<sup>59</sup> Lodovico Antonio Muratori, *Della perfetta poesia italiana* (1706), ed. Ada Ruschioni (1971); [http://www.letteraturaitaliana.net/pdf/Volume\\_7/t197.pdf](http://www.letteraturaitaliana.net/pdf/Volume_7/t197.pdf) (accessed 1 June 2007), 43: "Cristina Reina di Svezia, facendo coraggio in Roma alle Muse Italiane, fu in parte cagione, che si riaprisse la Scuola del Petrarca." On eighteenth-century Petrarchism, see Croce, *La letteratura italiana*, 2:240–9.

<sup>60</sup> None of the original music, by Paolo Magni (Act I) and Giacomo Griffini (Acts II and III), has survived. A modern edition (referred to throughout this chapter) of Lemene's *princeps* can be found in Francesco de Lemene, *Scherzi e favoli per musica*, ed. Maria Grazia Accorsi (Modena: Mucchi, 1992), 103–69. The attribution of a Lodi 1693 score to Giovanni Bononcini—in Gino Roncaglia, *L. A. Muratori, la musica e il maggior compositore modenese del suo tempo* (Modena: Società tipografico modenese, 1933), 23; and Kurt Hüber, “Die Wiener Opern Giovanni Bononcinis von 1697–1710” (Ph.D. diss., Universität Wien, 1955), 75—is simply erroneous.

<sup>61</sup> Details are in Lemene, *Scherzi e favoli*, xxxiv and c–ci. Lemene was offered an additional scenario by Christina, *Narciso* (not to be confused with his *Narciso* of 1676), of which only indications of the scenario remain.

<sup>62</sup> Two Arcadian biographies of Lemene were published shortly after his death: Tommaso Ceva's *Memorie d'alcune virtù del signor conte Francesco de Lemene con alcune riflessioni su le sue poesie* (Milan: Bellagatta, 1706) and Muratori's “Vita di Francesco de Lemene lodigiano, detto Arezio Gateate,” *Le vite degli Arcadi Illustri*, ed. Giovan Mario Crescimbeni (Rome: de' Rossi, 1708–14). Sonnets of Lemene were included in the *Rime degli Arcadi* of 1717.

<sup>63</sup> A Tirsi also appears in Lemene's *Il Narciso* (Lodi, 1676), *La ninfa Apollo* (Rome, 1689), and the *Dialogo pastorale* (Lodi, undated); an Aurilla is in the *Dialogo*.

<sup>64</sup>

O Meandro gentil, che in queste sponde  
tortuoso t'aggiri,  
e con volubil onde  
or parti, or torni in replicati giri,  
non è l'anima mia come sei tu,  
poiché amante partì, non torna più.  
Miei pensieri lusinghieri  
mi tradite, se mi dite  
che nel seno amor non ho;  
Ne l'insidie Amor si pose,  
si nascose  
d'un pastor [Endymion] nel bel sembiante,  
e furtivo in sen m'entrò.  
Son amante, già lo so.

<sup>65</sup> Maria Grazia Accorsi hits the nail on the head when noting, in Lemene, *Scherzi e favoli*, lix, that “Il vero semplice è Endimione che arriva fino alla fine senza aver capito nulla, sorpreso, ubbidiente e smarrito, il cui atteggiamento si riassume nella formula tipicamente seicentesca—ben prima che metastasiana—argutamente trascrittrice della condizione di dormiente di Endimione, del ‘sogno o son desto?’.”

<sup>66</sup> *Scherzi e favoli*, liii.

<sup>67</sup> In Act II, scene 15, Sylvanus quotes Endymion's description to Diana:

È viva spiritosa,  
lusinghevol, vezzosa,  
candida come neve,  
come cervetta lieve.

Se corre poi, non corre no, ma vola,  
e d'un aureo monile orna la gola.

<sup>68</sup> II, 10:

E' sempre inquieto  
Quel core infelice,  
Che perde il suo ben;  
Non gode mai lieto  
Di sorte felice  
Un giorno seren.

<sup>69</sup> Questions remain as to the author behind the Modenese revision. According to Lowell Lindgren, "A Bibliographic Scrutiny of Dramatic Works Set by Giovanni and His Brother Antonio Maria Bononcini" (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1972), 109, it was Arcadian co-founder Silvio Stampiglia, yet in Lemene, *Scherzi e favole*, cvii n. 4, Accorsi argued that it was Pietro Antonio Bernardoni who revised the text. On the basis of an observation in Hüber, "Die Wiener Opern," 75, namely that Bononcini's Viennese *Endimione* is "auf Grund seiner melodisch und harmonisch einfacheren Struktur, im Vergleich zu den benachbarten Opern dieser Zeit, einer früheren Schaffensperiode zuzuordnen," Anthony Ford furthermore stated, in "Music and Drama in the Operas of Giovanni Bononcini," *Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association* 101 (1974–5): 107–20, 107 n. 3, that the Modena 1698 score was "conceivably" by Bononcini, while Lindgren remarked, in "A Bibliographic Scrutiny," 110, that the archaic characteristics emphasized by Hüber "may instead reflect the pastoral rather than heroic character of *Endimione*'s text." Whatever the solution to this puzzle, Bononcini's Viennese version must have been (re)orchestrated with the chalumeaux of the Viennese Hofkapelle in mind. A manuscript copy of "E' sempre inquieto" lacking the chalumeau part is preserved in a collection entitled *Anderer Theil derer Cantaten und Arien*, preserved in *B-Bc* 15155, pp. 119–21).

<sup>70</sup>

O bellissima dea,  
oh qual dolcezza inusitata e nova,  
nel mirarti, o mia dea, l'anima prova.

<sup>71</sup> Details in Forment, *Greco-Roman Mythology in Opera*.

<sup>72</sup> See Hüber, "Die Wiener Opern," 24.

<sup>73</sup> In the absence of any evidence whatsoever, the music to this revival has been traditionally ascribed to Giovanni Bononcini; see Mercedes Viale Ferrero, *Storia del Teatro Regio di Torino: la scenografia dalle origini al 1936* (Turin: Cassa di Risparmio, 1980), 3:72 n. 282; and Marie-Thérèse Bouquet, *Storia del Teatro Regio di Torino: cronologie* (Turin: Cassa di Risparmio, 1988), 5:35.

<sup>74</sup> Mezzabarba, *Discorso in difesa dell'Endimione* (Turin: Zappata, 1699), 24: "Resta solo il povero Silvano, che, per avviso de' Critici, dovrebbe essere, ad onta dell'arte, ridicolo con maestà."

<sup>75</sup> *Discorso*, 25–6: "Averebbe il Poeta mancato contro il costume, se più gentilmente avesse introdotto Silvano."

<sup>76</sup> *Discorso*, 78: "Silvano quì s'introduce, come un Satiro degli antichi, che deve mischiare il serio col mordace, e giocoso ...."

<sup>77</sup> *Discorso*, 24.

<sup>78</sup> *Discorso*, 20–1.

<sup>79</sup> *Discorso*, 52–3.

<sup>80</sup> Gravina, *Scritti critici*, 208: “Nelle menti volgari, che sono quasi d’ogni parte involte tra le caligini della fantasia, è chiusa l’entrata agli eccitamenti del vero e delle cognizioni universali.”

<sup>81</sup> In this respect, Mezzabarba, *Discorso*, 23, argued that “Endimione si trattiene su’l Monte, non in Palazzo; abita le spelonche, non passeggia il Teatro; calza il socco [i.e. recites comedies], non il coturno [i.e. does not recite tragedies].”

<sup>82</sup> See *Discorso*, 73 (“Il Poeta facendo dormire Endimone alcune scene [in Lemene’s original libretto, Endymion is asleep from Act I, scene 8 to Act I, scene 15, and from Act III, scene 1 to Act III, scene 3] (e questa è la grande accusa) non si è punto scostato dalla favola, od’Istoria”) and 77 (“Non hà [Lemene] alterata la favola, l’hà modificata, temperando il sonno d’Endimione.” The precise borderline between “altering” and “modifying” a legend remains unclear to me).

<sup>83</sup> *Discorso*, 9–10. According to Maria Grazia Accorsi (Lemene, *Scherzi e favole*, xxiii), Lemene himself took only notice of Guidi’s *Endimione* in 1693.

<sup>84</sup> *Discorso*, 21: “Amore fà eloquente sì, ma non dà luogo all’enfatico.”

<sup>85</sup> *Discorso*, 22.

<sup>86</sup>

*Tirsi*. Amore io fuggirò,  
e per fuggirlo avrò,  
s’egli avrà l’ali al tergo, io l’ali al piede.

*Aurilla*. Se a caso un dì  
trovassi Amore, io gli direi così:  
[aria] Vieni pur, vieni, Amor, che ti sfido.  
Indarno tu ti stanchi / per ferir il cor mio.  
Come tu, son armata ancor io  
con l’arco in mano e le saette ai fianchi:  
del tuo poter mi rido.

<sup>87</sup> Diana rehearses this motif when falling in love with Endymion (I, 10):

A sì leggiadro aspetto  
sento sento nel core  
*un non più inteso affetto* [emphasis added]  
di gioia e di dolore.

<sup>88</sup> A modern edition is available in Pietro Metastasio, *Tutte le opere*, ed. Bruno Brunelli (Milan: Mondadori, 1943–54), 2:65–88; the letter of dedication can be found there, in 3:34–6. Domenico Sarro’s (?) original score is presumed lost. For a comprehensive list of settings, see Forment, *Greco-Roman Mythology in Opera*.



<sup>89</sup> In a letter to Algarotti, dated 1 August 1751, Metastasio recalled a meeting at Guidi's house where he got personally acquainted with the old poet.

<sup>90</sup> English translations cited, with minor emendations, from the libretto to Nicolò Sabatini's setting: *L'Endimione. Serenata. Del Signore l'Abbate Pietro Metastasio Romano* (Dublin: Sleater, 1758).

<sup>91</sup> Alceste appears to have been a typical name for disguised characters, examples including the Thessalian princess Oronta in Zeno's *Gl'inganni felici* (Venice, 1696) and the title character in Metastasio's *Demetrio* (Vienna, 1731).

<sup>92</sup> Compare with Cintia's "Il ruscel, che al mar s'invia" (see [Ref. 30](#)) and Diana's "O Meandro gentil" (see [Ref. 67](#)) in Guidi's and Lemene's versions, respectively.

<sup>93</sup>

Dimmi che vaga sei,  
Dimmi che hai fido il core;  
Ma non parlar d'amore,  
Ch'io non t'ascolterò.  
Sol cacciator son io:  
Le fere attendo al varco;  
Fuor che gli strali e l'arco,  
Altro piacer non ho.

<sup>94</sup>

Deh vieni, amico sonno,  
E, dell'onda di Lete  
Spargendo il ciglio mio,  
Tutti immergi i miei sensi in dolce oblio.

<sup>95</sup> Jacques Joly, *Les fêtes théâtrales de Métastase à la cour de Vienne (1731–67)* (Clermont Ferrand: Presses de l'Université II, 1978), 63.

<sup>96</sup> Metastasio would reintroduce Nice in his Viennese cantatas *La libertà (A Nice)* (1733), *La Danza* (1744), *Palinodia a Nice* (1746), *La ritrosia disarmata* (1759), and *L'ape* (1760).

<sup>97</sup> For example Smith, "Opera in Arcadia," 59, who has observed that a number of Arcadian librettos contain the very "elements despised by the Arcadians."

## Examples

[Example 1](#). Bononcini, *Endimione*: Endimione "E' sempre inquieto"

[Example 2](#). Bononcini, *Endimione*: Diana "Ma tanta ingiuria"

[Example 3](#). Bononcini, *Endimione*: Endimione "Sonno placido gradito"

[Example 4](#). Bononcini, *Endimione*: Aurilla "Ahi nel cor"

## Figures

[Figure 1](#). Christina of Sweden taming the lions (Rome, 1656).

[Figure 2.](#) Giuseppe dell'Acqua, final scene of Guidi's *Endimione*

[Figure 3.](#) Bibiena, "Bosco con Capanna di Silvano"

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