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WAR, PEACE, AND DIPLOMACY IN THE *NUMERI* OF NICOLÒ D'ARCO

Nicolò D'Arco is not at present one of the best known neo-Latin poets of the Renaissance. Part of the reason is that for four and a half centuries after his death Nicolò's *Numeri* were only partially accessible, and then only with difficulty. Up to 1996, Nicolò's works existed in a few anthologies and minor manuscripts, in his lengthy autograph[1], and in three partial printings – the very rare incunable of Mantua 1546 and two eighteenth century editions, those of the brothers Volpi and of Zaccharia Betti[2]. In 1996 the situation changed completely, with the publication of Mariano Welber's critical edition of all of Nicolò's *Numeri*, mainly on the basis of the autograph[3].

Nicolò D'Arco certainly deserves to be better known, and he may well become so in the wake of Welber's edition. Nicolò was dedicated throughout his life to the composition of his *Numeri*, which he revised constantly, and almost obsessively, up to the last period of his life, and his neo-Latin verses display an extraordinary fluency and virtuosity. Nicolò also employed a very large number of classical Latin metres: hexameter, elegiac, lyric of many types, and iambic; and he deployed these metres in the composition of virtually every possible type of minor poem. For example – and these categories are neither mutually exclusive nor complete – he composed calques on single classical models and on blends of classical models, student poems, commissioned poems, love-poems, bucolics, eulogies, encomia, indecent pieces, poems on nature, epithalamia, hymns to saints, laments for the dead, epitaphs, occasional poems, satirical pieces and iambic 'hate-poems', as well as poetic addresses to many individual friends. Welber's edition of the *Numeri* assembles no fewer that 412 separate items.

Welber's edition has made an outstanding contribution to the accessibility and comprehensibility of Nicolò and his *Numeri*. But the poet and his work nevertheless continue to present serious problems. Nicolò's birth-date remains debatable, with the rival proposals (1479 and 1492/3) separated by no less than thirteen years[4]. Much of Nicolò's life is also still obscure, and the textual tradition of his *Numeri* is so complex, and it involves so many layers of authorial intervention, that no authoritative text is ever likely to be arrived at. Paradoxically the existence of

1 Codex Ashb. 266 (198) Biblioteca Laurenziana (The Ashburnham-Laurentian Codex).

2 Giovanni Fruticeno and Stefano Laureo (edd.), *Nicolai Archii Comitis Numeri* (Venturino Ruffinelli, Mantova 1546); frat. Volpi (edd.), *Hieronymi Fracastorii Veronensis, Adami Fumani Canonici Veronensis, et Nicolai Archii Comitis Carminum Editio II.*, 2 volumes, (Comino, Padova 1739); Zaccaria Betti (ed.), *Nicolai Archii Comitis Numerorum Libri IV. Quartus ex codice Autographo nunc primum prodit* (Marco Moroni, Verona 1762).

3 *I numeri di Nicolò d'Arco,* ed. M. Welber, Trento 1996, from which all quotations of the *Numeri* in this paper are derived.

4 Cf. Welber, vii-xxiv.

Nicolò's autograph manuscript containing the bulk of his work is the main obstacle to achieving an authoritative text. This manuscript contains alterations which sometimes conflict with, and some of which may postdate, the Mantua edition of 1546; and we cannot be certain under what circumstances the Mantua edition was produced. But Nicolò and his work will continue to attract scholarly attention despite these difficulties. Apart from their intrinsic quality many of his poems are of considerable historical interest in that they are often addressed to, or refer to, important contemporaries and acquaintances of the poet.

This paper falls into two main sections: it will first examine some of those poems of the *Numeri* which handle the themes of war and peace; and second it will look at one important poem of the *Numeri* in which, so it is argued, Nicolò is practising diplomacy. All the poems discussed reflect Nicolò's background as a courtier and as an imperial subject. Nicolò's family, the Conti D'Arco, whose original land-holdings lay at Arco in the Trentino, had strong hereditary connections with the Empire[5]. They also had long-established links of kinship with, and loyalty to, the Gonzaga Marquises (subsequently Dukes) of Mantua. The Gonzaga connections became even closer when Nicolò's father Odorico was granted Mantuan citizenship in 1480 for himself and his descendants; and the family possessed various estates and properties in Mantuan territory[6]. Peace, war and diplomacy were part of the fabric of the lives of Nicolò and his patrons and superiors, and they inevitably became part of the fabric of his *Numeri*. Nicolò's pronouncements in these areas give us a clear picture of his political and social loyalties, and they also underscore some of the propagandistic uses to which neo-Latin poetry could be put in this period. It is worth recalling that the subjects of the 'Holy Roman (i.e. German) Empire' included large numbers of speakers of Romance, Germanic and Slavic languages, and smaller numbers of speakers of other languages (*e.g.* Hungarian). No single vernacular language could be used to communicate with all these groups. But a neo-Latin poet could speak to all the educated, and hence influential, members of all these groups, a fact which explains the manifestly commissioned nature of many of Nicolò D'Arco's political poems. Diplomacy in the *Numeri* takes the form of cultural diplomacy. In an article published in 1995[7] I argued that certain of the *Numeri* show Nicolò participating in a cultural and diplomatic offensive on the part of the Gonzagas of Mantua directed towards acquiring and retaining goodwill and

5 For partial histories of the family, cf. B. Waldstein-Wartenberg, *Storia dei Conti d'Arco nel Medioevo*, Roma 1979, Italian trans. by C. Vinci-Orlando of *Geschichte der Grafen von Arco im Mittelalter. Von der Edelfreiheit zur Reichsunmittelbarkei*, München-Moos 1971; G. Rill, *Storia dei Conti d'Arco 1487-1614*, Roma 1982, Italian trans. by C. Vinci-Orlando of *Geschichte der Grafen von Arco 1487-1614. Reichsvasallen und Landsassen*, München-Moos 1975.

6 Cf. A. Pranzelòres, *Niccolò d'Arco. Studio biografico con alcune note sulla Scuola lirica latina del Trentino nel sec. XV e XVI*, Annuario degli Studenti Trentini 7, 1901, 3-119 (repr. Trento 1983), 49-54; Rill (n.5) 80-1 (with note 94); 145-46 (with notes 229-30).

7 F. Cairns, The *'Numeri' of Niccolò D'Arco and the Veronese Circle of Fracastoro*, SUP. 15, 1995, 19-29.

political allegiance in Verona. Up to 1517 Verona had been imperial and it was closely linked to Mantua. Its governor before 1517 was a neighbour and friend of Nicolò – also from the Trentino – Bernardo Cles. However, following the peace of Brussels of 1516, Verona ceased to be imperial and was transferred to Venice in 1517. Nicolò, so my earlier paper suggested, had Veronese contacts before the transference, and he subsequently attempted on behalf of the Gonzagas of Mantua to undermine the transference by continuing to cultivate influential citizens of Verona. In the latter half of the present paper the topic of cultural diplomacy will recur, and it will be proposed that another, major poem of the *Numeri* represents a similar diplomatic feeler on behalf of Nicolò's Mantuan and imperial patrons towards certain elements in the Neapolitan kingdom.

But first a sample of Nicolò's pronouncements on war and peace. Nicolò's own personal military career was neither extended nor eventful. Gianmaria Mazzuchelli attributed various early activities to Nicolò[8]: he recounted how Nicolò started his career as a page at the court of the Emperor Frederic, and then commanded a cavalry detachment under Wolfgang Fürstenburg before taking part in 1525 in the Peasants' War in support of his neighbour and friend, Bernardo Cles[9]. Nicolò's Austrian court service is otherwise unevidenced, as is his cavalry command. These were doubtless family traditions which perhaps originated in the belief that Nicolò was born in 1479. His family may well have asked themselves whether he had really spent the first forty or so years of his life as a student! In fact No. 90 Welber shows that Nicolò experienced some sort of 'call to arms' during his student days at Pavia, and it also shows Nicolò expressing a detestation of war:

> Ah pereat bellum, pereat quoque miles iniquus
> vastatum miseram qui petit Italiam!
> Si non bella forent, nos affore conaremur,
> nec timidum me absens excruciaret hera (11-14)

Nicolò may have participated in the Peasants' War of 1525, but no subsequent military experiences are attested for him.

As well as being no great soldier, Nicolò was not an original thinker about peace and war. His themes are few and they are manifestly commonplace. Just how commonplace they are is shown by Nicolò's occasional ability to substitute the name of one patron for that of another: for example in Welber No. 227, as published in the Mantua edition of 1546, King Ferdinando's right hand man is Leonhart von Völs (41-2); but the same poem in Nicolò's autograph manuscript makes the King's right hand man Bernardo Cles! Another entire poem had two different addressees at

8 In his *Gli scrittori d'Italia, cioè notizie storiche e critiche intorno alle vite e agli scritti dei letterati italiani*, Brescia 1753, I.ii. 967-70.

9 Cf. Welber, xii. On Cles, cf. *DbI* 26, Rome 1982, 406-12.

different stages of its development: No. 313 Welber, as printed by Welber from the autograph manuscript, is a laudation of Alfonso Avalos, but in the Mantua edition the same poem appears, with a number of alterations, as an encomium of Ferdinando Gonzaga, viceroy of Sicily. Despite the level of generalization which made such substitutions possible, it is clear that poetry of this type was sought after and prized by powerful men. It must at least have played an important, and perhaps even an essential, role in the self-imaging of the mighty, particularly of the Emperors and the Dukes of Mantua. When German Emperors are lauded by Nicolò, the fact that many of the standard themes deployed in his encomia originated in the literary portraiture of ancient Roman emperors will doubtless have given them added attraction.

Nicolò's leading commonplace theme in the area of war and peace is that the military prowess of the divinized Duke or Emperor assures peace for his own city or empire. Thus Duke Federico of Mantua is identified without preamble as 'Mars' in a six-line epigram of Nicolò (No. 3 Welber) which celebrates the Gonzagas' Palace of Te at Mantua, with its famous paintings of Mars and Venus. The Venus of Te (*Theia Venus*), speaks and she declares: *Mars meus hic* (*i.e.* at Te) *habitat* (4). An expanded version of this same commonplace – in which Duke Federico's martial accomplishments make him the protector of Mantua – is twice highlighted in a long bucolic piece (No. 10 Welber) which was also part of the Gonzagas' diplomatic offensive towards Verona. In this poem the citizens of Verona, now lost to the Empire, lament the ruin of their own city while congratulating Mantua on its peace and safety, assured by the martial valour of Duke Federico:

Mantua, Federico, pulcherrima, principe gaudes
et frueris Iove foelici divisque secundis,
numine tuta tuo, nec sævo obnoxia Marti. (1-3)

Tu vero qu(æ) magnanimo sub principe tuta es,
Mantua, cui resonis applaudit Mincius undis,
cuius ab Occeano fama usque ad sydera nota est,
qui quotiens sævis acies diffulminat armis
Mars pater huic galeam cedit currumque flagellumque, 45
ocia læta diu teneas et pace fruaris,
fulta deo meliore et nixa potentibus armis. (41-47)

The praises of peace are more explicit and more sustained in a poem with at least one line missing at its beginning (No. 16 Welber).

(***)
Sperato et multo tempora sparge mero:
conspicis ut ventura dedit bona signa Lyæus
utque virens medio palmite gemma tumet.
Bella etiam procul hinc, procul hinc sint bella: nec enses
classica nec somnum formidolosa fugent. 5
Mars pater, aspira patriæ: fera bella fugato.
Hic nulla in nostro tela sonent latere;

hoc tonitru quod nocte venit nulla arma minetur;
significet nullas strix violenta minas:
aut modo si bellum portenditur omine tali, 10
nos frustra immeritos pertimuisse velis.
Bella alibi insurgant, nos pax tranquilla quietos
in patria teneat defficiente metu.
Tunc templi ante tui manabit victima postes
et loquar ante tuos mystica verba pedes. 15

1: maero ed Welber; 4: emses ed. Welber

It is particularly unfortunate that this poem, which contains an extensive treatment of the theme of peace, and in which even Mars is asked to «chase off savage wars» (6), completely lacks a context. Its initial references to wine (1) and Bacchus (*Lyaeus*, 2) might suggest that it was conceived for a celebratory occasion such as a birthday[10], but this can only be a guess.

Another piece (No. 207 Welber) is much more ambitious, in that it attempts to be a full-scale and exhaustive encomium of Duke Federico of Mantua as a soldier. Sixty-four lines are found in the autograph and seventy-five lines in the Mantua edition. The occasion for this encomium is Federico's participation as a defender at the siege of Pavia in 1525 by a French and Swiss army under the French king Francis I. The praises of Federico are again conventional: Federico is handsome and therefore attractive to the females of Pavia (10-17), he is unshakeable and foremost in battle (24), and he is undaunted by hunger, lack of sleep, heat and cold (25-29). Child and glory of Mars as he is (27), Federico inspirits his men by carrying out the tasks of a common soldier (33-6), with meagre forces he saves those entrusted to him and routs the enemy (37-40), and finally he fills the temples (i.e. the churches) with dedicated spoils (41-2). These topoi are standard in encomia from antiquity on, but Nicolò's lively and fluid verses render them palatable. Moreover at line 43 contemporary concerns appear, and these would instantly have enhanced the poem's interest for its first audience. Nicolò speculates that the Emperor will take Federico with him on a campaign against the Turks in which Federico will recapture Rhodes (which had fallen to the Turks in 1522) and will avenge the death at the hands of the Turks of the young king Lewis of Hungary in 1526 at the battle of Mohács (45-52). The question of contemporary concerns in the *Numeri* will recur in this paper. For the moment it may be noted in passing that commonplaces and reality intersect here in a way which should temper any modern tendency to regard renaissance commonplaces like these as 'mere' commonplaces.

Encomium of German Emperors in the *Numeri* follows the same general lines as the encomium of Federico, although it perhaps places more emphasis on the military

10 It is unsure whether *ante tuos ... pedes* in Nicolò's final line (15) alludes to the final line (22) of Tibullus' *genethliakon* (2.2): *ludat et ante* ***tuos*** *turba novella* ***pedes*** since the same phrase occurs in a number of Ovidian and other passages.

triumphs of the laudandus than on the blessings of peace. The brief (28 line) No. 37 Welber (*Divo C aesari*) addresses the Emperor Maximilian: he is to extend the Empire, to conquer the Turks, to become universal ruler, and to live a long and happy life. Nicolò imagines Maximilian's future Roman-style triumph accompanied by his own future poetry celebrating the Emperor. This last theme, namely that of the celebratory verses which will greet military victories, is also common in the Numeri, and it will be discussed again later. But on this occasion Nicolò withdraws in Propertian fashion, declaring himself barred from it. No. 37 Welber is thus purely militaristic and triumphal. No. 236 Welber has as its honorand the Emperor Charles V, the successor to Maximilian, and it contains a similar prophecy about Charles. It starts as an *adventus* poem for Charles' arrival in Italy in 1532 after helping to frustrate the siege of Vienna by the Turks under Sulaiman I. In Italy nature welcomes Charles, but Nicolò's verses quickly turn to predicting Charles' future victories over the Turks, his recovery of Rhodes, and his annexation of the Turkish realms. A comparably aggressive attitude is expressed in a poem with completely different content. This is No. 74 Welber, an eight line piece addressed *ad Germanos* which urges the youth of the Empire to die a glorious and honored death in battle. Nicolò also pursued this theme at great length in No. 186 Welber, an elegiac prosopopea of 174 lines in which Luigi Gonzaga, whose nickname was Rhodomonte, speaks posthumously to his wife about his own heroic deeds and death[11]. However Nicolò does not shun completely in the imperial sphere the notion that the hero's deeds in war guarantee peace for his subjects. No. 214 Welber, again addressed to Charles V, also foregrounds the notion that the great warrior is the restorer of peace:

> Invicte Caesar, quo ferus auspice
> tandem arva Mavors Itala deserit
> vastata terdenos per annos
> cum miserae Italiae ruina (1-4)

3: agros ed. Welber

There follow, of course, the usual martial topoi: triumphs, defeated kings, celebratory songs, lands added to the Empire, future conquests (5-12). But the main thrust of this lyric is the Emperor's protection of his threatened subjects from the Turks (13-32).

As well as his own Duke and the successive Emperors Maximilian and Charles, Nicolò freely lauds other major military figures in the same terms, for example the Marquis of Vasto Alfonso Avalos[12], and the Emperor Charles' brother, Ferdinando King of the Romans. Avalos played a part in the decisive battle of Pavia in 1525,

11 On his identity, see below.
12 *DbI* 4, Rome 1962, 612-16.

which for a time brought an end to French interference in Italy, and in the short No. 295 Welber Avalos is praised in purely militaristic mode, as he was in the longer No. 313 Welber, later rededicated to the viceroy of Sicily (above). Ferdinando receives a long lyric ode (92 lines – No. 227 Welber) composed in similar language in honor of his victorious part in preserving Vienna from siege by the Turks in the years 1529-32. This last poem brings us back to that other aspect of Nicolò's martial verse mentioned earlier which enlivens the commonplace nature of much of his martial content, namely his references to particular historical events and personalities. While many of Nicolò's bellicose pieces are admittedly couched in general terms, he does sometimes write in highly concrete fashion about specific contemporary events. This is a notable feature of the prosopopea already mentioned (No. 186 Welber), that of the dead Luigi Gonzaga, son of Ludovico Gonzaga, under his pseudonym Rhodomonte. Luigi was born in 1500 and died in 1532 of a wound received at the siege of Vicovaro[13]. In this prosopopea Luigi mentions his exploits in Tuscany, his part in taking Ancona from the papal forces, and his capture of Vicovaro where he received his fatal wound (69-74). He also urges his wife to remain faithful to him after his death, and so to follow the example o f Vittoria Colonna[14] (29-38). Similarly in No. 227 Welber (already discussed) Ferdinand's campaigns are recorded in some detail (9-12; 49-80).

The classicizing language and allusions of Nicolò's *Numeri* and their high level of topical content should therefore not blind us to the fact that Nicolò was writing about matters of vital daily interest to his contemporaries. This was a time when Europe was seriously threatened by renewed aggression from the East, and when divisions among the European powers were being skilfully exploited by the Ottoman Sultans. The main, and indeed only, effective barrier to Turkish expansion was now the Empire, which was greatly reinforced when Charles V became Emperor in 1517. Charles united in his person the crown of Spain and the Imperial crown, and so was able to bring to bear against the Turks the combined military strength of both realms. Nicolò was first and foremost an imperial noble, and the aspirations of the Empire were his aspirations; and many of his poems which we might read as skilfully phrased aggregations of commonplaces must have struck deeper resonances among his contemporaries because of the great events to which they refer.

A third element of contemporary relevance in some of those *Numeri* which have war and peace as one of their themes consists in their very specific references to the circumstances of Nicolò or his addressees. This occurs not so much in poems dedicated to Nicolò's Duke and Emperors, as in those devoted to individuals with whom Nicolò had genuine personal relationships. For example No. 203 Welber celebrates the return of Bernardo Cles from a campaign with Ferdinando, King of

13 *DbI* 57, Rome 2001, 817-24.
14 *DbI* 27, Rome 1982, 448-57.

the Romans, on the Empire's northern frontier. Nicolò deploys some of the commonplaces of welcome poetry; then he attributes his own peaceful leisure to the safety afforded him by the military activity of Bernardo and he expresses his intention of writing a poem in praise of Ferdinando's exploits. These latter two concepts are, of course, the very topoi which appear with greatest frequency in the *Numeri* in contexts of war and peace. But Nicolò particularizes them here, first in his description of the specific campaign from which Bernardo has returned, and then in the way in which he characterizes the expected fruit of his own *ocia*:

> nunc Sarchae prope littus amoenum,
> dum nitidi fulgent soles, dum vere tepenti
> auricomum caput exerit arbos,
> aut Ferdinandi fractos virtute Gelonos
> quique bibunt tumidum Choaspem,
> aut partam Italiae referam post tristia bella
> Caesaris auspiciis quietem (18-24)

The commonplaces are located in the particular setting of the river Sarca, which flows through Arco and which is a key motif in Nicolò's poetry – so much so that he wrote of himself (and others wrote of him) as '*(pastor) Sarchius*'[15]. The river Sarca is doubly apposite in this context: Bernardo came from Cles, and was thus also a neighbour of Nicolò; and the river Sarca rises in a mountainous area near Cles. In another welcome poem (No. 204 Welber) Nicolò greets as a visitor Paulo Giovio[16], an old friend from his days as a student at Pavia (2-5). Nicolò mentions Giovio's work celebrating the Emperor Charles' campaign of 1532 in Hungary against the Turks *(Commentario de le cose de' Turchi),* a work first published in 1532 and then republished in Latinized form as the *Belli Parthici Commentaria* in 1538:

> Annales voluo laboriosos,
> illustres lego foeminas virosque
> quos das perpetuo manere saeclo
> praeclara in monumenta posterorum.
> Quanta, Iuppiter, arte, quo labore
> proelium lego Parthicum inchoatum!
> Nam Germania te modo et Viennae
> viderunt iuga maximi parantem
> certum scribere Caesaris triumphum
> victoremque tuis sacrare chartis. (11-20)

The specification that Giovio has only begun to compose his celebration of Charles' campaign dates this poem to 1532. But, before mentioning the *Commentario*, Nicolò lays heavy emphasis on Giovio's *Clarissimorum Virorum*

15 No. 305.2 Welber; cf. also 71.43ff.; 138.3-4; 226.1ff.; 227.89-92; 228.11-12; 238.27-8 Welber; G. Riccadonna, *Nicolò D'Arco, il momento della riscoperta dell'Umanesimo*, Studi Trentini di Scienze Storiche 75, 1996, 417-30, 419-421.

16 *DbI* 56, Rome 2001, 430-40.

Elogia, first published from 1546 on. Giovio made a collection of portraits of famous contemporaries, and he wrote laudatory verses to accompany each portrait. The portrait collection was eventually housed in the 'Musaeum' which Giovio constructed in his native Como between 1537 and 1543. But Giovio started his collection in 1520 and it is interesting that it had already reached such a level of celebrity by 1532 that Nicolò could assume that his readership was aware of it. Another particularizing laudation is No. 205 Welber, addressed to the poetess Veronica Gambara[17]. It too speaks of a poem on the Emperor's campaign which she has started (17ff.). But Nicolò also introduces personal details about Veronica – her *caelebs lectum* (13-14) and the spoils she will dedicate at her own river Mella (18-20). These details point discreetly to her well-known husband Giberto da Corregio. Both Veronica's literary accomplishments, a signal, although not rare, qua lity of women of this period, and her famous husband and her separation from him by death are introduced to sharpen the reader's interest.

The topic of war and peace in the *Numeri* would not be complete without a brief mention of the remarkable sequence of poems devoted by Nicolò to the death of the Austrian imperial general Leonhart von Völs (Leonardus Velsius). Velsius, who had been praised by Nicolò in life too (No. 303 Welber),[18] died in 1545, and the poem sequence mourning his death was possibly commissioned either by one of Velsius' military superiors or by his family. In one poem from the sequence (No. 380 Welber) Nicolò attempted to persuade Girolamo Fracastoro to add yet another commemoration, a request which the Veronese poet prudently declined. Nicolò's memorial sequence for Velsius (Nos 367-386 Welber) contains no less than twenty separate pieces. With the exception of No. 367 Welber (42 lines) and No. 380 Welber (the 25 lines addressed to Fracastoro and seeking from him a poem on Velsius' death) they are all short. Indeed some may have been designed as candidates for the epitaph on Velsius' tomb in Vienna. But together they make up an impressive group.

The second part of this paper is concerned with cultural diplomacy. It will focus on No. 238 W elber (*Ad Alexandrum Thienum*), a poem which contains major references to two important literary contemporaries of Nicolò, Marcantonio Flaminio and Jacopo Sannazaro – the latter under his habitual pseudonym 'Syncerus'. Even if Nicolò himself were unworthy of study as a neo-Latin poet, the presence of Flaminio and Sannazaro in No. 238 Welber would call attention to it. Constraints of space rule out a discussion of the insights into early sixteenth century Italian literary circles which this poem may offer and the potentially fruitful questions which it raises about the genesis of the Mantua edition of Nicolò's *Numeri*. But questions can be asked about why Nicolò addressed Sannazaro, and

17 *DbI* 52, Rome 1999, 68-71.

18 See also above on No. 227.41-2 Welber.

why he did so in such specific terms at the particular date of composition of this poem.

But first, to clear away a possible distraction, a few words about the addressee of No. 238 Welber: he is Alessandro Thiene, who, as the first lines of the poem tell us, possessed an estate at Cavriana in the territory of Mantua and was thus a neighbour of Nicolò. A little more about Alessandro Thiene can be recovered from No. 233 Welber, which is also addressed to him. That poem characterizes him as a *sodalis* of Nicolò (13), that is a friend from Nicolò's student days, it mentions his great love of Ferrara and his residence at Verona, where he is said to have a girlfriend (9-12), and it stresses his great attractiveness to women (17-20)[19]. Alessandro was clearly a member of the Thiene family of Vicenza, Thiene being some 18 kilometres as the crow flies to the north of Vicenza. Indeed Alessandro is presumably to be identified as the father of Lavinia Thiene, who with his wife Laura erected for his daughter (and for her two parents) the famous 'pyramid' tomb in the Cathedral of Vicenza which is now believed to be the work of Giulio Romano, another dedicatee of Nicolò[20]. It is not clear why Alessandro Thiene was chosen by Nicolò as the addressee of this major poem. It may have had something to do with the connections between Thiene's native Vicenza and Venice.

Next the presence of Flaminio[21] and Sannazaro[22] in No. 238 Welber: Flaminio is present (29-36) for at least three reasons: first, his enormous literary prestige; second, his role as a friend, a poetic addressee, and a poetic correspondent of Nicolò[23]; and third his Neapolitan links, both with the Accademia Pontiana, founded by Sannazaro's old literary patron Giovanni Pontano, and with the circle of Valdès.

19 Betti (n. 2) had no further information to offer about Alessandro Thiene. Angiolgabriello di Santa Maria (= Paolo Calvi), *Biblioteca e Storia di quegli scrittori cosi della Città come del Territorio di Vicenza che pervennero fin' ad ora a notizia,* 6 vols (Vendramini Mosca, Vicenza 1772-1782), IV (1778) mentions three men called Thiene who are contemporaries of Alessandro, b ut no Alessandro Thiene. Betti did note that an Attilio Thiene was the second husband of Nicolò's daughter, Emilia; but Betti does not record the relationship (if any) between this Attilio and our Alessandro.

20 Cf. V. Pizzigoni, *La tomba di Lavinia Thiene: un'opera mantovana a Vicenza*, Annali di architettura 10-11, 1998-99, 135-39; Giulio Romano is addressed in No. 98 Welber.

21 For Flaminio in general, cf. esp. C. Maddison, *Marcantonio Flaminio: Poet, Humanist and Reformer*, London 1965. For other dedications and references to him in the *Numeri*, cf. Nos 70.11; 215; 238; 335.11; 357.22 Welber.

22 For otherwise unannotated aspects of the life and works of Sannazaro discussed below, cf. esp. W.J. Kennedy, *Jacopo Sannazaro and the Uses of Pastoral*, Hanover–London 1983. Modern texts of his relevant works can be found in: Ralph Nash (tr. with introd.), *Jacopo Sannazaro: Arcadia & Piscatorial Eclogues*, Wayne 1966; *Iacopo Sannazaro. De partu Virginis*, edd. C. Fantazzi–A. Perosa, Firenze 1988. An excellent and in-depth study of Sannazaro, his works, and his intellectual and cultural background, not generally accessible but generously made available to me by the author is: M. Deramaix, *Théologie et poétique. le 'De partu Virginis' de Jacques Sannazar dans l'histoire de l'humanisme napolitain*, Paris 1994 (Thèse Doctorat: Études latines).

23 Cf. Cairns, 21.

The latter two factors made Flaminio a useful bridge and link to Sannazaro, with whom Nicolò was unacquainted.

Nicolò's account of Sannazaro (39-60) is more detailed and more interesting than has been realized. The American scholar Wilfred P. Mustard, in his edition with commentary of Sannazaro's *Piscatorial Eclogues*[24], quoted part of Nicolò's eulogy of Sannazaro (47-9), noting that: «there are specific allusions to *Eclogues* ii, i, iv» (17). But Mustard did not cite the lines (or line-numbers) of those portions of the *Eclogues* to which Nicolò alludes; and he may not have grasped just how specific these allusions are, possibly because they come after a more generalized reference by Nicolò to Sannazaro's *Arcadia*. The details of Nicolò's pointers to Sannazaro and imitations of Sannazaro are as follows:

1) 45-6: *Tu canis* ***Arcadici*** *pastor pineta Lycaei/* ***Sebethi*** *propter flumina pascis oues*. Here the reference is to Sannazaro's vernacular ***Arcadia***, where the river **Sebethus** is mentioned seven times[25]; but apparently there is no verbal allusion.

2) 47: *scribis et* ***oscura cantantem nocte*** *Lyconem*: with this line compare *Piscatorial Eclogue* 2.7: *Ipse per* ***obscuram*** *meditatur* ***carmina noctem.*** This eclogue, entitled *Galatea*, treats of the fisherman Lycon's song to Galatea.

3) 48: *dilectae* ***defles Phillidis*** *interitum*: with this compare *Piscatorial Eclogue* 1.9: ***deflevimus***. This eclogue, entitled ***Phyllis***, is a lament for the dead Phyllis (Pontano's wife, Ariadna Sassone).

4) 49: ***Prothea*** *divino* ***mulcentem carmine phocas***: with this compare *Piscatorial Eclogue* 4.23: ***Mulcentemque*** *suas divino* ***carmine phocas***. This eclogue, entitled *Proteus*, is an imitation of Virgil's fourth eclogue. Proteus also plays an important role in Sannazaro's *De Partu Virginis* Book 3. Cf. also *Piscatorial Eclogue* 1.88: *Quae* ***Proteus*** *quondam divino pectore vates*.

5) 50: *vertis et in* ***salices*** *pectora Naiadum*. Here there is a reference to Sannazaro's ***Salices***, which is an account of the transformation of nymphs into willows.

6) 51-2: ***Virginis*** *ut celebras* ***partum*** *grauiore cothurno/ cedite, Mantoi carmina Vergilii*. Here the reference is to Sannazaro's most famous poem, his *De Partu Virginis*.

24 Baltimore 1914. Mustard quotes Nicolò's lines in a text ultimately derived from the incunable.

25 Sebethus also appears in Sannazaro's *Piscatorial Eclogues* (1.105; 5.21).

Lines 53-6 of No. 238 Welber then go on to sketch Sannazaro's Neapolitan environment with its woods and seascapes, emphasizing some of the place names – Pausylipus, Mergellina[26], and Parthenope – which are characteristic of Sannazaro's poetry.

Now for the date of Nicolò's poem: this can be established – not easily but with some security – within reasonably close limits. Its references to Sannazaro's *clara ... littora* and to the poet himself as *Syncero ... seni* (40), plus its detailed allusions to Sannazaro's *Piscatorial Eclogues* listed above, provide a *terminus post quem*. The *Piscatorial Eclogues* were first published in 1526 (Sannazaro's *De Partu Virginis* had appeared in its first edition in 1521). Nicolò's poem therefore cannot antedate 1526, especially since there is no evidence of prior contact between him and Sannazaro such that Nicolò might have had a pre-publication manuscript copy of the *Piscatorial Eclogues*[27]. A *terminus ante quem* is provided by Nicolò's reference in lines 57-60 to Sannazaro as still alive and resident at Naples; Sannazaro died in 1530. Those years, then, 1526–1530 provide initial parameters for dating No. 238 Welber.

And there is yet another factor which further narrows the period in which the poem can be dated. Welber printed the text of Nicolò's autograph, and he noted that lines 17-18 appear to have been struck out. The passage is:

Illo me vacuum conspexit tempore Amor, cum
exilii fleres tempora longa tui:
cum miserum a cara flêsti discedere amica
et me es solatus dulcibus alloquiis.
Tunc ego quas lachrymas, quae non suspiria fudi!
Ut fuit illa mei prima ruina mali! (15-20)

However in the Mantua edition of 1546 the same passage reads:

in me tunc primum coniecit tela Cupido,
cum longum fleres anxius exsilium.
Cum patris imperio, quam ardebam, linquere amicam
cogerer atque tuum dulce sodalitium.
Tu miserum a cara flêsti discedere amica:
tu miserum a caro corpore abesse tuo (15-20)

Then follow lines 19-20 of the autograph. Leaving aside the troubled question of the relationship between the autograph and whatever manuscript was used to print

26 Sannazaro's estate Mergellina was given to him in 1499 by king Federico II of Naples and became for him a symbolic poetic locus; cf. M. Deramaiz–B. Laschke, *Maroni musa proximus ut tumulo. L'église et le tombeau de Jacques Sannazar*, Revue de l'art 95, 1992, 25-40.

27 There is no evidence of other interest on Nicolò's part in Sannazaro, except for one (dubious) trifle, *i.e.* No. 217 Welber. Nicolò's reference to the *De Partu* is simply to its title.

the Mantua edition, we can note that in the autograph text there is no reference to Nicolò's father Odorico, whereas the new lines 17-18 of the Mantua edition declare that Odorico was responsible for Nicolò's unhappy love-life. The suspicion must be that Odorico was still alive when No. 238 Welber was first written. Hence Nicolò said nothing in his autograph about Odorico ruining his love-life. But Nicolò's father was long dead by the time the Mantua edition was printed, and I suggest that the obscurities of the autograph version were then pointed out to Nicolò, who rectified them by providing the true reason why he had then been an unhappy lover. If that is correct, we can narrow the date of composition of No. 238 Welber to 1526-1528, since Odorico died in 1528.

So far two points have been argued: first that Nicolò was making detailed allusions to Sannazaro and his works in No. 238 Welber, and second that Nicolò was doing this between 1526 and 1530, and probably between 1526 and 1528. These two points indicate that No. 238 Welber is not genuflecting to Sannazaro out of mere goodwill and literary admiration – although these were both undoubtedly present – but that Nicolò is engaged in the same kind of diplomatic activity through poetry as was observed in connection with his poetic contacts with individuals in Verona. Sannazaro was born in Naples in 1457 and he remained throughout his life intimately connnected with Naples. His first patrons were the Angevin royal house of Naples and Giovanni Pontano. When the Neapolitan kingdom was conquered by the French and Spanish in temporary alliance, and when King Federico of Naples went into exile in France in 1501, he was followed by Sannazaro. On Federico's death in 1504 Sannazaro returned to Naples and he spent the rest of his life there engaged in his literary work. The Emperor Charles V inherited the crown of Naples along with many other territories in 1516. Naples was particularly useful to Charles: he could raise there large sums of money from taxes which he could impose without the constitutional difficulties which impeded his fund-raising in most of his other dominions. But Charles' claim to Naples was not undisputed. Precisely in the years 1525-1528 Naples was twice under attack by the French. It is hard to believe that by pure coincidence Nicolò was suddenly and uniquely moved to write so flatteringly to Sannazaro at the very time when his imperial master was being threatened in the possession of his Neapolitan kingdom! This view is strengthened by the fact that in 1528, at the very time when the imperial occupation of Naples was under threat, Nicolò's cousin, Gerardo D'Arco, was recruiting troops in Riva and Arco[28]. What Nicolò hoped to achieve from his address to Sannazaro is unclear: he may have been attempting no more than to elicit from Sannazaro a favorable reply with which to enhance his own prestige and that of his patrons – and in any case the French threat to Naples was soon dispelled. On the other hand Nicolò may, by highlighting the Neapolitan poetry of Sannazaro, have been trying to influence against the French those elements of the Neapolitan ruling classes which still looked back to the period

28 Rill, 107-8.

before 1498 as their golden age, and who may have seen the renewed aggression of the French against Naples from 1525 on as a replay of their invasion of 1498. In such cases cause and effect may not be traceable with the clarity we might wish. But the political aspects of neo-Latin poetry like that of Nicolò should never be neglected – as they all too often are. The very fact that rulers were so eager to patronize neo-Latin poets and to create public occasions for the performance and promulgation of their works shows that some useful practical effects were anticipated. Conversely the continued presence of the D'Arco family on their ancestral estates for hundreds of years after the death of Nicolò surely owes at least something to the literary services with which Nicolò provided for so many patrons and friends.

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