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Polemics and the Emergence of the Venetian Novel: Pietro Aretino, Piero Chiari, and Carlo Gozzi

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Polemics and the Emergence of the Venetian Novel: Pietro Aretino, Piero Chiari, and Carlo Gozzi

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Italian

by

Cindy Diane Stanphill

2018

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Polemics and the Emergence of the Venetian Novel:

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Doctor of Philosophy in Italian

University of California, Los Angeles, 2018

Professor Massimo Ciavolella, Chair

Pietro Chiari (1712-1785) and Carlo Gozzi (1720-1806) are well-known eighteenth-century Italian playwrights. Their polemical relationship has been the object of many studies, but there is a dearth of work dedicated to their narratives and novels, with none in English language scholarship, though a small and growing number of Italian studies of the novelistic genre in eighteenth-century Italy has emerged in recent years. In my dissertation entitled, *Polemics and the Rise of the Venetian Novel: Pietro Aretino, Piero Chiari, and Carlo Gozzi*, I examine the evolution of the Italian novel in a Venetian context in which authors, some through translation, some through new work, vie

among themselves for the center in the contest to provide literary models that will shape and educate the Venetian subject.

I trace the evolution of the novel in Venice to the early modern, salacious author Pietro Aretino – specifically to his *Sei giornate,* or *Ragionamenti –,* as well as his influence on English and French libertine novels that eventually make their way back onto the peninsula through translation, and to the way in which agonistic relationships fueled literary output. I focus on three specific texts: Aretino's *Sei Giornate*, Chiari's *La filosofessa italiana*, and Gozzi's translation of John Cleland's *Fanny Hill*. Close readings of these three key literary texts, studied within their respective historical and cultural contexts and in comparison with each other, form the core of my dissertation. I utilize feminist and socio-political theory to approach case study analyses of these three literary works produced in Venice during the 1760s and 1770s, when social and cultural standards were beginning to break down in Venice. I use translation studies, the transmission of knowledge through communication networks and correspondence, and the periodical press to trace the cross-fertilization of texts between England, France, and Italy. I demonstrate the way in which salacious material and the use of female narrators such as Pietro Aretino's Nanna and Cleland's Fanny played a pivotal role in shaping the emergent novel in Venice to establish Italy's role in the development of the eighteenth-century European novel. Specifically, the licentiousness of the female narrators, who represented both social mobility and an open female sexuality, revealed deeper tensions surrounding class and gender in Venice. Those tensions became the content of the emergent novel and also helped to shape the Venetian novel.

The dissertation of Cindy Diane Stanphill is approved.

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This dissertation is the result of much sacrifice, a lot of hard work, and the love and patience of my family.

I dedicate this work to my husband and to my daughter.

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INTRODUCTION:

THE RISE OF THE NOVEL IN PRE-UNIFICATION ITALY

> Inside history, the history of literature has a small but important role: it takes the losing side and it redeems it or recuperates the losses; it deals with defeat and abandonment. An emerging order that believes it can dispense with this kind of help and this genuine opposition will cast grave doubts on its own validity and beneficence and will see itself threatened with irrelevance or odium. —Virgil Nemoianu[1]

At the opening of chapter one of *A Room of One's Own*, Virginia Woolf confronts a series of questions that came to her upon being asked to speak at a number of women's colleges about women and fiction: "The title women and fiction might mean, and you may have meant it to mean, women and what they are like; or it might mean women and the fiction that they write; or it might mean women and the fiction that is written about them; or it might mean that somehow all three are inextricably mixed together and you want me to consider them in that light."[2] I can pose a series of similar questions about the rise of the eighteenth-century novel in Venice and eighteenth-century male authors' general insistence on the use of a female protagonist and a female voice. This insistence might be due to several reasons. Perhaps the substantial distance between an author and the narrative voice created by the use of a female narrator-protagonist gave the author the freedom of expression required for the developing novel form. Maybe the subgenre required a female protagonist because of the way the female and feminine were understood at that time; maybe the woman best represented the form of the novel. Maybe women simply provided interesting and challenging subject matter for male authors who were willing to

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[1] Virgil Nemoianu, *Imperfection and Defeat: The Role of Aesthetic Imagination in Human Society* (Budapest, Hungary: Central European University Press, 2006), 25.

[2] Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own*, intro. Mary Gordon (Harcourt Brace & Company, 1981), 3.

venture into the new genre of the novel. What is clear is that of the major authors writing novels in eighteenth-century Venice, three chose to write or translate novels that feature a female protagonist and a particularly feminine plight. In this dissertation, I argue that while the narrative structure of each novel turns on a specifically feminine plight or issue, the undertones of each narrative share deep resonances with each author's own liminal position in the social structure: as an artist and author, as part of the impoverished nobility, or as a financially struggling foreigner to the city. Taking all these issues into account, I draw conclusions that will help us better understand the role of women and the female protagonist in the development of the Venetian novel during the eighteenth century.

I am writing about much more than just these authors. I am also trying to get inside the dynamic artistic scene that shaped the Italian novel as we have come to know it. The Italian novel's initial rejection by the literati and its overall popularity among the growing middle class reveals an immensely important social and artistic change both in Venice and on the Italian peninsula in general during the eighteenth century. Moreover, the use of newer media such as the periodical as a means of advertising and of very public forms of review and debate is a phenomenon that is being relived today with online social media and blogging. Rapid transfers of knowledge and of public and personal opinions have an enormous impact on the general public, including on what the public chooses to consume—the novel over poetry, or today, Internet shows rather than public television.

In other words, this dissertation is an effort to reveal the larger framework represented by these three individual authors. Each author catered to a particular bent of the public's tastes and sensibilities; thus, each author had his own taste of success. By examining their works

individually and side by side through textual analysis, I reveal a fractured social movement in Italian literary tastes that reflected social changes.

The origins of the novel, its evolution, and its history have been the object of study since the seventeenth century, yet the pre-Manzoni Italian novel has garnered little attention. In Britain and France, the novel flourished as a genre that was as ideally suited to the narrating and fashioning of new lives as it was to the spread of the enlightened ideas that informed those lives. Enlightened views in the novel took issue with class, gender, sexuality, social norms, and taste. The newly emerging literary genre demonstrated how new values could be acquired and performed in the absence of good breeding or family connections; through reading, one could observe and learn how people with such propitious origins behaved, and one could imitate them. Heroines like Samuel Richardson's Clarissa and Pamela, John Cleland's Fanny, Jean-Jacques Rousseau's Julie, Abbé Prévost's Manon, and Daniel Defoe's Roxanne offered innovative models of female worldliness in England and in France. In Italy, in contrast, authors struggled with narrating the lives of these new heroines. Moreover, they struggled to locate an appropriate Italian readership for their new prose fiction.[3]

In this study, I examine the birth of the Italian novel in the Venetian context. As the only long-standing republic on the peninsula, Venice became a leading cosmopolitan city and a center of innovation. It was a major publishing hub in the fifteenth century, and because it was less

[3] See Samuel Richardson, *Clarissa, Or, the History of a Young Lady*, intro. and notes Angus Ross (London, New York: Penguin Books, [1985] 2004); ibid., *Pamela, Or, Virtue Rewarded*, intro. Margaret Anne Doody, ed. Peter Sabor (London, New York: Penguin Books, 1981); John Cleland, *Fanny Hill, or, Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure*, intro. Gary Gautier (New York, Canada: Penguin Random House, 2001); Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Julie, or, the New Heloise*, trans. and ann. Philip Stewart and Jean Vaché (Hanover, London: University Press of New England, 1977); Abbé Prévost, *Manon Lescaut*, trans. and intro. Angela Scholar (Oxford, New York: University of Oxford Press, 2008); Daniel Defoe, *Roxana: The Fortunate Mistress*, intro. John Mullen (Oxford, New York: University of Oxford Press, 1997).

bound to the church, more secular texts were published there than in any other of the major Italian cities, such as Napoli and Rome. With a relatively secular outlook and capitalist economy, Venice attracted many artists, many who challenged traditional values and borrowed from outside sources for inspiration. It was within this specific cosmopolitan and capitalist atmosphere that literary and artist innovation took place. While the emerging eighteenth-century Venetian novel took many structural and thematic elements from the many English and French models that were being translated into Italian at that time, it was also inextricably tied to the distinctly Italian social tensions and complexities that were at play in the Republic during the period, all of which turned on issues of gender and social class. I aim to extrapolate from these Venetian texts some of the foundational and unique Italian characteristics of the novel genre on the peninsula and discuss how specific authors spun them in an effort to establish the genre on the peninsula.

In the first chapter of this project, I choose a less than obvious starting point for the Italian novel: the salacious sixteenth-century author Pietro Aretino's powerful influence upon prose and, specifically, gender performance in fiction. His works span a multitude of genres, including "pasquinades," comedies, dialogues, and letters. Aretino proved to be a capable and cunning writer and used each genre to attack and criticize the nobility, clerics, and competing authors and to manipulate the powerful of his time for his own benefit. He did so with an acute and innovative use of the printing press. His influence reaches far, both geographically and over time, and his exploitative depiction of sex, sexuality, and social inequity through the use of female protagonists has left its trace on all later salacious literatures. Most important for this study was Aretino's influence on the eighteenth-century Venetian novel.

I begin by examining Aretino's life trajectory alongside several of his most influential texts that reveal him as a revolutionary figure who cemented the *poligrafo* lifestyle and who

ultimately set the stage for later generations in Venice to explore hybrid literary genres, most explicitly the novel. The *poligrafo* was an upstart literary artist, who wrote poems, letters, plays, and even tracts all geared toward making money. Therefore, much of what was penned by *poligrafi* aimed toward sensationalism and polemics because these earned more money. Aretino revolutionized the literary scene in Venice by exploiting the new technology of the printing press and publishing scandalous texts that had previously only circulated in manuscript form among an elite and privileged class of readers—he is considered the first *poligrafo*. In so doing, he appealed to a new, less elite reading public and helped to produce a new literary aesthetic that influenced both his contemporaries and later writers until the modern period. By making this material widely available and realistic in content, Aretino challenged the status quo and created a tremendously antagonistic literary environment in which a number of artists engaged.

Aretino's dialogues and literary works also entertained less literate readers on a superficial level. For example, the shock-value aspect of his dialogues, the *Ragionamenti*, also commonly known as the *Sei giornate,* is a result of this work's realistic depiction of sexual acts and of its exploitation of real-life social issues, in particular the limited and precarious roles prescribed for women. All of this was meant to fill Aretino's pockets, sustain his rather extravagant lifestyle, and speak to the masses. However, it is also true that reading Aretino within the realistic aesthetic to which his texts so easily lend themselves leaves out very complex and fundamental aspects of his works.

It was in large part the reactionary nature of Aretino's texts and the polemic that they incited between authors and the establishment that helped the *poligrafo* movement grow and that led to the production of even more socially challenging texts. Aretino's salacious material made its way into the content of the French and English libertine novels, which helped spark yet

another cultural and literary shift in those territories. Through translation, both English and French novels that made their way into Venice during the early eighteenth century, along with translations of libertine novels, which were clearly influenced by Aretino's salacious dialogues, prompted a cultural debate that unfolded within the new Venetian novel.[4] I contend that Aretino and the later Venetian novelists' writing both spoke to and represented an emerging class of readers and citizens: a new working class consisting of artists, printers, artisanal workers, and women. As limited as this new literature was at that time, in that space, and within those particular cultural restraints, it reveals major social conflicts regarding class and gender.

Despite Aretino's comparatively limited audience, he challenged the institutional cultural authority of his time by writing texts that represented the underlying social conflicts of his era. Aretino became a revolutionary figure for some, and a problematic figure for others because his works highlighted a class polarization that hinged on gender and emasculation. All this led to polemics among the literati and the *poligrafi* of Aretino's time and fueled literary invention and production. A similar situation appeared among authors of eighteenth-century Venice such as Carlo Gozzi and Pietro Chiari, who adapted to an evolving readership and who were also deeply involved in forming the evolving popular and public literary tastes. In their era, theater and the novel competed to be the main mode of literary production and the expression of a polemic that was informed by class polarization. All of this facilitated the development of the Venetian novel. These authors, like Aretino and his contemporaries, expressed elements of a larger narrative of social change.

[4] See Ian Frederick Moulton, *Before Pornography: Erotic Writing in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 158-193. Moulton details and examines the Aretine influence on Thomas Nashe, specifically on his erotic or pornographic writing.

Chapter 2 is devoted to Venice, which was the locus of both the *poligrafo* literary revolution during the Cinquecento and the later development of the novel, which was influenced by a strong polemical theater and literary scene full to bursting with class conflict. Venice offered a haven to exiled writers and, as a cosmopolitan city and publishing center, enabled writers to print their works and even earn a living from them. Another driving force in eighteenth-century Venice was an influx of foreign texts, in both original and translated forms, a fact heightened by the number of foreigners who eventually made Venice their home.

While early modern Italy is still one of the most studied periods for art and literature, no connection has been proposed between the *poligrafi* and the development of the novel in Italy. Numerous scholars examine how the literature of the *Cinquecento* took on new forms as the printing press made letters, dialogues, treatises, and pamphlets readily available to a wider audience, thus prompting a new kind of emboldened writer and fostering a new readership. The fragility of the authors' livelihoods created an intense and very competitive literary scene in which authors competed to the point of hatred for one another. The result was a proliferation of texts in which these polemics were revealed. The eighteenth century in Venice was another period of rapid changes, as impoverished artists eked out a living by writing and staging plays for the growing middle class, instead of publishing letters and invectives. The epoch was rife with social and class conflicts that forced many male artists into the same circumscribed social positions in which women still lived. Eighteenth-century Venice, still a republic, continued to be a hotbed for controversial artists just as it was during the *Cinquecento*. Chiari and Gozzi—in the distant wake of Aretino and in the more recent wake of charismatic seventeenth-century figures such as Pallavicino, who also managed to be at the center of controversy throughout career—found themselves at odds with the literary tastes of the day and with each other.

After establishing Aretino's legacy and literary transmission and describing the Venetian *milieu*, in chapters 3 and 4 I examine how these issues surface in two specific eighteenth-century novels: Pietro Chiari's *La filosofessa italiana,* which borrows from a number of English and French sources, and Carlo Gozzi's 1764 translation of John Cleland's *Fanny Hill*, titled *La meretrice*. In the eighteenth century, these young artists continued to work against an antiquated Venetian (and Italian) sensibility but also helped to define a new literary form: the novel. Building upon Ian Moulton's 2005 *Before Pornography: Erotic Writing in Early Modern England*, which addresses Aretino's impact in England, chapters 3 and 4 trace how that influence eventually made its way back to the peninsula in the eighteenth century through Italian translations and adaptations of the above-mentioned heroines from English and French novels, noting the ways they take on or respond to Aretino's legacy. First and foremost, these novels use female narrators, as in Aretino's *Ragionamenti*.[5] In particular, they highlight the circumscribed and often degraded social roles open to women. However, more important and compelling is the way these texts problematize the social role of men from either the growing middle class or the impoverished nobility, who are often characterized as having feminine qualities or simply as feminine.

In chapter 3, I link Pietro Chiari's eighteenth-century Italian novel and bestseller *La filosofessa italiana* to Aretino's *Ragionamenti*. I also place *La filosofessa italiana* alongside Daniel Defoe's *Moll Flanders* (1722), Samuel Richardson's *Pamela* (1740), and Pierre de Marivaux's *La Vie de Marianne* or *The life of Marianne; or, the adventures of the Countess of* *** (serially published between 1731 and 1745). My aim in examining these texts together is

[5] Ibid. In his monograph, Moulton address the historicity of the term "pornography" and makes distinctions between "pornography" and "erotic writing." He then traces key texts that helped shape notions of the two categories, and the primary author he examines is Aretino.

first to highlight the novelistic flowering in Italy at this time and second to demonstrate how Chiari borrowed from and adapted English and French models of the novel in an Italian context. In many ways, Chiari reappropriated Aretino's influence on English and French salacious material and on the moral response, in novel form, to that influence. His efforts were successful in that he wrote the first bestseller on record in Italy. In general, however, authors like Chiari who were writing novels during this period are ignored outside Italian scholarship, where even now a deeper interest in the development of the Italian novel is just beginning to expand.

Chapter four examines Gozzi as a historical figure whose contentious character helped to shape the eighteenth-century Venetian theater scene. As a case study, the chapter explores Gozzi's translation of *Fanny Hill*. Gozzi was a conservative member of the impoverished nobility in eighteenth-century Venice. His conservative values are confirmed in most of his writing. He opposed French Enlightenment values, which placed in him is direct contention with his contemporaries Chiari and Goldoni, and even his brother Gasparo Gozzi and Gasparo's wife Luisa Bergalli. In his works, Gozzi sought to reinforce traditional social decorum, values, and most importantly, a class system that allowed him to remain a noble despite his lack of finances. He wrote a series of fables (*fiabe*) for the theater based on well-known fables, which made it easy for his audience to focus on the message rather than the plot. The message, as in his theatrical comedies, was that the nobility belonged at the top of the social hierarchy. Similarly, his translation of Fanny highlights his desire to reinforce a specific hierarchy that maintained his social status.

Because of the movement of texts through translation among England, France, and Italy, and based on a changing demographic in Venice, social polarities abounded, specifically concerning issues of morality and transgression within texts that were being read by a growing

number of people, including women. These concerns made their way into translations via the translator's personal agenda, and they certainly played a role in shaping the emerging novel in Venice and in Carlo Gozzi's translation of *Fanny Hill*. His translation is a clear example of *traduttore*/*traditore* and constitutes a case that engages questions of both morality and transgression, questions that may ultimately shed light on larger issues of cultural transmission, which involve the seventeenth-century reception of Aretino's salacious *Ragionamenti* in Britain and its influence on the novelistic genre, as well as the eighteenth-century translation of British novels into Italian and their role in the development of the Italian novel. Many translations of Aretino's text were by then in circulation in both English and French and were widely republished and read. Therefore, it is no stretch to make this final leap from Aretino to Gozzi, and to the novel, which dominated popular literature of the period. Even more convincing of the crucial connection between these texts and of the ways in which the work reveals and releases social tension is the overlapping of content and narrative structure. This is most evident in Gozzi's translation or, more appropriately, adaptation of *Fanny Hill* into Italian.

The origins of the novel in Western Europe, its evolution, history, and theories about its development have been the topic of seminal studies by Ian Watt and Michael McKeon, to name only two. Watt's focus on middle-class realism and the bourgeois roots of the novel in England and Michael McKeon's more complex considerations of the historical and socio-political conditions that led to questions of truth and virtue in the novel have been helpful tools to scholars of the eighteenth-century Italian novel. However, the Italian case, as Luca Clerici, Carlo A. Madrigniani, and Tatiana Crivelli have shown, requires new approaches to explain what Crivelli has called the Italian novel's "variety, mobility, and instability." The nascent eighteenth-century Italian novel was met with a strong resistance from a highly elite readership and tradition

literary values, not unlike the subversive texts of the early modern *poligrafi*, and specifically of Aretino. There are clear traces of Aretino in all of these eighteenth-century novels, English, French, and Italian alike. This dissertation tracts those traces as they return to Venice.

Much has been written about Gozzi and his contentious relationship with his archrival Goldoni, which resulted in Goldoni's exile, but no substantial work has been published in English on his heated relationship with Pietro Chiari. Moreover, Gozzi's prose works have received scant attention in comparison to his theatrical works, and his 1764 translation of a British erotic novel, John Cleland's *Fanny Hill, Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure*, has received no critical attention. Valeria Tavazzi argues in her 2010 monograph *Il romanzo in gara* that the explosive theater scene is in fact a focal point in Chiari's novels. Despite her important addition to the minimal material dedicated to the rise of the novel in Italy, she does not explore Gozzi's role in helping to shape the emergent genre, nor does she make the connection to Aretino and his lasting influence on the Venetian literary scene in general.[6]

Tavazzi's monograph, however, is important text for the new light it sheds on the rise of the novel in Italy. Other critical texts that address the eighteenth-century novel in Italy include Carlo Madrignani's *All'origine del romanzo in Italia: il celebre Abate Chiari* and Luca Clerici's *Il romanzo italiano del Settecento*, both seminal texts that focus almost exclusively on Chiari. Yet little scholarship has been published on the subject in English, and no literary research addresses simultaneously the links between the rise of the Venetian novel in the eighteenth century and Aretino's erotic and libertine material and use of the female voice. On Aretino, scholarship focuses on either biographical issues, such as the earlier works in English by Edward

[6] Valeria Tavazzi G. A., *Il romanzo in gara: echi delle polemiche teatrali nelle narrative di Pietro Chiari e Antonio Piazza* (Rome: Bulzoni Editore, 2010).

Hutton and James Cleugh, or on Aretino's self-fashioning and historical figure, such as Raymond Waddington's recent *Aretino's Satyr: Sexuality, Satire, Self-Projection in Sixteenth-Century Literature and Art*, which gives a convincing account of Aretino's skillful use of writing to fashion a new personal mythology. Paul Lavaille's *Pietro Aretino* in Italian is among the most-referenced Aretino biographies.

Mary Helen McMurran's 2009 monograph *The Spread of Novels: Translation and Prose Fiction in the Eighteenth Century* is extremely helpful for tracing specific literary themes back to Aretino's works, primarily to his *Ragionamenti*, which I investigate in the first chapter. McMurran examines the role of translation in the emergence of the novel in Britain and France and has prompted scholars to rethink what was at stake as this new genre unfolded and how the novel, when translated, became a site where the foreign author and the domestic reader merged, mediated through the figure of the translator. Thus, according to McMurran, the novel became a tangible locus where cosmopolitanism and national identity could be forged. Her work adds a new element to our understanding of the origins of the genre and its evolution, particularly in a national context, and her methods can tell us much about the evolution of the novel in Italy, though they require refocusing for Italian regional contexts. This is particularly true for Venice, a city that matches London and Paris in its history as a publishing center. Booksellers' catalogues, periodicals, and letters report the rise in popularity of both the English and French novel in Italian translation around the 1750s, as Luisa Giari's seminal 2009 article on the Italian translations of Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones* demonstrates.[7] Her analysis of the changes wrought in the Italian translations and their reception underscores the "domesticating" that McMurran

[7] Luisa Giari, "Le peripizie delle prime traduzioni del 'Tom Jones' tra Francia e Italia," in *Problemi di Critica Goldoniana,* vol. 9, ed. Gilberto Pizzamiglio and Manilo Pastore Stocchi (Ravenna: Longo Angelo Editore, 2002), 229-249.

refers to in her monograph, while at the same time providing insight into the evolving identity of the Venetian population in the mid-eighteenth century.

In this dissertation, I add the Italian cases to the development of the novel. It is important to scholarship on the development of the novel because, by looking at the trajectory of the emergence of the European novel and including Venice and the Italian peninsula in that exploration, we have a broader and more diverse understanding of the emergence of the novel. Moreover, specifically, associating the eighteenth-century novel in Venice with the *poligrafi* and Cinquecento Venetian letters and the licentious seed/gestation planted in Pietro Aretino's Dialogues complicates our understanding of the novel in England and France. I suggest that the diffusion of Aretino in translation had an impact on the novel, and that Aretino's influence returned to Venice in the eighteenth century via novels like *Pamela*, *Moll Flanders*, and *Fanny Hill*. These texts all took up issues of social status and mobility and the use a female narrator to explore these topics.

CHAPTER 1:

ARETINO, SETTING THE STAGE

et lo stil diemmi in sorte il mio pianeta
Per finger non, ma per predire il uero.
Son l'Aretin, censor del mondo altero
Et de la uerità nuncio et propheta;

(And my planet gave me as my lot the style
Not for feigning, but for speaking truth.
I am Aretino, censor of the ways
Of the lofty world, prophet-ambassador;)
-Aretino

I begin this study with Pietro Aretino (1492-1556) because he is the point of departure for a new type of literature in Italy. Specifically, Aretino set the stage for a wider reading public and the birth of the successful Italian novel in two major ways: he exploited the use of the printing press in sixteenth-century Venice, making traditionally private reading material public; and he challenged the hierarchal social system by making a life outside of the patronage system and living primarily from the popularity of his work. Aretino, the son of a humble cobbler from Arezzo, was born in the momentous year of 1492. Speculation that his mother had had an affair with a local nobleman, Luigi Bacci, made him a bastard, but potentially one with noble blood. In fact, Bacci's recognized son, Gualtieri, addresses Aretino in letters as "fratello honorandissimo."[8] Whether or not there is any truth to this speculation, Aretino certainly perpetuated the rumor in an effort to elevate his parentage.[9] What is incontrovertible about

[8] See *Lettere a Pietro Aretino*, ed. Gionaria Floris and Luisa Mulas, 3 vols. (Rome: Bulzoni, 1997).

[9] For more information on Aretino's biographical history see Paul Larivaille, *Pietro Aretino* (Roma: Salerno Editrice, 1997), 39-70, 102-107 and Raymond B. Waddington, *Aretino's Satyr: Sexuality, Satire, and Self-Projection in Sixteenth-Century Literature and Art* (Toronto:

Aretino's identity is his early desire to form it for himself, indicated in his decision to take "Arezzo" as a surname—a name derived from his birthplace, and thus "announc[ing] his independence" from his biological origins.[10] What is also evident is just how early in his life his socially transgressive tendencies surfaced, first evidenced in his refusal to work as a cobbler and his decision to instead pursue the arts.

At a young age, Aretino traveled to Perugia, where he first studied painting and finally began writing poetry. The *vis polemica* of Aretino is already present in his first collection of poems, *Opera nova del fecundissimo giovene Pietro Aretino* (1512), as Marga Cottino Jones makes clear: "Si apre già qui quella dimensione tutta aretiniana del raccontare in tono ironico, cioè riducendo a livello comico tutto ciò che tradizionalmente veniva proposta in tono serio ed elevato" (Already beginning here is the particularly Aretinian dimension of storytelling in an ironic tone, that is, of reducing to a comedic level all that which was traditionally posed in a serious and elevated manner).[11] This ironic tone turned to biting satire, which became most evident in the pasquinades written during his years in Rome (1517–1524)—a period that set him up as a satirical writer for the rest of his life and placed him both physically and intellectually at odds with the courtier class (to which he belonged socially) and to the elite class (to which he aspired).

University of Toronto Press, 2004), xx-xxv.

[10] Waddington, *Aretino's Satyr*, xxi. This use of a birthplace as a name was common; Bernardo Dovizi became known as "Bibbiena" because of his home town, as did Ser Giovanni Fiorentino and Giulio Romano. However, the point remains that he identifies himself by place rather than by his father.

[11] Marga Cottino Jones, *Introduzione a Pietro Aretino* (Bari: Editori Laterza, 1993), 6-7: "Aretino's satirical tone is already present here, which is to say that he reduces to a comical level everything that had been traditionally recounted in a serious and elevated manner." My translation.

Aretino later became most famously known as the "scourge of princes," a moniker given to him by none other than Ludovico Ariosto, because he wrote texts that often critiqued and challenged authority. Yet Aretino never actively sought social change. Instead, he solicited fame and money from anyone and anywhere. His most shocking texts relied on explicit sexuality as a central theme. Raymond B. Waddington argues in *Aretino's Satyr* that Aretino sought to construct a mythology around himself that portrayed him as "a prophet of sexuality" and a Satyr.[12] He first established this persona through his use of and identification with the Roman statue Pasquino, as I discuss below. Many of his works were scandalous, containing explicit sexual content and derogatory personal information about nobles, clergy, and eventually people from all social classes. Some of his most notorious works, such as *I sonetti lussuriosi* and the *Sei giornate*, still have the power to shock contemporary readers because of their uncensored and even pornographic material, while other politically charged works, such as the pasquinades, have lost some of their impact due to their dependence on references to specific political and religious figures of the period. Aretino also wrote religious works such as "L'Umanità di Cristo" (1539), which was dedicated to Isabella of Portugal, the wife of Aretino's then-patron Charles V. However, his writings on sacred subjects, while they were well-known and often reprinted in the *Cinquecento*, are not widely studied nor do they have modern critical editions.[13] The works that

[12] Waddington, *Aretino's Satyr,* xviii.

[13] Pietro Aretino, "L'Umanità di Cristo," in *Pietro Aretino*, intro. Giulio Ferroni (Rome: Istituto Poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato, 2002), 491-492. The essay was published first in 1535 and then in an expanded version in 1539 (ibid., 381-382). For Aretino's religious affinities, see Raymond B. Waddington, "Aretino, Titian and 'La Humanità di Cristo,'" in *Forms of Faith in Sixteenth-Century Italy*, ed. Abigail Brundin and Matthew Treherne (Aldershot, UK; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009), 171-175.

became influential were those perceived as new and shocking, not the works that exemplified traditional piety, even though both categories of his writings were widely read in his day.

Despite Aretino's lasting impression on the literary landscape of his time, the scandalous nature of *I sonnetti lussuriosi,* the *Sei giornate* (dialogues)*,* and his comedies resulted in his being relegated him to the margins of literary history by Francesco de Santis, which was in contrast to such notable contemporaries as Ariosto and Castiglione. Nowadays, more critics and scholars focus on Aretino's work, most specifically on his exploitative use of the printing press and explicitly sexual texts, rather than on the literariness of his works, thus inadvertently minimizing his literary impact. His work, however, prepared the ground for the development of the European novel in several important ways, as this chapter will show. For one thing, Aretino's example inspired the emergence of a class of financially independent writers, the *poligrafi*.[14] In seeking financial freedom, fame, and disentanglement from the corrupt Roman court, Aretino spearheaded the *poligrafo* profession, which developed shortly after the invention of the printing press and consisted of writers who produced a variety of texts in a range of genres that were usually superficial and vulgar in nature.[15] While vulgar texts had been traditionally reserved for an elite reading class, with only a few manuscript copies being passed around, the *poligrafi*, like

[14] Paul Grendler, *Critics of the Italian World: Anton Francesco Doni, Nicolò Franco, and Ortensio Lando* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969). The *poligrafo* was a prolific writer, and as Grendler argues, "'poligrafo' connotes a versatile and prolific author in a pejorative sense—an author who wrote much but with little concern for accuracy, truth, or plagiarism. According to this view, the goal of the *poligrafo* was to earn a living, nothing more" (68). I examine how this emergent social role is directly linked to Venice's politics and cosmopolitanism.

[15] Other than Pietro Aretino, the three best-known *poligrafi* of the Cinquecento are Ortensio Lando, Nicolò Franco, and Anton Francesco Doni. Other *poligrafi* include Lodovico Domenichi, Ludovico Dolce, and Francesco Sansovino, and less frequently noted are Girolamo Ruscelli, Tommaso Poracchi, Orazio Toscanella, and Dionigi Atanagi. For more about the distinctions among these writers, see Grendler, *Critics of the Italian World*, 65-69.

Aretino, would work closely with the printer to ensure that they appealed to a wide reading public and consequently made as much money as possible.

In this chapter, I discuss the fundamental role that Pietro Aretino played in preparing later generations for the emergence of the Italian novel. Aretino's provocative persona and confrontational rapport with his competitors fueled his own literary output and the *poligrafi* movement in Venice. Along with his followers, *i poligrafi,* and even his literary enemies, Aretino changed the face of prose by writing to please a new and less refined readership, thus revolutionizing the literary scene in early modern Venice and eventually throughout the Italian peninsula. The *poligrafi* movement is most certainly the undeclared precursor to the libertine atmosphere of seventeenth-century Venice, and is also what formally fueled the highly competitive theater scene in eighteenth-century Venice. It was from this polemical scene that the key authors of the Venetian novel emerged: Carlo Gozzi, Pietro Chiari, and Antonio Piazza.

Aretino however, did more than just influence the historical conditions in which the novel emerged. His work anticipated the novel in important ways in both its subject matter and its form, and these innovations were noted and imitated in England and France before making their way back to Venice. I will trace Aretino's literary innovations through an analysis of his most scandalous work, the *Sei giornate*, which was written while he lived in Venice. The work is a sexually explicit pedantic dialogue with a female narrator. The text created a stir, much as his early *pasquinate* did, and was translated into both English and French. We see its impact on English literature in texts like Daniel DeFoe's *Moll Flanders*, Samuel Richardson's *Pamela*, John Cleland's *Fanny Hill* and Henry Fieldings' *Shamela*, and in the libertine movement in France exemplified by Marivaux and many others.[16]

[16] For more information on the book trade of forbidden texts, specifically into and out of France,

Specifically, as later chapters of this dissertation will show, novel writers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries followed Aretino in using heteroglossia, female narrators, and sexuality to appeal to a wide readership and expose class conflict. This influence was possible because Aretino's works became popular in translation and therefore informed other upstart artists outside Venice and Italy.[17] Such artists perceived the social and political dissent present in Aretino's work as "potential" and imitated it because their political, social, and historical moments resembled Aretino's.[18]

To understand the aspects of Aretino's social critique that resonated most with his seventeenth- and eighteenth-century readers and imitators, it is useful to understand the rather strict class system that was in place in Italy during the Middle Ages and through the Renaissance. In most of Western Europe, people were generally divided into four major classes or groups, each with its own responsibilities and functions: nobles, merchants, the middle class (including artisans and shopkeepers), and laborers. Renaissance Italy deviated slightly from this structure because its middle class developed later and the system held tightly to its medieval feudal paradigm, although there was significant regional variation. In fact, it is possible to argue that Italy became increasingly feudal as previous republics were taken over by autocratic rulers.

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see Robert Darnton, *The Forbidden Best-Sellers of Pre-Revolutionary France* (New York and London: W. W. Norton and Company, 1996). For more on sexuality, libertinism, and erotic writing in the early modern period, see Ian Moulton, *Before Pornography: Erotic Writing in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

[17] Maulde-La-Clavière, *The Women of the Renaissance: A Study of Feminism*, trans. George Herbert Ely (London: Swan Sonnenschein & Company, 1900), 391. See also Darnton, *The Forbidden Best-Sellers of Pre-Revolutionary France.*

[18] Virgil Nemoianu contends in his monograph *A Theory of the Secondary: Literature, Progress, and Reaction* that "Marginality is broader than centrality, diversity broader than clarity, and the potential is larger than the actualized" (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), xii.

A discussion of the extremely nuanced and regionally defined political systems and social hierarchies in Italy falls outside the scope of my argument. However, it is important to know that Italy was a shifting collection of duchies and kingdoms and did not become a unified political entity until the nineteenth century. What is key here is that this fragmented nature of the Italian peninsula was a factor in the formation of the arts, including letters. In Aretino's time, most of the peninsula was governed by autocratic rulers. Italy was made up primarily of five princely courts—while "princely" describes the type of rule, most held the title of duke or marquis, with the exception of Naples—that stood out for their patronage of the arts and humanities: the Sforza family in Milan, the Montefeltro in Urbino, the Aragonese of Naples, the Gonzaga in Mantua, and the Este in Ferrara. Venice, however, was a republic. There was no king, duke, or marquis; instead, major aristocratic and patrician families ran the province together based on a loose three-tiered system that consisted of an upper class, a middle class (in turn consisting of upper-middle, mid-middle, and lower-middle classes), and a lower class (comprised of the laborer and poor classes). The ruler, called the doge, was an elder elected by the aristocracy. Because the title was not hereditary, Venice (like Genoa) operated as a republic.[19] Venice therefore became a refuge for many artists and political exiles, including Aretino. Venice's capitalist economic structure blurred the social hierarchy and gave a courtier-artist like Aretino the opportunity to live like a wealthy merchant rather than like a lower-class skilled laborer.

During this period, social norms and political systems were delineated by strictly defined and circumscribed gender roles and family lineages. Since this situation caused conflicts among

[19] The Doge was an elected official and the highest office in Venice. However, his power was limited by other city officials, who all needed to be present before major decisions regarding the city, especially foreign affairs and war, could be made. Elected Doges generally held the position for life.

gender, class, and definitions of masculinity and femininity, Aretino found reason to confront the ways in which these categories intersected and constrained him. He did so through references to sex and bodily functions, which, as Ian Moulton contends, "are used to level and erase distinctions between classes and high and low culture."[20] But Aretino moved beyond even these conflicts: his use of a female prostitute narrator in *Sei giornate* highlights the oppression of courtiers and gender conflict among the courtier class in *Seicento* Italy. His texts offer a resolution to these conflicts that was not possible outside the realm of fiction. These same conflicts became the content of Chiari's *La filosofessa Italiana*, the first Italian bestseller, and were further complicated in Antonio Piazza's *L'attrice*.

Specifically, gender complications arose in Aretino's time because of how courtiers' and artists' lives were circumscribed in ways similar to the ways women's lives were limited during this period. Women had three main life paths in Renaissance Italy, and by extension Venice: wife, nun, or prostitute, in the latter profession's many nuanced forms: *puttana, meretrice, cortigiana*, and the *cortigiana onesta*. Courtney Quaintance in *Textual Masculinity and the Exchange of Women in Renaissance Venice* highlights some of the important distinctions among the various names prostitutes were given in Venice (and beyond). *Puttana* most commonly referred to women who worked the streets, and *cortigiana* or *cortigiana onesta* more often referred to a woman who had a high-paying clientele, sometimes acting as the paid mistress to only one man. The title *meretrice*, instead, was more commonly found in court documents and seems to be a generic term.[21] Quaintance's argument hinges on Eve Sedgwick's influential

[20] Moulton, *Before Pornography*, 125.

[21] Courtney Quaintance, *Textual Masculinity and the Exchange of Women in Renaissance Venice* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015), 10-15.

book *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire* (1985), which has significant connections to this dissertation. Sedgwick argues that the relationship between the prostitute and men is "triangular."[22] Quaintance extends the argument that these titles assigned to women are a reflection of men's struggles with masculinity. Thus, the men who use these titles and write about women are doing so to communicate and forge relationships with other men. In effect, they are defining their status against that of women, and the prostitute, in all of her manifestations, acts as a foil to the men she serves. In other words, the titles that men associate with women and the texts they write about women are meant, consciously or not, to strengthen their own social and literary identities.

While each path available to women carried certain freedoms, then, the limitations were strict. Similarly, a man seeking work as a courtier found himself at the mercy of a duke, marquis, or other nobleman. He therefore occupied a subservient place within the hierarchal social structure, like a wife in relation to her husband. More startlingly, Aretino compared the life of an artist to the life of a prostitute: the artist was not only beholden to a patron, but also had to work to meet the patron's desires. He saw the artist as selling himself to the patron in the same way a woman sells her body to a customer. Indeed, courtesans of the time sold not only sex, but also sexuality, attraction, company, intellect, and often a party and a chance to be seen: in other words, an entire reputation. Similarly, the artist also sold intellectual property meant to reflect the patron's wealth and morality as much as it did the artist's talent.

[22] For the ways in which the "triangular" relationship between a woman and two men is related to suppressed queer subject, see Eve Sedgwick, *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985). See also Quaintance, *Textual Masculinity* for an extension of Sedgwick's argument to Renaissance Venice.

The more apparent the connection between the courtesan and the courtier became to Aretino during his Roman period, the more that conflict surfaced in his works. What made a lasting impact on letters and later provided a model for novelists like Chiari and Piazza was how those class complications in his works reflected emerging challenges to social conceptions of Renaissance masculinity. Even more daring was that Aretino made those conflicts and complications public. He used those class and gender conflicts as the primary content of his work and, with astute use of the printing press, placed that content into the hands of the public. To do so, he used vernacular language—Italian, not Latin—and sexually explicit language that resembled street conversation rather than the Petrarchan verse or Latinate prose suggested by Bembo. Aretino's Italian prose reflected his polyglot society; similarly, his use of a female narrator in *Sei giornate* and his depiction of the underbelly of the social hierarchy reflected a heterogeneous society full of conflict and corruption. All these features reappear in the eighteenth-century novel, transformed to reflect changing times. Because of these traits, the novel appealed to a growing readership made up of middle-class people. The use of female narrators and sexually explicit material was also titillating and drove interest in the novel.

In *Recursive Origins*, William Kuskin convincingly establishes recursion as central to important originary moments of early modern literature, specifically the birth of the modern poet and the first emergence of dramatic literature in print. According to Kuskin, these moments thought to be singular expressions of modernity "are recursively interconnected with the literature of the previous century."[23] While his argument hinges on Spenser and Shakespeare, the same concept is applicable to the eighteenth-century authors Pietro Chiari, Antonio Piazza, and

[23] William Kuskin, *Recursive Origins* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2013), 16.

Carlo Gozzi. I examine Chiari and Gozzi in chapters 3 and 4 because their works were contingent at least in part on the works and character of Aretino. (Piazza built on Chiari's success and then began to move the Venetian novel in a direction that is not pertinent to this study, and so this dissertation will not discuss him in detail.) Chiari is most commonly linked to English and French novelists; he is rarely seen in the light of earlier Italian literature. It is our purpose to draw this lineage.

We can find evidence of the Aretino/Chiari genealogy not only in the eighteenth-century texts themselves, which carry echoes of Aretino in both spirit and execution, but also in the ways their reading publics (which will be discussed in future chapters) evolved. Aretino relied on a literature based on shock value and revelation. In this way, unlike many contemporaries, Aretino exploited his reputation as a provocateur in a way that not only set the stage for the larger-scale literary revolution that took place in eighteenth-century Venice, but also provided the increasingly informal and often libertine narratives that grabbed the public's attention. Moulton claims that Aretino's role in Italian literature has been neglected because his works "have been read […] as if they were pornography, a predictable, empty, and reductive discourse whose meanings are all too obvious."[24] In contrast, Moulton holds that his erotic works were meant to be read "as political protest as well as for erotic titillation."[25] I extend this understanding of Aretino's works through time and space, placing Aretino at the center of a centrifugal movement of political, social, and historical consequence.

This chapter has four main sections. First, I analyze several of Aretino's pasquinades to show how he created a reputation for social and literary transgression. In this way, he was able to

[24] Moulton, *Before Pornography,* 121.

[25] Ibid., 124.

connect with a wide audience to help support his move away from the patronage system. Next, I briefly explain how Aretino's thirst for scandal further infiltrated his writing, in the form of sexually explicit content and the exposure of social tensions related to class and gender, with the result that his public persona became increasingly associated with provocation. The following section explores, through an analysis of selected letters, how Aretino's confrontational identity laid the ground for him and others to form a new class of financially independent writers. Finally, I discuss the literary innovations in Aretino's work *Sei giornate* that were taken up by early novel writers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

I. Aretino's Public Persona, Building an Audience, Part I: The Provocative Pasquino

For Aretino and the other *poligrafi*, the ability to make a living through writing specifically depended on having readers with the means to purchase books. To attract such readers, Aretino and others needed to appeal to their tastes, which meant they used everything from a traditionally elevated tone to increasingly base subject matter as their readership increased. Venice had a broader readership than other Italian city-states and duchies because the competition fostered by its longstanding capitalist culture placed money into the hands of mid- to lower-middle-class citizens (merchants and women), which eventually led to an increase in leisure time for reading. It was in this competitive and increasingly agonistic environment that Aretino set the stage for a bourgeois reading class in Venice that later created the market for romances and novels. We will return to the creation of this reading public in the last section of this chapter. To understand the public persona that Aretino constructed and its appeal to his readership, we will first examine his appropriation of the pasquinade form.

While in Rome, Aretino established himself in the public eye as an outrageous and provocative writer. This persona intrigued the public and helped sell his work. We can see how he created this persona in his use of the famous *pasquinate*. For centuries Romans had fixed their anonymous invectives against the Pope, the Roman court, and the power structure in general on a statue called Master Pasquino. According to Thomas Caldecot Chubb, an early Aretino biographer, "the statue of 'Master Pasquino' became the headquarters for that popular Roman diversion, speaking evil wittily. Anyone having anything scurrilous to say fastened it to 'Master Pasquino.' Indeed, a short scurrilous jib became known as a 'pasquinade.'"[26] Cottino Jones claims that the statue "offrì dunque a Roma l'occasione propizia per far sentire a cardinali e popolo una voce discordante che descrivesse con lingua 'maldicente' e tono clamorosamente caricaturale la corrotta situazione politica e culturale della Roma di quel momento" (offered Rome a propitious opportunity for cardinals and the people to hear a dissenting voice, with sensational caricature and a slanderous tongue, describe the corrupt political and cultural situation of Rome during that period).[27] Thus, the statue offered Romans the opportunity to make their discordant voices heard by cardinals, the Pope, and the general public in a biting and satirical language. Although the denouncers were always anonymous, they inspired Aretino to fashion a new identity based on Pasquino's longstanding reputation. Like Pasquino's anonymous ventriloquists, he spoke in mordent pasquinades. He did so by arrogating to himself certain of Pasquino's characteristics, portraying himself as a Pasquino figure, but he also made sure that his authorship of the poems was known.

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[26] Thomas Caldecot Chubb, *Aretino: Scourge of Princes* (New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, 1940), 64.

[27] Cottino Jones, *Pietro Aretino*, 15. My translation.

In writing *pasquinate,* Aretino defied convention and established a name for himself by making private opinion very public and transforming the once anonymous poetic form into his own personal mouthpiece, or *portavoce*. In fact, Aretino was the first to name himself in a pasquinade, breaking with the long tradition of anonymity and placing both his person and his text at the center of conflict. Chubb articulates just how well Aretino used the power of the pasquinade form to his advantage:

> [T]he truncated statue became his scandal sheet. He kept it plastered with his sharp effusions. Sonnet after biting sonnet. Each one filled with acid humor and with well-directed thrusts. They struck out at every cardinal. [Aretino] ...wanted to be known as possessor of the most dangerous tongue in Europe. If, at a time when the world's attention was concentrated on Rome, he could arouse the cynical amusement of the signori and at the same time again gain the applause of the populace, he would certainly accomplish this end.[28]

The rupturing of the pasquinade tradition of anonymity was a critical and defining moment for both pasquinade tradition and for Aretino. He sought to manipulate the powerful of his time for personal financial gain and elevated social status, and in so doing, he challenged social conventions that placed him at the mercy of the court and the patronage system.

A prime example of how Aretino appropriated the pasquinade to build his reputation comes from one of his best-known sonnets, which was attached to Pasquino during the conclave that elected Pope Adrian VI. In Sonnet 198, Aretino announces his identity while provoking the college of cardinals: "Dice ognun: - Io stupisco che 'l colegio/ non posa far tacer Pietro Aretino"[29] Here Aretino confronts the power structure of his time, challenging the political elite to silence him. He inhabits the Pasquino statue, but refers to himself directly. The choice of

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[28] Chubb, *Scourge of Princes,* 64-5.

[29] Pietro Aretino, "Sonetto 198," in *Testi e documenti di letteratura e di lingua VII: pasquinate romane del Cinquecento*, vol. 1, ed. Valerio Marucci, Antonio Marzo and Angelo Romano, intro. Giovanni Aquilecchia (Rome: Salerno Editrice, 1983), 179-180.

Pasquino to express these views is in alignment with the physical form of the truncated statue: the statue is just a partial head and a torso with no arms or legs. The power of the breast remains intact, but the limbless statue represents immobility. It is a symbol of Aretino's static position as a *portavoce* of the people, but still a mere courtier, just as it is a symbol of a people who had nothing more than a body for work, but no chance of social mobility. In this way, at a very foundational level, Aretino chose Pasquino as the physical representation of his mythological self because it is an accurate model: it was a place of open political, social, and religious dissonance, but it ultimately signified social immobility.

Writing his own mythology in this and similar sonnets, Aretino constructed an identity designed to intrigue his readers: he appropriated specific characteristics of Pasquino and incorporated them into both his public persona and his writing. In the Roman tradition of anonymously denigrating the elite, Aretino claimed the statue as his own, equating himself with all that Pasquino had come to represent. This use of Pasquino helped him build a reputation that garnered a wide readership. In addition, he bridged an important gap between the elite and plebian classes, mixing languages and genre to address both sets of readers.

In constructing this persona, Aretino was apparently motivated by personal gain. In the same sonnet, he expresses a narcissistic happiness at hearing himself challenge authority: "sí rinasco a sentir l'Aretino/ predicar tutti e' vizi del colegio." He relishes the thought that the cardinals have nothing to ponder other than Aretino himself: "O credete, voi bestie, che 'l colegio/ non abia altro pensier che l'Aretino." Here Aretino publicly challenges an authority figure and reveals his desire for recognition by making his identity known, both as a court figure and an artist. However, this sonnet is not a true challenge to the status quo, but rather an interjection: it is an entreaty from Aretino to the Roman court, to the cardinals, for recognition.

In other words, Aretino is asking the court to recognize his power as a poet and as an historical figure who has the power to interfere in their lives, and as such he is asking the court to validate his existence, presumably through financial means and titles: "e che non rida quando l'Aretino/ qualche sicurtà piglia del colegio?" He needs the court to legitimize his existence as a citizen, a man, and an artist. This and other *pasquinate* reveal his desire, as part of a limited bourgeois class at the mercy of the court for its livelihood, to challenge the system that denied him social mobility. He thus made public the profound social conflict of his time: an emerging bourgeoisie and courtier class that increasingly struggled against a closed elite that offered no real social mobility.

Aretino's use of the pasquinade exemplifies his tendency to use popular literary genres with his own twist. Jameson, elaborating on Bakhtin's theory of the dialogic, maintains that "the normal form of the dialogical is essentially an antagonistic one, and that the dialogue of class struggle is one in which two opposing discourses fight it out within the general unity of a shared code."[30] In this case, the two opposing discourses were the Papal Court and the lower classes, and their "dialogue" occurred through pasquinades, comedies, and dialogues.[31] Aretino's texts reveal social conflicts without offering political resolution: still, they convey a sense of potential that was addressed more explicitly by later artists.[32]

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[30] Fredric Jameson, *The Political Unconsciousness: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1981), 70.

[31] Ibid., 84. See also Mikhail Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoyevsky's Poetics*, trans. R. W. Rotsel (Ann Arbor, MI: Ardis, 1973), 153-169 (cited in Jameson, *The Political Unconscious*, 84).

[32] Giorgio Agamben, *Homer sacer: il potere sovrano e la nuda vita* (Turin: Giorio Einaudi Editore, 1995, 2005).

Arguing that the pasquinade form allowed Aretino to evoke social consequences beyond the written word , Valerio Marucci brings to light one of the most important and decisive Aretinian contributions to the pasquinade—the discovery that it can be used for "extra-literary" purposes, namely for personal advantage.[33] Aretino exploited this extra-literary "purchasing power" of the pasquinades by using them to demonstrate his literary ability, to threaten the signori for his personal profit, and to secure critical relationships with politicians. From this perspective, Aretino's pasquinades were forward-thinking in an anti-humanistic and anticlassical direction. Aretino's extraordinary exploitation of the formerly anonymous genre enabled him to begin to achieve an elevated social status that would have been unthinkable for a scholar from the previous generation.[34]

The success of the pasquinades was a turning point for Aretino that decided not only the subsequent tone of his writing, but his entire future. During the conclave after Pope Leone X's death, Aretino defamed all the possible candidates for the papacy except for Giulio de 'Medici. In the first lines of sonnet 168, Aretino presents a corrupt Rome: "Roma è tutta in garbuglio ed in contese" (Rome is in complete confusion and controversy). He plunges immediately into a torrent of insults: "ché papa voglion la Croce i marrani" (the boorish, filthy want Croce for Pope), a reference to Bernardino Carvajal, a candidate from Jerusalem, supported by the Hebrews, whom he attacked using a series of specific and easily identifiable characteristics. Aretino continues in this manner, connecting the vagaries of extravagant cardinals and nobles

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[33] Valerio Marucci, "L'Aretino e Pasquino," *Pietro Aretino nel cinquecentenario della nascita: atti del convegno di Roma-Viterbo-Arezzo*, vol. 1 (67-86) (28 settembre-1 ottobre 1992), Toronto (23-24 ottobre 1992), Los Angeles (27-29 ottobre 1992), (Roma: Salerno Editrice, 1995), 86.

[34] Ibid., 86.

with a corrupt Roman court and the public that supported them.[35] The result was that he antagonized both the cardinals and their supporters. More significantly, in these pasquinades he

[35] The text reads:

Flisco i cursori, i tacagni Grimani,
Monte i montati, i becchi il suo Farnese;

Soderino i ribaldi o 'l Bolognese,
Ancona i figli, la sua mamma Trani,
gli ignoranti Cornar, Cibo e Pisani,
le putane e gli sciochi il lor Sanese;

Vorian Ponzeta i ladri e l'Armellino,
i tiranni Petrucci, e' collitorti
Egidio, Santi Quatro o 'l fraticino;

Mantova, Cavaglion, Cortona i forti
a dar le pesche ed i struzier Orsino,
Colonna que ch'altrui braman far torti;

Como vorrieno i morti
E Vico i rubacappe e spadacini,
E' profumier San Sisto o Cesarini;

Vorien tra' fiorentini
o Salviati, o Ridolfi gli usurari,
ma il Sodonese o Ivrea i tavernari;

Iacobacci i vaccari,
Cesi i villain, i ghoitti el suo Campegio
e Medici chi temi star<e> pegio;

E far contese vegio
da buffoni e da pazi per Rangone,
ma per Triulzi non si fa questione,

Ché tutte le persone
conoscon ch'egli è in fine un pazerello
e ch'egli ha men ch'un cazo in cervello.

Chi vuol questo e chi quello,
tanto ch'opinïone è di qualcuno,
che sar<i>a buono a non far nesuno!

introduced a voice that revealed Rome's diverse population and revealed deep corruption. This representation of public commentary on a corrupt court continued in some of his later works, including the comedy *La cortigiana*.[36]

The ramifications of Aretino's rupturing of the tradition of the anonymous pasquinade and later the publication of his letters in the *volgare*, as I will examine in more detail below, were far-reaching. First, the need to solidify a polemical and dangerous yet titillating reputation was the first step in his challenge to the authority patrons held over artists' work. Once he established a new option for the artist/patron relationship by proving it was possible for an artist to sustain himself beyond this system, others had a new model. In Aretino's time, those who followed this model were the *poligrafi*, but those who used it in the eighteenth century were the novelists. Chiari, Piazza, and Gozzi, in particular, used the theater and the novel as spaces to demonstrate their power as artists and the lengths to which they would go to reveal the weaknesses of the power structure or of their competition. In other words, just as Aretino built his reputation as a blackmailer and reinforced the power of his pen through his pasquinades and letters, so too did Chiari and Gozzi build their reputations and demonstrate the power of the written (and performed) word through plays and novels.

Similarly, Chiari, Piazza, and Gozzi used the stage and female protagonists in their novels to portray their internal and external struggles with their limited social positions in the Venetian Republic. In other words, their works, meant for both the stage and private reading,

[36] An example of how Aretino leaves a very detailed, and different kind of record of events and public opinion toward the Papal Court and politicians for posterity is evidenced in note 28, in which Aretino names, outlines, and presents the public opinion of each cardinal up for the Papacy during the 1526 cycle. Also, later in this chapter, I briefly examine Aretino's introduction to his first edition of *La cortigiana*, in which he includes a variety of voices that represent a very diverse population.

reveal struggles related to a strict social hierarchy that limited their options as artists: the complexities that Chiari and Piazza faced as artists supporting themselves and those Gozzi faced as an impoverished nobleman in Venice were similar to what Aretino faced. Because they sought to survive in the extremely competitive Venetian market, they became adversaries who fueled each other's writing, just as Aretino and his contemporaries were fueled by the Roman court system and by the intense competition in Venice. We will see that like Aretino, Chiari, and Gozzi needed validation and support from the Venetian nobility and the growing Venetian middle class, for their survival depended on it.

II. The Public Persona, Building an Audience, Part II: The Courtier

In Rome, Aretino began to make a name for himself not only as a rogue poet, but also as a courtier. His transgressive (and ultimately lucrative) public persona, in other words, was built not only on his willingness to publicly malign his enemies and break literary conventions, but also on his self-fashioning as a courtier who brought to light the shocking secrets of the world of the court. Combining his new roles as a courtier and as a poet, he began to distinguish his artistic style. When Aretino first moved to Rome, he secured a place in the Agostino Chigi household, where he met and befriended many influential artists and literary figures of the day, including Raffaello Sanzio, Giulio Romano, and Cardinal Bibbiena, to name only a few. It was also during this time that he made important enemies such as Francesco Berni and Bishop Giovanni Giberti. Immersed in the salacious underworld of courtier life, Aretino clearly became versed in the erotic literature that would have then been in circulation only among elite and privileged citizens, and it was certainly during this period that he began to integrate the erotic element into his own work. In addition to the pasquinades, Aretino worked on other projects as well. When

Marcantonio Raimondi created engravings based on a series of erotic paintings by Romano, who also lived in the Chigi household for a time, Aretino wrote sonnets to accompany them, *I sonetti lussuriosi* (1524). The sonnets created a sensational scandal in Rome, resulting in the imprisonment of Raimondi and an assassination attempt on Aretino.

It is important to remember that erotica, such as *La cazzaria*, a homoerotic dialogue by Antonio Vignali published in 1530, and pornographic frescoes such as those by painted by Raffaello in Chigi's villa, were permissible only because they were intended for private audiences, whereas Raimondi's engravings and the pornographic sonnets written by Aretino to accompany them inadvertently challenged social morals by being designed specifically for public or popular consumption via the printing press. As Bette Talvacchia reminds us: "With mass distribution, private delight turned into public scandal."[37] Along with the pasquinades, this was another primary step towards Aretino's early understanding of the power of the printing press. The public revelation of private material and a taut focus on the licentious content of the sonnets led many to overlook the quality of Aretino's explicit sonnets. In fact, forcing the reader's gaze elsewhere seems to have been part of Aretino's method.

Another part of his method was a certain feigned artlessness: he claimed to be merely an unskilled truth-teller. This posture was clearly contrived, and it served his agenda well, affording him a freedom that the greater rigidity of the humanist literary tradition did not. The public's focus on his character over his literary merit, however, was a part of his agenda and a result of his self-created and self-perpetuated identity that concealed yet paradoxically reinforced his literary artistry as a satirist. As Carlo Dionisotti remarks, "Paradoxically, the claim to have no

[37] For more on *I modi* and Giulio Romano, see Bette Talvacchia, *Taking Positions: On the Erotic in Renaissance Culture* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999), xi.

style is itself a trick of style employed by nearly every satirist, and his realistic touches are themselves satiric conventions."[38] Aretino shows real *sprezzatura* in this respect, inadvertently honoring one of Baldassar Castiglione's main suggestions for good courtiers. Castiglione argues that it is important for a courtier to perform "in ogni cosa una certa *sprezzatura*, che nasconda l'arte e dimostri ciò, che si fa e dice, venir fatto senza fatica e quasi sensa pensarvi" (everything with a certain nonchalance, so as to conceal all art and make whatever one does or says appear to be without effort and almost without any thought about it).[39] Aretino had the courtier's ability to display "an easy facility in accomplishing difficult actions which hides the conscious effort that went into them," although he ostensibly rejected it. [40]

In fact, it was in response to Castiglione's wildly popular *Il libro del cortegiano* that Aretino wrote his first comedy, *La cortigiana* (1525). *La cortigiana* is one of Aretino's best-known comedies and is based on his experience living in the powerful Chigi household. Its main purpose is to satirize both court life in general and the ways young men seek to become courtiers in particular, in much the same manner that his pasquinades satirized the papal court and the political structure. It proffers reverse images of the ideal courtier of Castiglione's text, a developing motif and even an obsession in the early Renaissance: one of his courtiers is dull-witted and another is a scoundrel.

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[38] Carlo Dionisotti, "La letteratura italiana nell'età del concilio di Trento," in *Geografia e storia della letteratura italiana* (Turin: Einaudi 1967).

[39] Baldassarre Castiglione, *Il libro del cortegiano*, ed. Ettore Bonora (Milan: Ugo Mursia Editore S.p.A, 1972), 61-62. English translation by Charles Singleton in Baldesar Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier: The Singleton Translation*, trans. Charles Singleton and ed. Daniel Javitch (New York: W.W. Norton, 2002), 32.

[40] Wayne A. Rebhorn, *Courtly Performances: Masking and Festivity in Castiglione's Book of the Courtier* (Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1978), 33.

A detailed analysis of *La cortegiana* is beyond the scope of this chapter, but a brief description will indicate its most salient literary innovations. The comedy is based on the classical erudite comedy models of Terence and particularly Plautus; it is a *commedia della beffa*. There are also early elements of the *commedia dell'arte*, especially in the use of Italian dialects, improper Latin, and Spanish-isms, revealing a realistic and cosmopolitan Roman court – a feature that the later Venetian novelists would adopt. Paul Larivaille observes that the comedy can be understood "anche come sperimentazione squisitamente letteraria di un genere in corso di sviluppo, nel senso di un anticonformismo più calcolato e mediato di quanto possa apparire a prima vista" (also as an exquisite literary experimentation of a genre in the course of development, in a much more anti-conformist and more calculated and mediated sense than what it appears to be at first sight), proposing that whether it is literary or not, it is above all, anti-humanistic.[41] In other words, on a superficial level, Aretino followed the structure of the humanistic erudite comedy, but on another level, he challenged this structure by introducing outside elements such as multilingualism.

It is also important to note that Aretino's primary *modus operandi* in this text was to expose the depravity of the court, and explicitly the subordinated role of the courtier, highlighting the similarities between the prostitute and the courtier: both were subservient and sold their bodies for a living. In fact, despite the title, the main protagonists are not *cortigiane*, but male courtiers. The metaphor was certainly not lost on his audience. Through this comparison, and in numerous other ways throughout the text, Aretino problematizes gender roles and underlines the strong links among subordinate women in Renaissance Italian courts,

[41] Paul Larivaille, *La Vie quotidienne des courtisanes en Italie au temps de la Renaissance* (Paris: Hachette, 1975), 102.

courtesans, and the male courtiers and servants who occupied analogous positions. However, while doing so he also unintentionally reveals his own anxieties about this tension and about his own social position. As *La cortigiana* reveals in both its title and content, both servants and courtiers in the courtly social hierarchy were perceived as effeminate. Because they lacked power and autonomy, Aretino associated them with courtesans. Valeria Finucci reminds us that gender identification has never been as problematic for the traditionally identified female as it has been for the male:

> In the west, masculinity has been routinely identified with the universal—a definition that puts a great deal of pressure on men to behave "like men," while conferring some obvious advantages. Conversely, women have been the object of constant vigilance to make sure that they understand what is culturally expected of them within the limits of their sex. Ironically, proper gender alignment has been more relevant to men than to women, no matter the discrepancy in the amount of legislation meant to enforce decorum on maidens, wives, widows, and nuns.[42]

The female does not have to prove "femaleness" in the same way that a male must prove his "manliness"; his masculinity is therefore constantly in question. This was of no small consequence for a bastard such as Aretino. Jessica Goethals points to Dante's early portrait of Italy as a suffering woman ("serva Italia, di dolor ostello" [enslaved Italy, dwelling of pain]) to bring into focus what she terms the "feminized portrait of a dejected or lacerated political body."[43] Aretino was surely aware of this perspective and feared the potential consequences of being defined as a "dejected or lacerated" body because of an association between illegitimacy and tenuous masculinity. As I previously noted, Quaintance explores "how men in sixteenth-

[42] Valeria Finucci, *The Manly Masquerade: Masculinity, Paternity, and Castration in the Italian Renaissance* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003), 3.

[43] Jessica Goethals, "Vanquished Bodies, Weaponized Words: Pietro Aretino's Conflicting Portraits of the Sexes and the Sack of Rome," *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance* 17, no. 1 (Spring 2014): 55-78.

century Venice consolidated their bonds with one another through the creation, circulation, and consumption of literary fictions of women."[44] Thus, in many ways, their identities hinged on the ways women were defined against men, and femininity against masculinity. If the female was broken, the male was whole. Conversely, if a man lacked legitimacy or autonomy, he risked being associated with women. Aretino's association then was further complicated by his most fiercely associating himself with a fractured Pasquino that was also a reflection of a fractured political system, a system of which both Aretino and Pasquino were servants.

To be clear: I am *not* arguing that when Aretino challenged gender roles and social hierarchies, he was practicing a form of social activism. While he may have aimed on some level to open the eyes of the elites, he wrote above all for personal financial gain. Panizza Lorch maintains that "Aretino never really took up the challenge of Dante as defender of freedom and justice, not even when he was the citizen in a free city."[45] It is my contention that Aretino never really meant to enact change as much as he desired to highlight inequity and injustice in such a way that he could personally benefit from it. There is no money in social change, but selling interesting and provocative material is a lucrative business. As we have seen, Aretino enjoyed a public reputation that cast him as a thoroughly scandalous figure. This reputation was valuable because it inspired people to buy his work. Through it, however, he also came to occupy a symbolic role through which he uncovered the discordant voices and perspectives of his time.

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[44] Quaintance, *Textual Masculinity*, 6.

[45] Maristella de Panizza Lorch, "Pietro Aretino Revisited: Confessore e chiesa in the 'Cortigiana'," in *Pietro Aretino nel cinquecentenario della nascita: atti del convegno di Roma-Viterbo-Arezzo,* (28 settembre-1 ottobre 1992), Toronto (23-24 ottobre 1992), Los Angeles (27-29 ottobre 1992) (Roma: Salerno editrice, 1995), 728.

III. Letters, Polemics, and the Rise of the Poligrafi

In 1525, after his negative experiences in the Roman court, and especially because of the *I sonetti lussuriosi* scandal, Aretino wrote *La cortigiana* and then fled Rome, just before it was sacked in 1527. He wandered for some time in search of a court that would offer him protection but, unable to find one, he settled in Venice, where he lived for the rest of his life. As we have already seen, here he eventually created a new class of artist: the *poligrafo*. In Venice, Aretino was the first to publish letters in Italian (1537), dramatically altering the literary scene and breaking with the prevalent Latin and humanistic epistolary tradition. They were wildly successful and went though many reprints. He became acutely aware of the power of the printing press to facilitate the distribution of texts, which he used to his advantage by making a habit of publishing nearly everything he wrote.

It was in this role as a financially independent writer that his powerful personality had the most lasting impact. In this section, I examine what happened when this writer with a carefully cultivated reputation for transgression and confrontation began to earn his living among a circle of peers and apprentices. To do so, I discuss his interactions with several of these other writers and analyze representative parts of the published letters in which they staged their battles, to the delight of the reading public. This section makes two arguments: first, that Aretino's *modus operandi* made possible the rise of an independent class of writers, and second that his language use and the public exchange of letters with these writers helped generate the market that made this class possible.

Living in the Venetian republic, where he did not have to pay court to *signori*, Aretino was finally able to eke out a living through his own pen. In this way, he elevated himself above the effeminate, dependent status that he associated with common courtiers forced (like

prostitutes) to rely on patronage.[46] Moreover, he attracted many other youths to the city, all of whom desired to imitate him. Nicolò Franco, for example, lived with Aretino for many years, acting as his scribe and as a translator of Latin texts; however, the two eventually parted ways and an intense polemical relationship developed between them. Aretino accused Franco of plagiarism (likely with truth) and, in turn, Franco went on to publish many satirical works, all Aretinian in style and theme; in them, he defamed Aretino and inflamed their antagonism. As Paul Grendler argues, this agonistic demonstration was certainly the start of the rise of the *poligrafi* in Venice. This polemic and others like it fueled the literary output of the time and resulted in new uses of established genres, such as the letter and the dialogue. This revolution in the literary scene in Venice resonated throughout the Italian peninsula and abroad.[47]

The polemical nature of the period was central to the creation of an increased literary output in Venice aimed at the growing middle-class and less-elite reader. Authors including Anton Francesco Doni, Ortensio Lando, and Lodovico Dolce, among others, imitated Aretino by publishing invectives and letters that directly responded to him or alluded to him in obvious ways.[48] Anne Reynolds maps out in detail some of the most fiery polemics between Aretino and other influential writers of his time (Berni, Giovan Matteo Giberti, Giovanni Battista Sanga, and Francesco Minizio Calvo) in *Renaissance Humanism at the Court of Clement VII: Francesco Berni's Dialogue Against Poets in Context*.[49] While not all of these authors resided in Venice, it

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[46] While Aretino's association with the effeminate may not be overt, his linking of the role of the courtier with that of the courtesan is clear from the title of his *La cortegiana*. The main issue for Aretino is that both occupy a role that is defined against power and autonomy.

[47] For more on Aretino and the *poligrafi* in Venice, see Grendler*, Critics of the Italian World.*

[49] Anne Reynolds, *Renaissance Humanism at the Court of Clement VII: Francesco Berni's Dialogue Against Poets in Context* (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1997).

was the confrontational nature of their relation to Aretino, conducted largely through print, that fueled Aretino's literary output and the *poligrafi* movement in Venice.[50] The *poligrafi* movement was most certainly the precursor to the later libertine atmosphere in seventeenth-century Venice and the polemical theater scene in the eighteenth century, from which the Venetian novel emerged. Aretino set the stage for these later movements in which authors once again challenged literary tradition through dialogic representation of social and political antagonisms. Aretino, and the artists that followed in the *poligrafo*'s path, demonstrated how these various voices articulated irresolvable social conflicts.

Specifically, the very public literary battle of invectives between Aretino, Doni, Lando, and Franco set the stage for literary innovation because it fueled literary production and public interest: biting letters produced responses, which produced further responses. The more scandalous they were, the better they sold, and the public waited eagerly to read each new installment. Thanks to the many printing houses of the time, this battle is available in a variety of literary forms, most explicitly in letters.[51] Raymond Rosenthal, in his introduction to Aretino's *Sei giornate* describes how Aretino used his sharp intelligence and cutting pen to make a comfortable life for himself through his letters: "'I live,' he [Aretino] declared 'by the sweat of my ink-pot,' and he made no effort to conceal the fact that many of his ink-pot emanations were

[50] Ibid.

[51] For more information on these figures and their role in criticizing the establishment in which they found themselves on the lower rungs of the social hierarchy, see Grendler, *Critics of the Italian World*, 20-64.

forthright demands on the rich and powerful for hush-money, that is, to forestall his inevitable scathing assaults if the money wasn't forthcoming."[52] In the same vein, James Cleugh writes,

> Any biographer of Pietro Aretino must always bear in mind that he was a great liar all his life, with an extravagant imagination intent upon representing himself as a reckless, picturesque swashbuckler who had drunk life to the dregs before he was twenty-five. His letters were all written with an eye to subsequent publication, in order to maintain this legend among a great many others dealing with his recent as well as distant past. Carefully composed to amuse or impress the various persons to whom they were addressed, they were often inconsistent. He did not care in the least if he were found out in one of these fabrications.[53]

It is quite clear that Aretino was an opportunistic writer who welcomed and encouraged the polemics that drove interest in his work.

An example of this polemic appears in Aretino's exchange of letters with Doni, a polemical figure much like Aretino and a prime example of the Venetian *poligrafo.* Doni and Aretino were once close friends. Once their friendship came to an end, Doni published invectives against Aretino, some of which served to spoil Aretino's reputation for several centuries, until early Aretino scholars such as Francesco De Sanctis picked up his work again and began to

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[52] Pietro Aretino, *Dialogues*, trans. Raymond Rosenthal, intro. Margaret Rosenthal (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 377.

[53] James Cleugh, *The Divine Aretino* (New York: Stein and Day Publishers, 1965), 30. Cleugh notes that in Aretino's life, "A psychologically though not physically a reckless daring (is there something missing here?), carried out with a peculiar kind of humorous arrogance, predominated. An innate creative originality, not only in the literary sense, distinguished him from other typical Italian Renaissance adventures(adventurers?) who ran truer to the national failings--from a north European point of view--of unscrupulous cynicism, over-sharp practice, remorseless cruelty when their material interests seemed to demand it, and persistent ostentation. In Pietro all these traits were evident enough, but they were regularly modified, often even completely countered, by a humanity generous to the point of gullibility and a lack of common prudence which again and again got him into unnecessary trouble, where more cautious swindlers like the Marquess of Mantua would easily have evaded the consequences" (108-109).

reevaluate his place in literary history.[54] Lando was also a vagabond-style upstart, like Doni, who followed in Aretino's footsteps and wrote under a number of pseudonyms and often, also like Aretino, in a more vulgar style that appealed to a less literate but wider general readership. It makes sense that these figures would eventually become enemies because of the intense competition created by the printing press and to their shared interest in money, fame, and social status. It is unclear whether the polemics that drove their publications were relished as a means to sell more, or if the animosities between them were authentic driving forces. There must have been a level of friendly rivalry that benefitted all parties, but that there was true hostility is also evident, most clearly in the relationship between Aretino and Franco.

Franco, unlike Doni or Lando, had lived with Aretino and been under his tutelage for some time before they parted ways and eventually became enemies. In fact, Aretino, in a letter against rhetoric addressed to Franco from earlier in their friendship, advises the young upstart writer to make his writing his own through imitation rather than thievery:

> The nurse instructs the infant she nourishes, taking his feet and teaching him to walk, putting her own smile into his eyes, her own words upon his tongue, her own manners into his gestures until Nature, as he grows older, teaches him attitudes of his own. And he, little by little, having learned to eat, to walk and to talk, forms a new series of customs; and leaving the embrace of his nurse, he puts into operation his own native habits; and so it is with all of us; we retain only so much of our early instruction as birds do; a knowledge of the mother and father from whom they fly away. This he must do who would amount to anything as a poet and, taking only a spiritual inspiration, he should emerge with a harmony formed by his own organs.[55]

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[54] See Francesco De Sanctis, *Storia della letteratura italiana*, vol. II (Bari: Laterza, 1958). For more on Doni, see Maria A. Bartoletti, "Doni, Anton Francesco," in *Dizionario critico della letteratura italiana*, vol. II, ed. Vittore Branca (Torino, UTET, 1973), 17-19; see also Ettore Bonora, "Anton Francesco Doni," in *Storia della letteratura italiana*, vol. IV, ed. Emilio Cecchi e Natalino Sapegno (Milano, Garzanti, 1966), 436-443.

[55] English translation from Samuel Putnam, *The Works of Aretino* (New York: Covici-Friede Publishers, [1926] 1933), 133.

This self-reflective letter also conveys a sense of fatherly love or, at minimum, concern for his pupil. The letter is both a demonstration and eloquent summary of the way Aretino's method sets the stage for that later group of upstarts in Venice in the eighteenth century and shows a soft, parental, and caring tone, rather than an academic, condescending, or threatening one. Even though the letter is addressed to Franco, it was also written with publication in mind and therefore is addressed to all upstarts and offers yet another type of voice. In this way, it also serves as a defense of the *poligrafo* writing and lifestyle and is a declaration of independence in the face of the numerous pedants of the period.

In fact, the ongoing scandal upon which Aretino relied to earn his living was not merely a personal battle among several writers; it also involved sweeping criticisms of other classes of writers with the aim of glorifying the *poligrafi*. Just as Aretino advocated a break with the highly imitative style of many Renaissance writers of his time, he also was particularly rough on "pedants." Pedants could refer to *literati* making a living teaching the children of the elite and noble class or to university professors who promoted traditional approaches to reading and writing. In either case, to Aretino, a pedant reinforced a value system that he disputed. In a letter against pedantry, addressed to Cardinale Di Ravenna, Aretino insists:

> How much it would be better for a *gran maestro* to have in his house a few faithful fellows, free folk and persons of good will, than to attempt to adorn himself with the vulpine modesty of the asinine pedants who write books; who, when they have assassinated and, with their labors, have succeeded in croaking the dead, do not rest until they have crucified the living.[56]

These labors on the pedants' part are a result of thievery, according to Aretino, and while some of these artists and writers may be literate, Aretino maintains that they are not virtuous. In fact, he argues that it was "pedantry that poisoned the Medici; it was pedantry that cut the throat of

[56] Putnam, *Pietro Aretino*, 154-155. Letter LXIII.

Duke Alessandro; and what is worse, it has provoked a heresy against our faith through the mouth of Luther, the arch-pedant of them all." These severe condemnations serve primarily to elevate Aretino's own status as a *poligrafo*.[57] In other words, Aretino justifies his own literary transgressions while also portraying the *literati* and pedants as the true threat to the court system and to a broader value system that hinged on Catholicism.[58] Aretino continues:

> Certainly it is, all the *literati* are not virtuous; and when letters are not at home in the gentle mind of a noble or good man, they may be said to be nothing but bits of torn parchment. There is indeed a difference between a virtuous man and a literary hack, for virtue is founded in pure goodness of intention, and literature in the captious malignity of thievery. [59]

What Aretino is highlighting here is a separation between what he does as a *poligrafo* and what others are doing as *literati* and pedants. He makes this most explicit when he singles out Molza as an example of someone both virtuous and literate, Ubaldino as literate but not virtuous, and Giambattista Pontano as virtuous but not literate.

> Near the conclusion of this letter, Aretino urges his readers to
>
> Cherish […], gentlemen, lovers of the useful and of your honor, and bind to you with courtesy your solicitous servants, knowing there is more virtue in a fellow of the stalls or in a lackey, who is only alive when his master is looking at him, than there is in all the lettered ones that ever were.[60]

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[57] Ibid.

[58] It is not in the scope of this dissertation to examine the intricacies of Aretino's religion; however, here we see him playing the middle ground, and even supporting more traditional Catholic views that would have placed in him favor of the Papal court. In fact, Aretino seemed to mediate his writings to align with the popular opinion at any given moment. For more on this and the ways Aretino's religiosity, like his identity, was fluid, see Waddington, *Aretino's Satyr*.

[59] Putnam, *Pietro Aretino*, 154-155. Letter LXIII.

[60] Ibid.

He then arrives at his main point: "For learning is the property of those who fear to do disagreeable things; and woe to your welfare, if it lay in the hands of one of those untamed Ciceros instead of Messer Giambattista Pontano!"[61] This letter is of particular importance because in it Aretino sets himself apart from pedants and from the *literati*. Aretino is making a deliberate connection between himself—and by extension all *poligrafi*—and those who perform manual labor and other lower-class jobs. The contention is that while his solicitous writings may appear base, they are actually useful in the same way that a horse-stall cleaner's work is useful and important. This link between manual labor with literary output fueled the sensational elements of Aretino's work and reputation.

While Aretino relied on sensationalism, he also attempted to control scandal so that he emerged on the right side: in other words, usually with the aristocracy. He sought a free life in which he earned a living from his writing, and what sold was sex, scandal, and polemics. However, as has become clear, Aretino was not the only one to try to strike this precarious balance between sensational writing and favor among the elite classes. Therefore, a vigorous competition emerged in Venice between Aretino and the other *poligrafi*. What resulted was a literature that exposed a conflict between the desire for independence from the aristocratic class, an independence that Venice supported more than any other place on the peninsula (Venetian publishers having proven more adaptable than those of other Italian cities at navigating and circumventing Church prohibitions), and a desire for acknowledgment and support from the aristocracy to which the artisan class was still tied.[62] This internal conflict was a direct result of

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[61] Ibid.

[62] For more on Venice's adaptable publishing houses, see Paul F. Grendler, *The Roman Inquisition and the Venetian Press, 1540-1605* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1977). For more on the complications between the Venetian and Romans presses, see Mario

the hierarchal social and political system that forced artists and the working class into subservient positions, which often reflected women's roles.

Because of their incorporation of these tensions and conflicts, Aretino's letters demonstrate a heteroglossia that is characteristic of the hierarchical social and political organization of the court patronage system from which Aretino sought to break free and within which he also sought to elevate his own political and social status. The letters contain a variety of voices and registers, reflecting the fragmented political systems that made up the Italian peninsula of his time. Consequently, a number of his letters and other texts are performative, seeking to manipulate *and* secure his historical reputation as a literary and political figure, as demonstrated in the soft, instructive tone of the previously examined latter, which is in direct contrast with the threatening tone of his letters to the Duke Ferrarese or even to Charles V that demanded goods, or the scholarly, academic register of the letters addressed to Michelangelo in which he made suggestions on how to paint the Sistine Chapel.[63]

Aretino challenged the literary establishment of his time—which favored letters in the humanist tradition, philosophical treatises, and pedant dialogues—by imitating the traditional forms but populating them with base characters, vulgar language, and low circumstances and by revealing social tensions. The publication of the letters was also an act of subversion against the

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Infelise, *I padroni dei libri: Il controllo sulla stampa nella prima età moderna* (Rome: Editori Laterza, 2014). This text is important here because Venice, unlike any other city in the Italian peninsula, sought to keep its own publication prohibition and restriction laws rather than adhere to the Papal Court. This was done, in part, because of the commercial success of publishing in Venice.

[63] See *The Works of Aretino, Translated into English from the original Italian*, with a critical and biographical essay by Samuel Putnam, Illustrations by The Marquis de Bayros in Two Volumes; Pascal Covici: Chicago; 1926; Volume II., 292-297.

patronage system, because, as discussed above, it allowed Aretino to support himself without a patron. Aretino can thus also be recognized as an early instigator of the fall of the patronage system. Renato Pasta, echoing Muratori, states that the decline of the patronage system began in the *Settecento*. However, as we have seen, there is evidence that this trend began as early as the *Cinquecento* in Venice. It is most apparent among artists such as Aretino, who began to make their living as the result of the printing press rather than solely by patronage. Moreover, the publication of letters in the vulgar tongue invited citizens from all walks of life into the circle of communication concerning a range of social and political issues—a phenomenon that began before the eighteenth century, as Pasta makes clear:

> la circolazione degli stampanti, anche eterodossi, in città è capillare già al passaggio tra Seicento e Settecento, affidata al tessuto fitto di conversazioni, botteghe, barbieri, locande, luoghi di ritrovo e di consumi che contraddistingue il passaggio urbano ed evidenzia tanto l'osmosi intercetuale del discorso pubblico, cui partecipano patrizi e non privilegiati, ecclesiastici e membri delle professioni; quanto il panorama istituzionale che precede e accompagna le fortune delle librerie veneziana dell'età dei lumi.[64]
>
> (the circulation of printers, even dissident ones, in the city is already widespread at the turn of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, entrusted to the tight fabric of conversations, stores, barber shops, inns, and taverns that marks the urban movement and highlights both the interclass osmosis of public discourse, involving the under-privileged and patricians, clerics and members of the professions; as much as the institutional landscape that precedes and accompanies the fortunes of the Venetian bookstores of the Enlightenment.)

This spread of new knowledge among the lower classes upset the social hierarchy and placed the aristocracy on alert. Clearly, the printing press was the key for many writers, and Venice was

[64] Renato Pasta, "Mediazioni e trasformazioni: operatori del libro in Italia nel Settecento," in *Archivio storico italiano*, disp. II, eds. Mario Ascheri, Emilio Cristiani, Riccardo Fubini, et all (Florenceç: Leo S. Olschki editore, 2014), 335. My translation.

home to more presses than any other Italian city during the first half of the sixteenth century.[65] It is most likely for this very reason that the slow disintegration of the patronage system in Italy began here. The diffusion of information among the lower classes was probably also the reason nobles and kings, such as Charles V, conceded to the rather paltry demands Aretino often made in his letters.

IV. Literary Innovation in the *Sei giornate*

Thus far, this chapter has focused on how Aretino's public persona and relations with other writers fueled literary innovation by enabling the rise of the *poligrafi*. We have seen, however, that his writing itself also broke important ground: in his *pasquinate* he adapted a traditional form to air his personal grievances; *La cortigiana* used multilingualism and questioned the gender roles of the time; his letters were written in Italian rather than the traditional Latin and reflected a variety of registers; and most of his work used sexually explicit references and exposed class conflicts to appeal to a scandal-loving public. We turn now to a detailed analysis of a text that exemplifies these trends in ways that make visible Aretino's influence on seventeenth- and eighteenth-century writers. The *Sei giornate*, or *Ragionamenti*, is Aretino's most famous dialogue, mainly because of its extremely detailed, interlaced, and overall shocking pornographic nature. Giovanni Aquilecchia notes that the *Sei giornate* is a satire against, or parody of, neoplatonic dialogues and treatises on love, such as Bembo's *Gli asolani*

[65] See F. Barbieriato, *Politici e ateisti: percorsi della miscredenza a venezia tra Seicento e Settecento* (Milan: Unicopli, 2006) and Id., *Giovanni Giacomo Hertz: editoria e commercio librario a Venezia nel '600*, "La bibliofilìa," CVII (2005), 143-170, 276-289. Cited in Pasta, "Mediazioni e trasformazioni," 335.

(1505) and Castiglione's *Il libro del cortegiano* (1528).[66] It is undoubtedly an inversion of the *Ragionamento-Dialogo* archetype, the instructional dialogue that Aretino transforms into a "school of whoredom."[67] The dialogue reads realistically, as Guido Davico Bonino suggests: "Nel dialogo l'atmosfera è […] verosimile, gli eventi possibili (In the dialogue, the atmosphere is […] realistic, the events possible).[68] When read as the analogy that it is, the tension between the roles that the women characters occupy and those of their male counterparts within the court system becomes palpable.

Since the dialogue does seem to depict reality, it is tempting to read it as a perverted survival guide or educational manual for all women, and not for men or courtesans in a male-centered world. In fact, we are informed that a disobedient wife could be subject to a punishment called "the thirty-one"; the number becomes frightening when you learn that it refers to the number of men who were to rape her.[69] And while the work highlights the institutionalized

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[66] While 1528 may be the official publication date of Castiglione's text, it is certain that earlier versions were in circulation and that Castiglione felt compelled to release an official book before the unofficial manuscripts were copied and published illegally. It is very likely that Aretino had read the work by the time he began the *Sei Giornate*.

[67] For more of the forms and critical apparatus of the dialogue during the late Italian Renaissance, see Jon R. Snyder, *Writing the Scene of Speaking: Theories of Dialogue in the Late Italian Renaissance* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1989).

[68] Guido Davico Bonino, "Introduction," *Aretino: Sei giornate* (Torino: Giulio Einaudi editore, s. p. a., 1975), XXXII.

[69] Aretino, *Dialogues,* 40. For more about the "trentuno" and other real punishments and public shamings dealt to women and prostitutes during the Renaissance, see Deanna Shemek's entry on "Courtesans and Prostitutes, Cortigiana, Courtigiane" in *Encyclopedia of Women in the Renaissance: Italy, France, and England***,** ed. Diana Maury Robin, Anne R. Larsen, Carole Levin (Santa Barbara, Denver, Oxford: ABC-CLIO, Inc, 2007), 104. See also Elizabeth S. Cohen, "Courtesans and Whores: Words and Behavior in Roman Streets," *Women's Studies* 19 (1991): 201-208 and Larivaille, *La Vie quotidienne des courtisanes en Italie.* Other articles that discuss the lives of courtesans and specific courtesans include Lynee Lawner, *Lives of Courtesans* (Milan: Rizzoli, 1987); Georgina Masson, *Courtesans of the Italian Renaissance*

brutality against women of the time, it also calls attention to the ways ordinary male citizens could similarly be subjected to vicious abuse. In this text, Aretino explores how a marginalized social group (prostitutes, but also women in general) was forced to survive in odious ways. In point of fact, the courtesan, the servant, and the courtier, along with any number of lower-class citizens, had similar survival paths. Aretino's principal protagonist and speaker, Nanna, says, "Flattery and deceit are the darlings of great men and so with these men spread the butter on thick, if you want to get something out of them, otherwise you'll come home to me with a full belly and an empty purse."[70] In other words, one must play by the rules of the elite to earn one's keep and simply survive; this was true for any lower-class citizen, artist, or courtier. Aretino took on the voice of Nanna in the *Sei giornate* because he could identify his position as courtier with hers as prostitute, and because, like her, he sought to assert his independent agency. However, Aretino was not an advocate for women's equality or education, nor did he challenge heteronormative values in an effort to change them. While on one level he satirized emasculated and subservient men, his more perceptive readers would have implicitly registered a social critique of the courtier society, manners, and culture that so often resembled that of courtesans. A

(London: Secker and Warberg, 1975); Pio Pecchiai, *Donne del Rinascimento in Roma. Imperia. Lucrezia figlia d'Imperia. La misteriosa Fiammetta* (Padua: CEDAM, 1958); Margaret Rosenthal, *The Honest Courtesan: Veronica Franco, Citizen and Writer in Sixteenth-Century Venice* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992); and Deanna Shemek, *Ladies Errant: Wayward Women and Social Order in Early Modern Italy* (Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press, 1998) and "'Mi Mostrano a ditto tutti quanti': Disease, Deixis, and Disfiguration in the Lamento di una cortigiana ferrarese," in *Italiana* 11: *Essays on Gender, Literature, and Aesthetics in the Italian Renaissance. In honor of Robert J. Rodini*, ed. Paul A. Ferrara, Eugenio Giusti, and Jane Tylus (Boca Raton, FL: 2004), 49-64.

[70] Pietro Aretino, *The School of Whoredom*, trans. Rosa Maria Falva (London: Hesperius Press Limited, 2003), 26.

contemporary reader can even detect his own internal struggle and tension with the ways his masculinity was at stake.

The dialogue takes place over six days and is divided into two parts. In part one, Nanna and Antonia discuss and explore the three main life choices available to women at the time: becoming a nun, a wife, or a whore. In part two, Nanna instructs her daughter on how to be a whore and explores the three main aspects of whoredom: the "art of being a whore," the "vicious betrayals that men wreak on women," and "how to be a procuress."[71] Nanna is in many ways indicative of the trickster role that Aretino himself so often embraced and recalls Pasquino, whom, as we have seen, became inextricable from Aretino's public persona. If, as Paula Findlen contends in her study of Renaissance erotica, pornographers claim to "[lay] bare the truth" through a medium that shockingly displays "those who had power and those who succumbed to it."[72]

Margaret F. Rosenthal, in her introduction to the *Sei giornate*, supports the idea that Aretino intended to appeal to a wide audience: "his works were not intended only for tightly knit groups of male intellectuals, as was the case for other erotic satires of the same period," such as Vignali's *La cazzaria*; instead his "dialogues were intended for everyone who desired a glimpse of the workings of Renaissance cultural, political, and religious institutions."[73] Rosenthal highlights a key element of Aretino's strategy behind using Nanna as the central figure and primary speaker of the dialogues: "this complex machinery [political, cultural, and religious institutions] was examined from the vantage point, not of the male elite, but rather of lower-class

[71] Aretino, *Aretino's Dialogues*, see the Table of Contents.

[72] Cited in Goethals, "Vanquished Bodies," 85.

[73] Rosenthal, trans., *Aretino's Dialogues*, xiv.

women, women who were deeply mistrustful and scornful of pretentious, misogynist, and vindictive male intellectuals."[74] The *Sei giornate*, however, does more than reveal realistic and difficult truths about the circumscribed sphere and options available to women during the Renaissance. Nor is its scope limited to showing the corruption of society in general through the vision of a convent, a woman's household, and a whorehouse. Instead, the *Dialogues* propose a parallel structure that equates both the circumscribed lives of women and the ways they make a living with those of courtiers. M. Rosenthal contends that Aretino was as "'unfree' a worker as the female prostitute whom he satirized in such lavish and sordid detail," a view that is substantiated in this study and that I extend to writers and artists more broadly.

The dialogue presents interlocutors of various classes and perspectives that are in clear and open conflict with each other and within themselves. Since there is no possibility of a socially moral resolution that could coincide with the ideological status quo, the *Sei giornate* functions as a symbolic act that reveals the irresolvable conflict within Aretino's positions as a courtier, as an artist, and as a *poligrafo*. This text was important for Aretino and for posterity because it served as a model, along with his six volumes of letters written in both the vernacular and in prose, of a text that examined conflict on political, social, and historical levels.

Raymond Rosenthal, in his 1976 English translation of the *Sei giornate* (*Dialogues*), poses the following question: "why did Aretino write the Dialogues, which are so obviously a rancorous satiric picture of precisely the kind of lax morals and pervasive corruption that he and all of Venice wallowed in?"[75] Rosenthal suggests that he wrote the *Dialogues* as an attack on all those who did not support him during his upward trajectory and on those who abused him during

[74] Ibid.

[75] Ibid., 382.

his years working in base jobs such as stable boy, pimp, and messenger. But Nanna is much more than Aretino's personal attack on those who oppressed him. Instead, she is a voice of the oppressed of Aretino's time—specifically, of oppressed men who had no way to change their social position. She testifies to conflicted ideologies and complicated social and class structures at a moment when there were no resolutions in sight. This irresolvability is a crucial point. The *Sei giornate*'s polemic and antagonistic characteristics make it representative of the social and political conflicts of the period. Jameson contends that to rewrite a text "in terms of the antagonist dialogue of class voices" is to refocus it "as a *parole*, or individual utterance, of that vaster system, or *langue*, of class discourse. […] On this rewriting, the individual utterance or text is grasped as a symbolic move in an essentially polemic and strategic ideological confrontation between the classes."[76] In other words, the irresolvable conflict expressed in fiction forces the text to become a symbolic act in its antagonistic performance. Aretino identifies and establishes his social, political, and historical role through Nanna, a character born from inherent and irresolvable social conflict based on the static social structure of Renaissance Italy. In Nanna, Aretino develops a model and trajectory for later peripheral figures and for the formulation of the novel in Venice in the eighteenth century. The novel, more than any other genre, functions in society in the same way as Aretino's scandalous works, revealing the irresolvable and shedding light on social conflict.

M. Rosenthal is correct when she makes the following connection among Nanna, Aretino, and Venice:

> Nanna and Antonia's rejection of marriage for Pippa and their endorsement of the illicit world of the prostitute, concubine, or courtesan are manifestations of the kind of professional freedom that Aretino claimed was available to him in Venice. Just as

[76] Jameson, *The Political Unconscious*, 1178-1179.

> professional writers fashion a public persona of their own choosing, prostitutes and other marginalized individuals manipulate their public identity to serve their own designs.

Despite Aretino's play with his public persona, he was still obligated to the public for support, and to a certain degree and to the elite classes, who had the financial means to purchase his work. Like the prostitute who must "sit with someone else's buttocks, walk with someone else's feet, sleep with someone else's eyes, and eat with someone else's mouth … ever since money came into existence, a whore must open her legs as well for a lackey as for a king,"[77] Aretino and the *poligrafi* were tied to the elite, despite their protestations that argued otherwise, because elite readers still had more capital and purchasing power than middle-class readers. M. Rosenthal also points to Nanna's observation of writers' penchant for cruelty, which often led to women's tragic ruin. She concludes that women and courtiers shared a common vulnerability: they were expendable once used by their patrons. However, the woman's negative trajectory was much shorter than a man's, so the man was in a better position than the woman. The woman's position was based on primarily fleeting virtues, while the man's on a presumably enduring intellect, wit, and talent. Of course, as we saw above, complicated conceptions of the prostitute that included the more learned and intellectual *cortigiana* as well as the mere *prostituta* or *puttana* muddled how women were perceived.

Aretino wrote in opposition to the Petrarchan and Bembian models proposed in the other treatises, and even though, as Aquilecchia notes, he was later persuaded to revise the *Sei giornate* by the Venetian publisher Marcolini to adhere to a linguistic standard that was then being adopted by most publishers in Venice, his focus on the hierarchy of language was still effective. In other words, he suggested that the use of a highly literary language—Petrarchan or Bembian

[77] Pietro Aretino, *Dialogues*, trans. Raymond Rosenthal (New York: Marsilio, 1994), cited by Margaret Rosenthal in the epilogue, 396.

language, for example—did not necessarily indicate that the speaker or writer was educated. In fact, of the many affectations that Nanna suggests that Pippa carry out, the most important is to have a copy of Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* in a conspicuous place for her visitors to see. In specific instances, Aretino recalled the affected speech and language use of the Petrachists. For example, in book one day two, Nanna tells Antonia that a good prostitute ought to imitate fashionable language: instead of "finestra," she should say "balcone," or "porta" instead of "uscio," and she should use the more eloquent "viso," not "faccia," and "cuore" not "core." Fashionable language is a matter of both word choice and pronunciation. This is clearly both a representation of a social reality among Roman (and Venetian) courtesans and an implicit denigration of the learned humanists of the period.[78] Aretino highlighted these same Tuscanisms in *La cortigiana* to reinforce his own heteroglossial language, and in this way, he folds a broader class of people into the dialectic.

Aretino also uses Nanna, an unlikely narrator, to free himself from the constraints of the male voice and the humanist dialectical tradition in which higher-order philosophical themes were explored. The female was largely considered inferior to her male counterpart: in Aristotelian terms, she was a deformed male, rather and "imperfect male," and hence even less than human. The female narrator then lent Aretino a freedom of speech that was more easily retractable, easier to pass off as a joke, and less serious than would have been assumed in a similar dialogue featuring a male narrator. The dialogue form is often a location of philosophical discourse, and while Aretino's may seem far removed from the themes addressed by Speroni and others, in fact, he attempts to reveal what he would consider the inherent fallacies of their works. To achieve this goal, Aretino turns every aspect of the typical dialogue on its head. The typical

[78] In no part of the *Sei giornate* does Aretino ridicule Venetian courtesans or patricians.

dialogue was normally a dialectical exploration of intellectual and philosophical topics, such as love and God or language and culture. Instead, Aretino offers full-bodied speakers who seem to spill from the text. In this very important aspect, Aretino's *Sei giornate* begins to resemble more the novel than a Renaissance dialogue.

I am far from the first to posit that the dialogue is an early form of the novel. Jon R. Snyder cites both F. W. Schlegel's aphorism "Novels are the Socratic dialogues of our time" and Bakhtin's "coy reversal of that same aphorism [that] 'Socratic dialogues were the novels of their time'" to conclude that both ideas "confirm […] the link between Speroni's more modern modes of theoretical discourse" and the discourse and realism of the novel. He argues, in fact, that

> what is missing from the dialogue that is found in the novel is, among other things, a portrayal of the sheer corporality of the speakers, the physicality of their actions and experiences: dialogue is an arena of ideas and discourse, but is limited in its power to describe the experiences and sensations of the body itself. Despite the realism with which they are depicted, speakers in dialogue are shadowy person-ideas compared with the fully embodied figures and that characters may become in novels.[79]

Yet Snyder never mentions Aretino. Perhaps this is because the *Sei giornate* was highly unusual for its time. While most other dialogues of the period were populated by what Snyder calls "shadowy person-ideas," the *Sei giornate* is filled with the corporality that was later associated with the novel genre. Aretino's text reveals an obvious effort to provide readers with a vivid and socially immersive experience during the reading process. It is true that the text is not as fully developed as the modern novel, nor are the characters of Nanna, Antonia, and Pippa as fleshed out as their later reincarnations in the libertine novels of England and France. Nonetheless, the *Sei giornate* is marked by physicality and vivid characterizations. These features distinguish it from all other dialogues of the period. More importantly, they influenced the birth of the

[79] Snyder, *Writing the Scene of Speaking*, 121.

Venetian novel. In moving from the ephemeral to the material, the *Sei giornate* served as a major challenge to some Italian authors and as a model for others.

Aretino worked out his anxieties about the definitions of the subordinate classes by redefining the letter genre and exploring new, transgressive avenues in his later works, particularly vulgar prose and the didactic dialogue. His challenges to traditional genres and values and to traditional conceptions of gender roles became the starting point for later Venetian authors. In *La cortigiana,* Aretino follows the structure of the humanistic erudite comedy (which in that period had only recently been reformatted), but on another level, he challenges that structure by bringing outside elements such as multilingualism. Moreover, he localizes the comedy in the well-known Roman court in the contemporary period rather than placing the action of the play in a classical location and timeframe, therefore turning tradition upside down.[80] In this way, he forces the audience to face its own court rife with social tension, a subversive move that will resonate with later generations.

The themes and techniques that I have highlighted in this section are those that moved beyond the Italian peninsula, that informed English and French authors, and that finally found their way back into Italy, specifically back into Italian prose in Venice. These later Venetian writers continued to struggle with the same class conflicts that forced them into similar subservient roles that carried the risk of being seen as effeminate because of the widespread association between dominance and masculinity. Like Aretino, these writers also challenged genre and form, forcing texts to accommodate their social and political conflicts. Aretino's Nanna reveals what appears to be irresolvable conflicts, but through the agency newly accorded to the new female prostitute-protagonist, the speaking of truth to power is portrayed as a way of

[80] However, Aretino was not the first or only one.

changing society. This is what Chiari was attracted to and what he incorporated into his bestseller, and what Gozzi feared in the new female protagonists of the novel. The mere creation of Nanna was groundbreaking, but it appears even more so when studied as part of the evolution of the novel over the next two centuries.

CHAPTER 2:

LA SERENISSIMA AND A HISTORY OF INNOVATION

Venice and its history have always fascinated people from all walks of life.
It is a place of contradictions—a city without land, an empire without borders.
"Venetians first, Christians afterward."[81]

In chapter 1, I showed that Pietro Aretino passed the second half of his life in Venice writing and publishing controversial texts, specifically letters and his dialogue, the *Sei giornate*, in which he teased out a new political agenda in significant ways. He highlighted some of the most important social issues of his time and class: namely, the hierarchal divisions that placed lower-class males into a social class similar to that of women. Aretino capitalized on this phenomenon, sensationalizing the reversal of gender roles and using sex and prostitution in fiction as a way to engage readers from all walks of life.

What made Aretino and the *poligrafi*'s literary successes possible was a convergence of several key factors, including the unstable Papal court in Rome, an insidious backlash against a rigid social hierarchy that marked all the courts on the peninsula, and most importantly, *the possibility of exile in the Republic of Venice*. This final point was an essential contributor to Aretino's development of his authorial voice. I will briefly review the characteristics of sixteenth-century Venice that fostered the emergence of the *poligrafi* class before proceeding to

[81] See Donald M. Nicol, *Byzantium and Venice: A Study in Diplomatic and Cultural Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 381-407. Thomas F. Madden disagrees with Nicol's assessment of the Venetian people, arguing that they have always been much more complex: "Capitalism and idealism are not incompatible concepts. Like all people, Venetians were a complex tapestry of good and wicked, selfless and selfish, honorable and shameful." See Thomas F. Madden, *Venice: A New History* (New York: Penguin Books, 2012), 6. See also Will Durant, *The History of Civilization V: The Renaissance* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1953), 290.

the main topic of this chapter: the historical circumstances set in place in the seventeenth century that made mid-eighteenth-century Venice a propitious environment for the rise of the novel. The summary description of Aretino's Venice will set the stage for understanding the literary continuities that connect Aretino's Nanna in the sixteenth century to Chiari's *La filosofessa italiana* in the mid-eighteenth century.

Just as Venice opened her shores to foreign trade, she also opened her borders to voluntary exiles. Artists of all types sought out Venice in the sixteenth century because it offered the possibility of seeking fame and fortune on their own terms. Venice's oligarchy gave them room to explore their talents and exploit new technical advances in fine art and letters: oil painting and the printing press, respectively. Venice also appealed to artists' less holy appetites for women and earthly pleasures in general. Bellini, for example, was known for his womanizing and spent his final years as a Venetian resident. Giorgione was another artist sent to live in Venice at a young age who reveled in her colors, liked "handsome youths, soft-contoured women," and enjoyed the many pleasures Venice offered as no other city could.[82] Another Venetian star of the art world in Venice was Titian, a student of Giorgione and close friend of Pietro Aretino. They shared a love of fame, revelry, and women. This period also saw an opening and expansion of art to include Christian as well as pagan themes, reflecting the antagonistic relationship of the city to the Vatican and the pope.[83]

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[82] Durant, *The Renaissance*, 304.

[83] There are many resources that examine the arts in Venice (art, music, and architecture). Some of the more relevant sources for pagan and Christian themes are Jonathan Glixon, *Honoring God and the City: Music at the Venetian Confraternities, 1260-1806* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); Norbert Huse and Wolfgang Wolters, *The Art of Renaissance Venice* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990); and David Rosand, *Painting in the Cinquecento Venice: Titian, Veronese, Tintoretto* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1986).

In the sixteenth century, there was no city on the peninsula better suited than Venice to host the type of artistic innovations that writers like Aretino realized. While it had limitations similar to those of other duchies, city-states, and kingdoms on the Italian peninsula, Venice's political structure and capitalist economy allowed just enough social and economic freedom for artists to thrive. What set Venice apart historically from other city-states and duchies on the Italian peninsula was its distinct political system, an early form of capitalism, and the significant development of a strong artisan class that was more capable of self-sufficiency than artisan classes in cities such as Florence, Rome, or Naples.[84] In other Italian cities, for example, someone like Pietro Bembo had to simultaneously write poetry, write theses, and work for the pope or for rich patrons. In this way, artists and philosophers were directly linked to politics, not just because they represented public, social, and political issues in their works, but because they were actually politicians themselves, or were, at minimum, working for the political or religious systems that dominated daily life.[85] In Venice, in contrast, artists were able to benefit from the

[84] Specifically, as Madden notes in *Venice: A New History*, "Education levels in Venice had always been among the highest in Europe," which was certainly beneficial for writers, who had a better chance of selling books for entertainment to merchants who could read. According to Madden, a "quarter of all publications in Europe were produced in Venice" (318-319).

[85] For a sound history of Venice's political, social, and cultural life, see Madden, *Venice: A New History*. For a discussion of how writers and artists worked in the artistic and political realms, see Anne Reynolds, *Renaissance Humanism at the Court of Clement VII: Francesco Berni 's Dialogue Against Poets in Context* (New York; London: Routledge, 1977). Additional sources for the economic history of Venice include Frederic C. Lane and Reinhold C. Mueller, *Money and Banking in Medieval and Renaissance Venice* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985); Gino Luzzatto, *Storia economica di Venezia del XI XVI secolo* (Centro Internazionale delle Arti e del Costume, Venice, 1961); Richard MacKenney, *Tradesmen and Traders: The World of the Guilds in Venice and Europe* (New York; London: Routledge, 1990); Reinhold C. Mueller, *The Venetian Money Market: Banks, Panics, and the Public Debt, 1200-1500* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997); and Richard T. Rapp, *Industry and Economic Decline in Seventeenth-Century Venice* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976).

cosmopolitan city's stronger merchant class by bypassing the patronage system to cater to a new class of consumers. Book sales were also facilitated by the mass production of portable books, a Venetian innovation, and by the Venetian Republic's relative tolerance of challenging texts. At a minimum, the censors were slow to shut down printing.

Venice was populated by a mix of wayfarers, international merchants, laborers, and nobles. Moreover, although its hierarchal social system was influenced by major courts both on the peninsula and beyond, Venice still operated under a much more fluid conception of class than did other Italian cities.[86] As we saw in the last chapter, Aretino and the other *poligrafi* exemplified the new possibilities that Venice offered: thanks to the printing press, they were now able to support themselves by selling their writing to a diverse Venetian public. By the end of the sixteenth century, printers in Venice had published more than twice as many volumes as printers in any other Italian city.[87] These texts were a combination of current works, classics, and earlier

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[86] See Richard MacKenny, "'A Plot Discover'd?' Myth, Legend, and the 'Spanish' Conspiracy against Venice in 1618," in *Venice Reconsidered: The History and Civilization of an Italian City-State*, ed. John Jeffries Martin and Dennis Romano (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins Press, 2000), 185-216. For a challenge to Venetian scholars' perceptions of social identities of the Venetian hierarchy, see John R. Hale's seminal history, *Renaissance Venice* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1973). By Aretino's time, however, John Martin argues that the hierarchal social fluidity and hybrid identities preceding the late sixteenth century had become extremely limited and that the Republic of Venice was more a vision than a fact, since during that time there was an emphasis on hierarchy and social control, especially on women and gender constructions. See John Jeffries Martin, *Venice's Hidden Heretics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 168-9; Joanne Ferraro, *Nefarious Crimes, Contested Justice: Illicit Sex and Infanticide in the Republic of Venice, 1557-1789* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008).

[87] Durant, *The Renaissance*, 315. Durant writes that "[b]y the end of the fifteenth century 4987 books had been printed in Italy: 300 in Florence, 629 in Milan, 925 in Rome, 2835 in Venice" (315). While these numbers have been debated over the past twenty years and a new understanding of the Republic has emerged, it is still widely understood that Venice was the leader in book printing through the sixteenth century. These early numbers were culled from the early work of John Addington Symonds, *Renaissance in Italy*, Vol. 2 (London: Smith, Elder, & Co., 1877), 369. I accessed the text online via Project Gutenberg. Their edition is

Italian writers such as Petrarch, Dante, and Boccaccio. This phenomenon indicates an economic structure that was sufficient to support the printing of a large number of books. In other words, it means that the Venetian press offered support and encouragement to writers (who may have lived anywhere) apart from the patronage system.

As chapter 1 illustrated through the case of Aretino (who was by no means the only innovative and controversial writer of his time), Venice in the sixteenth century was a hotbed of innovation and polemics, and even though "it began to slip into political obscurity" in the seventeenth century, Madden notes, "[Venice] arose as a destination in its own right" as "new travelers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries sought the unusual, the interesting, and the beautiful."[88] Its cosmopolitan makeup, capitalist economy, and patrician government formed a perfect mix for artists to test their freedoms and explore the limits of their fields. Similar characteristics persisted into the eighteenth century and influenced the experiences of writers as well. They made the rise of the novel possible. Between the revolution of the printing press and the *poligrafi* and the *poligrafi* and the novel, however, there was an essential intermediate step: opera.

This chapter explains how the libertinism of Venice's seventeenth-century opera scene and the publication of early seventeenth-century novels set the stage for the polemical theater scene in the eighteenth century that resulted in the first Italian bestseller.[89] These phenomena

based on the 1960 reprint of *The Revival of Learning* by G.P. Putnam's Sons, which included this volume. Last access date January 16, 2018.

[88] Madden, *Venice: A New History*, 340.

[89] The term "bestseller" refers to top-selling texts with a large production, regardless of readership. England is usually considered to have had the first bestselling novels, beginning with Daniel DeFoe's *Robinson Crusoe*. The book was published in 1719 and before the end of the year had gone through four editions. Some historians, however, claim that Jean-Jacques

were anticipated and made possible by the *poligrafi* movement of sixteenth-century Venice. Aretino and the *poligrafi's* diffusion of sexually explicit material in the public realm was outrageous in the sixteenth century, but by the seventeenth century it had been virtually normalized. In Venice, the use of the printing press and the public availability of mildly sexual material were no longer novel or shocking, nor was the concept of an artist self-fashioning an identity for profit.

However, some courts both within and outside Venice, primarily the Papal court, were now concerned with the emergence of texts, performed or read, that challenged Papal authority and religious doctrine. The Papal court also claimed legal authority over Catholic churches and clergy outside of Rome and the Papal court itself. Openly licentious texts constituted yet another source of tension between artists and the courts. The courts feared that these texts would corrupt the readers and result in a challenge to their authority and to social norms. A very public case in point is Pallavicino's *La retorica della puttana*, for which the author was executed.[90] However, the Italian Inquisition, as Christopher Black reports in his *Italian Inquisition,* the Italian iteration

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Rousseau's *Julie, ou la nouvelle Héloïse* was the bestseller of the century. Robert Darnton writes that "Publishers could not print copies fast enough so they rented the book out by the day and even by the hour." According to Darnton, at least 70 editions were in print before 1800, "probably more than for any other novel in the previous history of publishing." See Robert Darnton, *The Great Cat Massacre and Other Episodes in French Cultural History* (New York: Viking, 1984), 242.

[90] For a deeper look into court cases tried by the Venetian Inquisition, see J. J. Martin, *Venice's Hidden Enemies: Italian Heretics in a Renaissance City* (Baltimore, MD and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003); Ruth Martin, *Witchcraft and the Inquisition in Venice 1550-1650* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1989); Guido Ruggiero, *Binding Passions: Tales of Magic, Marriage, and Power at the End of the Renaissance* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993); Anne Jacobson Schutte, *Aspiring Saints: Pretense of Holiness, Inquisition, and Gender in the Republic of Venice* (Baltimore, MD and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001); Paul F. Grendler, *The Roman Inquisition and the Venetian Press, 1540–1605* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1977).

was not as harsh as the Spanish or the Portuguese Inquisitions. After consulting the *Archivio della Congregazione per la Dottrina alla Fede* (ACDF), Black found that from about 1541 through the end of the eighteenth century (over 260 years), there were approximately 1250 executions. The Italian historian Andrea Del Col corroborates this number and estimates that out of 51,000–75,000 Inquisition cases in Italy after 1542, around 1,250 resulted in executions.[91] Giordano Bruno, Tommaso Campanella, and Cesare Cremonini were among some of those subjected to the Inquisition. Bruno was the only one of these to be executed. His judgment was based on his unwavering belief in a plurality of worlds, which challenged man's centrality. While he was also charged with immorality, it was his refusal to retract his statements against Church doctrine that resulted in his execution. It is plain that the Papal and other courts were concerned with the challenge that these libertine texts posed to religious authority, since overt sexuality was often a thinly-veiled (if veiled at all) attack on religion and the Papal court in particular.

Before discussing Venetian libertinism in more detail, let us pause to briefly to summarize two of the most important historical events that allowed it to flourish: the expulsion of the Jesuits (and other orders) from the Republic in 1605 and the Venetian interdict of 1606 and 1607.[92] Although it was a Roman Catholic city, Venice was often in conflict with the Papal

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[91] Andrea Del Col, *L'Inquisizione in Italia* (Milano: Oscar Mondadori, 2010), 779-780. Also, for the data on executions during the Inquisition, see Christopher Black, *Italian Inquisition* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2015).

[92] For a documented history of this relationship, see David Chambers and Brian Pullan with Jennifer Fletcher, eds., *Venice: A Documented History, 1450-1630* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, in association with The Renaissance Society of America, 2001). Other useful sources and general histories include John W. O'Malley SJ, *The Jesuits: A History from Ignatius to the Present* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2014) and John W. O'Malley et al., eds. *The Jesuits; Cultures, Sciences, and the Arts: 1540-1773* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999).

court and Rome because of the territorial aspirations of the Venetian government and what Venice saw as a heavy-handed assertion of religious authority on the part of the Papal court. The interdict, which restricted the practice of Catholic rites and sacraments in the Venetian Republic, was the result of a number of growing tensions between the Papal court and Venice.[93] It was primarily based on Venice's resistance to Papal authority over Venetian Catholic clergy and to the growing disagreement between the Jesuit University in Padua and the University of Padua. Specifically, the interdict, authored by Pope Paul V, asked Venice to release two clergymen whom Venice was holding in prison: Scipione Saraceno and the Abbot Brandolino.[94] The Venetian government did not respond to Pope Paul V when he requested their return to Rome; thus, he penned the interdict of 1606. But, the public tensions between the Jesuits and the Venetians was also a factor, and their official expulsion in 1605 certainly played a role in producing the interdict and in fostering anti-papal sentiment in the Republic.

The Society of Jesus, whose members were collectively known as the Jesuits, was founded in 1540 by Ignatius of Loyola and officially recognized as a Catholic religious order in a bull signed on September 27, 1540 by Pope Paul III, *Regimini militantis ecclesiae*. Their history is complex and lies outside the scope of this dissertation, but at their root they are an order that

[93] The Venetian interdicts of 1606 and 1607 were due to a Papal attack in 1605 on the way Venice exerted power over Catholic Clergy. Pope Paul V considered the Republic's insistence on civil jurisdiction over the clergy to be anti-clerical. For more information, see Filippo De Vivo, *Information and Communication in Venice: Rethinking Early Modern Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007) and Grendler, *The Roman Inquisition and the Venetian Press*. A of number interdicts were placed on Venice in previous centuries, including one imposed in 1284 by Pope Martin IV, but they are not particularly relevant to this dissertation other than to support the argument that Venice has a long history of contention and legal issues with the Papal court.

[94] The interdict of Pope Paul V, 1606 in Chambers and Pullan, *Venice: A Documented History*, 225.

takes traditional vows of "poverty, chastity, and obedience."[95] Like the Dominicans and Franciscans, the Jesuits are a missionary order and even have what can be considered a fourth vow that "obliges" them to be ready to travel the world, "among the Turks, or to the New World, or to the Lutherans, or to infidels or faithful."[96] What sets the Jesuits apart from other orders is their focus on establishing schools and emphasizing learning and the arts. In 1550, considered "the second founding," Ignatius modified the original concept of a band of missionaries to include the idea of a band of missionary professors. The trouble between the Jesuits and Venetians seems to have germinated in what amounted to a competition between the Jesuit University in Padua, a Venetian province, and the University of Padua. Some noble students from the University of Padua took issue with what they considered a conflict of schedules and were angry at the Jesuit school. The University students stormed the Jesuit school; they broke windows, and according Paul F. Grendler, they hurled insults at teachers and students. Grendler suggests that the students were angry that the Jesuits were offering the same classes at the same times as those offered at the University of Padua.[97] According to the elite students from the University of Padua, the conflicting class schedules created unfair competition, especially since the Jesuit school was free. While Grendler does not acknowledge this, there could have been an underlying fear of the fact that since the Jesuit school was free, it fostered a mixing of nobles and lower-class students, such as artisans and people from the merchant class.

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[95] O'Malley, *The Jesuits*, xi.

[96] Ibid., 4.

[97] Paul F. Grendler, *The Jesuits and Italian Universities: 1548-1773* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University Press, 2017). For Venice and the "Padua Disaster," see specifically pages 115-153.

This conflict led to the Jesuits' eventual expulsion from Venice. The expulsion added to a general anti-papal sentiment among the nobility, which then opened the door to a more openly displayed libertinism, especially in popular arts like opera, something to which most classes had access. In other words, even though Venice was Catholic, many Venetians, especially among the nobility, harbored anti-papal sentiments. These sentiments were rooted in issues of authority. When the Jesuits were expelled from the Republic, libertinism flourished because it was based on questioning religious authority. This questioning took place primarily in the arts, including theater, literature, and certainly the public spectacle of opera, and in the absence of the Jesuits in the Republic, artists felt even more free to explore anti-papal topics and sexuality. This history built on the foundations put in place in the sixteenth century by anti-papal writers like Aretino, who, in their libertine and licentious material, also pushed the boundaries of literary genres and brought to the forefront some of the most pressing issues of the period, such as the limitations of the class structure, limits on women's presence in the public sphere, and restricted access to education. This chapter and chapter 3 will explore how the repercussions of this strong anti-papal movement in Venice at the start of the seventeenth century helped pave the way for the advent of the novel in the eighteenth century.

I. Libertinism and Opera

A more detailed analysis of Venetian libertinism is beyond the scope of this project. Nevertheless, I outline its essential characteristics here because Venetian libertinism had a social and political impact on the Venetian literary and theater scenes that in turn had a direct impact on the rise of the novel in eighteenth-century Venice. Opera had a profound impact on Venetian culture. It was supported by libertines and fostered a competitive theater scene among a growing

number of opera houses and with *commedia dell'arte* theaters. Libertine and competitive culture endured into the eighteenth century and later shaped other artistic (and specifically literary) innovations.

The tradition of innovation in Venice, which Aretino and the *poligrafi* propelled forward through the use of the printing press, the publication of traditionally private material, and the challenge to the strict hierarchal social system, continued in seventeenth-century Venice. This tradition was bolstered by large-scale cultural changes taking place across Europe at the time. Brendan Dooley suggests in his introduction to *The Dissemination of News and the Emergence of Contemporaneity in Early Modern Europe* that in the seventeenth century, reading and otherwise obtaining news about foreign places began to change individuals' perception of time and place. His argument is that reading the daily news became a sacred act of ritual and solidarity in a similar way that practicing religion was.[98] Even a vague comprehension of this change provoked fear among the elite and religious leaders, resulting in the labeling of the act of reading as heretical. According to Jennifer Howard, the act of reading, unlike a physical book, is essentially private: "Readers … leave traces—a note in the margin, a stain on the binding—but those hints of human handling tell us only so much. The experience of reading vanishes with the reader."[99] It was the privacy of reading that threatened the elite. In the private reading space, each reader could interpret a text in his or her own way, despite the interpretations of scholars

[98] Brendan Dooley, "Introduction," *The Dissemination of News and the Emergence of Contemporaneity in Early Modern Europe,* ed. Brendan Dooley (Farnham, Surrey, England; Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publications, 2010), 2.

[99] Jennifer Howard, "Secret Lives of Readers," *The Chronicle*, December 17, 2012. Accessed November 5, 2017 at http://chronicle.com/article/Secret-Reading-Lives-Revealed/136261/

and clerics. Thus, texts that were sexually explicit or deviant seemed even more dangerous because readers could take them literally.

The seventeenth century in Western Europe was what David McKitterick, in his monograph *Print, Manuscript, and the Search for Order: 1450-1830*, called "a period of anxiety: at inaccuracy in the printed book, and at the apparently unstemmable increase in the number of publications, with their tendency for ill as well as for religious or scholarly good."[100] The base nature, popularity, frequency of publication, and wide diffusion of those vulgar and challenging texts set the stage for the libertine and anti-papal movements because the content became normalized and diffused. In earlier centuries, only scholars and clergy had access to ideas in written form. After the advent of the printing press in the sixteenth century, however, anyone with access to books could acquire knowledge. Over time, the printing press and the diffusion of more affordable texts led to a "democratization of knowledge."[101] More access to knowledge encouraged the discussion of books, the creation of new works, and most importantly, a growing body of people ready to challenge traditional thinking about political, social, and cultural ideas. All of this led to societies like the *Accademia degli Incogniti* (discussed in more detail below), in which like-minded people gathered, wrote, produced and consumed material that was often meant to defy traditional political, social, and religious structures. A case in point is the religious resistance of Paolo Sarpi (1552-1623), an active Venetian statesman, freethinker, and libertine who defied the Papal interdict of 1606 and 1607.[102]

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[100] David McKitterick, *Print, Manuscript, and the Search for Order: 1450-1830* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 8.

[101] Harold Love, "Early Modern Print Culture," in *The Book History Reader*, 2nd ed., ed. David Finkelstein and Alistair McCleery (New York: Routledge, 2006), 74-86.

[102] For more on the importance, influence and impact, and history of Paola Sarpi, see Jaska

It is common to associate libertinism in seventeenth-century Western Europe with debauchery and obscenity, though this association paints an incomplete picture of libertinism. In Venice, libertinism included these elements, but it was more specifically defined by a flouting of the authority of the nearby Papal court.[103] Venetian libertines in the seventeenth century (like libertines throughout Europe) asserted "the freedom of individual conscience over the dogma of formalized religions."[104] They challenged social norms, but they did not do so only—or even primarily—through explicit sexuality. Rather, their libertinism was a form of social rebellion that questioned organized religion, and specifically the Papal court. This questioning was widely seen as more threatening than sexual explicitness. For example, an edition of the *Decameron* was censored so as to remove references to misbehaving clergy, but the censors allowed the descriptions of sexuality to remain.[105] The Venetian civil authorities' view of religious rebellion

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Kainulainen, *Paolo Sarpi: A Servant of God and State* (Leiden: Brill, 2014); Filippo De Vivo, "Paolo Sarpi and the Uses of Information in Seventeenth-Century Venice," in *News Networks in Seventeenth Century Britain and Europe*, ed. Joad Raymond (London: Routledge, 2006), 35–49; David Wooten, *Paolo Sarpi: Between Renaissance and Enlightenment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983); John Leon Lievsay, *Venetian Phoenix: Paolo Sarpi and Some of His English Friends* (1606–1700) (Wichita: University Press of Kansas, 1973); William James Bouwsma, *Venice and the Defense of Republican Liberty: Renaissance Values in the Age of the Counter-Reformation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984, 1968); Paolo Sarpi, *The History of Benefices and Selections from the History of the Council of Trent,* ed. and trans. Peter Burke (New York: Washington Square Press, 1962).

[103] For Venice and tensions with Papal Court related to the Inquisition and libertinism, see Grendler, *The Roman Inquisition and the Venetian Press*, and for libertinism and opera, see Edward Muir, *The Culture Wars of the Late Renaissance: Skeptics, Libertines, and Opera* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007).

[104] Guyda Armstrong, "From Boccaccio to the Incogniti: The Cultural Politics of the Italian Tale in English Translation in the Seventeenth Century," in *Seventeenth-Century Fiction: Text and Transmission*, ed. Jacqueline Glomski and Isabelle Moreau (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 159-182.

[105] In Rome, the Vatican issued a "corrected" version of the Decameron in 1573, *Il Decameron ... Ricorretto in Roma, et emendato secondo l'ordine del Sacro Conc. di Trento, et riscontrato in*

as more dangerous than explicit or deviant sexuality can be explained by the geographical proximity of Venice to the Papal court. This proximity meant that the Papal court wielded significant influence over Venice, while at the same time, as we have seen, Venice tended to foster anti-papal sentiment and even functioned as an exile city for those evading prosecution by the Papal court. The tension and competition produced by this situation created fertile ground for innovation and the growth of new ideas.

Nowhere are the effects of Venetian libertinism's challenge to religion more evident than in the magnificent, grand, and outlandish spectacle of opera. Moreover, while opera was a Florentine invention, or at least was first performed in Florence, true innovation in the genre happened in Venice, which is why so many refer to Venice as the birthplace of opera, rather than Florence. The first declared opera was Jacopo Peri's now lost *Dafne*, produced around 1597. Opera is linked to other dramatic forms, such as monody and the madrigal, in which solo singers were used to help express the emotional quality of a text. It has been argued that the 1600 performance of Peri's *Euridice* at a Medici wedding in Florence was a pivotal moment in the history of opera. The setting was lavish and the performance made it a mainstream choice for

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Firenze con testi antichi & alla sua vera lezione ridotto da' deputati. They removed what they termed distorted elements of the manuscript. What they meant buy distorted was all material the represented the church in a salacious or negative manner. For further reading, see Giovanni Boccaccio, *The Decameron*, trans. and intro. G.H. McWilliam (London: Penguin Classics, 1972); Pisanus Fraxi, *Bibliography of prohibited books: Index librorum prohibitoru*, 3 Vols. (New York: Documentary Books, Inc., 1962); David Wallace, *Giovanni Boccaccio, Decameron* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Giuseppe Chiecchi, Luciano Troisio, *Il Decameron sequestrato: le tre edizioni censurate nel Cinquecento*. (Milan: Ed. Unicopli,1984); Giuseppe Chiecchi, *"Dolcemente dissumulando:" cartelle laurenziane e "Decameron"censurato* (1573) (Padua, 1992); and *Le annotazioni e i discorsi sul Decameron del 1573 dei deputatii fiorentini*, ed. Giuseppe Chiecchi (Rome, Padova: Antenore, 2001).

future courtly entertainment. As a result, opera spread throughout Italy, but its move into the public and commercial sphere happened in Venice with the construction of the first public opera house, *Teatro di San Cassiano*.

Thus, while opera was not invented in Venice, *La Serenissima* is considered the birthplace of modern opera because it was here that opera flourished and moved in an extravagant direction under the influence of the Venetian libertine culture. The characteristics of Venetian opera included an emphasis on formal arias and the beginning of the *bel canto*, or "beautiful singing" style. There was an overall focus on the vocal abilities and elegance of the performer rather than on the dramatic expression of the text, as was characteristic of Florentine opera. Complex and improbable plots were another characteristic of Venetian opera, along with elaborate stage machinery, staging, and costumes.[106] These innovations were possible because of the expulsion of the Jesuits from Venice in 1606 and, as Edward Muir argues, because Venice's tendency toward libertinism had fostered a noble class that was receptive to the challenges that opera posed to the Papal court.[107] The opera scene in Venice was also nurtured by the very same factors that allowed Aretino's and the *poligrafi's* letters and dialogues to flourish. In Venice, "[o]pera as we know it," Ellen Rosand observes in *Opera in Seventeenth-Century Venice*, "assumed its definitive identity—as a mixed theatrical spectacle available to a socially diversified, and paying, audience, a public art."[108] In other words, opera in Venice was supported

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[106] Hugh Milton Miller and Dale Cockrell, *History of Western Music* (New York: Harper Collins, 1991).

[107] Edward Muir, "Why Venice? Venetian Society and the Success of Early Opera," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 36, no. 3 (Winter 2006): 331-353. Muir argues that another key to opera's success in Venice was the prevalence of secret societies in the city.

[108] Ellen Rosand, *Opera in Seventeenth-Century Venice* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 1.

by a broad and socially diverse audience that was willing to pay for entertainment, all the more so because opera's libertine characteristics were relished as an affront to the Papal Court.[109] With so many interested in opera, many opera houses opened between 1640 and 1770, and thus a lively and competitive opera scene thrived alongside *commedia dell'arte* theater.

Venice opened its first permanent opera theater in 1637, and by 1678, says Muir, "all the elements of a flourishing enterprise were in place: competition among opera houses, the cult of the diva, [. . .] season-ticket holders, sold-out performances, [. . .] and tourists who came to Venice just to hear operas."[110] During this period, Venice suffered economic losses as business in its ports was lost to the Turks.[111] Yet the city remained an artistic hub and, as Muir notes, "wandering aristocrats, displaced priests, and speculative thinkers found aid and comfort in the intellectual politics of the Venetian academies, the members of which wrote the librettos and financed the theaters for the early Venetian operas."[112] Opera's bold and magnificent stage

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[109] Despite fallout moments, such as the suppression of the Jesuit order in 1773 by Pope Clement XIV, the relationship between the Jesuits and the Pope was usually at least a warm one. Because of this close relationship between the order and the Papacy, the expulsion of the Jesuits, combined with Venice's public dispute with the Papal court, created a space for libertinism – keeping in mind that first and foremost, libertinism is a movement linked to freethinking and a renouncing of religion and institutions, before it is associated with licentious behavior – and the opera proved to be a perfect form and public space to practice both free-thinking and licentious behavior. For more on the history of the Jesuits and popes, see John W. O'Malley, S.J., *The Jesuits and the Popes: A Historical Sketch of Their Relationship* (Philadelphia: Saint Joseph's University Press, 2016).

[110] Muir, "Why Venice?," 331-353.

[111] Madden, in *Venice: A New History*, maintains that "Venice is commonly described as entering its period of marked decline after 1600" (334). While Venice remained a "place of commerce, culture, and learning" and still prospered, it was not the port that it had been 100 years previously (334). The ongoing war that the Ottoman Empire began against Christianity in the 1520s under Suleiman the Magnificent (1520-66) took its toll on the Venetian port and the Ottoman Empire dominated the ports in the Mediterranean (323-339).

designs and content embodied the boldness of Venice: "During those two generations, Venice was the one place in Italy open to criticisms of Counter-Reformation papal politics. That moment brought libertines and religious skeptics to Venice from all over Italy."[113] The new content that opera invited into Venice had an impact on the eighteenth century, specifically with regard to libertinism as a force of resistance to hierarchal and oppressive structures.

Because of the crowds opera drew, it became a competitive space that offered the potential for financial gain in the same way that the printing press and the *poligrafi*'s publications had created a competitive and often agonistic literary scene in Venice from which authors could make money. Beth and Jonathan Glixen in *Inventing the Business of Opera: The Impresario and His World in Seventeenth-Century Venice* examine how, given the expensive nature of opera, houses tried to outdo each other and sought to hire, and sometimes force, divas and famous librettists to work for them. They also took into consideration the added element of *commedia dell'arte* theaters, which were also a part of this competitive scene. Opera houses were not only in competition with each other over hiring artists, but also in alluring lucrative season-ticket holders, specifically those who purchased boxes. Patrons who paid for annual rights to a box still had to buy tickets separately for each performance, and many bought boxes at more than one theater. Box seats were money-makers for the company and also a sign of privilege and wealth for the ticket-holder. This competition for sought-out and well-known performers and librettists as well as for patrons added to the opulent and extravagant nature of the productions and certainly fueled innovation.[114]

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[113] Muir, "Why Venice?," 332.

[114] Beth Glixen and Jonathan Glixen, *Inventing the Business of Opera: The Impresario and His world in Seventeenth-Century Venice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006). For a discussion of competition over consumers and box-seat sales, see pages 17-33, and for a

The atmosphere was competitive also because, as Johnson says of *Ancien Régime* Paris's opera house, opera was a social duty: "Attending the opera was more social event than aesthetic encounter."[115] The opera in Venice was a place where socialites displayed their fashions and artistic tastes, but perhaps more importantly, it also permitted the enjoyment of secrecy, as audience members cavorted in the theaters' dark corners and concealed themselves behind masks. Much like the city itself, the opera was a paradox of seeing and not seeing. Even though Venice had defied the pope by expelling the Jesuits, there was still an underlying fear of the potential spiritual or political repercussions of this defiance. By at least partially concealing identities, the masks that many opera attendees wore may have permitted individuals to behave licentiously.

In fact, if we understand Venetian libertinism as more than just obscenity or licentiousness, but rather as a rejection of social norms, religious and otherwise mandated by the Pope, then the opera was also a central space of challenge both on and off the stage. This challenge is particularly evident in the carnivalesque-grotesque turning of normative behaviors and social roles on their heads, but it also appears in play with gender roles. A case in point is Monteverdi's *L'incoronazione di Poppea*, in which greed and amorality are rewarded. Breaking from traditional literary form, this opera focuses on Poppea, a prostitute. Instead of experiencing punishment or redemption, Poppea turns tradition upside down by marrying the emperor Nero. However, not all transgressive texts place women in positions of power. Muir argues that "the harsh misogyny in [many of] the writings of the Venetian libertines provoked a protofeminist reaction from a group of Venetian women writers, creating a gender debate that further played

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detailed analysis of patronage and audiences, see pages 295-307.

[115] Muir, "Why Venice?," 331.

out in Venetian operatic librettos."[116] In both Aretino's work and in seventeenth-century opera, comparisons were implicitly or explicitly drawn between women's circumscribed roles and the social role of the artist; the same conflation appeared in many eighteenth-century novels, as chapter 3 will discuss.

Opera in seventeenth-century Venice was supported "behind the scenes" by a society called the *Accademia degli incogniti.*[117] As a way of solidifying the general anti-Papal and libertine leanings, Giovanni Francesco Loredano (1607-61) and Guido Casoni (1561-1642) founded the society in 1630. It would later include Pietro Chiari among its members. The *Accademia dei incogniti* consisted primarily of intellectuals and nobles, and thus it was an honor for Chiari to be included, as he came from the growing middle class instead of the nobility.[118] Lorenzo Bianconi observes that "i librettisti più brillanti degli anni '40 […] sono membri o frequentatori dell'Accademia degli incogniti, un club di intellectuali libertine che dissimulano sotto l'elogio dell'impostura su acre scetticismo filosofico, insofferente di qualsiasi autorità precostituita (sia essa politica, religiosa, morale, razionale; letterariamente essi si professano seguaci del Marino)" (the brightest librettists of the '40s [...] are members or frequenters of the Academy of the Unknowns, a club of libertine intellectuals who conceal themselves under the

[116] Muir, "Why Venice?," 332, 334. On the broader context of Venetian writing about women, see Lynn Lara Westwater, "The Disquieting Voice: Women's Writing and Antifeminism in Seventeenth-Century Venice" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 2000).

[117] Monica Miato in *L'Accademia degli incogniti di Giovan Francesco Loredan: Venezia (1630-1661)* (Tuscany: L.S. Olschki, 1998) sheds light on how how Giovan Francesco Loredan formed the *Accademia dei* incogniti in his home, and how about 295 *letterati* sought out and printed for commercial means texts that challenged the staus quo of his time and contributed to the anti-papal movement and to the necessity of more freedom of the press.

[118] I discuss Chiari's biography in chapter 3.

imposture of acrid philosophical skepticism, impatient of any preconceived authority (be it political, religious, moral, rational; literarily, they are professed followers of Marino).[119] The society published anonymously in support of amorality. In fact, "Sembra anzi di capire che siano proprio gli Incogniti a cogliere meglio di tutti, in Venezia, la portata intellettuale di quella nuova, attualissima, irregolare forma di intrattenimento che è il dramma per musica" (Indeed, in Venice, it seems that the Unknowns capture better than anyone the intellectual scope of the new, very current and irregular form of entertainment that is musical drama).[120] In other words, librettists, artists, and patrons were members of the *Incogniti* because they took issue with religious doctrine, ideology, and/or the papal court. They were freethinkers and rejected institutions that circumscribed physical or intellectual movement. Opera, therefore, was not only an exaggerated and overblown form of entertainment, but was also supported by an underground, libertine-minded academy. Some members were even able to carry over themes important to the *Incogniti* into the musically driven opera.

The *Accademia degli incogniti* also supported an early form of the Venetian novel that prepared the city and its readers for the bestsellers that would emerge in the eighteenth century. In fact, the academy counted many seventeenth-century novelists among its members, including Loredano himself, whose first novel *La Dianea* (1635) was enthusiastically received.[121] Other members who published novels in late sixteenth-century and seventeenth-century Venice include

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[119] Lorenzo Biancone, *Storia della musica: Il Seicento* (Torino: EDT, 1987), 189. My translation.

[120] Biancone, *Storia della musica*, 189. This carries over into the novel form as well.

[121] For a list of other novelists who were also *Accademici incogniti,* see *The Cambridge History of Italian Literature*, ed. Peter Brand and Lino Pertile (UK: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 320.

Pace Pasini (1583), Francesco Pona (1595), Maiolino Bisaccioni (1582-1663), and Girolamo Brusoni (1614-86). Although most of these early novels in Italy focused on traditional themes, belonging loosely to what is called the heroic-gallant genre, certain of the novels associated with the *Accademia degli incogniti* were libertine novellas.[122] For example, Loredano had a hand in publishing the novella *Alcibiade fanciullo a scuola* (Venice, 1650).[123] This story of pederastic seduction has been attributed to Antonio Rocco, a student of Cremonini, a Benedictine, and a member of the *Incogniti*. The book circulated underground but had a good number of readers, and it apparently influenced Aurelio Aureli's libretto for the Venetian opera *Alcibiade* (1680), which Muir maintains "echoes the novella's disingenuous defense of its subject matter in the preface: 'You will enjoy a few lascivious though restrained actions, composed by me with the sole aim that you learn to shun them, and not to imitate them.'"[124] In other words, when libertinism went too far on the side of vulgarity, in fiction and on the stage, authors and players sought to distance themselves from the content by disingenuously claiming that it was meant to give moral instruction.

Another famous *Accademico incognito* was Ferrante Pallavicino (1615-1644), who published a discourse on the relationship between rhetoric and philosophy, *La retorica delle puttane* (1642), that was very much in line with Aretino's *Sei giornate:* both are dialogues but

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[122] During the seventeenth century, however, Italy did not yet have a significant number of middle-class readers, and thus the novel genre took a backseat to opera and the theater. The phenomenon of the bestseller did not emerge until Chiari's *La filosofessa*, and even then, the novel did not take hold as it did in England and France. For more on the phenomenon of the bestseller, see Darnton, *The Great Cat Massacre*, 242. For more about the novel, translations and reading culture across Europe, see Bethany Wiggan, *Novel Translations: The European Novel and the German Book, 1680–1730* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011).

[123] *Cambridge History of Italian Literature,* 320.

[124] Muir, "Why Venice?," 343.

read like novels. They rely on obscenity, challenging social and political norms, and the Papal court. In this case, the libertine content was too explicit a challenge to religious authority, and Pallavicino was eventually sentenced and put to death by the Venetian Inquisition in 1644. Like Aretino's text, Pallavicino's features an old prostitute who instructs a naive apprentice. However, Pallavicino's discourse is informed by the Protestant Reformation and challenges conceptions of rhetoric and philosophy. Published in 1642, *La retorica* was in circulation during the height of libertinism in Venice and when opera was becoming the preferred entertainment of Venetians and tourists alike. Muir argues that "the book is an unmasking of rhetoric, a warning about its 'artificial words and mendacious pretexts,' which require vigilance." Moreover, Pallavicino discusses "carnal pleasure […] straightforwardly declar[ing] that sexual satisfaction is completely legitimate and natural, on a level with eating and drinking."[125] In this celebration of sexuality, Pallavicino maintains the Aretinian tradition of sexually explicit material and challenges to social norms through literature.

The point of these examples of members of the *Accademia degli incogniti* who produced literature is that the same conditions and structures (e.g., the *Accademia degli incogniti*) that helped opera become popular in Venice also allowed the city in the seventeenth century to serve as a sort of laboratory of innovation that fostered an early form of the Italian novel. In other words, the *Incogniti* became linked to libertinism, opera, the seventeenth-century Italian novel, and in all of this, they also became supporters and creators of innovation in the performing *and* literary arts, an important point that I will pick up on again in chapter 3. The sixteenth century saw innovation in Venice with the printing press and the *poligrafi*, and then in the seventeenth

[125] Ibid., 344-5.

century with the *Incogniti*, who had much in common with the *poligrafi* and an affinity with opera. Certainly, opera was the most popular of the art forms supported and created by the *Incogniti* during the seventeenth century.

This market for opera flourished in Venice, as we saw above, because plots could center on "gossipy" and sexual content that was in line with libertine values.[126] In fact, Ellen Rosand's monumental study of opera in seventeenth-century Venice identifies an "unusually large" audience, consisting of a very diverse population, including merchants, typical carnival-goers, and elites—people from all stations and walks of life.[127] Opera was undoubtedly big business, and Glixon and Glixon corroborate this point, adding that since box seats were limited and generally sold out on an annual basis, which often created tension and difficulties between the impresarios and the elite, "it is likely that a number of noble men sat [in the parterre]."[128] The parterre is the ground floor and generally was a place for merchants and the non-elite; however, due to the limited box seating and competition over box seats among both elite customers and noble foreign travelers, many elite attended the opera in the parterre. It is also clear that opera was popular in the seventeenth century based on the increasing number of opera houses that opened in Venice between 1600-1650, approximately 10. To compete for business and

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[126] See Rosand, *Opera in Seventeenth-Century Venice*, 37-39 on the *Accademia degli incogniti*; on competition and opera 77-80, and on immorality 125-153.

[127] Ibid., 10.

[128] Glixen and Glixen, *Inventing*, 304. The importance of opera in Italian and Venetian culture has long been studied. Seminal studies include Nino Pirotta and Elena Povoledo, *Li due Orfei* (Torino: Giulio Einaudi, 1975); Giovanni Morelli, "*L'opera nella cultura nazionale italiana*," in *Storia dell'opera italiana*, VI (Torino: EDT, 1988), 393-453; Lorenzo Bianconi, *Il teatro d'opera in Italia* (Bologna: Il mulino, 1993); and Simon Towneley Worsthorne, *Venetian Opera in the Seventeenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1954).

reputation, each house had to try to outdo the others, vying for audiences from the *commedia dell'arte* theaters.

The opera audience wanted exciting plots and action, and to satisfy the demand, more than 150 operas were written and produced in Venice during the 1600s. This demand from the audience helped sales and created a competitive market. Venice's diverse population, its status as a printing and book hub, and its culture centered on public entertainment like opera and carnival also contributed to the proliferation of operas, including many with libertine themes. One basic and very popular theme in opera in Venice during the seventeenth century, for example, was the Trojan war. This was because Venice often traced its origins back to this story, rather than the one that has Venice founded by "fearful fisherman running away from barbarians."[129] Moreover, there was contention between Rome and Venice in the Trojan theme that Rosand calls the Rome-Venice *paragone*. This plotline, therefore, offered an affront to Rome through opera on the behalf of Venetians, who reveled in their opposition to Rome and the papal court.

II. Theater Wars

As we have seen, Venice was the locus of theatrical innovation in opera during the seventeenth century. Theater, including both opera and *commedia dell'arte* in the seventeenth century and later primarily *commedia dell'arte* in the eighteenth century, brought together a wide range of people from different social classes and informed a growing interest in narrative fiction that treated many of the same libertine themes.[130] In other words, opera was social hub that brought together people from very different classes into one, shared space, literally the *parterre* in the

[129] Rosand, *Opera in Seventeenth-Century Venice*, 126, fn 2.

[130] See Anna Langiano, "Dal romanza alla scena: G. F. Busenello e l'Accademia degli incogniti," in *La letteratura degli italiani 4: I letterati e la scena* (Rome: Aldi editore, 2014), 1-13.

case of opera. The spectacle of opera was not only an innovative form of entertainment, but also an artistic outlet for libertine ideologies and as such, increased tensions with a concerned Papal court. Even more importantly, the crowds at the Venetian theaters were culturally diverse, because Venice housed merchants from all over the world. Theater directors and writers competed directly with each other to attract wealthy patrons and large audiences, which created tension and often hostility among the directors, writers, and actors. This type of hostile artistic relationship was not new to Venice, for we saw it during Aretino's time, when the *poligrafi* used invective to attract readers. This tradition continued throughout the seventeenth century and into the eighteenth-century theater scene.

Opera and *commedia dell'arte* theaters dominated the Venetian artistic scene in the seventeenth century. However, the eighteenth century saw a renewed focus on *commedia dell'arte*, and in this period Venice had at least 14 theaters that featured both musical and spoken theater. During the years 1750-1765, among the theaters that featured spoken plays, there was a triangulation between three major dramatists and the theaters that hired them: Pietro Chiari, Carlo Gozzi, and Carlo Goldoni. The fundamental conflict between Goldoni and Gozzi was over whether to empower the marginalized in theater, which many argue was Goldoni's intention. Gozzi, instead, sought to preserve the privileges of the noble class within his plays. Goldoni, that is, used theater as a form of social critique that questioned the class system, but did so in a manner that did not attract censorship. He broke with the traditional methods of *commedia dell'arte* that Gozzi revered and began to use a style of realism new to the Italian stage in an attempt to reveal the oppressive social conditions of the working classes.[131] Gozzi, in contrast,

[131] For theater as a form of social criticism, see Tim Prentki, "Social Action Through Theatre," in *Contemporary Theatre Review* 12 (2002): 115-133. Web. Accessed January 2018.

used fantastical, unrealistic styles to present the dominance of the ruling class as inevitable, natural, and right. While many contend that Goldoni ultimately lost this feud, as evidenced by the fact that he was forced out of Venice, Gozzi could not stop the social revolution. Chiari entered this battle with an Aretinian approach: embracing whatever position seemed to promise personal gain and working for whichever theater would hire him. However, he was ultimately on the progressive side, as he championed social changes that included education and worldly experience for women, as evidenced in his novels.[132]

This fierce polemic, based on innovation, competition, and the pitting of traditional values against progressive and libertine ones, is known as the "theater wars." In the sixteenth century, Venice had been the birthplace of the *commedia dell'arte*, a theatrical art form that was decidedly lowbrow and catered to the tastes of the *popoli*. Gozzi aimed to keep *commedia dell'arte* primarily a theater of improvisation that worked from a scenario with traditionally defined and in some cases masked character types. However, he transformed those basic plots into new, magical worlds that captured the imagination of his audience and won him acclaim. As part of this transformation, characters that had traditionally been middle-class often became courtiers and kings. A prime example of Gozzi's comedy is *L'amore delle tre melarance*, in which he preserves the content of *commedia dell'arte* and parodies both Chiari and Goldoni. With this work, he at once maintains the relevance of *commedia dell'arte* in the eighteenth century and incorporates unexpected magical elements and miraculous transformations of the characters and their surroundings. *L'amore delle tre melance* serves as a prime example of the theater wars. In *L'amore delle tre melarance*, Gozzi casts *commedia dell'arte* in the role of

[132] In chapter 3 of this dissertation, I examine Chiari's novel *La filosofessa italiana* as a case study of the ways eighteenth-century Venice set the stage for a new Italian sensibility that included education for women.

Trufaldino and Goldoni and Chiari as Celio and Morgan La Fay, respectively. Each of the three characters seeks to break the deep spell of melancholia to which the Venetian Prince Tartaglia has succumbed. Only Trufaldino is able to finally make the prince laugh and thus reverse the spell. In simple terms, "the older comedies are funny, while the plays of the reformers are not."[133] So, by placing *le tre melarance* in competition with each other to save the prince, Gozzi's representative wins, and thus so does conservatism.

Social conservatism also pervades Gozzi's work, stemming from his fear of the social and political changes that were sweeping into Venice, especially from France. He believed that class structure was providentially ordained, and his plays reflected this belief. In his plays, the upper class is naturally superior to the lower class, but it is often threatened by someone who is attempting to upset the natural order, such as Tartaglia in *Il re cervo*, or the twins who are separated from their parents in *L'Augellino Bel Verde*, or Turandot in *Turandot*, who refuses to marry. The binary opposition between an ordered class structure and disorderly thought, such as that represented when religion is endangered by philosophical free thinking, is inevitably solved in a manner that shows that the right way to live is to accept the current social structure. The king regains his throne, the twins are restored to their proper place in society, and Turandot gets married—though much is to be said about the right to marry. The way these events unfold in the plays asks the audience to accept Gozzi's premise that noble superiority is natural and inevitable. Another way to see restoration in Gozzi's work is to understand that in his view, the carnivalesque should be limited to one day a year, and at the end of the day, what he perceived as the natural order must be restored.

[133] Ted Emery, Introduction to *Five Tales for the Theater: Carlo Gozzi*, ed. Albert Bermel and Ted Emery (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 4.

Gozzi was influenced by Marivaux, perhaps because they had similar upbringings (both were members of the impoverished nobility) and Gozzi saw potential success in Marivaux's story.[134] Gozzi spoke out against those he considered freethinkers:

> Siccome … se noi non possiamo diffinire fondatamente ciò che siamo, sappiamo almeno con una innegabile sicurezza ciò che non siamo, e che lasciando razzolare nel letame e gruffolare nel fango i spiriti forti galline e porci, dobbiamo ridere e dileggiarli o piangere e commiscrarli, ma credere fermamente ciò che ci consigliarono a credere tanti filosofi piú saggi e piú considerabili de' filosofi galline e porci.
>
> Le odierne novitá di rovesci che ci dipingono gli Epicuri onest'uomini, i Seneca impostori, venerabili filosofi i Volteri, i Russeau, gli Elvezi, i Mirabò, eccetera eccetera, che ci dipingono ridicoli e inetti filosofi i benemeriti nostri santi padri, e le altre empie dottrine sparse in questo secolo di voluttuosi fanatici da funi e da catene non seducono il mio interno. Guardo i funesti effetti cagionati sui popoli dalle dottrine dell'ateismo. L'animo mio si rassoda ancor piú nella credenza, e sulle sue osservazioni va replicando a prò de' fanatici spiriti forti galline e porci e a pro della ingannata umanitá le esemplari e sacre parole di Gesú Cristo crocefisso: "*Pater, dimitte illis: non enim sciunt quid faciunt*."
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> Because ... if we cannot define fundamentally what we are, we know at least with undeniable certainty what we are not. And, leaving the strong-willed pigs and hens to roll about in dung and rummage through mud, we must laugh and mock them or cry and commiserate with them, but we must believe firmly in the many more wise and respectable philosophers than in the hens and the pigs.
>
> The hateful novelty of turning everything upside and presenting to us Epicureans as honest men, followers of Seneca as impostors, as venerable philosophers, followers of Voltaire, Rousseau, Helvetius, Mirabeau, etc., etc., depicting as ridiculous and inept the worthy fathers of the church, and the other impious doctrines scattered in this century by inebriated fanatics of ropes and chains does not seduce me. I look at the fatal effects on people produced by the doctrines of atheism. On the observations that continue to be repeated by the fanatical freethinking hens and pigs and the deceived humanity, my soul is strengthened even more in faith and in the exemplary and sacred words of Jesus Christ crucified: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."[135]

[134] See John Louis DiGaetani, *Carlo Gozzi: A Life In 18th Century Venetian Theatre: An Afterlife in Opera* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Comp, 2000), 22.

[135] Carlo Gozzi, *Memorie inutili*, ed. Giuseppe Prezzolini (Bari: Laterza, 1910), 156.

Here, Gozzi declares that some of the major and most influential figures of his time are incompetent and are unjustly overturning a social system that is supported by God. In other words, Gozzi directly opposed the larger social changes taking place around him, including at the elite level with influential politicians like Paolo Sarpi, who, we saw earlier, was a freethinker and anti-papal.

Goldoni, in contrast, used realistic depictions, coarse dialogue, and ridiculous buffoons in place of nobles to suggest that there was a problem with the status quo and that things ought to change. He also represented sympathetic middle-class characters. One such character is Momolo in *Momolo courtesan* or *L'uomo del mondo*. Momolo stands as a beacon of Venetian social decorum, and as such, rises in social rank from low-born to nobleman. In his memoir, Goldoni describes Momolo as a true Venetian gentleman in spirit and body. Goldoni's detailed description of Momolo is also an outline of how he believed a true, good, and honest Venetian citizen should comport himself: "È generoso senza profusione, allegro senza esser leggero, amatore delle donne senza compromettere il suo decoro, amator dei piaceri senza rovinarsi; in tutto si mescola per il solo bene degli affari, preferisce la tranquillità, né sa soffrir la soperchieria; affabile con tutti, fervido amico, zelante protettore. Non è dunque questi L'uomo di mondo?"[136] ("He is generous without profusion; gay without rashness; fond of women without involving himself; fond of pleasure without ruining himself; he is prepared to bear a part in everything for the good of society; he prefers tranquility, but will not allow himself to be duped;

[136] Carlo Goldoni, *Memorie scritte dal medesimo per l'istoria della sua vita e del suo teatro rivedute e corrette*, *Part 1.XL* (www.LiberLiber.it) http://www.classicitaliani.it/goldoni/memorie/Goldoni_Memorie_parte1.htm. Accessed January 31, 2018.

he is affable to all, a warm friend and a zealous protector. Is not this an accomplished man?")[137] In other words, Momolo is the opposite of a man like Gozzi. While Gozzi believed that gentility and nobility were innate, Goldoni suggested that by acquiring knowledge of the world, the middle class could gain the gentility expected of the nobility. As an example of the difference between Gozzi and Goldoni, consider Goldoni's *Il vecchio bizarre*, in which an old man plays the lover, in strict violation of Italian *commedia* tradition. The audience is led to empathize with this character, something that Gozzi abhorred. Goldoni's elevation of the servants in his comedies, who were often more intelligent than the nobility, unnerved Gozzi, who remained attached to his title *conte* throughout his life, despite not having the means usually associated with such a title. In his plays, as noted above, he elevates the characters who are middle-class in the traditional *commedia dell'arte* plots to the nobility, suggesting his fascination with the upper class. Thus, while Goldoni experimented with celebrating the common man, Gozzi continued to support a hierarchal system in which he felt he held a high place, despite his impoverished status.

Another point of contention between Gozzi and Goldoni was the representation of noble characters. As we have seen, Gozzi accused Goldoni of frequently portraying nobles as frauds while, as Emery maintains, "giving the serious actions of heroism and generosity to his plebian characters" in order to pander to the lower classes who viewed his plays.[138] Gozzi claimed that that Goldoni's comedies were "a bad public example against the indispensable order of

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[137] English translation from John Black, *Memoirs of Goldoni, Written by Himself, Forming a Complete History of His Life and Writings Volume I*, Printed for Henry Colburn (London: Public Library Pubic House, 1814), 273.

[138] Carlo Gozzi, *Five Tales for the Theatre*, ed. and trans. Albert Bermel and Ted Emery (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 6.

subordination."[139] Gozzi equated nobility with good, a concept John Louis DiGaetani calls *testing*, in which a noble hero is forced to endure difficulties throughout the play so that at the end he deserves victory.[140] In Gozzi's *I pitocchi fortunati*, a king pretends to depart for a four-year vacation while leaving his kingdom in the hands of a non-noble advisor. However, instead of leaving, the king disguises himself as a merchant peddler and at times a beggar. While in disguise, the king discovers that his kingdom is overrun by corruption, misery and cruelty due entirely to the poor administration of his evil adviser. The structure of the play then reveals the king as the proper ruler for his kingdom and reinforces the idea that a king is a good and virtuous man who goes out of his way to ensure that his subjects are treated well, while a non-noble either does not care about the people and is only looking out for himself or, at best, is unable to properly rule. The noble, being of noble birth and therefore superior, is better suited for wealth, power, and prestige.

These differences between Gozzi and Goldoni were not mere differences of opinion or approach. The two playwrights attacked each other publicly: for example, Gozzi, as mentioned above, parodied Goldoni and Chiari in *L'amore delle tre melarance.* Such attacks drew even larger crowds to the plays of all three playwrights, as the people reveled in the drama. It was especially enticing for those who understood how the on-stage drama reflected the feud that was occurring backstage.

Chiari participated in the theater wars by provoking both sides. He was much more ideologically aligned with Goldoni than Gozzi, though he was considered much more conservative than Goldoni. He invited polemic, especially in his published letters, because

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[139] Ibid., 6.

[140] DeGaetani, *Carlo Gozzi*, 3.

polemics helped sales. In fact, all three writers exchanged scathing remarks in a series of published letters. In a representative example, in *Fogli sopra alcune massime del genio e costumi del secolo dell'abate Pietro Chiari e contro a' poeti Nugnez de'nostri tempi*, Gozzi publicly maligned Chiari's treatment of theater and staging by portraying him as a parasitic writer who emulated others:

> Non sono dieci anni […] che siete nato come un Poeta come un fungo di forse quarant'anni, e che incominciaste il mestiere della letteratura dall'assaltare il Signor Avvocato Costantini nelle sue Lettere critiche, le quali gli aveano fatto onore, e dal dire ne' vostri Tomi, ch'egli è un ignorante, e dall'attacare con Commedie satiriche, e impertinenti nel Teatro il Signor Goldoni per fabbricare la vostra cucina col spezzare i laveggi altrui?[141]
>
> Hasn't it been ten years since you were born a poet, like a fungus of maybe forty years of age, and since you began the work of your literary assault on the critical letters of the lawyer, Signor Costantini, which had brought him some honor, and the work of saying in your letters that he is ignorant, and of attacking Signor Goldoni's work with satirical and disrespectful comedies with the aim of setting yourself up by breaking others down?

Gozzi's purpose here is at once to devalue Chiari's intellectual capacity—that is, to represent him as a follower—and to elevate his own theater work as original, the standard that newcomers seek to imitate. So, despite the title of this text, Gozzi does not praise Chiari; in fact, Gozzi disparages Chiari and the title is simply satirical. Gozzi thus intensifies the division between himself and Chiari, while momentarily placing himself alongside Goldoni, with whom, as we have seen, he also had significant tensions. In this particular instance, Gozzi and Goldoni agreed in denouncing Chiari, although they sharply criticized each other elsewhere. Chiari responded to

[141] Carlo Gozzi, *Fogli sopra alcune massime del genio e costumi del secolo dell'abate Pietro Chiari e contro a' poeti Nugnez de'nostri tempi* (Venezia: Colombani, 1761), 92. Notably, this came out in the same year that Gozzi's *L'Amore delle tre melarance* was performed. Gozzi thinly veiled his attacks against both Chiari and Goldoni in *L'Amore delle tre melarance*, so it is fitting that both his theatrical pieces and his *fogli* forged deeper tensions between him, Chiari, and Goldoni.

these attacks indirectly in his *Lettere scelte*, when he wrote that a certain individual made him "evacuare gl'intestini": it was clear that this was the same person who had denounced Rousseau and Voltaire, and the same person who had praised traditional religious beliefs and a healthy morality.[142] In other words, Chiari singled out Gozzi. While it is clear why Gozzi would have been offended, what exacerbated the tensions between Goldoni and Chiari was Chiari's crudeness. So, when Chiari followed on the heels of Goldoni (who had previously replaced Gozzi) by twice replacing him as theater director or playwright, first by filling a vacancy left by Goldoni at the *Teatro Sant'Angelo*, led by Girolamo Medebach,[143] and then by taking a post with Antonio Sacchi and his company, his succession to these posts added to the tensions that were already present between Goldoni, Chiari, and Gozzi, which have been studied extensively by many scholars.[144]

The theater wars of the eighteenth century were thus driven by both strongly-held differences in social beliefs and by the playwrights' competition for self-sufficiency, based on popularity and the simple need to survive. The challenge of survival during this period was directly linked to the hierarchal system that was based on very distinct social classes. As the playwrights either sought to maintain their social standing or to rupture the class system, they changed theatrical and genre conventions in important ways. Because the theater was a place

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[142] Pietro Chiari, *Lettere scelte di varie materie, piacevoli, critiche, ed erudite*, Vol. III (Venice: Angelo Pasinelli, 1765), 239.

[143] On the often problematic and precarious relationship between Goldoni and Medebach, see Sara Mamone's "Introduction" to *La locandiera,* ed. Sara Mamone and Teresa Megale (Venice: Marsilio, 2007), 9-91.

[144] See John Louis DiGaetani's introduction to Gozzi's *fiabe* for more on the Gozzi and Goldoni feud. DiGaetani, *Carlo Gozzi*, 1-8.

where different social classes, ethnicities and genders met, the content of the plays reflected this diversity, as did the novel later. In fact, Francesca Saggini notes that in England, the theater and the novel shared the same audience; the same was true in Venice.[145] Part of this innovation was driven by competition and audience reception, playing out within the comedies and novels. One of the main contentions of this dissertation is that polemics tended to push artists beyond genre and thematic conventions because producing literature served as a way for the artists to argue their cases and to win the attention of the public. This phenomenon was certainly evident in Venice during the 1750s and 1760s, as I discuss below.[146]

Eighteenth-century writers of opera, theater, and novels relied more on the public for support than on a single patron, and therefore gaining and maintaining the public's support was critical for both personal and financial success. This situation, combined with the fiery and combative personalities of Chiari, Gozzi, and Goldoni, was a major cause of the theater wars. We have seen these elements in Aretino and his work and in the contention between libertines and traditionalists, but by the time of the theater wars in the eighteenth century, writers' reliance on the public's support had increased exponentially, thus causing even more tension between authors.

As we have seen, the theater wars were also a result of the social tensions at play during the period, especially those pertaining to the possibility and desirability of social mobility. I will say more about these tensions in the discussion of Chiari in the next chapter. For now, the

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[145] Francesca Saggini, *Backstage in the Novel: Frances Burney and the Theater Arts*, trans. Laura Kopp (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2012). Saggini explores the interplay between the novel and the theater in the eighteenth-century using Frances Burney as a case study.

[146] Tavazzi, *Il romanzo in gara*, 15.

important point is that the new Venetian novel, an experimental and hybrid genre, reflected these tensions and used them as both explicit and implicit content. The backstage drama of the theater wars, in other words, made its way into the content of novels, which were sometimes written by the same people who wrote the plays and read by audiences who understood the social context of the drama.[147] To summarize, the theater wars were important in the development of the novel in Venice because they encouraged artistic experimentation and drew public attention to new ideas about social class that were eventually taken up by the authors of eighteenth-century novels.

III. The Rise of the Novel in Eighteenth-Century Venice

Venice in the eighteenth century, then, was the scene of a fierce polemic that was simultaneously literary, social, and personal. In this sense, it bore a strong similarity to sixteenth-century Venice at the height of the tensions among Aretino and the other *poligrafi*. The causes of the two polemics were similar as well; in both cases, the polemics were driven by a combination of competition for artistic livelihoods, personal animosities, and social tensions. Other similarities between the two historical contexts will be discussed in chapter 3 in reference to the case of Chiari. One significant difference is that the period between the two polemics saw the rise of libertinism on the seventeenth-century opera scene and in libertine texts, which meant that by the eighteenth century, Venetians were accustomed to the publication of mildly sexually explicit material.

[147] I agree with Giacomo Mannironi, who argues, "The polemics of this period should be carefully taken into account, as they have nothing of the usual *querelles* typical of the intellectual élite. In the new debates, the public had a pivotal role. This was clearly understood not only by authors, but also by entrepreneurs." Giacomo Mannironi, "Libri disonesti: Education and Disobedience in the Eighteenth-Century Venetian Novel (1753-1769)" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Warwick, 2015), 52.

As I have suggested, the polemics of eighteenth-century Venice are a key point of departure for analyzing the emergence of the Italian novel, or rather, of the bestselling Italian novel—any widely read novel that was printed in large quantities.[148] The powerful polemical relationships between key literary figures of the period helped shape the Venetian model of the novel by fueling literary production and output and encouraging movement beyond standardized genres. The remainder of this chapter explores how the novel arose in Venice.

Despite a long record of novels published in Venice during the eighteenth century, this corpus has received scant attention. Since the Italian case is quite distinct from the English and French cases, scholars such as Luca Clerici, Carlo A. Madrigniani, Pino Fasano and Tatiana Crivelli have argued that new approaches are required to explain what Fasano calls (recalling Crivelli's treatment of the eighteenth-century Italian novel) the Italian novel's "variety, mobility, and instability."[149] The first flowering of novel production in Italy took place in the latter half of the seventeenth century in Venice, but the novels lacked the domestic qualities of English and French novels and thus their popularity was short-lived. "In the first half of the eighteenth century," according to Mannironi, "very few of these novels [were] republished (in Venice or elsewhere), with the exception of long- and best-sellers, both Italian ones such as Marini's *Calloandro fedele*, or European such as Cervantes' *Quixote* and Fenelon's *Les Aventures de*

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[148] As discussed earlier, some novels were published in Venice in the seventeenth century. The lack of a broad middle-class readership, however, meant that most of these early novels were not widely read.

[149] Pino Fasano, "Il romanzo inesistente," in *La riflessione sul romanzo nell'Europa del Settecento*, ed. Rosamarie Loretelli and Ugo M. Olivieri (Milan: Tipomonza, 2005), 68, based on Tatiana Crivelli's treatment of the novel in *Né Arturo né Turpino né la Tavola rotonda: Romanzi del secondo Settecento italiano* (Rome: Salerno, 2002). See Carlo Madrignani, *All'origine del romanzo in Italia: Il "Celebre abate Chiari"* (Naples: Liguori editore, 2000) and Luca Clerici, *Il romanzo italiano del Settecento: il caso Chiari* (Venice: Marsilio, 1997).

Télémaque."[150] Yet we must hesitate here over Mannironi's use of the term *bestseller* regarding Marini's *Calloandro*. While it drew some success, it was not really a bestseller, since it did not capture the imagination of the new, emerging readership in Venice, requiring multiple reprints as did Chiari's *La filosofessa italiana*. In other words, less-educated readers, who were necessary for the sales volumes required for what we would now call a bestseller, were not present in sufficient numbers in Venice in the second half of the seventeenth century. Of the Italian case, Luca Clerici argues that

> le grandi potenzialità communicative del nuovo genere sono trascurate; la mentalità elitaria degli autori si riflette in una serie di testi che guardano all'indietro, incapaci di proporsi come modelli di un tipo di racconto giovane, proiettato con spregiudicatezza verso il futuro. Opere insomma più legate alla canonistica del passato che alle libere regale del novel, libri che fanno appello alla cultura letteraria del lettore e non alla sua esperienza di vita, imponendo con ciò una fruizione smaliziata, dottamente consapevole.[151]

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[150] Mannironi, "Libri disonesti," 60. Marivaux's parody of Fénelon's novel *Les aventures de Télemaque* (1699) demonstrates a French resistance to a literary tradition rooted in the classic period. The first Italian translation of Fénelon's version was published as *Gli avvenimenti di Telemaco figliuolo d'Ulisse* (Leiden: Haaring, 1704); the first Venetian edition followed after two decades: *Le avventure di Telemaco figliuolo d'Ulisse ovvero continuazione del quarto libro della Odissea d'Omero* (Venice: Pavino, 1725). See Gabriel Maugain, *Documenti bibliografici e critici per la storia della fortuna del Fénelon in Italia* (Paris: Champion, 1910), 30–31. For an overview of first translations into Italian, see Paolo Zanotti, "La penetrazione delle letterature straniere in Italia," in *Atlante della letteratura italiana,* II, ed. Sergio Luzzatto and Gabriele Pedullà (Torino: Einaudi, 2012), 492–97. I can find no evidence of Marivaux's parody in Italian. Marivaux himself tried to distance himself from the text since it came out many years after he had written it and the style was no longer in vogue. See David Coward, *Marivaux, La Vie de Marianne and Le paysan parvenu* (London: Grant & Cutler, 1982), 16 and Carlo Madrignani, Introduction to *La filosofessa italiana*, 18-19. The first eighteenth-century Italian edition of the *Quixote* was published by Antonio Groppo – incidentally the same publisher with whom Pasinelli did his apprenticeship – in 1722: Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, *Dell'ingegnoso cittadino don Chisciotte della Mancia* (Venice: Antonio Groppo, 1722). Pasinelli, as Chiari's first publisher, printed *La filosofessa italiana*. See also Joan Givaneli Mas*, Catalogo de la Coleccion Cervantina*, 5 vols. (Barcelona: Diputación provincial de Barcelona, 1941–64), I (1941), 227. On the eighteenth-century fortunes of Cervantes' novel, see Franco Fido, "Viaggi in Italia di Don Chisciotte e Sancio nel Settecento. Farsa, follia, filosofia," *Italies*, [online] 4 (2000), accessed December 18, 2014.

[151] Clerici, *Il romanzo italiano del settecento*, 8. My translation.

> the great communicative potential of the new genre is neglected; authors' elitist mentality is reflected in a series of texts that look backwards, incapable of becoming models for a kind of young, unfettered narrative, thrust toward the future. These works are more tied to past canons than they are to the novel's open-ended rules. These works appeal to readers' literary culture rather than to their personal life experiences, forcing them into a shrewd and eruditely conscious diversion.

Because most of these early novels soon ceased to circulate, it is reasonable to date the beginning of the rise of the modern novel in Venice to the 1720s, when an influx of foreign novels in translation made their way into the hands of Venetian readers and writers, including an increasing number of women. Novels by Lesage and Marivaux and works by Defoe, Swift and Richardson, for instance, had all been translated into Italian and published by 1730. Many of the plays produced during the next few decades, including those emerging at the height of the theater wars in the 1750s and 1760s, used these foreign novels as templates. For example, Chiari wrote at least two comedies that borrow from English novels: *Pamela, schiava combatutta* and *Fanny Hill*. The latter is clearly another reason for Gozzi's eventual adaptation of Cleland's *Fanny Hill* into Italian. Chiari appreciated Cleland's emancipated female protagonist, while Gozzi abhorred her. Chiari was known as "the great plagiarist," so a character like Fanny was perfect for the taking; he in fact based an entire trilogy based on her for the stage. Moreover, Fanny was just the type of female protagonist who would interest a writer like Chiari, because Fanny represented upward social movement and was an example of the positive effect of education on women. (The novel was also titillating, which meant Chiari's adaptation promised to bring in larger audiences.) In contrast, Gozzi's belief in the status quo as ordained by God and in the villainy of women made it logical for him to dislike Fanny. For Gozzi, prostitution was not a way to make ends meet, but was always a moral matter. As a result, his translation of *Fanny Hill* into a long novella called *La meretrice* was a way for Gozzi to correct the outcome of Chiari's adaptation—

to make things right. While Cleland's Fanny and Chiari's adaptation of her for the stage depict a liberated woman who eventually marries, Gozzi's Fanny meets her just end by being denied upward social movement through marriage.[152]

In addition, the playwrights began to write novels of their own that were influenced by the foreign novels. Specifically, Chiari initiated a second flowering of novel production in Venice with the bestseller *La filosofessa italiana*. This novel, published in 1753, introduced a new style of Italian long prose narrative aimed at a non-elite reader, the *lettore medio*, and modeled on popular English and French novels like Defoe's *Moll Flanders,* Richardson's *Pamela*, and Marivaux's *La Vie de Marianne*.[153] Chiari had translated at least Marivaux and most likely Richardson as well.[154] Chiari's main publisher, Pasinelli, referred directly to French and English novels in his introduction to *La filosofessa italiana*, which suggests that he expected his readers to be familiar with these foreign works. Specifically, Pasinelli's introduction tells the reader that *La filosofessa italiana* is better than any of the recent translations they might have read. It is, he argues: "più istruttivo della Marianna, più tenero della Pamela, più intrecciato della Contadina, più vago, e, dirò così, filosofico del Filosofo Inglese, che pur fu ricevuto con tanto compatimento" (more instructive than Marianne, more sensitive than Pamela, more intricately

[152] Chapter 4 is a textual analysis of Gozzi's translation of *Fanny Hill*.

[153] These three novels were very popular in Venice during the time Chiari was writing *La filosofessa italiana*, and Chiari made reference to them in his comedies. See Luisa Giari, "Le peripizie delle prime traduzioni del *Tom Jones* tra Francia e Italia," in *Problemi di Critica Goldoniana,* vol. 9, ed. Gilberto Pizzamiglio and Manilo Pastore Stocchi (Ravenna: Longo Angelo Editore, 2002), 229-249.

[154] Giari, "Le peripizie delle prime traduzioni del *Tom Jones* tra Francia e Italia," 229-249. See also Madrignani, "Introduction," *La filosofessa italiana,* 5-14 and Robert Darnton, *The Forbidden Best-Sellers* (New York and London: W.W. Norton and Company, 1996).

woven than the Contadina, and more ambiguous, and, I would say, more philosophical than the *Filosofo Inglese*, which was nevertheless received with such indulgence.)[155] This comparison served as a marketing strategy and implied the publisher's (and perhaps the author's) desire to promote Venetian novels among an audience predisposed to appreciate novels from elsewhere. However, Pasinelli also presented Chiari's novel as the translation of a new French novel: "è tanto nuovo, che l'ho ricevuto da Parigi a foglio per foglio, secondo che usciva dal Torchio; e posso dire con tutta franchezza, che in Italia non l'ha ancora veduto nessuno" ([This novel] is so new that I received it page by page, hot off the press; and I can say with absolute frankness, that no one has yet seen it in Italy.)[156] Chiari and Pasinelli relied on several techniques like this to contextualize the novel and to capitalize on the public's interest in foreign novels. The idea is founded on two main principles: first, that readers of Italian wanted foreign novels because they were less interested in domestic ones, and second, that there may have been a real deception based on a growing tradition of novels in translation. However, I maintain that Pasinelli knew that Chiari's novel was not, in fact, a translation of a French text. Instead, Pasinelli was banking on extra interest in the text—and consequently higher sales— if it were introduced as an Italian translation of a French text.[157] I cannot prove such a claim, but I can rely on Pasinelli's large

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[155] Pietro Chiari, *La filosofessa italiana*, ed. Carlo Madrignani (Lecce: Piero Manni, s.r.l), 28. My translation.

[156] Ibid., 27.

[157] For an examination of pseudotranslation in eighteenth-century Venice, see Paolo Rambelli, "The Role of Pseudotranslations in the Establishment of Authorship: The Case of Eighteenth-century Italian Novelists," in *Translating Others*, Atti del Congresso internazionale, "Translations and Translation Theories East and West: Cross-cultural Translation in Theory and Practice," London, June 19-20, 2003 (Amsterdam: St. Jerome, 2006), 181-210. This article is of particular importance because Rambelli points to Chiari's *La filosofessa italiana* and the model for the Italian novel. I examine this in terms of a specific Italian sensibility in chapter three. Also, Rambelli points to issues of poor translations that also flooded the market

number of publications as an indicator of his awareness of the goings-on in and around the literary scene. (In the preface to the third volume, Pasinelli admits that he had been fooled into thinking the novel was translated from French; in reality, he says, it was originally Italian.)

Despite such efforts, the nascent eighteenth-century Italian novel, and specifically the Venetian novel, met with strong resistance from a highly elite readership who adhered to traditional literary values, like Gozzi. This was especially true because Italian novels were perceived as being inferior to English and French novels, as evidenced by the weak reception of the novel in Italy compared to England and France, where it flourished. In fact, despite recent renewed interest in the eighteenth-century Italian novel, scholars still feel compelled to defend it. Daniela Mangione asserts that

> È interessante notare come ogni nuovo studio porti con sé, ancora, la necessità di riassumere i passi fondamentali della scoperta critica: segnale, questo della non completata assimilazione dei risultati di un'indagine che in effetti si mostra ancora largamente in fieri.[158]
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> It is interesting to note that every new finding [about the eighteenth-century novel] still needs to repeatedly retrace the fundamental steps leading to its discovery: this indicates that the results of this research have not yet been fully understood and that the study of the Italian eighteenth-century novel is still largely a work in progress.

I agree with both Mangione and Mannironi, who also suggests that "it was as if the *damnatio* expressed by contemporaries […] had not only survived but was still active after more than two

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and made marketing novels even more challenging for publishers like Pasinelli.

[158] Mannironi, "Libri disonesti," 1. Daniela Mangione also comments that the long history of either silence about and or disinterest in the eighteenth-century Italian novel still pervades scholarship on the novel in *Prima di Manzoni: autore e lettore nel romanzo del Settecento* (Rome: Salerno, 2012), 9, n. 3. My translation.

hundred years."[159] In other words, the negative reception of the eighteenth-century Italian novel by its contemporaries still affects its reception today.

Nevertheless, Chiari's *La filosofessa italiana* found success. By the time the final installment of the serialized *La filosofessa italiana* appeared, Chiari's first publisher, Pasinelli, seemed to be attempting to counter this scorn for novels written in Italian: "Il romanzo [*La filosofessa italiana*] è nato in Italia; un Italiano l'ha scritto; e l'ha scritto per far vedere alla nostra Italia, che non c'è sempre bisogno di ricorrere a Traduzioni servili, per dar alla luce un Libro da passatempo" (The novel [*La filosofessa italiana*] was born in Italy, an Italian wrote it, and wrote it to demonstrate to our Italy that it is not always necessary to resort to servile

[159] See Mangione, *Prima di Manzoni*. The first scholarship began with the positivist school: Luca Toschi and Maura Gori, eds., *Studi e ricerche intorno ai nostri romanzieri e romanzi del Settecento* (Bergamo: Istituto italiano d'arti grafiche, 1903; facsimile: Romanzieri e romanzi del Settecento [Rome: Vecchiarelli, 1991]); *I romanzi dell'Abate Chiari* (Bergamo: Istituto Italiano d'arti grafiche, 1900); Emilio Bertana, "Pro e contro i romanzi del Settecento," *Giornale storico della letteratura italiana* 37 (1901): 339–352; Raffa Garzia, "Recensione a Studi e ricerche sui nostri romanzieri e romanzi del Settecento," *Bullettino Bibliografico Sardo* 3 (1903): 116–126. In different ways, five volumes have helped to renew the debate on the eighteenth-century novel between the 1990s and 2000s: Giuseppe Antonelli, *Alle radici della letteratura di consumo: la lingua dei romanzi di Pietro Chiari e Antonio Piazza* (Milan: Istituto di propaganda libraria, 1996); Clerici, *Il romanzo italiano del Settecento*; Carlo Madrignani, *All'origine del romanzo in Italia: il celebre Abate Chiari* (Naples: Liguori, 2000); Aldo Maria Morace, *Il prisma dell'apparenza: La narrativa di Antonio Piazza* (Naples: Liguori, 2002); Tatiana Crivelli, *"Né Arturo né Turpino né la Tavola rotonda": romanzi del secondo Settecento italiano* (Rome: Salerno, 2002). For an overview of scholarship before the 1990s, see Ilaria Crotti, "Rassegna di studi e testi del romanzo italiano nel Settecento (1960-1989)," *Lettere Italiane* 42 (1990): 296–331 and more recently Ann Hallamore Caesar, "History or Prehistory? Recent Revisions of the Eighteenth-Century Novel in Italy," in *Remapping the Rise of the European Novel*, *Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century* – SVEC, 10, ed. Jenny Mander (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2007), 215–24. Two recently published studies that have been important for various aspects of this research are Valeria G. A. Tavazzi, *Il romanzo in gara: echi delle polemiche teatrali nella narrativa di Pietro Chiari e Antonio Piazza* (Rome: Bulzoni, 2010) and Daniela Mangione, *Prima di Manzoni*.

translations to bring forth an entertaining novel).[160] The goal here is to remind the readers that this novel, written by an Italian, should be chosen over the translations to which they are accustomed. Thus, the publisher also says in his introduction to the final installment that he will fulfill the desires of his readership despite elitist backlash: "Finchè il mondo avrà voglia di leggere simili galanterie, io non mancherò di stamparne di quando in quando, e l'Autore di scriverne; per vedere agli stranieri che anche noi sappiamo dar qualcosa del nostro" (As long as the world wants to read similar gallantries, I will continue to print them and the author to write them, to show foreigners that we too can offer something of our own).[161] Perhaps if the Italians felt proud of their own contributions to this new genre, then they would then more readily accept novels written in Italian, and even popularize them abroad.

As did *Pamela, Moll Flanders*, and *La Vie de Marianne*, *La filosofessa italiana* and other Venetian novels of the time contained didactic and domestic elements that appealed to less-educated readers and tended to alienate elite readers. In fact, this is one area where Goldoni and Gozzi were aligned. They shared a desire to eliminate indecency from comic theater—thus encouraging men to allow their wives to accompany them and doubling the box office returns. In keeping with that theme, novels appealed to a demographic that included women, and their themes reflected the new readership. In seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Venice, the romance and the novel challenged the place of letters and short pieces previously published by the *poligrafi* by directly responding to the desires and demands of a bourgeois reading class that had only just begun to surface during Aretino's time. A distinguishing feature of eighteenth-century Venice was, in fact, a larger and broader readership than that of any other court on the Italian

[160] Chiari, *La filosofessa italiana,* 362. My translation.

[161] Ibid., 362. My translation.

peninsula. Because statistics on literacy were published only beginning in 1871, it is impossible to know with certainty what the literacy levels were in eighteenth-century Venice. Due, however, to Venice's capitalist economy and strong merchant class, one can assume relatively high literacy rates. Ann Hallamore Caesar contends,

> The absence of a peasantry [in Venice], traditionally associated with low literacy levels, must have contributed to an unusually high number of readers. Many of the citizens were engaged in commercial and manufacturing activities—for example as shopkeepers and artisans—that entailed some literacy and numeracy. Of the 150,000 residents in Venice itself, of whom over half were women, 55,000 are thought to have belonged to these categories; there were, furthermore, 12,819 "servidori e massere" living in Venice in 1760.[162]

Therefore, Venice's strong merchant class and cosmopolitan makeup created a reading class more similar to those in areas of France and England than to those of courts such as Rome or Florence. Moreover, the Venetian readership was comprised largely of readers that Carlo Denina describes as "mediocremente istrutte" (poorly educated).[163] Hallamore Caesar confirms that this was "a broad and not particularly cultured readership."[164] Simply put, there were more readers than in previous times because artisans and shopkeepers were now reading books. However, these new readers were not as educated as the clerics and nobles who constituted most of the readership of works produced in previous centuries.

As Patrizia Delpiano reminds us, the emerging *lettore medio* presented a challenge to the "traditional roles that the *eruditi* and the church held over the written word" that resulted in

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[162] Ann Hallamore Caesar, "Bagatelle, Bamboccerie, and Bordellerie: The Critics and the Novel in Eighteenth-Century Italy," *Italian Studies* 60, no. 1 (2002): 26.

[163] Carlo Denina, *Bibliopea o sia l'arte di compor libri* (Turin: Fratelli Reycends, 1776), 184. My translation.

[164] Caesar, "Bagatelle, Bamboccerie, and Bordellerie," 36.

difficulties of interpretation.[165] These elite readers, many linked to the church, were also concerned that the *lettore medio* was not intellectually equipped to "properly" interpret the material, a fact that threatened their control over both ideas and interpretation. Book historians recognize that books are the "primary tools that people use to transmit ideas, record memories, create narratives, exercise power, and distribute wealth."[166] It was crucial for the elite to retain control over the distribution and content of texts because of the powerful role of books in shaping ideas. Simon Eliot and Jonathan Rose argue in *A Companion to the History of the Book* that

> when we study any literate human society, we must ask what books it produced, where they were distributed, which libraries held them, how they were censored (or smuggled past the censors), where and how they were translated, and who was reading (or "using") them.[167]

Eliot and Rose warn, "we should also be aware that readers can read the same book in a variety of ways, with important consequences: after all, wars have been fought over differing interpretations of scriptures and treatises."[168] This fight over interpretation had been a governing factor in the publishing and censoring of books since the invention of the printing press. This fear was a driving force behind the prohibition of books and of publication, but also behind

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[165] See Patrizia Delpiano, "Sulla riscoperta del romanzo italiano del Settecento: Note a margine degli studi di Madrignani e Crivelli," *Rivista Storica Italiana CXVI* (2004): 556-576; Patrizia Delpiano, "La Chiesa e la lettura," *Rivista Storica Italiana* CXVIII (2006), 440-485; and Patrizia Delpiano, *Il governo della lettura. Chiesa e libri nell'Italia del Settecento* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2007), specifically 321.

[166] Simon Eliot and Jonathan Rose, eds., *A Companion to the History of the Book* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2007), 1.

[167] Ibid.

[168] Ibid.

Venice's resistance to the pope's attempts to assert control over the presses.[169] One consequence of the Inquisition was papal efforts to control book production and publication through the censorship of books that challenged religious doctrine and were considered heretical, and perhaps could influence uneducated readers. The Venetian elite was not beyond a fear that access to knowledge through reading could challenge the traditional values that helped maintain the status of the elite within a hierarchical structure. So, while the Venetian elite resisted Papal influence over the clergy in Venice and Papal power in general within the city-state, the elite did share a fear of the educated and literate merchant class.

Therefore, the controversy that surrounded the novel also attached itself to the new less-elite reader. On the one hand, an emerging middle class argued that knowledge should be diffused and everyone should be educated. On the other hand, however, the elites perpetuated a backlash against the spread of knowledge based on a fear of upsetting social and political structures. Thus, much like the novel itself, the less-educated reader occupied what Mannironi calls "a hybrid zone between the elite of intellectuals, and the anonymous multitude of theatres."[170] Evidence of this, he maintains, can be found in the "semantic choices made by the writer."[171] Mannironi points to Chiari's introduction to his *Commedie in prosa*, in which Chiari delineates the distinctions between the *eruditi* and the *volgo*:

> So che il buono, e il bello in materia di lettere è una cosa reale, che non dipende dal caso; So che di questo buono, e di questo bello, non è giudice il volgo; So che la parzialità, e la passione accieca i più illuminati intelletti; e

[169] In chapter 3, I examine how reading and the transmission of knowledge through books caused fear in the elite mainly because they acknowledged that books could empower the middle classes and even the lower classes.

[170] Mannironi, "Libri disonesti," 11.

[171] Ibid.

> che le persone ragionevoli, intendenti, e discrete, non decidono d'una composizione Poetica con quella franchezza medesima, che si deciderebbe d'una vivanda, dicendo che è buona, o cattiva, senza averla assaggiata; e sentendone soltanto l'odore.[172]
>
> I know that the good and the beautiful in the field of letters are real things that do not depend on chance; I know that the common people cannot judge this good and beauty; I know that bias and passion blind even the most enlightened of intellects, and that reasonable, fair-minded and discerning people do not judge a poetic composition with the same freedom with which one judges a morsel of food, saying it is good or bad without having first tasted it, but only having smelled its aroma.

In this way, Chiari attempted to elevate the novel genre, as did both his Venetian and foreign contemporaries, and to "fill in the existing gap which divided intellectuals from the rest of readers."[173] However, since middle-class readers and women were not the only readers of novels—in fact, in eighteenth-century Italy these groups still constituted a minority of the total readership—it became increasingly challenging for authors to appeal to such a diverse audience, with an extremely wide variety of tastes and interests.[174] Chiari, like others, sought to address the new reader who wanted to be entertained and educated, while at the same time continuing to write for the *literati* and *eruditi*, who expected traditional literary structures and themes.

While education is certainly one of the main objectives of *La filosofessa italiana*, it is also an adventure novel that advocates for the education for women outside the pages of fiction—whether intentionally or not. When we consider *La filosofessa italiana* as a representative novel of the period, its main character, Madamigella D'Avrile, takes on an even more important role as a representative of the social ills that affected an entire group of new

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[172] Pietro Chiari, *Commedie rappresentate nei teatri Grimani*, I (Venice: Angiolo Pasinelli, 1749), v. My translation.

[173] Mannironi, "Libri disonesti," 64.

[174] For more on this, see Mangione, *Prima di Manzoni*, 109–45.

readers, including women, artists, and displaced individuals who moved in a hybrid zone between the elites and lower classes. In this function, Chiari's protagonist evokes Aretino's use of Nanna to represent his social marginality. Chiari's choice of a female protagonist to play this role was not coincidental; chapter 3 will argue that this choice—and especially the use of a cross-dressing female protagonist—allowed Chiari a certain freedom to explore social barriers similar to those that he also faced as a writer dependent on the elite for his livelihood. Marivaux's *Marianne,* Richardson's *Pamela*, and Defoe's *Moll Flanders* played similar roles. In each novel, there is an element of proposopeia, in which the author uses the heroine to voice his own anxieties. As the case studies in chapter 3 will illustrate, the novel thus emerged as a literary space in which authors negotiated conceptions of gender, sexuality, and class.

CHAPTER 3:

PIETRO CHIARI AND THE FIRST VENETIAN BESTSELLER

> So che il buono, e il bello in materia di lettere è una cosa reale, che non dipende dal caso; So che di questo buono, e di questo bello, non è giudice il volgo; So che la parzialità, e la passione accieca i più illuminati intelletti; e che le persone ragionevoli, intendenti, e discrete, non decidono d'una composizione Poetica con quella franchezza medesima, che si deciderebbe d'una vivanda, dicendo che è buona, o cattiva, senza averla assaggiata; e sentendone soltanto l'odore.[175]

We saw in chapter 1 that for the sixteenth-century *poligrafo* Aretino, identity and success were rooted, on the one hand, in the public's reception of his work and in his limited and reserved acceptance into a closed-off, elite class. On the other hand, however, his identity and definition of success also lay in his individual capacity as a writer and artist, and in his ability to earn a living and therefore live as a free man. The possibility of maintaining oneself as a writer was the result of the Venetian Republic's political, social, and economic system, which supported a large merchant class. The innovative and agonistic spirit of the sixteenth century served as a model for the competitive and innovative opera theatre scene in seventeenth-century Venice, which was a hotbed of libertinism, as I outlined in chapter 2. Venice continued to be a hub of innovation and opportunity in the eighteenth century, setting the stage for the emergence of the novel in Venice. Aretino informed the work of his followers during his own time and the work of later Venetian movements that relied on self-fashioning, shock value, and pushing the boundaries of genre and of the self in order to respond to the desires of a broadening readership.

[175] Pietro Chiari, *Commedie rappresentate ne'teatri Grimani di Venezia*, Vol. I (Angelo Pasinelli, 1752), 50.

Aretino represents innovation in writing in the same way that Venice represents innovation in general: the coming together of Aretino and Venice proved monumental, particularly in advent of the self-fashioning individual and artist, which was a crucial step toward modernity. Stephen Greenblatt, in his analysis of self-fashioning in the lives and works of the Renaissance English writers More, Tyndale, and Wyatt, argues that their works give "voice to longings and fears that are deeply embedded in the nation's social and psychological character."[176] Like the English artists, Aretino worked diligently to fashion a specific public persona both in his work and through his public interactions. The same can be said of the works of the eighteenth-century dramatist and novelist Pietro Chiari, and in particular of his first novel, *La filosofessa italiana* (1753). However, Chiari's self-fashioning was not the same as that of his English or Italian predecessors. Instead, Chiari and his characters fashioned themselves based on the fluidity of the evolving social and economic conditions of Venice and of the Western Europe. The novel, itself a fluid genre, seemed to be the most adept at playing with a new concept of self-fashioning.[177]

While it is not the aim of this dissertation to examine the definition of the term "novel," a few words about the difficulty of determining just what constitutes a novel are in order to show how problematic a term it was during the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.[178] The term

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[176] Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (Il: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 157.

[177] For more on self-fashioning in the eighteenth century and sociability, see Ellen Russo, "Exploring the Conversible World: Text and Sociability from the Classical Age to the Enlightenment," *Yale French Studies* 92 (1997): 1-10. Also, for a revisionist history of French society and the bourgeoisie, see Sarah Maza, *The Myth of the French Bourgeoisie: An Essay on the Social Imaginary, 1750-1850* (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 2003).

[178] There are a number of studies, too many to list here, that take up the issue: see Percy G.

"novel" did not come into common use until the eighteenth century, when it was used to designate the influx of prose fiction narratives being produced primarily in England and France. A brief look at Pierre Daniel Huet (1630-1721) illuminates the increasingly positive view of the novel during the eighteenth century and reveals the long and insistent exclusion of Italian works from its history. Huet was an influential French scholar, an editor of the Delphin Classics, and the founder of the *Academie du Physique in Caen* (1662-1672). Bethany Wiggin, in her seminal *Novel Translations: The European Novel and the German Book, 1680-1730*, acknowledges Huet's exclusion of Italy and Spain as forerunners of the genre: "His *Traité* also neatly excluded any Spanish or Italian pretenders from the genre's throne—despite ample claims that seemed to make the genre theirs."[179] In fact, many arguments have made a case for Boccaccio as the forerunner of the modern novel with his *Decameron*, the elegiac narrative *L'elegia di Madonna Fiammetta*, and the *Filocolo*—a rather easy case to make, at least when acknowledging the influence of the *novella* form on the eventual novel. Many also argue with good reason that Cervantes' *Don Quixote* is the first modern novel.[180]

Adams' introduction to his *Travel Literature and the Evolution of the Novel* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1983). Many of the essays and excerpts included in *Theory of the Novel: Critical Edition*, ed. Michael McKeon (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000) address this matter; see also Franco Moretti, *The Novel* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006). Seminal studies on the English novel include Ian Watt, *The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson and Fielding* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001) and Michael McKeon, *The Origins of the English Novel* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987).

[179] Bethany Wiggin, *Novel Translations: The European Novel and the German Book, 1680-1730* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011), 2. See also Pierre Daniel Huet, *Traité de l'origine des romans* (1670).

[180] Despite this common understanding of *Don Quixote*, some would argue that Giovanni Boccaccio's *Elegia della madonna Fiammetta* is the first novel in the modern sense of the term. This conversation was first delineated by Dario Rastelli in "La modernità della Fiammetta," *Convivium* n.s. (194): 703-15.

Although authors such as Boccaccio and, as this dissertation argues, Aretino had a significant influence on the modern novel, Wiggin's discussion of Huet helps explain why Italy has been largely left out of the debate on the development of the novel. It also explains why the pre-Manzoni novel, beyond a limited circle of critics and academics, has been nearly completely overlooked. Wiggins explains: "France was the place where, Huet claimed, the *roman* had first been brought to full flower, initially by Honoré d'Urfé (1568-1625), then by Madeleine de Scudéry (1606-1701), and finally by the author of *Zaïde*, listed on the original title page as 'Monsieur de Segrais' (Jean Regnault de Segrais, 1624-1701)."[181] She contends that while in another century Gotthard Heidegger, a Swiss theologian and satirist (1666-1711), believed that politics and culture would suffer because of the novel, or *roman*, Huet believed they would be uplifted and enriched, for the novel both reflected and glorified the state:

> If cultural accomplishment accompanied political might, cultural decline ways equally certain proof of power's ebb. What augured the rise (of the roman) prognosticated by one soothsayer could be read by another to herald the fall. Thus, while for Huet the *roman* predicted French preeminence, for Heidegger it told of French decadence. Huet's *roman* burnished French Glory; Heidegger's exposed that nation's seamy underside. It was the genre's intense reception beyond France that had so vexed the Swiss Calvinist. Its popularity portended a fall from grace for all nations who sampled the fruits.[182]

Huet sought to glorify France, not Italy, which could have been a reason for omitting Italy from the discourse.

Like Heidegger, many of Italy's *literati* feared that long narrative fiction both posed a threat to the literary canon and exposed the "seamy underside" of Italian culture. Verse had been the most elevated and revered literary form at least since Dante and treated mostly lofty subjects,

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[181] Wiggin, *Novel Translations,* 3.

[182] Ibid.

while prose fiction tended towards less noble themes. Therefore, there was also pushback against promoting the novel from within Italy.

In chapter 2, we saw that there was no better place than the Venetian Republic for an artist like Aretino to make a living, free from many of the restrictions of the court system present in most other Italian city-states, kingdoms, and duchies of the period. It was in Venice, therefore, that first Aretino and then Chiari sought to fashion an identity that existed outside the hierarchal system that determined each person's social status and role. In other words, each writer worked and existed in an "uncategorized realm" for which he became the spokesperson.[183] Aretino's appropriation of the female voice in the *Sei giornate*, in particular, resulted in a fluid gender identity that assigned traditional male agency to a female protagonist. The appearance of such a dynamic literary female protagonist in the public sphere was one of many transgressive writing acts that helped fuel a dynamic polemic among Aretino and his contemporaries. Chiari picked up this same technique in *La filosofessa italiana*, but his was an evolved version of the female protagonist/narrator, marked by a diachronic filtration through international appropriation and translation. When a character like Aretino's Nanna finally returned to Venice, then, she arrived in a new genre—the novel—and had an updated agenda. As we saw in chapter 2, the polemic that shaped so much of the work and content of the sixteenth-century *poligrafi*, and certainly defined Aretino's use of Nanna as a spokeswoman for the courtier, also marked the eighteenth-century Venetian literary scene, in which a similar polemic played out, primarily among Chiari, Gozzi, and Goldoni.

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[183] Madeleine Kahn, *Narrative Transvestism: Rhetoric and Gender in the Eighteenth-Century English Novel* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991), 151. Kahn writes about this space as a liminal place, that is neither one nor the other gender. I contend that this is equally applicable to the space between classes; it is a place that lacks definition.

As the first bestselling novel in Venice on record, Chiari's *La filosofessa italiana* (1753) is the ideal point of departure for the examination of the development of the Italian novel. To accomplish this task, I place this foundational text in dialogue with Daniel Defoe's *Moll Flanders* (1722), Samuel Richardson's *Pamela* (1740), and Pierre de Marivaux's *La Vie de Marianne* or *The life of Marianne; or, the adventures of the Countess of* *** (serially published between 1731 and 1745). The aims of examining these texts together are 1) to highlight the ways the novelistic flowering in Italy at this time was related to the social and political tensions at play in eighteenth-century Venice, which had an indirect but fundamental connection to a growing tradition of unique innovation in Venice, with Aretino, the printing press, and the *poligrafi*, opera theatre, and *commedia dell'arte*, and 2) to demonstrate how Chiari, in particular, borrowed from and adapted English and French models of the novel to inform his own. This second point is complicated because some English novels actually borrowed from Aretino thematically, so we witness a return of Aretino's transgressive and innovative spirit through Chiari, who brought Aretino's innovations back into Venice.

The flowering of the novel tradition in England has been widely studied and has been primarily linked to England's growing middle class, the increase in its literacy rates compared to those of previous centuries (resulting in more women readers), and an economy that supported the sale of books. Two monumental studies of the novel in England that support that thesis are Ian Watt's *The Rise of the Novel* and Michael McKeon's *The Origins of the English Novel, 1600-1740*. However, Mary Helen McMurran, in her *The Spread of Novels: Translation and Prose Fiction in the Eighteenth Century*, expands the notion of the emergence of the novel to include the fundamental role of translation in both the complex emergence of the novel and its evolution as it was shaped by a number of cultural influences that lay outside England and beyond the

growing middle class.[184] When we take McMurran's work into consideration, the reasons for the differences in the novel's rise in France and in Italy come more clearly into focus.

In France, the novel's burgeoning was not due simply to a growing middle class, as has been argued about the rise of the novel in England. Instead, the novel flourished in France due to the strong presence of Enlightenment ideals and the spread of knowledge and new ideas in the salon and through the press. These ideals fostered bourgeois values. Olivier Delers, associate professor of French at the University of Richmond, complicates these reasons, however. The slow demise of the ancient régime meant that the prestige of an impoverished nobility could no longer be guaranteed. The nobility, in turn, increasingly imposed taxes on peasants and the bourgeoisie, which led to the erosion of class distinctions and the sale of titles of nobility. These new nobles, "nobles of the robe," possessed financial power and now titles, though they lacked a mentality of reverence for the class they had just joined. Indeed, as many revisionist historians have noted, it is important to avoid mythicizing the bourgeoisie and the nobility alike when trying to understand the advent of the French Revolution. There are certainly myriad shifts, not solely economic, that created conditions of increased choices and possibilities for people, especially women, to live their lives: the complexity of the individual within shifting conceptions of class identity surfaced in narrative fiction, and English narrative fiction served as a point of departure for French novelists.

The shifting class power and the increased participation in public life of new classes created strong public opinion, which rapidly eroded old values and forged new ones. The details of this shift in lifestyle and social attitudes fill the pages of the *Encyclopédie.* The first

[184] Mary Helen McMurran, *The Spread of Novels: Translation and Prose Fiction in the Eighteenth Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009).

Encyclopédie was published in France 1751 and 1772 and was the first book of its type to be composed of contributions from a large number of authors, including prominent, leading figures of the French Enlightenment such as Voltaire, Rousseau, and Baron d'Holbach, among many others. The concept behind the *Encyclopédie* reflected the shifting lifestyle in France and even looked to the growing middle-class culture in England. Indeed, the plates of the *Encyclopédie* are full of the depictions of this new class of wealth and social mobility. Mobility for women was especially visible. Women became the protagonists of eighteenth-century French novels, such as *Manon Lescaut* and *Les Lettres d'une Péruvienne*, and philosophical, pornographic novels, such as *Margot la Ravaudeuse* and *Thèrese philosophe*. In this environment, English novels appealed to French readers because they detailed realistically the lives of middle-class people, a class that had not yet been fully realized in France. Furthermore, the novels presented both interactions and tensions between shifting social classes and economies, and they carried a special element of self-fashioning that could be localized.

Unlike English authors, French authors tended to see the novel genre as an opportunity to examine and complicate new conceptions of class identity that resisted strict categorization. While middle-class identity was fully formed in England, it was still emerging in France as well, and the definition or conception of the bourgeois class remained nebulous. Novels like *Manon Lescaut* reinforced better than any others the crisis of *Ancien Régime* thinking and practices. Delers suggests in *The Other Rise of the Novel in Eighteenth-Century French Fiction* that

> [w]hen we follow the "actors" in stories, step-by-step and without limiting what they do and say to predefined categories, we see that the French eighteenth-century novel does not point to a moment of epistemological transition or to an unfolding of a class dialectic, but to the radical indeterminacy that structures the complex politics of choice with which characters are confronted.[185]

[185] Olivier Delers, *The Other Rise of the Novel in Eighteenth-Century French Fiction* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2015), 5.

In other words, the rise or emergence of the novel did not occur because of class shifts or the rise of a bourgeois class, but instead reflected any number of self-interests and economies. This was partially due to changing conceptions of class divisions and a new economy, but also due to personal interest, on the levels of both authors and characters.

This reading of the history of the French novel suggests that the studies of the rise of the novel that treat the English case as paradigmatic have circumscribed the study of the novel, and of bestseller culture, by leaving out key aspects of novels outside England. My comparative approach is based on the idea that the early novel in Venice showed characteristics of both the English and the French traditions, in addition to characteristics that were uniquely its own. While Delers maintains that the experiences of characters in French novels are a politics of choice, I add that in the French case, the politics of choice evolved out of a set of practices and beliefs that were increasingly bourgeois.[186] I put Chiari's *La filosofessa italiana* in dialogue with Marivaux's *La Vie de Marianne* to bridge the gap between the English models and Chiari

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[186] In addition to Watt and McKeon, Delers incorporates other key sources into his analysis that may interest readers looking to better understand the complexities of the evolving social, philosophical and economic culture in France during the long eighteenth century. Those sources include Georges May, *Le Dilemme du roman au XVIIIe siècle* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1963); Marie-Hélène Huet, *Le Héros et son double: Essai sur le roman d'ascension social au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Librairie José Corti, 1975); Malcolm Cook, *Fictional France: Social Reality in the French Novel, 1775*-1800 (Oxford: Berg, 1993); David Denby, *Sentimental Narrative and the Social Order in France, 1760-1820* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); Patrick Coleman, *Reparative Realism: Mourning and Modernity in the French Novel, 1730-1830* (Geneva: Droz, 1998); Jenny Mander, *Circles of Learning: Narratology and the Eighteenth-Century French Novel* (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 1999); Thomas Pavel, *La pensée du roman* (Paris: Gallimard, 2003); Christophe Martin, *Espaces du féminin dans le roman français du dix-huitième siècle* (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2004); and Colette Cazenobe, *Au Malheur des dames: le roman féminin au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Champion, 2006). See also Henri Coulet, *Le roman jusqu'à la Révolution*, vol. I, Histoire du roman en France (Paris: Armand Colin, 1967).

because the "radical indeterminancy that structures the complex politics of choice with which characters are confronted" is the connective tissue between the French and Italian novels that keeps them distinct from their English counterparts, even as they sometimes used the English novels as models.

To make this argument, I could have chosen any number of key French novels, such as the five Delers analyzes in his monograph: Antoine Furetière's *Le Roman bourgeois* (1666), Lafayette's *La Princesse de Clèves* (1678), Prévost's *Manon Lescaut* (1731), Graffingny's *Lettres d'une Péruvienne* (1747), and Rousseau's *Julie, ou La Nouvelle Héloïse* (1761). But here I have some contention with Delers' definition of what constitutes a French novel based on a number of issues. *La Princesse de Clèves* is very much anchored in the *Ancien régime* under Louis XIV and can hardly be compared to *Manon Lescaut*, and to call *Julie, ou La Nouvelle Héloise* a French novel is to ignore that Rousseau was Swiss and not French. Rousseau consistently rails against French values and French women throughout this long epistolary novel, decrying their agency and their subversion of the true essence of women and female values, and women's relationship to patriarchy. Instead, I have chosen to focus on *La Vie de Marianne* because in it Marivaux focuses on the bourgeois values of Marianne, and the text thus offers many similarities to (and notable differences from) Pamela, Marianne, and D'Avrile; moreover, Chiari translated both *La Vie de Marianne* and *Pamela*, which makes linking them to his first bestseller a logical choice.

This chapter will first briefly explain Chiari's biography and discuss some of the similarities between his situation and Aretino's, with the aim of pointing out the tensions of Chiari's position as an "upstart artist." I will then outline the literary influences that made Chiari's bestseller *La filosofessa italiana* a "hybrid" text. The third section of this chapter asks

what kinds of social commentary on gender and class were made possible by Chiari's use of a female protagonist/narrator, and the fourth section continues the focus on gender and class to tease apart the ways Chiari's text differed from the English and French novels that served as his models. In all of these analyses, the influence and spirit of Aretino is apparent.

I. The Upstart Artist in Venice: Pietro Chiari

Chiari was born in 1712 in Brescia, which at the time was still part of the Venetian Republic. While not much is known of his early life, scholars know that he came from a military family of modest means, and that for many years Chiari followed in his father's footsteps as a "colonnello al servizio di Venezia."[187] His love of reading and letters is also known from his collections of letters, in which he expresses that he never had a predisposition for a military career and instead preferred the company of books. After leaving his military work, Chiari spent time reading and is believed to have studied in Modena with the Jesuits. This was a key factor in his strong resistance to traditional education, which is at the core of his novelistic works.[188] Chiari spent some time in Rome, but like Aretino, had difficulty securing a living. However, while in Rome he participated in a meeting of the *Accademia dell'Arcadia*, where he recited some of his own poetry. His involvement in the Academy marks a movement in his works that focuses on a simplification of language and a return to classical themes. This tendency eventually provided fodder for his polemical relationship with Carlo Goldoni and placed him in direct contention

[187] Nicola Mangini, ed., *Dizionario bibliografico degli italiani*, vol. 24 (Rome: Trecanni, 1980), 566.

[188] See Giacomo Mannironi, "Libri disonesti: Education and Disobedience in the Venetian Novel (1753-1769)" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Warwick, 2015), 53-84.

with Carlo Gozzi, whose theater pieces are grounded in a baroque aesthetic.[189] Chiari eventually settled in Venice for about 15 years. This was his most prolific and successful period. In Venice, Chiari immediately engaged in the polemics of the city: he joined the Academy.

Like Aretino, Chiari made a number of enemies. As I outline in chapter 2, the most notable of these on the theater front were Gozzi and Goldoni. However, he did not limit scandal to the stage. He also sparred through letters with Giuseppe Antonio Costantini (1662-1772), who, like Chiari, worked with the publisher Pasinelli. Little is known about Costantini's early life because he is often conflated or confused with another Costantini. Thus, his family connections are hazy, but it is clear that he moved to Venice around 1727 or 1728 and worked as a lawyer. Soon after Costantini's move to Venice, he was appointed a commercial deputy and finally worked as a *ministero* for the state. During this time, Costantini published his first volume, *Lettere critiche* (1743), and continued to publish profusely on a wide range of topics, from science to economics, government and civics, the stuff of daily and sometimes polemical letters. While Costantini's books covered varied topics, they were generally typical of the period: moralistic and pedantic. Chiari and Costantini engaged in a battle of wits via the publication of letters that was initiated by Chiari, most likely in an effort to stir up controversy to sell more

[189] For more on Carlo Gozzi and Carlo Goldoni as the sole Venetian Baroque playwrights, see Margarete Baur-Heinhold, *The Baroque Theatre: A Cultural History of the 17th and 18th Centuries* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967), in which the author offers a detailed index of the courts of European monarchies, plays, stage designs, and theater buildings (8). The Baroque is a theme that she delimits "in chronological terms by reference to the history of architecture" (9). For her, Baroque theater begins with the building of the Teatro Olimpico in Vicenza (1580–1584) and ends with the building of Teatro La Fenice in Venice (1790-1792). Unlike Bjurström and Ogden, Baur-Heinhold extends her research on the Baroque into the realm of performance. Specifically, she features Carlo Goldoni (1707-1793) and Carlo Gozzi (1720-1806) as the sole contributors to Venetian comedy in the Baroque era. Even the comedies penned by these Venetians, however, take a back seat to opera, which, for the author, constitutes the ultimate Baroque form due to its spectacular combination of music, poetry, and the plastic arts.

books. (Arguably, some of the polemics in the theater wars were also meant to sell tickets.) Costantini was a member of the *Accademia degli Agiati di Rovereto*, a science-based academy that sought to promote science and culture. However, the *Accademia degli Agiati di Rovereto* also sought to preserve the prestige of the noble class as the custodians of knowledge. Costantini's association with the *Agiati* must have played a role in Chiari and Costantini's polemical exchanges.[190] In his *Lettere scelte di varie materie piacevoli*, *critiche*, *ed erudite*; *scritte ad una dama di qualità* (Venezia 1749), Chiari satirizes Costantini's first publication, *Lettere critiche* (1743). Costantini returned the attack in his seventh volume of *Lettere critiche* (1752), in a letter titled *La scimia [sic] col fagotto*, in which he accuses Chiari "di essere un volgare plagio e un pennaiolo spropositato" (of being a vulgar plagiarizer and preposterous writer).[191] Here Costantini is referring to Chiari's translation of popular English and French novels into the theater. Costantini's rebuttal is in tune with Gozzi's commentary on Chiari that also accuses him of stealing others' work. In fact, Chiari's most noted works are translations of Prévost, Fénelon, Marivaux, Mouchy, Richardson, and Fielding.[192]

Chiari had traditionalist roots, as evidenced by his affiliation with the *Accademia dell'Arcadia*, but he was also in tune with his contemporaries, advocated the spread of knowledge, and was a proponent of educational reforms that would allow education to be customized to meet the needs of individuals, both men and women. These activities met with

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[190] Stefano Ferrari, ed., *Cultura letteraria e sapere scientifico nelle accademie tedesche e italiane del Settecento* (Rovereto: Accademia Roveretana degli Agiati, 2003), 5-8. For more on the history of the Agiati, see Ferruccio Trentini, *Duecent'anni di vita dell'Accademia degli Agiati: sintesi storica* (Rovereto: Grafiche Manfrini, 1952).

[191] *Dizionario bibliografico degli italiani*, 567.

[192] *Dizionario bibliografico degli italiani*, 568.

strong resistance from Gozzi, who was an impoverished member of the aristocracy and a clear misogynist. Their conflicting beliefs were made manifest in their works and came to represent the social and political tensions at play in Venice.

Several additional key elements link Chiari to the *Seicento poligrafo*, and specifically to Aretino. Both authors occupied tenuous social positions that challenged their masculinity by limiting their social mobility. Let us recall Sedgwick's argument that Renaissance men defined their masculinity against the women they exchanged both physically and through literary devices, with the result that women served as a foil to their self-definition. For Aretino and Chiari, upward social mobility meant catering to an elite, which emphasized their own socially subservient role, in many ways analogous to women's social roles. In contrast to Gozzi, as we will see in chapter 4, both Aretino and Chiari had humble family roots and were therefore characterized as upstarts in a closed court system that maintained a rigid social order.[193] The well-born would have preferred upstarts like Aretino and Chiari to remain in the social position in which they were born.

We saw earlier that Aretino transgressed the traditional literary constraints that dictated which content was permitted in the public sphere and which was reserved for private and elite audiences only. Chiari continued in this transgressive tradition of the upstart artist by taking on the novel genre, which was still considered an inappropriate and dangerous form in Italy—inappropriate because it was viewed as a feminine form and dangerous because it had no formal

[193] See James H. Johnson, *Venice Incognito: Masks in the Serene Republic* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005). Pages 3-13 and 129-152 deal, in particular, with Casanova and his performance as other selves through "masking." Casanova "outperformed" other nobles with gallantry and elegant courting, which his theatrical background gave him the tools to do. He left Venice, however, because his transgressions were not tolerated there.

constraints regarding structure or content and broke with traditional Italian poetic genres. In this way, Chiari's relationship with the novel form was problematized by his status as an upstart writer and by his appropriation of a form so closely linked to the feminine.

The literary critic Marthe Robert argues in *Origins of the Novel* that

> The modern novel, whether it was born with Don Quixote's memorable escapade or on Robinson Crusoe's desert Isle, and notwithstanding the distinguished and historically acknowledged ancestry it claims, is a newcomer to the literary scene, a commoner made good who will always stand out as something of an upstart, even a bit of a swindler, among the established genres it is gradually supplanting.[194]

Responding to Robert, McKeon expands on this definition, adding that the novel "is figured as a newcomer, an upstart, a commoner made good who verges on the status of a heroic outlaw; an imperial invader, usurper, and colonizer, at once totalitarian and leveling; a parasite that cannibalistically feeds off of the other, legitimate forms for its own illicit sustenance."[195] The key terms here are "usurper" and "heroic outlaw." If we agree on these definitions and descriptions of the novel, then it was a highly appropriate form for Chiari and others like him to take up. It was also precisely these perceptions of the novel genre that made it so popular in England when embraced by Defoe and Richardson, and in France by Marivaux, and that made it suspect in Italy.

Another reason the novel was readily accepted in England in the seventeenth century is that England was a bustling, commodity-based society, thanks to the slave trade.[196] Both the

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[194] Marthe Robert, "Origins of the Novel," in *Theory of the Novel: A Historical Approach*, ed. Micheal McKeon (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), 57-69.

[195] Michael McKeon, ed., *Theory of the Novel: A Historical Approach* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), 4.

[196] Miranda Kaufmann, "Slavery and English Common Law," in *Encyclopaedia of Blacks in European History and Culture*, vol. I (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2008), 200-203.

slave trade, notably in London, and the triangular trade in major cities like Bristol, Liverpool, and Glasgow enriched England by supporting a substantial middle class that did not yet exist in Italy, though cities like Venice and Naples possessed a social order that most closely resembled this cosmopolitan structure. Money poured into England, and work in new sectors created and enriched the middle class.[197] Both café culture and newspaper culture were at their height. Voltaire mentions these social innovations in his *Lettres anglaises,* also known as *Lettres philosophiques* (1721), in which he points out all of these people working together in a new English class, united by the goal of making money, with prosperity and the pursuit of happiness closely aligned.[198] The novels published in seventeenth-century England emerged from this changing economic and social system.

The French *philosophes* admired the freedom of England and its constitutional monarchy. Voltaire, Montesquieu and Rousseau all travelled to England and respected and incorporated into their own works the ideas of Thomas Hobbes, Isaac Newton, and John Locke.[199] For example,

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[197] See Paul Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People: England 1727–1783* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 59–122. The triangle was composed of Africa, the colonies, and England, with many cities in Great Britain benefitting from it, but also France. Bordeaux, for example, and other French cities with strong Huguenot populations flourished, like England, in the slave trade. Montesquieu and Voltaire both prospered in the slave trade, which stood in complete contrast to their views as "philosophes," which has somewhat tarnished their reputations in recent years.

[198] See Nicholas Cronk's introduction to Voltaire, *Letters Concerning the English Nation* (Oxford: Oxford Printing Press, 2009 [reissued].)

[199] It is important to remember that Rousseau was Swiss, from Geneva, not French, and made his career in writings that consistently challenged the French enlightenment. He did contribute to the *Encyclopédie*, but not directly. His "Dictionnaire de musique" was incorporated into it, but while he is often considered a *philosophe*, he was generally in contention with the French *philosphes*. I include Rousseau here because of his influence through his "Social Contract" and, more importantly, his *Julie*.

despite Hobbes' pessimistic and cynical view of human life, his politics, which were based on human reason, interested the French philosophers. They circulated the English ideas in their writings and in their own periodical press. By contributing to the monumental *Encyclopédie* edited by Denis Diderot, these philosophers and their fellow authors intended to educate the growing number of literate people in France and beyond. In other words, the *Encyclopédie* was the manifestation of Enlightenment ideals that encouraged learning. Thanks to the idea-rich French Enlightenment and the ability to circulate these ideas through numerous forms of media, France, too, embraced the Enlightenment project and the emergence of new audiences. In this environment, the French novel blossomed.

While Venice's environment was the closest in Italy to those of cosmopolitan English and French cities such as London, Paris, and Bordeaux, the reasons for its liberalism were different, and liberal ideas were not widely shared throughout Venetian society, as we saw in chapter 2.[200] An English character such as Richardson's Moll Flanders was therefore shocking to Italian sensibilities, but not to French. The Italian literary system clung to tradition and old literary models, and the *literati* resisted vulgarizing these forms. Because novelists were so adept at subsuming other genres and often drew material from domestic or base life, popularizing the novel was a much more difficult task in Italy than in France or England.

Like many prominent English and French authors of novels, Chiari belonged to an artist class that sought to make a living through art by appealing to the widest audience possible. Like

[200] The French ports and colonies were also very involved in the slave trade. See Elizabeth Colwill, "Sex, Savagery and Slavery in the Shaping of the French Body Politic," in *From the Royal to the Republican Body*, ed. Kathryn Norberg and Sara E. Melzer (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 198-223.

Aretino and the *poligrafi* before him, Chiari was beholden to an elite class that seduced him with the promise of both a financially stable (even extravagant) lifestyle and social mobility. However, social mobility in general was even less available on the peninsula than in other places in Western Europe, and as much as Chiari still sought to appeal to a wealthy elite that had more leisure time to read, he could never really join their ranks, nor survive on their limited purchasing power alone. Thus, he also needed to write for the growing middle and merchant classes. In fact, he and his contemporaries increasingly relied more on the buying power of the emerging middle and merchant classes, which included women, than on those of the limited elite. As I will demonstrate later, for Chiari this became a reality in part through Chiari's use of the female narrator, which opened a number of narrative possibilities.

Pietro Chiari declared the eighteenth century "The Century of Women" because it was a period in which women were at the center of cultural, social, and political debates. Rebecca Messbarger borrowed this phrase for the title of her monograph *The Century of Women: Representations of Women in Eighteenth-Century Italian Public Discourse*, in which she shows that women "stood as a leitmotif at the centre of Italian Enlightenment discourse."[201] Messbarger acknowledges that while women may have taken center stage as objects of discussion, the discourse was "shaped by a need to hold them in check, by a barely concealed desire to turn their presence into a kind of absence, or at any rate, a discreet presence within narrowly defined boundaries, rather like a walled garden."[202] Nevertheless, many Italians supported expanded social roles for women, or at the very least a basic education for women. Chiari was one such

[201] Rebecca Messbarger, *The Century of Women: Representations of Women in Eighteenth-Century Italian Public Discourse* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 1.

[202] Messbarger, *The Century of Women,* 2.

Italian. He wrote a number of novels featuring female protagonists and narrators, and a preponderance of these female protagonists have significant agency.[203] One the one hand, as primarily adventure novels told through letters, these works appealed to both elite and less-elite readers. Perhaps the female narrators made the adventures even more titillating because of the increased level of danger a woman would face while traveling abroad, and titillation was what sold. But Chiari also used the female narrator as a mouthpiece to express a general discord within a social system that immobilized both men and women. Chiari was just one of a large

[203] Pietro Chiari published novels with both male and female narrators. The titles that follow are only of those with female narrators: *La ballerina onorata, o sia memorie d'una figlia naturale del Duca N.V., scritte da lei medesima* (Venezia: Pasinelli, 1754), [8°, 2 vols]; *La cantatrice per disgrazia, o sia le avventure della Marchesa N.N., scritte da lei medesima e pubblicate dall'Abate Chiari* (Venezia: Pasinelli, 1755), [8°, 2 vols]; *La commediante in fortuna, o sia memorie di Madama N.N., scritte da lei medesima e pubblicate dall'Ab. Chiari* (Venezia: Pasinelli, 1755), [8°, 2 vols]; *La giuocatrice di Lotto, o sia memoria di Madama Tolot, scritte da lei medesima, colle regole con cui fece al lotto una fortuna considerevole, pubblicate dall'Abate Pietro Chiari* (Venezia: Pasinelli, 1758), [8°]; *La Zingana, memorie egiziane di Madama N.N., scritte in francese da lei medesima e pubblicate dall'Abate Pietro Chiari* (Venezia: Pasinelli, 1758), [8°, 2 vols]; *La francese in Italia, o sia memorie critiche di Madama N.N., scritte da lei medesima, e pubblicate dall'Abate Pietro Chiari* (Venezia: Pasinelli, 1760), [8°, 2 vols]; *La viaggiatrice, o sia le avventure di Madamigella E.B., scritte da lei medesima in altrettante lettere all'Abate Pietro Chiari, e da lui pubblicate* (Venezia: Pasinelli, 1761), [8°, 2 vols]; *La bella pellegrina, o sia memorie di una dama Moscovita, scritte da lei medesima e pubblicate dall'Abate Pietro Chiari* (Venezia: [Marcuzzi], 1761), [8°, 2 vols]; *La Viniziana di spirito, o sia le avventure di una viniziana ben nata, scritte da lei medesima, e ridotte in altrettante massime, le più giovevoli a formare una dama di spirito, pubblicate dall'abate Pietro Chiari bresciano, Poeta di S.A.R. il Sig. Duca di Modena (*Venezia: [Marcuzzi], 1762), [8°, 2 vols]; *L'Americana ramminga cioè Memorie di Donna Jnnez de Quebrada scritte da lei stessa, ed ora pubblicate da M. G. Di S. sua confidente amica* (Venezia: Pasinelli, 1762), [8°, 2 vols]; *L'amante incognita, o sia le avventure d'una principessa svedese, scritte da lei medesima, e pubblicate dall'Abate P. Chiari* (Venezia: Pasinelli, 1764/5), [8°, 2 vols]; *L'amore senza fortuna, o sia memorie d'una dama portoghese, scritte da lei medesima, pubblicate dall'Ab. Pietro Chiari* (Firenze [but Venice]: Colombani, 1765). [8°, 2 vols]. Antonio Piazza also published novels featuring female protagonists, often drawing on backstage theater drama for content. His novels include *La Turca in Cimento*, *osia l'avventure di Zelmira*, *scritte da lei medesima e dedicate a s.e.f. Daniel Barbaro* (Venezia: Antonio Decastro, 1765), [8°, 2 vols].

number of novelists who used this technique. In fact, the female protagonist was at her height during this time in which novels sought to educate women in a number of ways; this was true for the didactic novels of manners being published in England and France and for the libertine novels that passed the censors by posing as cautionary tales. These novels acted as a supplement to the many treatises of the period that sought to either expand or limit women's social sphere.[204]

Messbarger sheds light on the many ambivalences that mark both the anti- and pro-women treatises of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but she does not extend her inquiry to an examination of how these ambivalences play out in the novels of the period, many of which were written with female readers in mind and featured female protagonists and narrators. Nor does she examine how the construction of male and female identities reflects the limitations placed on gender and identity. Messbarger contends that "The ambivalence and incongruities that mark arguments in the [*querelle des femmes*] stem largely from an increased, albeit anxious, recognition of women as a rising interest-group whose reality and perspective contradicted longstanding constructions of femininity."[205] Because, as I have argued in chapters 1 and 2, there was (or at least there was perceived to be) some overlap between the treatment of women and the

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[204] See Messbarger, *The Century of Women,* in which she examines the debate between men and women, using Camposanpiero's *Defense of the Education of Women* and Volpi's *Against the Education of Women* as case studies for the representation of women in the private and public and to highlight the strong sentiments during the period on both sides of the debate. Other treatises were published in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but the number of published defenses of women in eighteenth-century Italy dropped. See Rinaldina Russell, ed., *The Feminist Encyclopedia of Italian Literature* (Westport, London: Greenword Press, 1997), 274-277. The treatises and defenses include Carolina Lattanzi, *Schiavitù delle donne* [1797], ed. Gilberto Zacchè (Mantua: Edizioni Lombarde, 1976); the anonomous political tracts include Anonima Cittadina, *La causa della donne: Discorso agli italiani* [Venice, 1797], in *Donne e Diritto: Due secoli di legislazione* 1796/1986, vol. 2, ed. Agata Capiello et al. (Rome: Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri, 1988) and Anonimo, "Istruzione d'una Cittadina alle sue Concittadine" (Venice, 1797).

[205] Messbarger, *The Century of Women*, 24.

treatment of members of the male-dominated social class of artists, I suggest that Chiari, too, was concerned with these constructions of feminine identity. Specifically, he was concerned about how they affected his own reception by his contemporaries, who might perceive him as more feminine than masculine because of his class, a perception reinforced by his writing of novels, which had long been considered a feminine genre. Therefore, Chiari's elevation of the female and of the feminine in *La filosofessa italiana* can be seen as essentially an insurance measure related to his ambiguous social standing. The ambiguities associated with the artist class and with the *querelle des femmes* led to a number of polemics on the Venetian literary scene, and more specifically in the theater, which have been designated the "theater wars."

As discussed in chapter 2, the eighteenth-century theater wars resembled the chaotic and financially beneficial publication of letters and texts by Aretino and the *poligrafi* during the sixteenth century. Chiari and his apprentice Antonio Piazza drew from the backstage drama of the theater wars for content in their novels. Other aspects of the content offered a different kind of appeal: Chiari's female protagonist gave the reader a glimpse into the domestic, female realm. The combination of worldly and domesticated content appealed to a wide audience, as did the novel's hybrid structure. Thus, not only did the "theater wars" help shape the emergent novel in Venice, but so too did the changing tastes of the public and the rapacity of publishers, whose income depended on the support of these new readers as much as did the author's.

II. Influences on *La filosofessa italiana*

The first edition of *La filosofessa italiana* was printed in 1753. The long narrative takes place over seven parts—totaling just over 700 pages—in which the reader follows the young Madamigella D'Arvile on her adventures as she seeks to discover her true parentage, find her

lover, and ultimately free herself from the life of a cloistered nun. The similarity of this plot to a theater comedy plot would not have been lost on his readership. The interplay between French and Italian convent culture and education would also have struck a chord among many readers and serves as a point of departure for the female protagonist/narrator's (and thus Chiari's) challenge to the social role assigned to women.

The novel begins with the young orphan escaping from the French orphanage where she has been supported by an unknown, wealthy benefactor. Her escape is based on two desires, ignited by a serious love interest: to experience a free life and to discover her true roots. The novel, however, does not rely entirely on a typical love *topos*; in fact, both male and female relationships are explored on a number of levels.[206] Chiari's placement of the Italian D'Avrile in a French convent immediately highlights the issue of French versus Italian convent culture and education. At the time, French Enlightenment culture was exerting a profound influence on women's education in France, and many were questioning women's intellectual capacity and educational rights. The debate remained heated well into the nineteenth century. While the *querelle des femme* was also an issue in Italy stemming from texts such as Boccaccio's *De mulieribus claris*, in Venice, and other city-states and duchies on the peninsula, Italy was still far behind in literacy rates and educational opportunities for women.[207] Chiari highlights this situation later, when D'Avrile chastises an Italian woman for her lack of education, but reflects

[206] For more on female friendship in fiction, see Brian Mangano, *Fictions of Friendship in the Eighteenth-Century Novel* (Palgrave McMillan, 2017).

[207] Christine de Pizan was of an Italian family but living in Burgundy and writing in French. Her name was actually Pizan—her family was not from Pisa. Her *Book of the City of Ladies* drew heavily on Boccaccio (both *Decameron* and *De mulieribus claris),* and one might argue that the *querelle* began in Italy with Boccaccio's works, but Christine imported them into France.

on the culture that supports it. It is likely that Chiari, like many of his compatriots, was aware of the debate in France and of French women's educational advantages. We see traces of this awareness in references to France throughout *La filosofessa italiana*, as will be discussed in the pages to come.

Chiari's use of the convent as the starting point of D'Avrile's narrative thus highlights a larger issue centered on convents, monasteries, female education, and spaces for women in the public sphere that was relevant to both France and Italy during the eighteenth century. Mita Choudhoury argues in *Convents and Nuns in Eighteenth-century French Politics and Culture* that French convents served as more than just religious institutions or as a place for women who could not afford to wed or were born of illegitimate parents, "but [were also] … a political [institution] emblematic of all the disorders associated with the larger body politic."[208] Chiari capitalizes on the heated debates about the role of convents and women religious by placing D'Avrile in a French convent. On the one hand, by doing so, he suggests that this Italian girl receives a better education there than in Italy, since this is where her wealthy benefactor chooses to place her. On the other hand, he brings to light the positive influence of education on women through D'Avrile's strong, independent nature.

In fact, the convent and its role in women's education were at the forefront of public discourse in France in the eighteenth century, as evidenced in Diderot's *La religieuse*. Diderot's *La religieuse* argues that the closerization and forced vocation of women is against nature, and women's education in general was being highly debated by philosophers like Rousseau, who contrary to Diderot, insisted on only a domestic education for women in his *Emile*. Rousseau

[208] Mita Choudhury, *Convents and Nuns in Eighteenth-century French Politics and Culture* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004), 2.

insists that the ideal woman for Emile, Sophy, should be educated, but not in the same manner as Emile himself, or men in general. Instead, Rousseau argues that "nature means [women] to think, to will, to love, to cultivate their minds as well as their persons; [nature] puts these weapons in their hands to make up for their lack of strength and to enable them to direct the strength of men. They should learn many things, but only such things as are suitable."[209]

In both cases, the concept was to educate women in relation to men, honoring the differences between the sexes:

> Thus the whole education of women ought to be relative to men. To please them, to be useful to them, to make themselves loved and honored by them, to educate them when young, to care for them when grown, to council them, to console them, and to make life agreeable and sweet to them—these are the duties of women at all times, and should be taught them from their infancy.[210]

Women should be educated, but with a very different curriculum, one that prepared them to be caretakers and early educators and to charm.

In both England and France, the debate widened to include poor, middle-class, and noble women, and covered education in the convent, the education of women religious, and private education. In England, the rapid growth of the middle class and the need for women workers to support economic demands helped make the case for women's education. Enlightenment philosophy in France tended toward a new understanding of biology, science, and humanity that included a belief in the equality of the sexes and therefore a belief in the need for female education. While Italian humanists were the pioneers of female education, as Messbarger argues,

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[209] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Emile, or Education* (London: J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd, 1762 [1914]), 330–331.

[210] Cited in Susan Groag Bell and Karen M. Offen, eds., *Women, the Family, and Freedom: The Debate in Documents, vol. 1: 1750–1880* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1983), 55.

the debate remained circumscribed in Italy due to very slow class changes.[211] These ideas, however, were not absent. As I will discuss below, Chiari highlights their presence through D'Avrile's critique of the lack of education for women on the peninsula. It is part of this chapter's argument that Chiari joined this larger conversation about women and education, aligning himself with more radical views about women's education. It is important to keep in mind, however, that participating in it does not appear to have been the primary aim of *La filosofessa italiana*—instead, its primary aim was to make the author a living.

La filosofessa italiana is a hybrid text (as are most novels of this period) that borrows from more established English and French models, in particular from Richardson's *Pamela*, whose plot development is established through letters and fictional memoirs, and is in turn based on Marivaux's *La Vie de Marianne*. Unlike *Pamela*, however, Chiari's narrative is also a fictional memoir. It includes a number of letters that help to advance the plot, but it primarily consists of narrative prose. It is an adventure, a collection of letters, an education manual, and finally a new model for the Italian novel that features a female protagonist. The influences of *Pamela, Moll Flanders* and *La Vie de Marianne* will be discussed in more detail in a later section. For now, it is important to note that while the primary functions of most novels that featured female protagonists, like *Le Vie de Marianne*, *Pamela*, and even *Moll Flanders*, were to entertain and to educate, the adventure structure and the use of female narrators complicate *La filosofessa italiana*'s function and create an important link with the Spanish picaresque novel.

However, there were important Italian influences at play as well. For example, there are

[211] Rebecca Messbarger, introduction to *The Contest for Knowledge: Debates Over Women's Learning in Eighteenth-Century Italy*, ed. and trans. Rebecca Messbarger and Paula Findlen (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), xix-xx.

echoes of Boccaccio's *Elegia di madonna Fiammetta* and its sixteenth-century offspring, Helisenne de Crenne's *Les angoysses amoureuses*, in Chiari and in the literary tradition of narrative prose in Italy. Boccaccio is widely thought to have established the novella form, and the *Elegia di madonna Fiammetta* is often considered an early Italian novel.[212] Moreover, France was enamored of Boccaccio's *Decameron*; for example, Marguerite de Navarre's *Heptaméron* is modeled after the *Decameron*, albeit with a decidedly female based perspective. While Italy was often perceived to have been left out of the novel tradition during the eighteenth century, it is thus possible to speak of an Italian tradition of early influences on the genre of the novel. In fact, we saw in chapter 2 that Pasinelli introduced an Italian tradition of novel-writing in his comments on the publication of Chiari's *La filosofessa italiana*. A large part of this tradition came from Boccaccio's *Elegia di madonna Fiammetta* and his *Decameron.* There is some of Fiammetta in Chiari's Madamigella D'Avrile, who comes from an Italian line of female narrators (for example, in the work of Boccaccio), but there is even more of the pìcara, a modern female who exhibits an agency that we do not see in the likes of Fiammetta. In other words, Madamigella D'Avrile is the result of an amalgamation of the many female protagonists who precede her, including Aretino's Nanna and even Ariosto's Angelica. Madamigella D'Avrile is lovesick like Fiammetta, but has agency like Nanna and the pìcara, with the pìcara being superficial and in constant movement and Fiammetta being introspective and psychologically vulnerable. D'Avrile is not, however, low-born like the pìcara, so in this way she still appealed to the elite reader. Other influences on Madamigella D'Avrile and *La filosofessa italiana* include

[212] There are earlier collections of short tales (e.g., the *Novellino*), but Boccaccio set a literary example that became the model and inspiration for subsequent *novellieri*. The *Elegia di madonna Fiammetta* was translated into French by numerous authors; for a list of French editions, see Guyda Armstrong, *The English Boccaccio: A History in Books* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015), 418.

the particularities of the Venetian and Italian book markets, the theater wars,[213] and the lack of an English-style middle class on the Italian peninsula. With this multitude of influences, Chiari's text is a clear example of the hybridity of the novel genre that reflects a slowly changing social environment.

Female protagonists were clearly not new to eighteenth-century literature, as we saw in the analysis of *Sei giornate* in chapter 1. The type of female protagonist called the pìcara, however, became popularized in eighteenth-century Spanish picaresque novels, some of which were even written by women. The pìcara emerged in the seventeenth century. Part of the pìcara's (and pìcaro's) genealogy comes from early examples such as Aretino's Nanna and from a tradition of female transvestism present in theater, folktales, and song. Ariosto's Angelica is also often related to the picaresque tradition, with her movement through the storyline, and Spaniards were very taken with Ariosto and Angelica, both major influences on *Don Quixote*.

The pìcara was popular well into the eighteenth century. For example, in 1752 Charlotte Lennox published *The Female Quixote; or, The Adventures of Arabella*, a parody of Miguel de Cervantes' *El ingenioso hidalgo Don Quijote de la Mancha*, in which she mocks the weak-minded readers who believe novels to be models of reality and try to imitate them, as Don Quixote does. Pìcaras such as Grimmelshousen's Courage and Lesage's Laura, following in the Spanish tradition of *La Picara Justina* (1605) and the Rufina from *La Garduña de Seville* (1665), laid the literary foundations for later female representations of complex women in novels, such as Moll Flanders.[214] Courage, Laura, La Picara Justina, and the Rufina use cross-dressing and

[213] See Valeria G. A. Tavazzi, *Il romanzo in gara: echi delle polemiche teatrali nella narrativa di Pietro Chiari e Antonio Piazza* (Rome: Bulzoni, 2010).

[214] For more on these texts, see David Mañero Lozano, "Trayectoria editorial de La pícara Justina. Estudio bibliográfico y textual," *Criticón* 09 (2010): 73-93.

costume changes to help them navigate the outside world, which was typically closed to women; thus, while the pìcara moves about freely in society, she usually does so in a male disguise. Theater, and more broadly, Italian comedy—e.g., *La Calandra,* which preceded *commedia dell'arte*, and *Gl'Ingannati*, which is a *commedia erudita*, also offered examples of women moving outside freely in male disguise. In addition to being influenced by the picaresque tradition, Chiari worked in theater and with *commedia dell'arte*, all of which help explain how the element of disguise made its way into his novel. Women in many (though by no means all) literary traditions had usually been portrayed in enclosed spaces such as the boudoir or salon; therefore, the freedom of the pìcara further complicates literary representations of women, even if her freedom is acquired though cross-dressing.

The roguish pìcara opened up a new vision of the female sex and of the feminine, challenging traditional literary representations of women. The key characteristics of the pìcara include movement in the outside world, agency, and a complex, duplicitous nature, all of which are present in *La filosofessa italiana*.[215] The characteristic of duplicity is also present in the novella tradition; when picaresque narratives picked up this feature, it appeared in the use of theatrical disguises. Ann Daghistany notes that the pìcara can "change like a chameleon to a different role, through disguises in costume," and that "the pìcaro shares this flexibility, although his female counterpart uses it more frequently."[216] Most importantly, the seventeenth-century Spanish picaresque novel with its rogue female protagonists assimilated into other cultural and linguistic contexts and eventually informed the eighteenth-century novel.

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[215] For more on the duplicitous nature of the pìcara, see Ann Daghistany, "The Picara Nature," *Women's Studies* 5, no. 1 (November 1977): 51-60.

[216] Daghistany, "The Picara Nature," 54.

Female agency in fiction, seen in particular in the case of the pìcara, permitted women to transgress social norms in an unthreatening way, but when that agency began to transfer to real women seeking to enter the public sphere, many began to view the fiction as threatening. For example, Aretino's Nanna and her overt sexuality posed only a minimal threat to men's power in both the private and public spheres, since there was no actual encroachment of real women into the public sphere. The real threat came from the text's criticism of the Papal court. However, since we saw above that men's sexuality was somewhat linked to their power, a figure like the pìcara could be threatening if women were influenced by these fictional characters and began to assert independence in the lived world. Consequently, once women began to enter the social sphere in earnest, their representation in literature took on a new importance. While debates and treatises on the *querelle des femmes* until the second half of the seventeenth century did not topple the patriarchal system, they did begin to shift cultural attitudes at least in some circles and to prepare the way for more radical changes later. Messbarger argues that once the debates began to focus on real changes regarding the education of women, "the female Other enter[ed] the literal and symbolic space of male authority, and infiltrate[ed] the discourse both explicitly and implicitly"; thus, Messbarger continues, "she forces open the text."[217] In other words, the female presence (and absence, as Messbarger argues) in debates that took place in the *caffè* and were subsequently published in periodicals and didactic dialogues began to pose a tangible threat to the patriarchal social system.

In a similar fashion, both the female and the male picaresque allowed the female protagonist to move into a more dominant literary space. Once there, she began to threaten social

[217] Messbarger, *The Century of Women*, 29.

paradigms in a more tangible way. Richard Bjornson makes an important point that the picaresque allowed "vulgar characters"—not just women, but also lower-class men—to appear as dominant figures. He argues that in France, England, and Germany, the picaresque novel, which often featured the pìcara,

> helped break down the traditional separation of styles and establish the legitimacy of considering vulgar characters as appropriate subjects for morally serious literature. In a very real sense they participated in shaping the socio-literary contexts from which *Simplicius Simplicissimus*, *Moll Flanders*, *Gil Blas*, and *Roderick Random* later emerged.[218]

For example, the emergence of a formidable protagonist like Moll Flanders was possible because of predecessors like Courage, Laura, La Picara Justina, and the Rufina, but also because of the new permissibility of vulgar characters in general, including lower-class men. However, an issue with "vulgar characters" becoming dominant is the conflation of male and female characters. In fiction, these women have the same agency as their male counterparts, which threatens males of a less-privileged class. This is an issue that we saw arise in Aretino's work in chapter 1.

Historical evidence of female transvestism dates back to at least the medieval period. While it is outside the scope of this study to examine historical cases of female transvestism, it is important here to acknowledge that one of the reasons for the depiction of female transvestites in literature was the historical existence of these figures. In *The Tradition of Female Transvestism in Early Modern Europe*, Rudolf M. Dekker and Lotte C. van de Pol present a number of historical cases in which women lived as men for many years, and in some instances these women also married other women. Rather than dismiss these cases as "incidental human curiosities," Rudolf and van de Pol argue that "their cross-dressing was part of a deeply rooted

[218] Richard Bjornson, "The Picaresque Novel in France, England, and Germany," *Comparative Literature* 29, no. 2 (1977): 124-5.

tradition," citing a number of reasons for the phenomenon, including "having fallen on hard times and … struggling to overcome their difficult circumstances."[219] They cite 119 cases of cross-dressing between 1550 and 1839 in Western Europe. In all of these cases, the women shared similar back stories: low-born, one or both parents deceased, and/or a general rootlessness.

Despite the historical realities, both theatre and literature featured cross-dressing characters of a higher class. In the Renaissance, cross-dressing was a fundamental feature of the erudite comedy, in which men dressed as women, and in an even more complex arrangement, a male actor played a female character who then cross-dressed as a man. In the *commedia dell'arte* of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, however, it was actresses who played the girls who dressed as boys. In all these cases, Maggie Günsberg maintains that the plays "retain the fundamental patriarchal definitions of femininity, while constructing different variants of them in accordance with the development of early capitalism."[220] Moreover, in the literature of the eighteenth century, fictional (auto)biographies of cross-dressing women fascinated the reading public, most of whom—as we have already seen—were either from the upper-middle or upper classes.[221] Dekker and van de Pol suggest that "this can be taken as an indication that the idea of cross-dressing appealed to women of the middle and upper classes also, although few of them

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[219] Rudolf M. Dekker and Lotte C. van de Pol, *The Tradition of Female Transvestism in Early Modern Europe*, trans. Judy Marcure and Lotte Van de Pol (Basingstoke: MacMillan, 1989), 1-2.

[220] Maggie Günsberg, *Gender and the Italian Stage: From the Renaissance to the Present Day* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 2.

[221] Ibid., 100.

actually took to this road."[222] Such women had significantly more to lose than the fictional pìcaras or the lower-class women who practiced transvestism in reality. Despite an interest among readers in the lives of cross-dressing women, the practice itself received negative attention because it threatened the gendered social hierarchy. In any case, these early examples of cross-dressing and female transvestism were an important step in the development of the pìcara. Although Fiammetta could narrate without freedom of movement, the pìcara could narrate a different type of narrative that required moving about in wider circles, either for adventure or for social commentary.

The picaresque novel and the pìcara, along with the Aretinian legacy and an influx of English and French novels, had a substantial impact on both the content and the form of Chiari's *La filosofessa italiana*, and were formative in the fashioning of D'Avrile. Another key element in the shaping of *La filosofessa italiana* was the personal agonistic relationships among the primary participants in the theater wars (discussed in chapter 2): Chiari, Goldoni, and Gozzi. Much of this conflict played out in the plays and the Venetian theater scene and through an ongoing dialectic of published letters and prose dialogues. In fact, those polemics revolutionized the Venetian literary scene in very much the same manner as did the polemical scene that sustained the lives of the *poligrafi* in the sixteenth century, which also helped change the face of prose during that period. As examined in chapter 2, the conflict among Chiari, Goldoni and Gozzi fueled an explosive theater and literary scene, which then ushered in the eighteenth-century Venetian novel. The possibilities opened up by Aretino and the *poligrafi* thus created a platform for Chiari's *La filosofessa italiana* and, as we will see in chapter 4, for Gozzi's later translation of *Fanny Hill* (1764), in which the author imagines, reimagines, and rewrites a female narrator who

[222] Ibid.

seeks to discover her real identity or to fashion a new identity based on both personal interest and bourgeois social norms. Of all of the cosmopolitan cities in Italy, as we saw in chapter 2, Venice was the ideal location in which to develop the novel genre, and Chiari, specifically, was the ideal author.

III. Transvestism and Androgyny in *La filosofessa italiana*

Chiari's choice of a female narrator reflects a number of literary influences and social issues. Kahn maintains that "this narrative projection of the male self into an imagined female voice and experience was an integral part of the emerging novel's radical destabilizing investigation of how an individual creates an identity and, as our society if not our biology requires, a gendered identity."[223] Thus, as for Aretino, the use of a female protagonist gave Chiari creative license to explore spaces outside established social categories. Kahn argues that in what she calls "narrative transvestism," an author's use of a narrator of the opposite gender offers an "escape from defining boundaries" and functions as "a receptacle of experience."[224] The focus is on D'Avrile's personal growth as an individual and as part of society. Madrignani observes in his introduction to his critical edition of the novel that D'Avrile

> è una eroina antisentimentale e intraprendente: il suo girovagare è un viaggio di perlustrazione e disvelamento, durante il quale la Madamigella si comporta con realtà diverse da cui trae una lezione di saggezza critica.
>
> is an anti-sentimental and resourceful heroine: her travels are an exploration and revelation during which she interacts with different realities from which she draws a lesson of critical wisdom.[225]

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[223] Ibid., 6-7.

[224] Ibid., 151-152.

[225] Carlo Madrignani, ed., "Introduction," *La filosofessa italiana* (Lecce: Piero Manni, s.r.l, 2004), 6.

This "lesson of critical wisdom" is possible only because she is *la filosofessa italiana,* and as such, she weighs, considers, and rationally examines each decision in a traditionally masculine manner. She knows that to receive a real education, she must venture outside the confines of the feminine world. As I argue below, the only way to accomplish this is by dressing, living, and traveling as a man.

In this way, Chiari questions the gendering of intellectual activity by calling D'Avrile *la filosofessa,* and presenting her as a "real woman" rather than as the mythical or classical female mouthpiece of virtue with which we are so familiar from classical, medieval, and early modern texts. Chiari defines "filosofia" essentially as a tool to guide the reader to a better understanding of the novel and the protagonist: "La vera Filosofia non consiste in altro, che in far buon uso della ragione; e chi l'usa cos' non si diparte dal suo dovere giammai" (True Philosophy does not consist in anything other than a good use of reason; and whoever uses it like this so does not ever depart from his duty).[226] Madamigella's adventures are not only meant to entertain, but are also designed to close the divide between specific male and female understandings of the world, or rather to demonstrate that given equal opportunity, those divergent perspectives may have much more in common than the typical Venetian reader may want to believe. In other words, "buon uso della ragione" is "buon uso della ragione" no matter who is doing the reasoning. This is a strong and pointed response to a long tradition of debate regarding whether women are capable of good reasoning, with notable defenses by Christine de Pizan and Helisenne.[227] Moreover, and

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[226] Ibid., 266.

[227] The eighteenth century saw an increase in treatises defending woman in England, France, Germany and Italy. Some of these include Mary Astell, *Some Reflections Upon Marriage, Occasioned by the Duke and Dutchess of Mazarine's Case; Which is Also Considered*

crucially, D'Avrile highlights antiquated Italian cultural traditions regarding gender and sexuality that hold the peninsula hostage to backward thinking. She notes these traditions in particular when questioning her Italian host's lack of interest in books and in turn highlights the positive reception of French models for female intellectual agency:

> Non avea veramente lo spirito suo tutta quella coltura, e quella vivacita', che si trova ordinariamente nelle donne di Francia; ma ho veduto in progresso di tempo, che questo e' un male assai famigliare nelle donne Italiane, piu' per mancanza di buona educazione, che di talenti sortiti dalla natura.[228]
>
> Her spirit did not have all that culture and that vivacity, which is ordinarily found in French women; but I have seen in the passing of time that this is a familiar malady in Italian women, more because of lack of good education, than of natural talents.

According to D'Avrile and Chiari, it is through adventure, experience, and education that the human being, male or female, cultivates the mind and the soul.

In fact, it is her adventures both physical and intellectual that lead her to meet with Il Conte di Terme as an equal, which deepens their relationship. Il Conte is D'Avrile's only love interest. She meets him at the French convent in Book I, and he is the main reason for her escape from it. However, D'Avrile does not actually see him again until five years later, in Book II. At the end of this meeting, she suggests that their continual and deep love is only possible because of this separation and because of her new habits, which differ from those of a traditional female lover:

> Non ci furono mai più due amanti, che per lo spazio d'anni cinque, poco più, poco meno, avessero insieme minor commercio di parole, o di lettere; e che in capo a tal tempo si trovassero l'un dell'altro più innamorati di prima. Se le Donne conoscessero i loro

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(1700); Daniel DeFoe, *The Education of Women*, (1719) https://www.thoughtco.com/the-education-of-women-by-defoe-1690238, accessed 22 February 2018. Some earlier treatises that informed the above-cited include Helisenne de Crenne, *Les Epistres familières et invectives* (1539); Marianne Ehrmann, *Philosophie eines Weibs: Von einer Beobachterin* (1784); and Christine de Pizan, *Le Livre de la Cité des Dames* (1405).

[228] Chiari, *La filosofessa italiana*, 261. My translation.

> vantagi, non anojerebbero gli amanti a forza di lettere, d'ambasciate, di visite, e di volerli sempre vicini. Siccome l'abbondanza sazia ne' cibi, così viene a noja, e si cangia in disprezzo la troppa domestichezza in amore.[229]
>
> Never were there two lovers, who for the space of five years, more or less, had less exchange of words or letters with each other; and (yet) who at the end of that time found each other more in love than before. If women knew their advantages, they would not annoy their lovers with an army of letters, embassies, visits, and desiring always to have them close. Since an appetite is satiated by food, so too much familiarity in love creates boredom and changes into contempt.

Here, D'Avrile attacks women's behavior in a number of ways. First, she says that they smother their lovers, but more importantly, she implies that women have nothing better to do than to obsess over their lovers. In other words, women focus on lovers and love affairs only because they are not permitted to engage in other intellectual pursuits. D'Avrile seems to be positioning all of this in contrast to the intellectual life led by many women in French society, specifically in the Salons. If women were studying, working on something, or even travelling, they would not smother their lovers and would deepen their relationships through intelligence. It is also notable that D'Avrile does not suggest that women do not have the same intellectual capacity as men, but rather that they are not permitted to develop it. Chiari's point here seems to be about more than formal education; what women need is a more welcoming social culture that supports public spaces for both men and women.

To further complicate the portrayal of D'Avrile as a *filosofessa*, her male disguise in the first two books of the novel permits a complete emancipation from her female social role, and thus from her inhibitions as a woman. Yet despite her outward appearance, both the author and the reader are reminded of her real sex by D'Avrile's many hesitations and fears in the outside world. According to Kahn,

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[229] Ibid., 330.

> "Transvestism" as applied to literary structures is not a [psychological] diagnosis but a metaphor: it furnishes helpful analogies to the structures that govern an essentially literary masquerade, and it directs our attention to the dialectic of display and concealment exhibited by these eighteenth-century texts—to the complex negotiations between self and other that structure both the novelist's art and the reader's response.[230]

Chiari plays with gender roles by presenting an unstable protagonist who disrupts traditional understanding of masculine and feminine, and male and female, by appearing as female and male at various points in the narrative. But in neither case can she or the reader completely discard the constructs dictated by a socially fashioned female identity. By dressing D'Avrile as Ricciardi, Chiari is directing his reader to read her/his experiences in an ambivalent and androgynous manner.

By the close of Book I, D'Avrile/Ricciardi is neither fully male, as her costume suggests, nor female, as her sex suggests. Instead, she embodies both genders at the same time. In D'Avrile/Ricciardi, Chiari presents an androgynous figure who seeks to make whole what has been fractured and classified into binary gendered beings—sexually, politically, and socially.[231] While it is not explicit, there is a moment when Chiari subtly implies that D'Avrile refers to her own death and birth: it is at least the death of the simple, young woman who grew up cloistered, and the birth of a modern androgynous being who embodies both male and female characteristics. Once escaped from the convent, D'Avrile/Ricciardi and her handmaiden, Celeste,

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[230] Kahn, *Narrative Transvestism*, 11.

[231] Catriona MacLeod looks to Plato's *Symposium* in her monograph *Embodying Ambiguity: Androgyny and Aesthetics from Winckelmann to Keller*, in which Aristophanes recounts the fragmentation of primordial man's union, as the catalyst that set "in motion a powerful cultural narrative about the origins of human sexuality. […] [and] that modeled men and women 'as sexual beings.'" This fragmentation lead to the simplification of gender and sexuality into binary categories that the androgyne challenges. Catriona MacLeod, *Embodying Ambiguity: Androgyny and Aesthetics from Winckelmann to Keller* (Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1998), 3.

secure a room in Lyons. As night falls, D'Avrile/Ricciardi dresses once again as a man and goes out after dark:

> Questa spedizione non era di poco momento per una donna, per una giovane dell'età mia, e per una fanciulla allevata sotto una severissima disciplina. Fosse l'improvisa allegrezza di vedermi in libertà, o la paura d'esser colta sul fatto della mia fuga, mi prese in tal batticuore, che tremavo da capo a'piedi, come se fossi condotta alla morte.[232]
>
> This expedition was not trivial for a woman, for a young person of my age, and for a girl who was bred under such a strict discipline. Whether it was the sudden happiness of seeing myself free, or the fear of being caught in the deed of my escape, I found my heart pounding and I was trembling from head to foot, as if I had been condemned to death.

In fact, the young D'Avrile who flees the convent dies in that moment, and a new version of the character is born, one with a more developed understanding of what the world has to offer. This new vision of the world changes who she is and how she navigates physical and intellectual spaces.

During her adventures as a man, D'Avrile/Ricciardi confronts social biases against female freedom, mobility, and learning, and s/he challenges all of these constructs through her/his agency, through the movement of the body outside the female domain. However, her role is ambiguous because, though ostentatiously capable in all the roles she occupies as a man, including those of merchant, courtier, soldier, and finally "uomo di lettere," she is still categorically female according to the social dictates of the time.[233] Despite the social barriers that continue to govern both her movement outside the home and her capabilities as a female, she concludes that women are just as capable as men if they are given the same educational opportunities, mobility, and freedom to develop intellectually. Recognizing that men and women

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[232] Chiari, *La filosofessa italiana*, 61.

[233] Ibid., 122.

have advantages and disadvantages at different life stages, D'Avrile laments the common judgment that aging women have little value. D'Avrile argues that

> Mentre essi la discorrevano così, io la pensavo diversamente. Da persone, che pretendevano d'aver dello spirito, e di pensar giustamente, ho inteso dire più volte, che se stasse in nostra mano di scegliere quel sesso, che ci sarebbe più utile, dall'età d'anni tredici persino ai ventitrè, dovressimo scegliere d'esser donne; e di esser poi uomini per tutti gli anni in appresso. Il mondo ci fa una ingiustizia, giudicando, che non possiamo essere amabili, se non se in questo breve giro d'età. Perché non può esser bella una donna anche dopo i trenta anni, se belli, ed amabili si giudicano tanti uomini, anche dopo i quaranta? ….Io considerava l'amore come un nimico, che potea solo esser causa del mio precipizio; ed avventurare con un segreto, da cui dipendea l'onor mio, tutto ancora la mia fortuna.[234]
>
> While they were talking in that way, I thought otherwise. By people who claimed to have intelligence, and to think justly, I heard it said many times that if it were in our own hands to choose which sex would be most useful from the age of thirteen to twenty-three years, we would have to choose being a woman; and then to be men for all the years thereafter. The world does us an injustice by judging that we cannot be lovable beyond this brief period of time. Why can not a woman be beautiful even after thirty years of age, if men are considered handsome and lovable even after forty? … I considered love as an enemy, as it could only be the cause of my downfall; and adventuring with a secret, on which depended my honor, as well as my luck.

D'Avrile is not necessarily speaking of an androgynous figure here, but is rather considering which sex is preferable at various life stages. She is also asking the reader to reexamine the ways feminine and masculine characteristics are assigned, or even what *feminine* and *masculine* mean. This insistence on the discrepancy and the hinting at equity, however it might be manifest, seem to be arguing for a balancing of rights in order to eliminate the negative valorization of feminine attributes. Male and female are finally, according to D'Avrile, arbitrary categories.

Accentuating Italian women's precarious social position, D'Avrile compares the difficult condition of women in Italy to the state of women in France, highlighting French women's developed skills in comparison to those of Italian women:

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[234] Ibid., 122-123.

> In Francia leggono piu' le donne, che gli uomini; perocche' essendo esse meno occupate di loro dagli affari civili, e domestici, hanno piu' tempo da coltivarsi colla lettura l'ingegno; dandogli quella tintura di varie cose morali, istoriche, geografiche, romanzesche, e civili, che basta al loro sesso, per meritargli il nome di donne di spirito.
>
> In France, women read more than men since they are not as involved in matters either civil or domestic, they have more time to cultivate their intellect with literature: giving them a gloss of various matters moral, historical, geographical, novelistic, and civil, that is enough for their gender to deserve the name *witty women*.[235]

By having D'Avrile/Ricciardi explore ongoing social conflicts that are directly related to class, gender, and education, and by having her/him compare Italian culture to the situation elsewhere, Chiari uses D'Avrile/Ricciardi as a mouthpiece to shed light on the disparity of the Italian situation.

IV. Female Protagonists of the Eighteenth Century: A Comparison

Chiari's innovations in the novel genre can be seen through a comparison with three other important texts of the time that feature female protagonists: Richardson's *Pamela,* Defoe's *Moll Flanders*, and Marivaux's *La Vie de Marianne.* Chiari was evidently influenced by his reading of these three novels. As discussed in chapter 2, their Italian translations were tremendously popular in Venice while Chiari was living there, and Chiari himself translated Marivaux and most likely Richardson. I focus primarily on these texts as points of departure and models for Chiari. This section will point out similarities between Chiari's novel and those of Richardson, Defoe, and Marivaux, but it will also explain certain original aspects of Chiari's D'Avrile. The goal of this close reading is to show how Chiari's treatment of gender and class in *La filosofessa italiana* both drew on published examples of the emerging genre of the novel in England and

[235] Ibid., 266.

France and advanced the genre's development through new ways of appealing to a diverse Venetian readership.

Although all four of these texts feature female protagonists, each bears the weight of a particular cultural background that has a distinct impact on the reader. Marianne is the most like D'Avrile, since she unknowingly comes from a noble background but must make her own way before discovering it. Moll is born in prison yet earns her way into the middle class with her wit and cunning and by exploiting a growing capitalistic system. The reader is drawn to her because she is dynamic and challenges social constructs that circumscribe the feminine. She is the kind of protagonist that Gozzi and others despised because they believed that such female figures should not be legitimated through literature, and in this respect she is similar to Aretino's Nanna. Pamela, in contrast, is of common birth but from a family known for its virtue, and despite her poverty and hardships, she remains the epitome of feminine virtue and reinforces the notion that virtue is a woman's most powerful asset. Madamigella D'Avrile is noble but orphaned and is left to be raised by nuns in Avignon. She runs away and earns her living dressed as a man, also benefiting from capitalism, while suffering from unrequited love. Although her character is drawn from a number of traditional Italian roles, she ultimately challenges Italian social restrictions placed on the female sex in her freedom of movement outside enclosed spaces.

D'Avrile, as Ricciardi, is a courtier in France, a soldier in Venice, and finally a "uomo di lettere."[236] Ricciardi's political, military, and literary careers typify those of the young impoverished Venetian aristocrats and the luckier lower-class courtiers, like Chiari himself, who were given the opportunity to serve the Republic. As Mannironi notes, "this is one of the main

[236] Ibid., 87.

examples in which the novel mirrors an aristocratic mentality; and more in particular a Venetian one."[237] D'Avrile's male dress permits a number of adventures, including visits to several important Italian cities: Turin, Bologna, Brescia, Verona, Venice, and Rome. Even disguised as a man, she inhabits subservient roles, but these roles grant her more power than she likely could have wielded in female dress. Clothing and material possessions, then, play an important role in labeling or even identifying male or female. We see the same power of clothing and wealth in Richardson's *Pamela*. In fact, Chiari borrows specific cues from Richardson's use of clothing and materials to both define and circumscribe Pamela, though Chiari uses them in a different way.[238]

Chiari's protagonist uses clothing and material goods to attain upward social mobility, as Richardson's Pamela does. The main point of difference is that D'Avrile uses possessions and dress to emancipate herself from confinement in a convent and from the limits imposed on her by her sex, whereas in *Pamela*, they are used to further circumscribe the protagonist and to define

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[237] Mannironi, "Libri disonesti," 88.

[238] Nancy K. Miller, *The Heroine's Text: Readings in the French and English Novel, 1722-1782* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), 46; see also p. 165n2; Nancy Armstrong, *Desire and Domestic Fiction: A Political History of the Novel* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987). In his chapter on Pamela, "Richardson and the Domestication of Service," Michael McKeon puts the role of the servant into the perspective of the longue durée from feudalism to capitalism. McKeon, *The Origins of the English Novel*, 357-81. Bruce Robbins comments on Pamela only in passing in his highly suggestive *The Servant's Hand: English Fiction from Below* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968). He makes the important general point, however, that the servant appears in the novel rather than the proletarian (6). One might add that Pamela occupies a relatively high place in the hierarchy of female servants. John Bender does not discuss Pamela in his *Imagining the Penitentiary: Fiction and the Architecture of Mind in Eighteenth-Century England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), but he sees the novel's relevance to his central concerns. For a more general consideration of Armstrong, McKeon, Bender, and other recent work on the eighteenth-century novel, see Robert Folkenflik, "The Heirs of Ian Watt," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 25 (1991-92): 203-17.

her in relation to a man. Aubrey L. C. Mishou maintains that "Richardson […] does not share [the] belief in the liberating qualities inherent in clothing, as he instead uses clothing to dismantle the female body."[239] After Pamela's lady passes away, she is assigned to her lady's son. Her new master gives her "a Suit of my old Lady's clothes, and half a dozen of her Shifts, and Six fine Handkerchiefs, and three of her Cambrick Aprons, and Four Holland ones: The Clothes are fine Silks, and too rich and good for me."[240] These gifts do not come without strings attached, however, and in fact, they are meant to dress Pamela up for her master, but not to elevate her in any tangible way or to give her independence. Rather, the clothes and other gifts are meant to leave Pamela obligated to her master. The way he seeks to collect on this debt threatens Pamela's virtue. A struggle ensues in which Pamela must find a way to both please her master and maintain her virtue, which is finally the only feature that can save her social position and ensure her a viable future. She is thus "dismantled" and forced by her master to rebuild herself according to his fashion. In this way, she is defined by him.

Mishou continues, "In Richardson's novels, female identity outside of partnership with a masculine counterpart cannot be exercised, because they have no body with which to act. Their form itself is constructed through the materiality of their clothing, in a male-dominated capitalistic economy."[241] Chiari borrows from Richardson by setting up D'Avrile's virtue as a point of fundamental importance, but he also distances himself from Richardson's use of

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[239] Aubrey L. C. Mishou, "Clothes Make the (Wo)Man: Eighteenth-Century Materialism and the Creation of the Female Subject," *Rupkatha Journal on Studies in the Humanities* 5, no. 3 (2013).

[240] Samuel Richardson, *Pamela,* ed. and notes Thomas Keymer and Alice Wakey, introduction by Thomas Keymore (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 18.

[241] Mishou, "Clothes Make the (Wo)Man."

clothing as a way to circumscribe his protagonist and hold her hostage to a "male-dominated capitalistic economy." Here, we see Chiari using clothing and the economy as a means of upward social mobility and independence for D'Avrile, in contrast to Richardson's Pamela, for whom they are a means of reinforcing a more traditional woman's role—clearly a role that maintains her subservient and passive social position, regardless of class.[242]

As discussed above, Chiari also draws on the pìcara tradition to inform his independent protagonist. While Chiari's novel reads like a fictional memoir, the primarily adventure element of the first two books has clear picaresque elements that demonstrate a direct connection to Defoe's *Moll Flanders*. Madrignani contends that Chiari's protagonist praises

> quella forma di autoeducazione che s'identifica con la lettura dei libri, intesa come un modo innovativo e anarchico di crescita complessiva. […] L'elogio del libro riprende il motivo ricorrente nella strategia settecentesca, e poi specificatamente illuministica, di diffondere la cultura in forma accessibile e utile.[243]
>
> that form of self-education that is identified with reading books, seen as an innovative and anarchic overall growth. [...] The praise of the book takes on the recurring theme of an eighteenth-century strategy, and specifically of the Enlightenment, to spread culture in an accessible and useful way.

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[242] Mishou argues that women gained more freedom through capitalism by making clothing, specifically women's clothing. In this way, their agency threatened the male-capitalistic system and challenged notions of gender. She maintains that "This ability to impact the representation of 'notions of gender itself' is what establishes female workers of the fashion industry as a threat to patriarchal mandates of morality and decency in dress, as women begin to usurp masculine counterparts in the marketplace. As women become agents in their own fashion, they gain the power to figuratively and literally shape the bodies of other women, expressing their own creativity and capability as they allow female consumers greater freedom of choice. Invigorated interest in fashion on the part of female patrons creates career opportunities for women, establishing a greater female mercantile power." Mishou, "Clothes Make the (Wo)Man." See also Carey McIntosh, "Pamela's Clothes," *ELH* 35, no. 1 (1968): 75-83.

[243] Madrignani, "Introduzione," in Chiari, *La filosofessa italiana*, 5.

In the picaresque tradition, D'Avrile earnestly pursues education and self-fashioning, both of which are directly related to books and access to knowledge. Unlike the pìcara, however, D'Avrile maintains her virtue—or rather, her virginity. The belief in the importance of female virtue is a point of commonality between D'Avrile, Pamela, and Marivaux's Marianne, although while Marianne and Pamela maintain their virtue as their most prized attribute, for D'Avrile it is one goal among others. The pursuit of female virtue is a point of difference between D'Avrile and Moll Flanders. Thus D'Avrile is different from all three heroines.

One of the most significant differences between Moll and D'Avrile is that Moll reflects lower-class London. With Moll, Defoe "invokes sympathy" by "exposing the harshness of poverty."[244] Moll, a daughter of a thief and an orphaned child abandoned by her country's government, has had a hard life of suffering, which "buys her credibility."[245] In many ways, Moll is an "outlaw hero" who, defying social standards that should have limited her social role, continuously rises to the opportunity to seize a good life. Moll is a good person born into harsh circumstances, but unlike Pamela, who is also a good person, Moll believes in independence and self-subsistence, whereas Pamela believes in God and virtue, neither of which prepare her for surviving in the world independently. Despite their differences, then, D'Avrile and Moll share a commitment to independence, whereas Marianne and Pamela expect to be dependent on a man and need to preserve their virtue in order to make a good marriage.

Moll, however, does not fit an Italian sensibility, and therefore Chiari had to adapt and domesticate Defoe's modern pìcara. Instead of being born in a prison to a "petty thief" mother,

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[244] Sarah Damewood, "A Bull Market for Moll Flanders: A Female Capitalizing on the Changing Economic Climate of Eighteenth Century London" (master's thesis, Bridgewater State University, 2013), 3.

[245] Ibid, 3.

D'Avrile is raised in a French convent, educated, and financially cared for by an unknown benefactor—someone who is clearly wealthy. This decision on Chiari's part indicates an awareness of his diverse readership. It permits his protagonist to have adventures outside confined spaces, while her noble birth explains her naturally virtuous behavior. Yet despite the relatively conformist plot structure, Chiari highlights the social limitations women face: from the outset of the novel, the reader is confronted with the limited opportunities afforded to women, even those with wealthy benefactors. It is assumed that when D'Avrile is old enough, she will also become a nun and her familial origins will always remain a secret, even from her. This female adventurer with noble roots was easier to accept in the Italian context than a low-born woman adventurer would have been because middle-class readers preferred to identify with a noble woman rather than a poor one, and the noble protagonist certainly appealed to the noble reader. In the world of fiction, at least, both nobility and a certain virtue or spirit seem to have been important. D'Avrile is virtuous like Marianne and Pamela but worldly like Moll, though never reduced to thievery or prostitution. Despite her old-world trappings, she promotes learning for women, independence, and marriage for love rather than commerce. (Moll Flanders also promotes these same "new" values for women, but Moll's narrative is more realistic—almost journalistic—and represents English culture.) D'Avrile breaks substantial barriers for the eighteenth-century Italian woman, although she does so initially dressed as a man.

Richardson's Pamela would not have become a popular Italian heroine in eighteenth-century Venice because she is a servant with no noble roots, aside from the moral nobility of her ability to maintain her virtue in challenging circumstances. (While there is a history of low-born heroines in fiction in Venice and elsewhere on the peninsula, such as the pícara, none of those

texts attained bestseller status.[246]) Marivaux's Marianne is threatened by a number of outside forces that block a marriage of love that would also grant her upward social mobility. However, because the reader knows that Marianne is of noble birth, her ability to maintain her virtue is less of a shock. While statistics on dropping rates of celibacy among women during the period might tell a different story, the novel is playing with the conceptions of *cicisbei* culture and the cultural and social expectations of women. In both novels, then, the heroines demonstrate extreme strength in dire circumstances.[247] Yet Marivaux and Richardson also reinforce the notion that virtue is a woman's most important asset (virtue and virginity are almost synonymous in these cases) and advocate an unwavering belief in God. These same characteristics are possessed by D'Avrile, who never succumbs to her passions throughout all of her adventures, despite numerous temptations. However, D'Avrile only moves beyond social constructs as a man. In fact, many of Chiari's elite readers apparently feared the social and political repercussions that her openness might have. In other words, the elite feared that the *lettore medio* would misinterpret D'Avrile's freedom as a call to action.[248]

There is, however, another aspect to consider: changing attitudes toward love matches. While at the beginning of the eighteenth century, marriages among the wealthy and elite were

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[246] It is true that there are many cases of the low outsmarting the high in Italian literature, such as in Goldoni's comedy *La Locandiera*. Mirandolina becomes a heroine because of her lack of noble roots and reasonable engagement in the world, which makes the nobility look foolish. However, the time and place of a comedy are quite different from those of a novel, and a heroine like Mirandolina would not necessarily have been popular in a novel.

[247] For more on celibacy rates and the changing conceptions of women in Western Europe, see Judith M. Bennett and Amy M. Froide, eds., *Singlewomen in the European Past 1250-1800* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), and specifically Monica Chojnacka, "Singlewomen in Early Modern Venice: Communities and Opportunities," 217-235.

[248] See Mannironi, "Libri disonesti," 19-84.

still essentially financial arrangements designed to secure powerful alliances and economic advantages, the lower classes saw more freedom related to choosing a life partner and this made its way into the novel. Members of working-class and agricultural communities had more autonomy in their choice of a partner, but they were usually limited to a narrow economic group and geographical area. The vast majority of marriages among aristocratic, wealthy and middle-class families were arranged by parents with the prospective bride and bridegroom having little or no say in the matter. This was the world of Chiari, Richardson, and Marivaux, yet in these novels the heroine's adventures are guided by love and pursuing a love match.[249] (DeFoe is the exception in this respect.)

In each of the abovementioned novels, love plays a central role, in contrast to cloisterization or marriages driven by expediency. D'Avrile falls in love with Conte, and the whole book then centers on the idea that marriage partners can be chosen because of love. Marianne also strives to be with her true love and save her virtue during her journey. Pamela's insistence is about more than just her virtue: she needs to love before she can agree to marriage. Two other novels that are very telling in this regard are Abbé Prévost's *Manon Lescaut* (1731)

[249] For background information on the history of marriage and divorce in England, see Lawrence Stone, *Broken Lives: Separation and Divorce in England, 1660-1857* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993); Lawrence Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England, 1500-1800* (London: Penguin, 1977); and Lawrence Stone, *Road to Divorce: A History of the Making and Breaking of Marriage in England, 1530-1987* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995). For more background information about love and marriage in eighteenth-century France, see Maurice Daumas, *Le Mariage amoureux: histoire du lien conjugal sous l'Ancien Régime* (Paris: Armand Colin, 2004); Daniel Roche, *France in the Enlightenment*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998), 522-4; and James F. Traer, *Marriage and the Family in Eighteenth-Century France* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1980). For resources on love matches in Italy, see Gene A. Brucker, *Giovanni and Lusanna: Love and Marriage in Renaissance Florence* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986) and Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, *Women, Family and Ritual in Renaissance Italy*, trans. Lydia Cochrane (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985).

and *Julie, ou la nouvelle Héloïse* (1761), not to mention Johann Wolfgang von Goethe *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers* (1774). Manon is not a positive reflection of women from a traditional, *Ancien régime* gaze, but she is very positive when it comes to her agency, and her ability to inspire in her lover, Des Grieux, a desire to defy his father the marriage strictures of the *Ancient régime*. The plot is centered on love by choice and is driven by Manon. However, in this case, the unwed Manon dies an early death in a Louisiana wood. Here, the double-edged sword of female beauty is also at play. Her beauty gets her out of problems and by the same token creates them because in Louisiana the governor wants to marry her and the only way to avoid this is to escape into the wilderness, where the harshness of the conditions provokes Manon's death. Unlike Manon, Julie follows her parents' orders and agrees to a marriage of expediency, but her life reads as tragic because she commits suicide. She does not marry the person she loves, succumbing, instead, to patriarchy, which, however, she also rails against in the novel. Rousseau's idea of female agency as being subjugated to male agency reigns supreme. So is Werther's love tragic because it is circumscribed by both a tradition of arranged marriage and class restrictions. It seems that the denial of love-based marriage takes a toll on both female and male lovers, and in Werther's case, even feminizes him. Societal limitations on the individual has dire and grave results, leading some to suicide in Werther's and Julie's case, and an untimely death in Manon's.[250] Taken together and read in the context of the historical record, these novels

[250] For an examination of female suicide in the novel, see Margaret Higonnet, "Frames of Female Suicide," *Studies in the Novel* 32, no. 2 (2000): 229-42 and Margaret Higonnet, "Suicide: Representations of the Feminine in the Nineteenth Century," *Poetics Today* 6.1-2 (1985): 103–18. For further work on conceptions of suicide in the eighteenth century, see Michelle Faubert, "Romantic Suicide, Contagion, and Rousseau's *Julie*," in Angela Esterhammer, Diane Piccitto, and Patrick Vincent, eds., *Romanticism, Rousseau, Switzerland: New Prospects* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015).

suggest that marriage for love was in the process of becoming an ideal, but was not yet a widespread practice in Europe.

These novels, of course, are about far more than just marriage, whether chosen or arranged. They are also about the issue of authenticity, understood as the need to be true to the demands of obligation both to society and to the self. We see D'Avrile struggling to meet both the demands of her heart and her mind as well as those of social duty. She complicates these duties by playing a male role, which forces her to look at herself in a new light. She comes to understand her capabilities in a new, expanded way. Because her survival is proof to her that men and women have very similar capabilities, she struggles with who she is. Her experience of falling in love with the Conte and running away from life as a nun is more than just a love story, then; it is also about living as her authentic self, which requires experience, worldly and personal knowledge, and education.

While on the one hand D'Avrile indirectly reminds readers, by evoking Italian texts, that Italy is the birthplace of literature and of the novel (suggested in the preface by the publisher, Pasinelli), she also bemoans the lack of education for most people and the social structure that makes it difficult to achieve. For example, D'Avrile/Ricciardi castigates her Italian host, la Contessa, for her vanity and her lack of desire to read or cultivate her tastes:

> Se l'abilità d'un uomo è tanto più grande, quanto è più universale, perché la nobilità d'una donna consisterà nel non esser buona da nulla? Se vogliano che i meriti vostri consistano più nello spirito, che nelle mani, perché non vi fanno leggere continuamente? Perché non vi ammaestrano nelle cose del mondo? Perche' non v'insegnano a ben distinguere il bene dal male; e regolate ogni vostra azione co' principj della ragione?[251]
>
> If the ability of a man is so much larger the more it is universal, why will a woman's nobility reside in her being good for nothing? If they want your merits more in your spirit than in your hands, why do they not keep you reading continuously? Why do they not

[251] Chiari, *La filosofessa italiana*, 265.

> teach you about the things of the world? Why do they not teach you to distinguish good from evil; and to regulate your every action with the principles of reason?

Though admonishing the Contessa, she finally zeroes in on Italian men who still oppose education for women. The protagonist's demand is clear: education for women should be encouraged, if not required. This passage can be read as Chiari's straightforward call for universal education for women. Moreover, this education should not only be aimed at self-improvement or at cultivating women to be better companions for men; instead, Chiari's appeal is much broader and more inclusive in scope. Chiari is not only promoting equality for women; he is also calling for a better quality of life for both Italian men and women. He does so by linking D'Avrile's education to France, thus highlighting how Italy is behind in this conversation. D'Avrile is capable of sustaining herself as a merchant, but she will also be a better companion to her husband because she can engage him on a number of levels.

As we see above, Chiari's use of transvestism ultimately permits D'Avrile/Ricciardi to live successfully as a woman. That D'Avrile/Ricciardi navigates the world successfully as a woman is a reflection of Chiari's social stance on women and the social hierarchy that limits their movement and their learning. For example, in the novel, when D'Avrile/Ricciardi decides to leave Torino, s/he reflects, "Avendo risoluto così, mi pareva d'esser costante ne' miei principi; e d'esser superiore a certi deboli pregiudizi, che sono i tiranni della società, e specialmente del nostro sesso." (Having resolved this, I seemed to be constant in my principles and to be superior to certain weak prejudices, which are the tyrants of society, and especially of our sex).[252] On the one hand, s/he suggests that she is above the "weak prejudices" that both men and women are prey to, and highlights the belief that women are even more susceptible to those weaknesses. On

[252] Ibid., 251.

the other hand, s/he is able to maintain the principles that she has learned through her elite education in France, which she attained as a girl and as a young woman.

Marianne, in a similar manner, laments that women must rely on base means for attention because the patriarchy forces the behavior: "Que nous rest-t-il, qu'un courage impuissant, que vous réduisez à la honteuse nécessité de devenir finesse? Notre malice n'est que le fruit de la dépendance où nous sommes. Notre coquetterie fait tout notre bien" (What do we have left but a resigned will that you reduce to the shameful necessity of resorting to tricks? Our malice is only the fruit of the dependent situation in which we find ourselves. Our coquetry is our sole valuable). Marianne sees the same weakness in herself and the women around her due to the oppressive nature of patriarchy, and the power to change it lies in education. The suggestion here is that women could begin to sustain themselves if allowed a broader education. Another such example can be found Prevost's *Histoire d'une grecque moderne* (1740), in which a woman is both itinerant and maintains virtue. In this case, she preserves her virtue because the man is appalling and she can't stand him, but virtue is highlighted, maintaining the general, social expectation of a noble or elite woman. Thus, the model here is French, not English, and the exploration of the theme of education, within the confines of the text, is performed by women about women (within the noble class), with new actions and cultural consequences. Even if women seem to be even more susceptible to "certain weak prejudices," we can understand that an educated woman could learn to control herself amid those weaknesses. Moreover, a woman could even be capable of surviving in the world if she had a broader and more extensive education that included travel and worldliness. In this way, education is serving women as more than just a means to learn how to control the self. But, it is aimed also at how to navigate the outside world. That a woman can survive in the world is evidenced by D'Avrile's adventures as

Ricciardi. However, one must keep in mind that in all of the cases discussed here, the *by women and for women* theme is fictional, since these particular texts are composed by sympathetic men.

While the narratives of the four novels discussed in this section focus on feminine plights, highlighted by the use of female protagonists/narrators, the undertones of each narrative reveal deep resonances with the authors' own liminal and limiting positions in the social hierarchy. Paula Backsheider argues that "How free writers ever are from genre conventions, from their own horizons of expectation for the forms in which they write, and from the pressures exerted on them can never be known, but writers have agency, and traces of the mind that created the texts linger."[253] In other words, traces of the author's own experiences always mark the text in some way, either intentionally or unintentionally, and these four novels are no exception. These traces are especially noticeable in *Moll Flanders* and *La filosofessa italiana*. Backscheider continues,

> Defoe was one of the most embattled public figures in history. He lacked any of the sources of power—position, family, wealth, charisma. His life was a struggle to hang on to what he wanted to be and thought he was, and he faced frequent, very harsh confrontations with contradicting facts. In Defoe's case, political, religious, and economic forces were especially strong, as were […] the pressures of his sense of himself.[254]

Subverting her predetermined social role, Defoe's Moll refuses to submit to a circumscribed position that places her at the mercy of a master in the service field or as a complacent wife. Instead, she seeks real "work" that will earn her a good living. The waxing and waning of her fortunes in many ways reflect Defoe's own financial and personal trajectory, including substantial time in prison.

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[253] Paula R. Backsheider, "Defoe: The Man in the Works," in *The Cambridge Companion to Daniel Defoe*, ed. John Richetti (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 7.

[254] Ibid.

Chiari's connection to his Madamigella D'Avrile is no less present. D'Avrile is not as bold as Moll and does not reject her social role in the same defiant manner that Moll does, but this is because she is of noble birth and is therefore not faced with Moll's debilitating poverty. Madamigella D'Avrile, however, clearly reflects some of Chiari's own fears about his delicate social position as a struggling artist in a foreign city. It is possible that the use of a female protagonist allowed him to express these fears in a way that otherwise would have been impossible, if we accept Kahn's argument that the "narrative transvestite self"—in other words, the use of a protagonist of a gender that is not the author's own—"is not in any sense the 'true' self of the author; it is rather a provisional writing self, a stance from which the author can play with the instability that might otherwise immobilize him."[255] Conversely, we should be aware that books are made by history, shaped by economic, political, social and cultural forces: "No book is created by its author: printers, publishers, literary agents, editors, designers, and lawyers all play a role in molding the final product. Critics, booksellers and educational bureaucrats can proclaim a book a classic or consign it to oblivion. And every writer must take into account the demands of the reading public and the laws of literary property."[256] Because Chiari's fragile social role is mirrored by D'Avrile's delicate situation in her male disguise, D'Avrile functions, on one level, as Chiari's avatar: she is clearly built on his anxieties. She is always fearful of being discovered, and thus her freedom is often tinged by fear and worry, as was the social and financial status of most men who practiced letters in eighteenth-century Venice. Chiari never had financial stability. He relied on the theater and its patrons to pay his bills and to survive, and the polemical theater scene ensured that survival was always a struggle. In other words, Chiari, and

[255] Kahn, *Narrative Transvestism*, 12.

[256] Ibid., 2.

other artists like him, occupied a tenuous social role that made them appear weak to the elite. I contend that this weakness was, at the time, associated with femininity in the same way that we saw in chapter 1 in the discussion about the ways Aretino's insecurities about his social position were revealed in his texts.

Despite her worldliness, D'Avrile also possesses feminine characteristics that circumscribe her. In Book V, the original final installment of *La filosofessa italiana*, D'Avrile succumbs to what she considers base emotions.[257] Fearing that she has been cheated on, D'Avrile seeks to find out as much as possible about her lover while in a male disguise. Her goal is to vindicate herself by punishing her rival in love, rather than her lover. Thus, even though D'Avrile laments the status of women and argues for their intellectual capabilities, she also succumbs to the vice of jealousy that has helped to define women as the so-called weaker sex. One thinks of Boccaccio's *L'elegia di Madonna Fiammetta*, in which Fiammetta appears modern, since she has a voice and agency, and yet is also static and unable to break away from the traditional role of the thwarted woman. In fact, Boccaccio's Fiammetta demonstrates the Renaissance belief that women's nature is flawed because it tends toward "female pride, lasciviousness, obstinacy, desire for mastery, jealousy, talkativeness, vanity, greed, extravagance, infidelity, physical and moral inferiority, and caprice."[258] Chiari draws on the tradition of Fiammetta here in an important way: in this new phase of D'Avrile's journey, she is ruled by her passions rather than by reason and begins to unravel all that she has learned while

[257] *La filosofessa italiana* was originally meant to be published in five volumes, but because of its success, Pasinelli convinced Chiari to add two more volumes.

[258] Mary Weisner, *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993 [Second edition, 2000]), 19.

passing as a man. She rationalizes her irrational behavior in the following way: "Fra persone, che nell'amor suo regolar si lascino più dal capriccio, e dall'estro, che dalla Ragione mi vedeva in necessità ancor io d'operare più da pazzo che da Filosofo" (Among people, who in their love let themselves be governed more by caprice and whim than by Reason, I saw that by necessity even I operated more like a crazy person than as a Philosopher).[259] In the subsequent chapters, Madamigella devises plans to demonstrate to the Contessa that the Count is an unfaithful man. She thus submerges herself in the failings associated with weak women, reinforcing negative stereotypes of women. Ultimately, however, Chiari confirms her development as an intellectual who reasons through experience and education. In other words, D'Avrile recognizes that she has succumbed to the very traits that men use to maintain their domination of women, and in so doing, she is able to work through her emotions using "ragione" and "filosofia."

Perhaps to emphasize the importance of philosophy in D'Avrile's trajectory, the final installment of the text begins with a philosophical question: "Se prima di essere al Mondo, diceva chi la propose, stesse in nostra mano la scelta d'essere, o di non essere, supposta una cognizione pienissima non meno del nostro niente, che di tutte le vicende nostre avvenire, qual delle due sceglieressimo noi per non aversi a pentire d'una tal scelta!" (If, before being in the world, he who proposed it said, the choice of whether to be or not to be was in our hands, supposing a full knowledge no less of our nothingness than of all our future affairs, which of the two would we choose so as to not to repent such a choice?)[260] In this larger philosophical sphere evoked by this question, sex disappears, as the meditation revolves around much deeper issues.

[259] Chiari, *La filosofessa italiana*, 274.

[260] Ibid., 531.

The distinction between being and not being, which is a matter of humanity, makes D'Avrile's momentary lapse into weak-minded thinking seem silly and superficial. This passage serves to highlight how silly she comes to find her thought process here, and her recognition that it is linked to human passion—a trait shared by men and women alike.

Thus, as D'Avrile prepares a verbal attack against the Contessa, she is actually castigating herself: "La parte più debole d'una donna del suo carattere mi parve con tutta ragione che fosse la vanità" (the weakest part of a woman's character, with all reason, is her vanity). When she says this, she does not yet see herself in her damnation of the Contessa's character. Only when she recognizes her own behavior does she admit, "Ebbi in questo incontro occasione d'ammirare, e compiangere la debolezza del nostro sesso, e la cecità delle umane passioni" (In this encounter I had the opportunity to wonder at and pity the weakness of our sex, and the blindness of human passions).[261] In light of these revelations, we must return to the beginning of the text, as the heroine's journey takes on new meaning at every turn. As Madamigella works on her designs against the Contessa, she also begins to see and question her own faults: are they faults of her sex or her nationality, or are they simply human faults? She asks herself,

> Se tutte le donne fanno cos', dicevo da me medesima, ah! con ragione mi vergogno d'esser una donna anch'io; e il non esser creduta tale è l'unica felicità che io pur goda su questa terra. Forse questa istabilità vergognosa è un difetto più d'una nazione, che d'un'altra; ma se io non ne sono capace, posso far fede per questo che mi somiglin tutte le donne di Francia? Se tutte amassero più colla passione, sarebbero meno incostanti; ma se fossero meno incostanti, sarebbero elleno così corteggiate dagli uomini?[262]
>
> If all women do this, I said to myself, ah! It is with reason I'm ashamed of being a woman too; And not being believed to be one is the only happiness I enjoy on this earth. Perhaps this shameful instability is a defect more of one nation than of another; but if I am unable to do so, can I believe that all the women in France are similar to me? If they all loved

[261] Ibid., 270.

[262] Ibid., 271.

> more with passion, they would be less inconstant; but if they were less inconstant, would they be so courted by men?

It is surely no coincidence that D'Avrile at first regards herself as superior to her sex, but then recognizes that she also must confront human nature's weakness: "In ogni incontro lo spirit mio aveva resa superior al mio sesso; e quando fossi arrivata a non curare neppure la morte, mi pareva che sarei stata superior altresì a tutte le debolezze dell'umana natura" (In every encounter, my spirit remained superior to my sex; and were I to become nonchalant even about death, it seemed to me that I would be even superior to all of the weaknesses of human nature).[263] What I want to highlight here is that she moves directly from talking about her inconstancy—a trait usually associated with women—to imagining that she may rise above "all of the weaknesses of human nature." This quick transition suggests that she is ultimately classifying inconstancy as a *human* weakness, not merely a female weakness. In other words, she is challenging negative conceptions of female behavior and recasting the behavior as simply human. She implies that the sexes share at least some of the same weaknesses (inconstancy, the fear of death) and that she has overcome them as a whole human being, not as just a woman or just a man. This struggle renders D'Avrile more complex than her English and French counterparts. It also reveals a struggle on her part that Pamela, Moll, and even Marianna do not have: her *Italianness*. She struggles with her position as a woman whose origins lie in a place that has very little regard for women outside the private sphere.

Moreover, we can extend the argument made in chapter 1 that Aretino used Nanna as a mouthpiece for his own internal struggle about his social position. Chapter 1 argued that Aretino's subservience was likened to that of a woman (specifically, a prostitute). Both Aretino

[263] Ibid., 517.

and Chiari appear to have feared being perceived as more feminine than masculine due to a social position that required the support of an elite class. While this issue was less pressing for Chiari than it was for Aretino, Chiari and his contemporaries were still deeply in the service of the elite class. If Chiari could successfully advocate for the recognition of the intellectual capacity of women, however, his own status would be elevated. That is, because writers were seen as more feminine than men in other professions—especially when they wrote novels, often seen as a feminine genre—Chiari's support for education and a more liberal approach to women's rights could be expected to have a positive impact on his own social position.

D'Avrile also delves into the salient questions of her time and place: how education should work, whom it should teach, what kind of lessons it should teach and why, and whether gender should dictate who receives an education. She points out that both men and women are raised by women, a fact that Aretino also mentions, and she continues to reinforce the concept that equal treatment brings equal results:

> Perché non sarà capace una donna di quanto possono gli uomini, se di quella non men che di questi fu madre egualmente benefica l'umana natura? Non è già la medesima, che condanni noi donne ad una vita donnesca, molle, ritirata, soggetta, e priva di gloria; ma gli abusi del Mondo, per non dire la tirannica prepotenza degli uomini, che non vogliono con noi divider l'autorità loro, per timore di non diventar nostri schiavi. Date ad una fanciulla l'educazione letteraria, cavalleresca, e politica, con cui si allevano gli uomini, e sarà capace ella pure al par de' medesimi di far nel Mondo la sua gloriosa figura.[264]
>
> Why will a woman not be able to do what men can do, if human nature was an equally beneficent mother to these and to those [to men and to women]? It is not that [human nature] that condemns us women to a female life, soft, withdrawn, subjugated, and devoid of glory; but the abuses of the World, not to mention the tyrannical arrogance of men, who do not want to share their authority with us for fear of becoming our slaves. Give a young woman the literary, noble, and political education with which men are raised, and she too will be equally capable with men of cutting a glorious figure in the world.

[264] Ibid., 340.

In other words, it is not a woman's body that makes her appear to be less intellectual; it is her oppression by men. Moreover, if she is intellectually equal to men, then there is an implicit challenge to conceptions of feminine and masculine. She also argues for women's competence as philosophers and intellectuals: "Se anche le donne son ragionevoli, perché non potranno ancor esse filosofare sulle proprie vicende? E filosofando così, di che non saranno capaci coll'esempio di tanti uomini, che tutto intraprendono, senza esser filosofi? Anzi, quasi quasi direi, senza esser neppur ragionevoli?" (If women too are reasonable, why cannot they too philosophize about their own affairs? And philosophizing in this way, of what will they not be capable, with the example of so many men, who undertake everything without being philosophers? In fact, I would almost say, without even being reasonable?)[265] That is, having men as models, why couldn't a woman also reason and philosophize well—not to mention do anything else a man could do? I contend that Chiari's text argues that women can and should do all these things, all for the betterment of society.

Conclusion

Eighteenth-century Venetian novels like *La filosofessa italiana* broached many of the contemporary issues addressed in bestselling English novels such as Defoe's *Moll Flanders* and Richardson's *Pamela* and French novels such as Marivaux's *La Vie de Marianne*. And like Marivaux, Defoe, Richardson, Fielding and any number of English and French novelists, Chiari used the genre of the novel to entertain a new, less elite readership.

Chiari entertained the new, less-elite readership and the increasingly low-brow tastes of the elite reader by conjuring Aretino. This is evident in Chiari's strong heroine and in his use of

[265] Ibid., 341.

English and French models that were themselves the product of Aretino's influence. This permitted him on the one hand to appeal to an elite reader who was still a main source of support, and on the other hand to appeal to and anticipate a new middle-class reader through adventures, transvestism, and even love matches. All of these elements also served a specific and nuanced critique of a weakening, oppressive social system. Finally, building on Aretino, Chiari uses the female narrator to make a claim about women's equality to men given the feminized genre of the novel and its author's need to assert his own status.

Chiari borrowed from English and French novels as models for his novel, which can be characterized as both Venetian and Italian. He adapted the models to meet the needs of a diverse readership with a distinctly Italian sensibility; he domesticated them while also using them as an outlet for his own social and ideological struggles. He highlighted the benefits of education for women, and in so doing sought to elevate his own social status as a writer of a feminine genre. While he sought to appeal to a new readership in Venice, it is important to remember that an English-style middle class did not exist in Italy at the time. This meant that Chiari's novel still catered to an elite reader, whose tastes were increasingly low-brow, while incorporating the adventures of the lower-class, yet virtuous heroines from England, and/or adapting the mistaken identity of the French model. Although the middle class wasn't as big as it was in England, the elite class no longer had elite reading taste, preferring the novel and domestic theater. In this way, Chiari is adapting foreign models for a Venetian audience, and even anticipating a future reader. Although Chiari is often excluded from the modern canon, his success in Venice and on the peninsula was demonstrated by his popularity in his own time, even in a period in which the novel met with intense resistance in Italy.

CHAPTER 4:

CARLO GOZZI: GET AWAY YOU DIRTY WOMAN![266]

The sweet delusive dream of democracy organized and based on your available foundations – the expectation of a moral impossibility – madmen howl and laugh and dance and weep together. The ululations of the dreamers, yelling out Liberty, Equality, Fraternity, deafened our ears; and those of us who still remained awake were forced to feign themselves dreamers, in order to protect their honor, their property, their lives... I was keenly alive to the disastrous results which had to be expected from revolutionary science broadcast during the past age. I always dreaded and predicted the cataclysm that is the natural consequence of those pernicious doctrines. Yet my warnings were doomed to remain as useless as these memoirs will certainly be - as ineffectual as the doctors prescriptions for a man whose lungs are rotten. The sweet delusive dream of our physically impossible democracy will and in the evolution of... Let us leave to serious and candid historians the task of relating what we are sure, if we live, to see. Today is 18 March in the year 1798 and here I lay my pen down, lest I injure my good publisher. Farewell, patient and benign readers of my useless memoirs![267]
Carlo Gozzi

By the mid-eighteenth century, the documenting and depicting of everyday life, especially the sexual education and exploits of young women and men, had become the stuff of British and French novels alike, often through a reciprocal cross-fertilization by means of translation back and forth across the channel. This activity is now seen as crucial to the formation of the novel, with translation a salient feature in the evolution of the genre. However, the ways genre formation through translation operated on the Italian peninsula have yet to be fully explored. I touched on the importance of translation in the rise of the Italian novel in chapters 2 and 3, but the present chapter is dedicated to examining the phenomenon in more

[266] Portions of this chapter were published in an article co-authored with Clorinda Donato: "Periphery and Centre in the Evolution of the Novelistic Genre in Venice: Carlo Gozzi's 1764 Translation of John Cleland's Fanny Hill," in *The Centre and the Margins in Eighteenth-Century British and Italian Cultures*, ed. Frank O'Gorman and Lia Guerra (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013), 68-86.

[267] Carlo Gozzi, *The Useless Memoirs of Carlo Gozzi, Vol. II,* trans. John Addington Symonds (London: John C. Nimmo, 1890), 328-330.

detail. Specifically, I analyze Carlo Gozzi's (1720-1806) translation into Italian of the erotic novel *Fanny Hill, or Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure* by John Cleland (1709-89). Gozzi's translation reflects a number of the literary tensions at play in Venice during the 1760s, including personal vendettas, the debate over literary taste, and the struggle to dictate public and private morality among a growing number of literary consumers among whose ranks women figured prominently. Most importantly, Gozzi's use of a female narrator places his text in contention with his rival Chiari's D'Avrile because of the ways Gozzi rewrote his female narrator and protagonist to function as a negative example of the worldly woman. In Cleland's text, Fanny finds a happy ending because she learns throughout the text and finally, as a worldly woman, understands how to live properly in society. In contrast, the Fanny of Gozzi's translation reflects his resistance to an empowered female sexuality—Gozzi's Fanny is not worldly, just low. This is important because it shows how the earliest Venetian novels not only exemplified the social debates of their time, but also pushed literary boundaries even when written from a reactionary social perspective; Gozzi, after all, joined his literary adversaries in seeking to appeal to a middle-class readership by depicting a female protagonist who flaunted her sexuality. Moreover, an examination of Cleland's Fanny in Italian translation reveals how Aretino's Nanna was rewritten into a Venetian context after being taken up as a model by English and French novelists.

While the novel was the artistic form that best reflected and narrated the aspirations, dilemmas, and characteristics of a growing European middle class, this new readership, the developing middle class, did not emerge until much later on the Italian peninsula. At least partly for this reason, the novel took a different path in form and in development than it did in England and France, as we saw in chapter 3. Translation played a decisive role in this path, but its

workings have yet to be fully understood. Thanks to Mary Helen McMurran's 2009 *The Spread of Novels: Translation and Prose Fiction in the Eighteenth Century*, the role of translation in the emergence of the novel in both Britain and France has prompted scholars to rethink what was at stake as this new genre unfolded, and more importantly, how the novel, when translated, became a site where foreign author and domestic reader merged, mediated through the figure of the translator. Indeed, McMurran's thesis is that the novel was born as a function of translation where authors engaged in *amplificatio* and *brevitas* within the text itself as they tailored novelistic content to local, national, or personal criteria and identities. Thus, as translators sought to render life stories from one language into another, they modified their source texts in such a way as to reflect their personal agendas as well as to either adhere to or challenge established social and political constructs. They did this either by expanding the text to include specific local cultural and linguistic details or by reducing texts through a process of intensive cutting that removed questionable material or features that did not coincide with the translator's agenda. Thus, the novel became a place where both cosmopolitanism and national identity could be forged.[268] McMurran's work, then, adds a new element to our understanding of the origins of the genre and its evolution, particularly in a national context. In much the same way that networks focusing on center and flow in the study of eighteenth-century epistolary contacts have revolutionized our understanding of knowledge production and transmission, the same methods of translation networks, when applied to the study of the novel, are reaping similar rewards.

McMurran's approach can tell us much about the evolution of the novel in Italy, though it requires refocusing for Italian regional contexts. This is particularly true for Venice, a city within

[268] Mary Helen McMurran, *The Spread of Novels: Translation and Prose Fiction in the Eighteenth Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009).

the Italian context that can be considered somewhat comparable to London and Paris as a center of publishing and an area where the readership for non-liturgical writings grew.[269] As we saw in chapters 2 and 3, booksellers' catalogues, periodicals, and letters report the rise in popularity of both the English and French novel in Italian translation around the 1750s, as Luisa Giari's work on the Italian translations of Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones* amply demonstrates.[270] Her analysis of the changes wrought in the Italian translations and their reception underscores the "domesticating" that McMurran refers to in her monograph, while at the same time providing insight into the evolving identity of the Venetian population in the mid-eighteenth century. Chiari's *La filosofessa italiana* is not an example of this phenomenon because his text was not a translation, though his text is certainly modeled on these British and French texts. However, Gozzi's *La Meretrice* provides an excellent example of how authors translated and localized texts to reflect the particular identity of a place or a group. The translation of this British erotic novel into Italian sheds light on larger issues of cultural transmission because it involves the seventeenth-century reception of Pietro Aretino in Britain and his influence on the novelistic genre, as well as the eighteenth-century translation of British novels into Italian and their role in

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[269] See Mario Infelise, *L'editoria veneziana nel '700* (Milano: FrancoAngeli, 8th edition, 2008) for a thorough exploration of Venetian publishing in the eighteenth century. Infelise charts a publishing industry in full expansion by 1735 when he calculates that some 26 publishers ran a total of 94 presses. For an analysis of the French market, see Thierry Rigogne, *Between State and Market: Printing and Bookselling in Eighteenth-Century France* (Oxford: The Voltaire Foundation, 2007). In his preface to Rigogne's work, Robert Darnton cites the number of printers in Paris as in decline, at 75 in 1644, 51 in 1692 and 36 only in 1777, with numbers declining in the provinces as well. Darnton discusses the importance of the underground press in this regard, as well as the circulation of foreign books, which by 1770 accounted for half of the books for sale in France (xvi-xvii). Book publishing in London was far more diffuse, with 802 printers active between 1750 and 1770, according to the University of Birmingham's British Booktrade Index (http://www.bbti.bham.ac.uk/results.htm).

[270] Luisa Giari, "Le Peripezie delle prime traduzioni del *Tom Jones* tra Francia e Italia," in *Problemi di Critica Goldoniana,* vol. 11 (2002), 229-249.

the development of the Italian novel.[271] In other words, it highlights the movement of Aretino's Nanna from Italy to Britian and then back again in the character of Fanny.

This chapter extends McMurran's line of inquiry to the erotic novel, focusing on Gozzi's 1764 translation of John Cleland's *Fanny Hill, or Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure*. Research to date has uncovered four translations of *Cleland's Fanny Hill* into Italian, from the eighteenth, nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first centuries.[272] The first three appear to constitute instances of intertranslation, i.e., the translation of a work from another translation, rather than the original, in this case from French into Italian. The first Italian translation, published in 1764, was clandestine, bearing neither the imprint of a major publisher nor the name of the translator, but instead the false imprint Cosmopoli, used for books that had been published secretly, thus avoiding censorship.[273] It is this translation that I discuss in this chapter.

A survey of Italian texts translated into English over the course of the eighteenth century reveals considerable English interest in and familiarity with those genres of Italian writing that the Milanese, Neapolitan, and Venetian centers of *Illuminismo* produced, i.e., legislative and

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[271] See Ian Frederick Moulton, *Before Pornography: Erotic Writing in Early Modern England* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000); for the evolution of the erotic/pornographic genre in seventeenth-century England and a definition of terms, see R. Thompson, *Unfit for Modest Ears. A Study of Pornographic, Obscene and Body Words Written or Published in England in the Second Half of the Seventeenth Century* (London: Macmillan, 1979), IX-X.

[272] The Italian translation of *Fanny Hill* that is currently available, *Fanny Hill: Memorie di una donna di piacere*, trans. Franco Garnero (Roma: Gruppo Editoriale L'Espresso, 2003) makes no mention of these earlier Italian versions, citing (in translation) only from Cleland expert Peter Sabor's classic introduction to his edition of Cleland's novel, *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1985).

[273] "Cosmopoli" was an imprint for texts published clandestinely in Venice during the eighteenth century that had skipped the censor's gaze. By appearing to have been imported into Venice and published elsewhere, the otherwise scandalous and blasphemous texts that the Council of Ten sought to block succeeded in circulating.

religious reform, historical and philosophical reflection, theater and opera. The Italian fictional prose produced in the eighteenth century, however, is conspicuously absent on the international scene, although verse translations of Ariosto and Tasso abounded in English and French.[274] Yet, the innovative features of new genre formation in Italy can be found in the translations of English or French novels into Italian, and it behooves us to examine them by identifying the changes made in the translated novels and comparing them to other forms of prose writing by the translators themselves. In the case of Gozzi, this means including some analysis of his autobiography, *Le Memorie inutili,* and his letters alongside his translation of Cleland.

Gozzi's impassioned and contentious relationship with his rivals has further branded him as an outlier, setting him at odds with the traditionally "enlightened" Venetian writers who are more easily accommodated under the overarching history of literature studies. Gozzi's translation of Cleland has thus remained relatively unknown. It was within an environment dominated by this "traditional" vision with an expressed cultural preference for poetry as the privileged literary mode that Gozzi translated Cleland's pornographic novel into Italian. Despite his general conservatism and his strong belief in the primacy of classical Italian poetry, Gozzi was apparently tempted to experiment, realizing (though certainly without admitting it) that the classical literary system was in crisis. On the one hand, Gozzi sought to undermine the novel genre from within by adapting and rewriting the narrative to fit his morality. For Gozzi opposed the new literature, philosophy, and libertinism that was entering Italy from France.[275] On the

[274] See Clorinda Donato, "Charles-Joseph Panckoucke's Translations of Ariosto and Tasso and His Treatise on Translation," in *Forma e parola: Studi in memoria di Fredi Chiappelli*, eds. Dennis J. Dutschke, et all. (Roma: Bulzoni, 1992), 495-503.

[275] Carlo Gozzi, *The Useless Memoirs of Carlo Gozzi, Vol. I*, trans. John Addington Symonds (London: John C. Nimmo, 1890), I:160.

other hand, however, his translation of Cleland's novel also demonstrates his awareness of an evolving readership and reveals his desire to be relevant. But, as we will see, even as he experimented with the novel genre though translation, Gozzi's conservative perspective remained present, especially regarding gender roles.

In chapter 3, we saw how the use of a female narrator by Gozzi's contemporary Pietro Chiari played a pivotal role in polarizing and shaping the emergent novel in Venice during the eighteenth century. Chiari's female narrator emerged from a long and complex history of female narrators in Italian, including Boccaccio's Fiammetta, and specifically from Aretino's Nanna in Venice. However, in Chiari's D'Avrile we saw a more progressive female protagonist, revealing another side to Venice's relationship with the novel that hinged on a more eager readership than had been traditionally believed to exist in Venice. Some of these readers appear to have had a fairly progressive view of women, reflecting an affinity with the forward-thinking English novelist Daniel Defoe rather than with the traditional Samuel Richardson. Those who shared Defoe's perspective favored education and political participation for women, in contrast with those who believed women should limit themselves to household duties. In addition, we saw how the female narrator at times acted as a foil for the author himself, spotlighting the challenges faced by the artisan class.

In the present chapter, I argue that Gozzi also portrayed a female protagonist in a mid-eighteenth-century novel with sexually explicit elements, but for a very different purpose. Gozzi's Fanny is a refashioned literary figure who reveals the traditionalists' fears about the negative effects on women (and consequently on society) of reading, education, and permission to navigate the public realm. For these reasons, Gozzi's Fanny is not redeemed at the end of the

text when she becomes a wiser and more worldly woman, as she is in Cleland's original. Instead, she is condemned because of her explicit sexuality. Thus, Gozzi reaffirms the traditional social expectations of women and emphasizes the negative consequences of overt displays of female sexuality. If Aretino's Nanna reveals what appears to be irresolvable conflicts through her newly accorded agency as a female prostitute-protagonist, and if Chiari's D'Avrile builds on this agency and expands her emancipation through education, then Gozzi's Fanny represents a clear rejection of female agency, explicit sexuality, and education.

Earlier chapters of this dissertation argued that novel writers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, like Aretino, sought to appeal to their readers by featuring women protagonists who openly displayed their sexuality. I have also suggested throughout this dissertation that such protagonists tend to reveal the tensions in their creators' social positions. Gozzi's participation in the literary scene through his translation/adaptation of *Fanny Hill* presents an interesting twist on this situation. On one hand, he seemed to be trying to attract the same readers as Chiari, and even as his brother Gasparo. On the other hand, he could not hide his distrust of the liberated or educated female. Thus, Gozzi's writing, like Aretino's, suggests an oscillation between his desire for renown as a writer and his participation in a class struggle that compelled him to live like the other writers around him despite his noble parentage. Moreover, his traditional view of women placed them as one of the primary threats to a fragile hierarchy in which he barely held on to his noble title.

It is true, of course, that Gozzi's text is a translation, but comparing the translation to the original reveals that Gozzi made deliberate and revealing changes to the depiction of the woman protagonist. It is important to acknowledge that Gozzi's translation did not necessarily have a substantial impact on the readership in Venice because his text was published anonymously and

it is likely that fewer copies were in circulation than of Chiari's *La filosofessa italiana*. Rather, what is important here is the backlash against the social change represented by the new form of the novel, which was linked to women, gender, and sexuality, and therefore to gendered social roles. This backlash in turn is significant because it paradoxically indicates the growing importance and popularity of the novel form, and especially novels with female protagonists. To respond effectively to the threat of the novel, Gozzi had to produce a novel.

Gozzi himself is significant because he was a key figure in the theater, which was central to Venetian culture. Moreover, he was at the heart of the theater wars, as we saw in chapter 2, and placed himself in direct contention with Chiari, among others. That Chiari had written a three-part theatrical series based on Fanny adds to the complicated relation between Gozzi and Chiari. Pietro Chiari's *Fannì a Londra*, inedito, 1797, has a later publication date than Gozzi's adaptation of Cleland's novel; thus it is unclear whether Chiari's play was written before or after Gozzi's translation. Since the publication date on the one edition I have found comes later, I cannot assume that Gozzi was influenced by this play; rather it appears that Chiari was challenging Gozzi here. Either way, the implication is that Gozzi and Chiari sought to instigate and challenge each other both on and off the stage. And since Chiari's novel *La filosofessa italiana* was published before Gozzi's translation of Cleland's text, I hold that Gozzi saw Chiari's female narrator as a threat to his social position. Gozzi demonstrated a long and troubled relationship with women, beginning with his problematic relationship with his mother.[276] Even

[276] While little is known about Gozzi's relationship with his mother, he makes clear in his memoirs that he was much closer to his father, and that he harbored deep anger and resentment toward his mother because of her and his sister's dealings with the Gozzi estate. DiGaetani details Gozzi's return from Fruili to see in person how his mother had mismanaged the family assets John Louis DiGaetani, *Carlo Gozzi: A Life In 18th Century Venetian Theatre, An Afterlife in Opera* (NC: McFarland & Company, 2000), 57.

more disturbing for Gozzi was the depiction of overt female sexuality, which seemed to offer women a certain power over men. The result was *La Meretrice*, a paradoxical text translated by a man who lived between two worlds, that of the nobility and that of the writer, or artisan.

In this chapter, I first introduce John Cleland and Carlo Gozzi and their respective works, exploring in more detail what appears to have motivated Gozzi to undertake this translation. I then discuss the most salient differences between Cleland's work and Gozzi's translation. These changes reflect Gozzi's adaptation of the text to the particular desires and expectations of his middle-class readership, or rather of some of his readership, for we have seen that there was also a desire to read about the adventures of intelligent, educated, and worldly women. Gozzi's choice to translate a novel in the first place seems curious, considering his general mistrust of the genre. His one-time foray into the world of the novel makes more sense when seen as a response to Chiari, his popular contemporary. Essentially, Gozzi unravels Chiari's progressive D'Avrile and instead, as I discuss below, emphasizes the dangers of female agency and sexuality, including the threat they pose to the Venetian social hierarchy. Moreover, the text reveals Gozzi's own fears about social change.

I. John Cleland: A Brief History of the Author and His Text

John Cleland's controversial epistolary novel *Fanny Hill, or Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure* was first published in two parts in 1748 and 1749. The novel was immersed in controversy from the time of its release, and soon afterward it was banned. In 1750 Cleland issued a bowdlerized version, but the text continued to be forbidden, published only in pirated editions, some of which included a very explicit homosexual scene that Cleland denied having written. In fact, the book was placed on the "banned reading list" in the United States and

remained on it well into the 1960s, when the ban was finally overturned in the "Memoirs vs. Massachusetts" case of 1966.[277]

While Cleland came from an upper-middle-class family and had two brothers who successfully finished their schooling and were eventually able to support themselves, Cleland himself was constantly in dire straits. He was expelled from school, and his father subsequently cut off all financial support. The reasons for this upheaval were never entirely clear, but it has been speculated that Cleland was homosexual, which would have accounted not only for his estrangement from his family but also for his troubles at school. He never married, was constantly in debt, and struggled to support himself throughout his life. He died destitute and alone in 1789. *Fanny Hill* was his only real success as an author, although he published at least two other novels, several never performed comedies, and one dramatic work, as well as a hodgepodge of writings in various genres, including philological treatises, pamphlets on sexuality, a dictionary on love, and monthly reviews. Some scholars and critics have suggested that *Fanny Hill, or Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure* was written while Cleland languished in prison for unpaid debts, with the text standing as payment for some of what he owed.

Fanny Hill, as the novel was immediately called in reference to its heroine, is an intriguing and controversial work, a masterpiece of the epistolary genre, and a foundational libertine text that continues to offer grist to scholars of gender and sexuality studies. Though undoubtedly sexually explicit, it curiously contains not one foul or vulgar word—nothing that would mark it as obscene at the level of language, a narrative strategy that would become the model for French libertine prose as well. H. Montgomery Hyde's description of the text in the

[277] For a more in-depth history of the ban history of *Fanny Hill*, see Charles Rembar's commentary in John Cleland, *Fanny Hill, Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure*, intro. Gary Gautier (New York: The Modern Library, 2001), 229-247.

introduction to his 1973 edition comments on the impact of Cleland's language. He finds that the novel is "expressed in the elegant language of the period" and has "great historical value in the relation to the development of the novel itself and it has similar value in relation to its subject matter in the age in which it was written and while it does not rank with the works of Dickens and Scott, it is, in its way, a little masterpiece."[278] Today we no longer feel compelled to measure Cleland's impact with reference to Dickens and Scott, but the use of the comparison to justify calling the novel "a little masterpiece" reminds us how daring it was to write about Cleland only a few short decades ago.

II. Carlo Gozzi: A Brief History of the Author and his Adaptation of "Fanny"

In 1764 Carlo Gozzi translated *Fanny Hill* with the title *La Meretrice* under the false imprint of Cosmopoli. We are able to attribute the translation to Gozzi through the Marquis de Paulmy from a reference by Apollinaire in his introduction to the 1923 French translation of Cleland's novel.[279] Apollinaire notes that Gozzi himself sent the published translation to the Marquis; today that copy can be found in the Arsenal. Paulmy was a well-known bibliophile and art collector whose 100,000-volume book collection was annotated and catalogued by him personally. In 1785 the collection was sold to the Comte d'Artois, brother of the king, and became the founding collection of the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, since in his position as Grand Master of Artillery, he housed his personal library in the Arsenal. Further research on eighteenth-century networks will certainly reveal more about the relationship between Paulmy and Gozzi,

[278] H. Montgomery Hyde, foreword to John Cleland, *Memoirs of Fanny Hill* (New York: Peebles Press International, 1973), 2.

[279] Guillaume Apollinaire, introduction to John Cleland, *Mémoires de Fanny Hill, L'oeuvre de John Cleland* (Paris: Bibliothèque des Curieux, 1923).

but for our purposes, we can be confident that Paulmy's careful catalogue and annotations make this a reliable attribution.

Gozzi's choice of *Fanny Hill* is intriguing when one considers other novels published in the same year or earlier that he might have chosen to translate, such as Samuel Richardson's *Clarissa* or Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones,* neither of which was as contentious or controversial as *Fanny Hill*. As discussed above, the theater wars and Gozzi's agonistic relationship with Chiari suggest reasons for his choice of this novel. Another possible reason can be found in his fraught relationship with his brother Gasparo Gozzi and Gasparo's poetess and protofeminist wife, Luisa Bergalli. As the Gozzis were considered "impoverished Venetian nobility," Carlo, to improve his fortunes, joined the Dalmatian army for three years. When he returned, he became a member of the *Accademia dei Granelleschi*, whose name referenced the Renaissance *Accademia della Crusca*'s "bread" and "flour" theme. Both academies supported Italian literature, but above all they sought to promote Tuscan as the preferred literary tongue and drew heavily on classical references. The *Accademia dei Granelleschi* was immensely popular and widespread throughout northern and central Italy. Though both the Gozzi brothers were members of the *Accademia dei Granelleschi*, their literary tastes could not have been more divergent. Both Gasparo Gozzi and Luisa Bergalli translated French works for the theater of Sant'Angelo in Venice, but Gasparo is known mainly for his work at the *Gazzetta Veneta,* recognized among periodicals for its elevated style; he also worked as the press censor in Venice for many years and published translations of Alexander Pope's *Essay on Criticism* and Jean-François Marmontel's *Tales.* For these reasons, even though Cleland's novel contained not a single vulgar word, its chastely recounted but sexually explicit details would certainly have offended Gasparo and Luisa's sensibilities. Carlo Gozzi, therefore, may have been attracted to this text precisely because of its controversial status,

and more specifically, as a response to Gasparo's reflections on the relationship between the epic poem and the novel that he published in *Il Mondo morale*, where he claimed the highest of moral inspiration for the emerging genre:

> I poemi e i romanzi fanno professione di narrare favole e bugie; e gli scrittori di quelli senza punto avvedersene ci lasciano ripieni i libri loro d'una verità che risplende da tutte le parti. I costumi di tutti i secoli e di tutti i paesi sono dipinti in cotali opera, e vi si veggono, come in uno specchio, dall'un capo all'altro, tanto che se ci fossero rimasti di tempo in tempo romanzi dal diluvio in qua d'ogni nazione e d'ogni tempo, noi vedremmo quali virtu o quali vizi regnarono ne' popoli, e come in un secolo regnò più l'uno che l'altro. Vegnamo alla dichiarazione, che non paresse ch'io farneticassi. La poesia e la favola sono un'imitazione della natura trovata per dar diletto, dicono alcuni anche per utilità, ma questo ne venne dopo. Perché l'imitazione sia dilettevole, la dee dunque aver l'occhio alla natura, traendo dal vero che vede una certa verisimiglianza.
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> The objective of poems and novels is to narrate tales and lies; and without realizing it, these writers leave us their books that are actually full of a truthfulness that shines out from all sides. The customs of all centuries and all nations are illustrated in such works, where one sees, as if reflected in a mirror, from one end to the other, to such an extent that if novels from every period and every nation, from the Diluvian until now, had survived, we would know the virtues or vices that prevailed among those peoples, and how in a particular century, one held sway over the other. But let us come to my statement, so that it doesn't appear that I am mad. Poetry and narration are both imitations of nature, invented to give pleasure, some say, to serve a useful purpose as well, but this comes later. In order for imitation to be pleasurable, it must keep an eye trained on nature, drawing a certain verisimilitude from the truth it sees.[280]

This view that the purpose of literature was to serve as a mirror of reality could not have been further from Carlo Gozzi's perspective, but that it gives pleasure by reflecting nature and reinforcing useful social values was a point of agreement between Gasparo and Carlo Gozzi. That stated, they did not also hold the same values. But, even though they did have a rather

[280] Gasparo Gozzi, *Il mondo morale* (Venice: Colombani, 1760), VII, 101-02, also quoted in Gilberto Pizzamiglio, "Le Fortune del romanzo e della letteratura d'intrattenimento," *Storia della cultura veneta 5/1: Dalla controriforma alla fine della Repubblica, Il settecento* (Vicenza: Neri Pozza, 1985), 173. My translation.

contentious relationship, Carlo Gozzi was closer to Gasparo than to any of his other siblings, and they were both members of the Testicular Academy, also translated as The Big Balled Academy.

But even though Gasparo and Carlo Gozzi shared the same literary vision regarding language, they did not agree on gender or on women in literature and on the stage. We can therefore speculate that Carlo Gozzi translated *Fanny Hill* to contradict Chiari's progressive female narrator, the moral standard held by his brother, and the literary style promoted by his brother and Luisa Bergalli, thus placing him at the center of a controversy once again. Carlo Gozzi sought out and enjoyed such wranglings, as we saw in chapter 2 in the analysis of the theater wars, and judging from his very public clashes with Chiari, Carlo Goldoni, Gratorol, and Gasparo and Luisa, who were part of the eighteenth-century Venetian literary establishment. Carlo Gozzi was an inveterate defender of Italy's poetic tradition and an outspoken opponent of the celebration of *quotidianità* that was the stuff of Carlo Goldoni's theater and *Commedia dell'arte*. Gozzi's magical theater is not very realistic, presenting outright magical plots with enchanters, though Gozzi did want the audience to identify with and support the general social order that he presented. Gozzi wanted to save the fantasy of theater from Goldoni's more banal realistic drama. He wanted to instruct and preserve traditional social order through fantasy and *fiabe*. Likewise, Carlo Gozzi most certainly took perverse pleasure in translating a work, *Fanny Hill*, whose contents parodied his brother Gasparo's picturesque praise of the novelistic genre in *Il Mondo morale*.

Even when Gozzi stopped writing his *fiabe*, he continued to challenge social changes around him. He began to translate Spanish plays, but localized them for his Venetian audience and to meet his need to promote traditional social values that included maintaining a strict noble class, a lack of social mobility, and less-literate women. Therefore, his translations of the

Spanish plays were more like adaptations, like his translation of *Fanny Hill*. In fact, each is so distinct from the original that calling them translations is disingenuous.[281]

On the one hand, then, Gozzi's translation appears to parody his brother's work, and on the other it undoubtedly reflects the tensions of the theater wars. As we saw in chapter 2, the conflict among Chiari, Goldoni, and Gozzi fueled the explosive theater scene and informed the literary scene by helping to usher in the novel. With *La Meretrice*, Gozzi was at once provoking his brother, who sought morality in his novel, and criticizing Chiari, who promoted worldly, learned, and adventurous women in his novels, especially in *La filosofessa italiana*. It is also possible that Gozzi, like Aretino before him, sought out this controversy in an effort to increase his readership.

Gozzi's autobiography, *Memorie inutili della vita di Carlo Gozzi, scritte da lui medesimo, e da lui pubblicate per umiltà*, was written in 1780 and finally published in 1797, after the fall of the Venetian Republic. The *Memorie inutili* chronicle his various amorous affairs, often with married women and actresses, and his daily life as an inveterate bachelor. His disparaging consideration of women is evident in this work, most explicitly in his "condescending descriptions of the actresses in Sacchi's company," as Emma Dassori has noted.[282] In the *Memorie*, Gozzi also admits to being afraid of long-term commitment or marriage, and we could speculate that that fear was born from his familial trouble. Gozzi writes, "It seemed to me, in this condition of affairs, best to remain a bachelor and to devote myself to the duties I had undertaken, without ambitious projects and without assuming heavier

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[281] DiGaetani, *Carlo Gozzi*, 157.

[282] Emma A. Dassori, "Carlo Gozzi's Zobeide: An Annotated Translation" (Ph.D. dissertation, Tufts University, 2011), 54.

obligations."[283] Gozzi also shares that he had three affairs as a young man, each painful, causing him to suffer because of unfaithful women, and he concludes that "love was nothing but a politer way of two people obtaining what they secretly wish for."[284] In other words, Gozzi treated love as selfish game and one in which he often lost.

Other scholars have also remarked on Gozzi's troubled view of changing sexual mores in the public sphere of the eighteenth century. Ted Emery, in particular, has probed this issue in the preface to his translation of Gozzi's *Fiabe* by comparing their animus against women with ideas expressed in the *Memorie inutili.* However, Emery finds that Gozzi thoroughly rejects the freedoms afforded to the enlightened woman and the agency granted her by his contemporaries in their writings. Gozzi views women's less guarded behavior, now developing unchecked as a function of greater intellectual freedom, as a threat to the social order. Gozzi's translation of *Fanny Hill* may be considered as another example of such suspicion.[285]

Memoirs like the *Memorie inutile* and Rousseau's momentous *Confessions* were increasingly popular during this period and were read like novels, adding to the demand for prose narratives. Yet lengthy prose works were still far from being the preferred literary genre in Italy, with theater and verse still occupying the primary position.

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[283] Gozzi, *Useless,* I: 371.

[284] Ibid, II: 100.

[285] Ted Emery, "Carlo Gozzi in Context," introduction to *Carlo Gozzi, Five Tales for the Theatre*, ed. and trans. Albert Bermel and Ted Emery (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 1-20.

III. John Cleland's *Fanny Hill* and Carlo Gozzi's Translation

Like much eighteenth-century prose translation, Gozzi's text is an adaptation and acculturation of *Fanny Hill*.[286] In other words, Gozzi domesticated, localized, and Italianized *Fanny Hill.* He also *personalized* the work, matching the text to his personal set of cultural and moral criteria, of which there is evidence in his autobiography and his letters.[287] His translation also reflects what we might define as a uniquely Italian sensibility in licentious literature. Indeed, we find echoes of Aretino's *I Ragionamenti* in Carlo Gozzi's rendition.[288] In Cleland, Fanny has a social mobility that Aretino's Nanna does not in the *Ragionamenti*, but Gozzi removes Fanny's social mobility and reinserts her in the fixed sphere of whoredom that Nanna also occupied. Gozzi's translation of *Fanny Hill* should thus be considered not only within the context of the other British novels that were being translated at the time of its publication and of the novels being written by his rival, Pietro Chiari—in particular *La filosofessa italiana*, published in 1753––but also of an earlier Italian tradition started by Aretino.

Cleland's novel is comprised of two lengthy letters written by Fanny to a friend as a confession of her past life as a prostitute after she was left to fend for herself upon the demise of her parents. Narratives of girls left to fend for themselves had been treated before in earlier British novels of education, such as Daniel Defoe's *Moll Flanders* and Samuel Richardson's

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[286] For an in-depth discussion of the translating of novels in the eighteenth-century, see Annie Cointre, Alain Lautel, and Annie Rivara, eds., *La Traduction Romanesque au XVIIIe siècle* (Artois: Artois Presses Université, 2003).

[287] Lawrence Venuti discusses the "domestication" of the translated text as a strategy of adaptation in Chapter 1, "Invisibility," in *The Translator's Invisibility*: *A History of Translation* (Routledge: London and New York, 1995), 1-43.

[288] See Moulton, *Before Pornography* for how Aretino is echoed in British texts, including Cleland. Thus, Gozzi's translation of Cleland also brings with it the Aretine traces.

Pamela and *Clarissa Howe*, which, like *Fanny Hill,* were presented and read like autobiographies, blurring the line between fiction and reality. As Christoffer Fogleström has pointed out, *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure* is a distinct kind of *Bildungsroman* in which a very specific type of education takes place: an education in sexual pleasure.[289] Indeed, the innovation of Cleland's work lies in the sexual agency displayed by Fanny, who narrates her licentious experiences with the immediate, rollicking, and curious delight with which she experienced them.[290] Fanny ostensibly repents of her former life in the course of the letters, explaining how she was compelled to sell herself for survival. Her account, however, is told with such vivid detail and unabashed enthusiasm that it is clear that she is not only unrepentantly expressing her sexual enjoyment, but even inviting our voyeuristic participation, so that we too might prepare for similar exploits in our own boudoirs. Moreover, although her account of the sexual act is surprisingly, perhaps even shockingly detailed, as if it were a manual for pleasure, it is devoid of any actual vulgar words, as discussed earlier. Though Fanny is delving into the world of what we might today call high-end prostitution, it is easy to forget that she is being paid for her services. Cleland refers to her as a "lady," a "mistress," and "a woman of pleasure," a term whose meaning is wholly reversed, for she is actively engaged in procuring her own pleasure.[291]

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[289] Christoffer Fogleström, "The Bildung of Fanny Hill: John Cleland's *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure*" (thesis, Linneaus University, Sweden, 2011).

[290] Fanny's recollections are certainly akin to Nanna's in Aretino's *I ragionamenti*, except that Aretino's text is essentially a sex manual and political commentary, while Cleland's text takes on a much more progressive role.

[291] All of Cleland's terms for prostitute here have positive connotations, whereas the various terms for prostitute that we saw in Chapter one vary from negative to positive: "puttana" is negative, "meretrice" neutral, and "cortigiana" positive.

It is possible that Gozzi translated not directly from English but rather from the French, but the self-fashioning evident in the English is not present in Gozzi's translation and he did not follow the French translator's lead with regard to the title. The title of the first French translation of 1751, *La Fille de joie*, is actually a partial calque of the English title *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure,* though the agency demonstrated by the young woman who writes her own "memories" is absent from the French title. Like Gozzi's translation, the French translation was published anonymously, though it was later attributed to the erotic French novelist Jean-Louis Fougeret de Montbron, author of *Margot, la ravaudeuse* (1750), a novel that drew heavily from *Fanny Hill, or Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure*.[292] However, the translation does refer explicitly to the book's English provenance by means of the phrase *ouvrage quintessencié de l'anglois* added just below the title. Statistical information on the rate of book translations from English into French during the eighteenth century shows a marked increase at the middle of the century, which coincides with the 1751 publication date of Fougeret de Montbron's translation of the *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure*. By mid-century, the French reading public had become aware of the sheer numbers of British novels being diffused through France, and especially in Paris; as French novelistic production began to wane, English-language novels translated into French easily filled the gap.[293] These considerations explain the later appearance of Italian translations, many of which were translated from French into Italian and not from the original English. The French translations became available in Venice, where they were in turn translated into Italian. The first

[292] See Sylvie Kleiman-Lafon, "The French Adventures of Fanny Hill," in *Launching 'Fanny Hill': Essays on the Novel and its Influence*, ed. Patsy S. Fowler and Alan Jackson (New York: AMS 2003), 127-151.

[293] McMurran, *The Spread of Novels,* 130.

French translation of *Fanny Hill* was published with the false imprint of "Lampsaque," which is French for Lampsacus, a small town of the Hellespont where the cult of Priapus was actively celebrated.[294] This practice was carried over into the Italian translation with the false imprint of "Cosmopoli," an indicator, as was "Lampsaque," of the novel's licentious nature.

In his translation, Gozzi definitively removed any trace of the self-fashioning implied in Cleland's title. Gozzi's Fanny is relegated to the rank of common prostitute with no hope for social mobility. Gozzi was undoubtedly opposed to the practice of self-fashioning, since many artists used it as means for social mobility. That Fanny, in Cleland's original, could marry and enter the English middle class threatened Gozzi's fragile, impoverished nobility. His theater and his translation of Cleland's Fanny sent a message to the lower social classes that seeking upward social mobility would have serious negative consequences.[295] Thus, Gozzi intensified *Fanny Hill*'s original licentious tone and placed a very different cultural and personal stamp on its protagonist, and thus on the novel as a whole. For example, Cleland's progressive Fanny is negated by Gozzi's repeated use of such base and vulgar terms as "meretrice" (whore), "puttana" (whore) and "ruffiana" (procuress or female pimp.) Gozzi's insistence on rewriting Fanny using derogatory language choices reflects Gozzi's personal issue with social mobility on the one hand, and on the other hand, progressive conceptions of female sexuality. While the act of prostitution may have been socially acceptable to Gozzi on one level, a woman enthusiastically and unapologetically writing about her sexual pleasure apparently was not. He thus largely eliminated this aspect of Fanny's narrative voice, exchanging the elegant euphemisms in her

[294] Kleiman-Lafon, "The French Adventures of Fanny Hill," 130, n2.

[295] DiGaetani, *Carlo Gozzi*, 90-91.

"confession" for more direct and morally weighted terms. Gozzi did not, in other words, share Cleland's aim of writing licentious material without the use of licentious language.

In chapter 1, I examined Aretino's most scandalous work, the pedantic dialogue *Sei giornate* that features Nanna, a female narrator. We see the impact of this work on English literature in texts like Cleland's *Fanny Hill* and *Shamela*, and in the libertine movement in France in Marivaux and many others. Cleland's Fanny, however, is similar to Aretino's Nanna only in the sense that Fanny grows intellectually throughout the text, and finally the reader learns that she marries and enters society legitimately. In other words, Fanny is like Nanna because her only choice at the start of the text is to become a prostitute, but unlike Nanna, social mobility becomes an option and she enters the middle class as a proper women, despite her past. In contrast, Nanna's final social role, her best option, is to be a procuress and to teach her daughter how to live as a courtesan or prostitute: the option to marry and enter society is not available, and neither fate offers any type of intellectual freedom. Thus, Cleland borrowed the "sex manual" model, but changed the trajectory of the protagonist and emancipates her from the restrictive roles delineated in the *Sei giornate*. However, when Gozzi translated Fanny, he reassigned her to the restrictive role laid out for Nanna in the *Sei giornate*. This is seen in Gozzi's excision of all Fanny's reflection, as we will see below, and in the text's ending, which leaves Fanny merely a prostitute.

Gozzi's "adaptation" of Cleland is both a literary and a communicative act. In it, he rewrites Cleland's intellectually inclined and sexually progressive woman, re-forming her into a simplified and disreputable protagonist. Gozzi vulgarizes the text from the very beginning. While Cleland uses the euphemism "woman of pleasure" even in the title, Gozzi calls his translation *La Meretrice* or *The Whore*—reducing Fanny's subjectivity to its former déclassé status, which her

narrative is explicitly trying to transcend. The translator/author also makes his presence known through a double set of interventions that make the reader aware of the male gaze that oversees the prostitute's narrative. The first of these interventions consists of four lines of verse, while the second, a de facto preface, disclaims its prefatory status.

The four lines of verse are taken from canto 25 of *Il Vendemmiatore* by Luigi Tansillo, written in 1530-34, which casts a libertine eye on the joys of the grape harvest. It was considered so licentious that Pope Paul IV placed it on the prohibited book index. The selected lines that appear on the frontispiece of Gozzi's translation send yet another signal to the reader about the subject matter of this work. Only the last four lines of the octave appear on the frontispiece; in our example below, however, the first four lines are also provided to clarify the meaning:

> Nell'età d'or, quando la ghianda e 'l pomo
> Eran del ventre uman lodevol pasto,
> Nè femmina sapea, nè sapeva uomo,
> Che cosa fosse onor, che viver casto;
>
> Trovò debil vecchion, dagli anni domo,
> Queste leggi d'onor che 'l mondo han guasto,
> Sazio del dolce, già vietato a lui,
> Volle dar legge alle dolcezze altrui.
>
> In the golden age when acorns and apples
> Were for the human appetite a worthy meal
> Neither woman, nor man knew
> What honor was, or chaste living either
> Tamed by the years, the feeble-minded old man discovers
> These laws of honor that have ruined the world
> Sated by the sweet things he has already tasted
> He now legislates the enjoyment of others.[296]

Gozzi has also rearranged the introduction. In the preface printed in both Cleland's

[296] This translation is mine, in collaboration with Clorinda Donato. See Stanphill and Donato, "Periphery and Centre," 68-86.

original and the French translation, Fanny's confessional voice is present—she begins by apologetically addressing the recipient of the letter. By justifying her licentious actions, she takes the first step toward building empathy with the reader. In contrast, Gozzi silences this confessional voice in his version; his Fanny begins by stating that the text does not need a preface at all. Gozzi was a religious man, and a confession leads to forgiveness, but Gozzi cannot forgive Fanny nor translate her social mobility. Gozzi's removal of the preface cuts this moment of character-building and turns Fanny into a less empathetic character. In addition, Gozzi's Fanny addresses her readers with the informal "tu" rather than the formal "voi" that was more common in this type of writing. The ability to change register in Italian by changing pronouns, something that is impossible in English, makes a strong statement in *La Meretrice*: Gozzi's choice to have Fanny use "tu" rather than "voi" makes her appear uneducated and base, and may also be a disparaging comment on the reader. In this way, the reader becomes complicit in the depravity of Fanny and of the novel.

Gozzi also reduces the novel by half, including just one letter instead of two. The parts he removes are all of the truly reflective moments in which Fanny begins to examine her movement into the licentious world of prostitution, her understanding of social classes, and her understanding of men's and women's desires—especially those desires that lie beyond the bed. Gozzi's protagonist is thus much less intellectual than the original. While she is with Charles, her first love, Cleland's Fanny recollects,

> I was in a little time enabl'd, by the progress I had made, to prove the deep regard I had paid to all that he said to me; repeating it to him almost word for word; and to show that I was not entirely the parrot, but that I reflected upon, that I enter'd into it, I join'd my own comments, and ask'd him questions of explanation. My country accent, and the rusticity of my gait, manners, and deportment, began now sensibly to wear off,

> so quick was my observation, and so efficacious my desire of growing every day worthier of his heart.[297]

Gozzi's translation of this passage eliminates Fanny's reflection on her ability to learn, making her a far more Rousseauian heroine who depends completely on a man: "Posso dire senza insuperbirmi, che le di lui attenzioni non furono inutili. In breve tempo acquistai le maniere gentili, e la buona pronunzia. Tanto è vero, che non v'ha miglior maestro dell'amore, e del desiderio di piacere" (I can say without a doubt, that his intentions were not in vain. In a short time, I acquired gentle manners, and good pronunciation. This much is true, there is no better teacher than love and the desire for pleasure).[298] In Cleland's text, Fanny not only learns from him, but also learns to think for herself, to not just "parrot" but "reflect upon" things. Gozzi, instead, adapts this passage so that Fanny simply learns from her man how to behave in public and be a good lover; she reflects no further upon her transformation. Gozzi is doing two things by choosing to translate or adapt Fanny in this way: he is imposing a particular Italian cultural standard on women, and, as Lawrence Venuti would argue, he is "localizing" the text on a linguistic level as well as on an ideological level.

This localization becomes even more pronounced later in the text when Fanny reveals her understanding of class differences while contemplating her new situation with Mr. H (her second lover). Cleland's Fanny reflects that

> he was much my superior in every sense, that I felt too much to the disadvantage of the gratitude I ow'd him, thus he gain'd my esteem, though he could not raise my taste; I was qualified for no sort of conversation with him, except one sort, and that is

[297] Cleland, *Fanny Hill,* intro. Gautier, 62.

[298] Carlo Gozzi, *La Meretrice* (Milano – Braidense: Cosmopoli, 1764), 54.

> a satisfaction which leaves tiresome intervals, if not fill'd up by love, or other amusements.[299]

Just as Fanny is about to close her first letter, and thus the first part of her experience, she reflects on her experiences with Charles, Mr. H and Will, Mr. H's servant, acknowledging that she is better suited to Will, the servant, than to Mr. H. Fanny ends her letter with the dissolution of her relationship with Mr. H and her choice to move into a real "house of pleasure." In all instances up to this point, she has prostituted herself unwillingly or unknowingly. Additionally, there is a clear development in Fanny's character between the two letters; she even comes to acknowledge her limited education and its effect on the company she keeps, like Mr. H. In the first letter, she is passive and demure, while in the second she is more active, even aggressive. Gozzi cuts or condenses most of Fanny's self-examinations and reflections on her affairs at the close of her first letter, completely ignoring the clear break in the narrative of the original text. The passage cited above does not even appear in Gozzi's translation. Gozzi's text is unified, with no chapters, and thus does not contain a second letter. In fact, this caesura is not as necessary because Gozzi's Fanny lacks the intellectual depth and growth of Cleland's.

When Gozzi strips Fanny of her intellectual tendencies by cutting the very scenes and moments that render her reflective and independent, he also imputes a very clear set of values to the text. If we use Italian literature as the defining national point of reference, these values can be seen as quintessentially Italian. Gozzi consistently adds specific classical references that are not present in the original and that a contemporary educated Italian reader would have immediately recognized. With these conspicuous insertions, Gozzi is able to import a host of inferences and references that change the description, and thus the reader's response to the text. For example,

[299] Cleland, *Fanny Hill*, 77.

Fanny, at the very start of her journey, seeks work through a labor house managed by an "elderly woman."[300] After she is told that "places for women were exceeding scarce," especially for those of her slight build and size, Cleland has her draw back into the room where the following internal monologue is reported. She is "most heartily mortified at a declaration which carried with it a killing uncertainty, that [her] circumstances could not well endure."[301] Gozzi, however, adds a whole new dimension to the scene with the addition of just one word: *sibilla*. Gozzi's Fanny recollects that "mi allonatanai confusa, e disperata, per la risposta della vecchia sibilla."[302] By referring to the old woman as a Sybil at this turning point in Fanny's life, Gozzi creates a prophetess who gives Fanny an ambiguous yet foreboding response. In Cleland's text, the old woman's response is hurtful to Fanny because the woman criticizes her stature and intensifies Fanny's fear of her future and how she might take care of herself. In Gozzi's text, the response is much more ominous, fully imbued in the Italian context with the oracle's ancient tradition of delivering prophecies that bode ill for those asking to hear their fate. Here, Gozzi makes his own voice heard through Fanny's with his recollection of classical figures. Moreover, Fanny reacts differently to this: instead of just being afraid of her future, she is also confused and desperate. It is not clear from Fanny's voice here whether she understand the history behind the figure of "sibilla," but even the sound of this adjective creates a confusion for Fanny. Gozzi thus presents a contradictory Fanny here: on the one hand, she is not a redeemable character because she is a *meretrice*, but on the other hand, her character uses elevated language that would appeal to Gozzi's elite Italian reader.

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[300] Ibid., 9.

[301] Ibid., 9.

[302] Gozzi, *La Meretrice*, 8.

The insertion of this one word, and other changes like it, may have increased the text's appeal to Gozzi's Italian readers by inviting them to congratulate themselves on their literary knowledge while also looking down on Fanny. This change recalls Aretino's Nanna, who made fun of her clients' pretentious (as she considered it) use of Tuscan, as we saw in chapter 1. There are no indications, however, that Gozzi's Fanny is similarly using elevated language for the purpose of mocking it; rather, Gozzi is inserting his own voice to appeal to his readership, since the references are otherwise out of character for his Fanny. Chiari's D'Avrile, who, despite her French education, is Italian, is quick to admonish other Italian women for their lack of education. In each instance, the author is localizing the text for his specific readership while also revealing his fears about the culture's tendency to circumscribe people's lives. Aretino knows that Tuscan is the preferred literary language and there is a hint of fear in his poking fun at it; Chiari is making a clear statement about his support for the education of Italian women; and here, when Gozzi refers to classical literature at a crucial moment in the text, he evokes a larger literary tradition while taking pleasure in disparaging Fanny for her inability to understand it, and he invites his intended readers to take pleasure in doing the same. Moreover, the larger text still condemns Fanny to the life of a prostitute. Thus, his desire to uphold Italian literary tradition and his condemnation of women enjoying explicit sexuality occur simultaneously.

Gozzi has no qualms about giving his Fanny a weak and pliable nature, and thus suggesting his view of female nature in general. Therefore, he retains all of the sexual initiation scenes from Cleland, including two explicit homosexual scenes between Fanny and an older, more experienced girl from the house. Acts of lesbianism constituted at minimum an established type of subject matter in Italian literature, we saw plates from Aretino's *Sonetti Lussuriosi* and Raimondi's plates that described and depicted female homosexuality. However, explicit

description of male homosexuality was not acceptable within the Italian literary tradition, just as in social life "l'amore contro natura" was deemed too extreme and was not acceptable under the Italian social-sexual code.[303] Thus it is not surprising that Gozzi excludes a detailed male homosexual scene from Cleland's original, in which Fanny inadvertently watches through the curtains in an inn while a young man "mounts" another young man. Gozzi's exclusion of this "perverted" sexual act is very much a betrayal of Cleland's rendition of Fanny's experience in the sexual underworld as panoramic—aptly recalling the saying "traduttore, traditore" (translator, traitor), for here Gozzi allows a rigid cultural standard to dictate his choices.

Gozzi's contemporary, Pietro Chiari, does not disparage female homosexuality (or male homosexuality) in *La filosofessa italiana*, where ideas are discussed and explained by a new kind of woman. This new woman is not unlike Goldoni's Mirandolina in *La locandiera*, a woman who has agency and who thinks of herself on the same level as men. Here is where the real divide lies: between Gozzi's staunch hold on what had been the cultural standard and other authors' embrace of the new Enlightenment ideals coming in from France. Thus, Gozzi's autobiography and letters are rife with worry about declining morals and the need to combat the encroachment of free-thinking and material pursuits. In a letter dated July 12, 1770, Gozzi writes the following to the actress, Caterina Manzoni, to whom he was particularly close:

> Voi volete attendere lumi dal tempo. Non posso ingannarvi. L'umanità sciolta da' principi sani della educazione, si va invescando d'uno in un altro abisso di mali, riduce tutte le qualita dello spirito a' soli sensi materialissimi, e giunta quella età in cui i sensi formano il nostro ridicolo a la nostra miseria, non siamo piu capaci né di consiglio, né di ristabilire nell'animo quella calma di cui abbiamo perduta ogni traccia. Aprite gl'occhi Cattarina, o voi condurrete una vita con pochi momentanei piaceri, lunghissimi affanni, crudelissime voglie ed agitazione, e morrrete disperata.

[303] See Massimo Cattaneo, "*Vitio Nefando* e Inquisizione Romana," in *Diversità e minoranze nel Settecento,* ed. Marina Formica and Alberto Postigliola (Roma: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 2006), 54-77 for a discussion of 'l'amore contro natura' in eighteenth-century Italy.

> You prefer to await insight from the passing of time. I don't want to fool you. Humanity, once released from the solid principles of good upbringing, is becoming entangled in ever deepening abysses of evil, reducing all qualities of the mind to only the most material senses. Having reached the age in which our senses make us ridiculous, to our misery, we are no longer capable of either counsel or reacquiring for our souls that tranquility of which we have lost every trace. Open your eyes, Caterina, or you will lead a life with few momentary pleasures, extremely long troubles, the cruelest of desires and agitations, and you will die in despair.[304]

Gozzi's words to Caterina offer insight into his translation of *Fanny Hill*, but also into the context of prostitution and courtesan culture in eighteenth-century Venice. As Markman Ellis and Ann Lewis observe in their introduction to *Prostitution and Eighteenth-Century Culture: Sex, Commerce and Morality*, "Prostitutes, and prostitution, were notoriously visible in eighteenth-century European culture, a visibility that was amply reflected in political and cultural discourses."[305] While Gozzi was open in his memoirs about his affairs with all types of women, including courtesans, actresses, and married women, he was not comfortable with their public presence or with the ways this presence reflected on Venetian culture and noble Venetians like himself, even if he was impoverished. Gozzi was certainly not the only Venetian to feel this way; therefore, his condemnation of Fanny would have appealed to those readers who felt as he did, threatened by the visibility of women who flaunted their sexuality through prostitution or otherwise.

As the protagonists of an ever-growing number of eighteenth-century novels, prostitutes certainly gauged the "moral temperature of society," as Ellis and Lewis remind us, but the more

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[304] Carlo Gozzi, *Lettere, a cura di Faio Soldatini* (Venezia: Marsiglio, 2004), 89. This translation is mine, in collaboration with Clorinda Donato. See Stanphill and Donato, "Periphery and Centre," 68-86.

[305] Markman Ellis and Ann Lewis, *Prostitution and Eighteenth-Century Culture: Sex, Commerce and Morality* (New York: Routledge, 2016), 1.

important point is that they were fully present and active in the new literary genre of the novel. With regard to the inclusion of women, we can draw a fascinating line from Ariosto and Tasso's rewriting of the epic poem and Aretino and Pallavicino's transgressive dialogues to the eighteenth-century Venetian novel: in the new genre of the novel, Angelica and Clorinda, and Nanna and La vecchia, found a literary home where their entire stories could be told, as we saw in Chiari's *La filosofessa italiana*. Although Gozzi's intention may have been to convince his readers to join him in morally reprimanding Fanny for her whoredom, she is still the protagonist of his translated adaptation. To better understand the heavy moral overtones of Gozzi's translation, it is useful to turn to Alison Conway's *The Protestant Whore: Courtesan Narrative and Religious Controversy in England, 1680-1750*, which comments on Cleland's decoupling of sexuality and sinfulness: "The separation of sexuality from discourses of sinfulness is particularly apparent in Cleland's 1748 pornographic novel, *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure (Fanny Hill)*. Its treatment of Fanny's sexuality as secular and apolitical marks a mid-century shift in courtesan representations."[306] Gozzi's translation returns Fanny to the sinful whore, meretrice model of the earlier British whore or even courtesan, certainly a more comfortable perspective for Gozzi. And true to form, he throws down the gauntlet on women as a challenge to the work of his contemporaries and rivals, Pietro Chiari and Carlo Goldoni. Both writers had brought forth modern models of women, in *La filosofessa italiana* and *La Locandiera*, respectively, whose sexuality was sacrificed in favor of the performance of knowledge and common sense. Gozzi links female independence and learning, instead, with sexuality, promiscuity, and prostitution. Of course, the source for female independence was courtesan

[306] Alison Conway, *The Protestant Whore: Courtesan Narrative and Religious Controversy in England, 1680-1750* (Toronto, Buffalo, London: The University of Toronto Press, 2010), 250.

culture, which held a central role in Venetian life for many men.

In chapter 3, I argued that Chiari followed Aretino in using a female narrator and sexuality to appeal to a broad readership and explore the social conflicts of his time. Gozzi took a stand against changing the status quo, which had been based on a tradition of limiting women's movement and restraining their sexuality. In Gozzi's condemnation of Fanny and of public whoredom, which would have been understood by his readers as a way of taking a stand against women's education and emancipation, Gozzi too sought a specific readership that would sympathize with his position. Gozzi linked education with increased sexuality. It appears that he believed that women should not be educated because they could not handle complex intellectual thought. If women were taught to read complex texts, they still would lack the intellectual capacity to interpret them correctly. If a woman read Aretino's *Ragionamenti* or Cleland's *Fanny Hill*, for example, she might begin to consider prostitution as a viable and even reputable path to social mobility. Thus, female emancipation and education would also lead to licentiousness and even prostitution. It is also possible that Gozzi attempted to gain readers by contradicting other texts, like Chiari's *La filosofessa italiana* and even his brother's *Mondo morale.* If Chiari's writing reveals his struggle to establish himself in a generally inflexible social hierarchy, as chapter 3 explores, Gozzi instead sought to retain what small hold he had in the noble class by denouncing what Chiari championed. Like Aretino and Chiari, Gozzi faced the challenge of having to support himself as an artist in the competitive Venetian market. Unlike the other writers, Gozzi held a noble title. This advantage may help to explain why he tended to uphold literary tradition, while those with less of an investment in the existing social system tended to flout literary conventions. Gozzi needed money (and therefore readers), and he needed constantly to reaffirm his social position. In this combination of circumstances, it is unsurprising that he

simultaneously exploited the popularity of literary sexuality—something that appealed to large numbers of middle-class readers who purchased books—and enshrined a conservative social perspective in his translation/adaptation, all while contradicting his traditionalist literary principles by working in the form of the novel and indulging his usual love of stirring up polemics with other writers.

Ultimately, Gozzi's Fanny, when juxtaposed with Chiari's "filosofessa" and even Goldoni's "locandiera," reminds us that *meretrici* and *attrici* demand our consideration of them as women in a vast arena of female protagonists. While the female protagonists of Gozzi's plays have been the subject of articles, dissertations and books, considering the novels of Chiari and Gozzi together helps us understand the transformation of the female protagonist in Venetian literature, even if Gozzi only penned one. (I would argue that his *Memorie* constitute a type of novel, but that argument lies beyond the scope of this project.) As we have seen, though Gozzi may have loved the figure of the traditionally virtuous and innocent woman, he was contemptuous of independent women (such as his sister-in-law Luisa Bergalli) and opposed the expansion of women's rights. His choice to translate a novel whose protagonist is a prostitute highlights his concerns about the moral values prevalent in Venice and his fears related to female sexuality.

Gozzi apparently concluded that one way to address the problem of declining morals was through the genre of the novel, since Chiari's *La filosofessa italiana* had already seen great success by the time Gozzi's translation was published under the *Cosmopoli* imprint. Gozzi thus made a public statement about Venetian values by participating in what he must have seen as yet another value issue, albeit a literary one: the novel.[307] Writing about a prostitute in response to

[307] For Gozzi, and most in the Testicular Academy, the novel was not highly regarded because it

Chiari's more noble independent protagonist served as way of denigrating the genre of the novel while also reinforcing his social values, which were becoming increasingly antiquated in Venice.

However, if his intention was to curb the rise of a genre he professed to oppose, his participation in it appears paradoxical. Why did he write a novel with the apparent aim of criticizing the genre of the novel? Chapters 1 and 3 argued that Aretino's and Chiari's writing was intended at least in part to display their power to craft their own reputations and tear down their rivals. Gozzi certainly participated in this showmanship, but as a noble, he worked against social mobility and self-fashioning. Specifically, as this chapter has argued, Gozzi used his adaptation of *Fanny Hill* as a cautionary text in which he reinforced his social morality and decried open female sexuality. Gozzi's translation serves as a negative model of the novel, which only reinforced the values promoted by the Testicular Academy. As I have suggested, the form he chose for his negative model was in tension with his conservative stance. Like Aretino, Gozzi used a female protagonist who is also a prostitute to represent something else: in this case not his own social status, but the status of both the novel and the society around him. He used the novel itself to make his argument, and his readership, which was likely the same as Chiari's, may not have appreciated his critique, but simply delighted in reading yet another novel that featured sexuality.[308]

As this chapter has argued, Gozzi's *La Meretrice* differed from Cleland's *Fanny Hill* in significant ways. Gozzi intensified the licentious elements of *Fanny Hill* and removed most of

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was not considered a part of elite literary culture.

[308] While I have not uncovered any reviews from the time of *La Meretrice*'s publication that would show how it was received, the fact that Gozzi and Chiari were rivals on the theater scene suggests that Gozzi's foray into the novel was based on Chiari's success in the same form.

Fanny's self-reflective elements, resulting in a protagonist who is significantly simpler, weaker, and an easier target of moral condemnation than Cleland's original. In doing so, he negates the positive female narrator his readers would have encountered in Chiari's *La filosofessa italiana*. In this, he continued Aretino's tradition of salacious material that we saw in the *Ragionamenti*, and he returns the liberated woman to the circumscribed roles that were even more clearly delineated in Aretino's time. He also responded to Chiari's success as a novelist by adapting *Fanny Hill* as a negative model of the novel. In all of these texts, we see author's striving to make their mark through letters while seeking commercial success, all the while, combatting an evolving social structure that often took center stage in their texts. In fact, the novel seemed to be the appropriate genre to carry the debate.

CONCLUSION:

VYING TO BE THE MODEL NOVEL

The tensions between Pietro Chiari and Carlo Gozzi helped fuel the emergence of the novel in eighteenth-century Venice, as I have demonstrated in this dissertation, and their work beyond the stage was paramount in the development of the Venetian novel. While their agonistic relationship has been the object of many studies, until recently, few had examined their narratives and novels, leaving a gap in our understanding of the Venetian novel, and even of the Italian novel in general. When we examine the evolution of the Italian novel in a Venetian context and look at translations and original works side by side, many of the social tensions of the time are highlighted, revealing as much about the form as about the society that demanded it. We have seen that Chiari and Gozzi were not only seeking public approval, recognition, and compensation by writing or translating novels, but also highlighting some of the key social and political issues of their time. Moreover, they were deeply indebted to early *poligrafi* like Aretino, who helped create a space in Venice for innovation. As Chiari and Gozzi vied in an implicit contest to provide the literary models that would shape and educate the Venetian subject, they produced texts that reveal much about the changing society that formed their audience.

In tracing the evolution of the novel in Venice, we can see Pietro Aretino's influence specifically from his *Sei giornate,* or *Ragionamenti,* on English and French libertine authors comes to the forefront. But Aretino is one of many sixteenth-century *poligrafi* to have made such a significant impact; future work could examine in more detail the contributions of the other *poligrafi* to the trajectory described in this dissertation. In addition, more can be done to link the controversial seventeenth-century author Pallavicino to the licentious novels published in

England and France. Pallavicino is easily linked to the Aretine tradition, but as an international figure, he may also have had links to the development of the novel in Venice and beyond, which would also bear on English and French works, as we have seen with Aretino. Since the novel in England often highlighted bourgeois values, and at times served to instruct as much as to entertain, Aretino's and Pallavicino's critical texts with female prostitute narrators offered authors a model for their challenges to pedantic novels that reinforced restrictive social constructs pertaining to all women and to men from lower classes.

Crucial to this study has been the recognition that Aretino's influence eventually made its way back onto the peninsula through translation. In fact, not only was the content of Aretino's work brought back into Venice in the eighteenth century, but we saw that Venice experienced an agonistic theater and literary scene that fueled literary output much in the same way as a similar scene did for the *poligrafi* in Aretino's sixteenth-century Venice. The cross-fertilization of texts that traveled among England, France, and Italy; the use of salacious material; and the use of female narrators such as Aretino's Nanna and Cleland's Fanny all played a pivotal role in shaping the emergent novel in Venice. But these are just a few examples. There are many more to be uncovered.

This study paves the way for further research on the use of the female narrator as the novel gained popularity in Venice and throughout Italy. How did subsequent authors, especially male authors, continue in this tradition, and to what ends? Antonio Piazza, Chiari's student,[309] for example, worked both in the theater and as a novelist. Like Chiari, Piazza capitalized on the use of a female narrator and the drama of the theater scene, exploring the intersections between

[309] Ann Hallamore Caesar, "Theatre and the Rise of the Italian Novel: Venice 1753–84," *Italian Studies,* 67:1, 37-55.

theater and the novel. In his *L'attrice,* the female narrator continues to challenge the traditional social norms that we saw Gozzi supporting. However, theater, gossip, sensationalism, and drama are at the forefront of *L'attrice*, so it could be argued that the strength we saw in Chiari's *La filosofessa italiana* is weakened in Piazza's *L'attrice* because of his focus on the trivial.[310] Such developments deserve further attention.

Further investigations into the connections among the novella, travel literature, and the novel could also reveal deeper Italian influences on the emergence of the Western novel in general. For example, one intriguing avenue of research is the influence of sixteenth and seventeenth-century novelists on Alessandro Manzoni (1785–1873). Since Manzoni has long been considered the first Italian novelist, incorporating the Venetian bestsellers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries into the history of the Italian novel deepens and complicates our understanding of this phenomenon. Moreover, analysis of the intersections between regions within the peninsula, linguistic issues, and unification promises to offer further insight into how the novel shaped society as much as society shaped the content of the novel.

This dissertation has addressed questions about the emergence of the pre-Manzoni novel in Italy, focusing on Venice. I have argued that Aretino's confrontational rapport with his competitors fueled his literary output and the *poligrafi* movement in Venice and that the *poligrafi* movement was the undeclared precursor to the libertine atmosphere of seventeenth-century Venice, which formally fueled the highly competitive theater scene in eighteenth-century Venice. Discussing the importance of Italy in the transmission of fiction from both England and France and arguing that Italy added to and borrowed from both rich cultures, I drew attention to

[310] Antonio Piazza, *L'attrice*, ed. Roberta Turchi (Naples: Guida Editori, 1984).

the important role Italy played in shaping the novel beyond the Mediterranean and Adriatic seas during the eighteenth century. Further examination of the bestseller in Venice may generate additional insight into how the form helped shape social constructs beyond the page and how both English and French texts owe more to the Italian novel than has been believed. This dissertation is a move in that direction.

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