Lodge's *A Margarite of America*: An Elizabethan Medley

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Maurice Evans' contention in *English Poetry in the Sixteenth Century* that the literature of the whole era "is composed of the digested scraps of other modes and periods" is a particularly accurate description of the composition of prose fiction in England in the second half of the sixteenth century. The romances of Thomas Lodge provide especially interesting examples of how an author went about writing prose fiction in the age of Elizabeth. In his first romance, *Forbonius and Prisceria*, he combined no less than three of the most popular genres of the age, the Italian *novella*, the Greek romance, and the pastoral. To his two medieval sources for *Robin the Diuell* he added pages of romantic and violent material from the *novella*, allegory such as he had learned from Spenser, and original passages of a theological nature. *Euphues Shadow* followed much the same process. Although its initial situation repeats that of Lyly's *Euphues*, Lodge quickly changed it into a medieval romance of magic and chivalry by borrowing the plot from Sidney's *Arcadia* and by inserting the motif of the "damsel's rash promise".

Lodge's most elaborate production is, however, *A Margarite of America*, a fascinating amalgam, which uses foreign and non-fictional material from Machiavelli's *The Prince* and *The Discourses* and Castiglione's *The Courtier* as the basis of characterization and theme. With these Lodge included elements of Spenserian pastoral, the violence of the *novella*, *he questioni d'amore* of the courtesy books, the combats of the romances of chivalry, and, to complete this elaborate combination, a bit of poetry, original and translated.

Curiously enough, in his own account Lodge claimed that he found the source for *A Margarite of America* in the Jesuit College at Santos, Brazil. To his "Gentlemen Readers" he gave this explanation:

"Som fourere yeares since being at sea with M. Candish (whose memorie if I repent not, I lament not) it was my chance in the librarie of the lesuits in Sanctum to find this historie in the Spanish tong, which as I read delighted me, and delighting me, wonne me, and winning me, made me write it." (p. 4.)

For a number of reasons this assertion of a Spanish manuscript as the main source of *A Margarite* is almost certainly a fabrication. First of all, the library at Santos could not have been extensive and probably consisted mainly of catechisms for the young Indians and books of a more serious theological nature for the priests. Secondly, Renaissance authors frequently claimed fictitious foreign sources simply to encourage sales, and finally, sixteenth-century Spanish *novelas* have nothing whatsoever in common with Lodge's romance. The Spanish were more interested in the great vogues of the picaresque novel, romances of chivalry, and pastoral romance, and it is a few elements of these latter two (which I will discuss later) that Lodge gave his readers. *A Margarite of America* is fundamentally Italianate, especially in its adaptation of two of sixteenth-century Italy's most famous authors, Castiglione and Machiavelli.

In *A Margarite of America* there are, altogether, three Machiavellian figures, but one of them, the villain-hero, Arsadachus, possesses as well all the exterior "virtues" of Castiglione's deal courtier. The combination is most intriguing. Arsadachus appears to be a perfect example of the potentially ideal courtier gone wrong — a basically evil man who uses his courtly
attributes for villainous ends. It would seem that Lodge asked himself what would happen if such a man, accomplished in the outward virtues advocated by Castiglione, but eschewing the inward, adopted instead their antithesis — the political principles of Niccolò Machiavelli. This explanation of Arsadachus' amorality and cruelty is implicit throughout the novel: he lives entirely by the precepts and suggestions expressed in *The Prince* and *The Discourses*.

Since the ideal conduct of the courtier from Castiglione and his tradition and the practical behavior of the courtier from Machiavelli were common property by the 1590's, Lodge could have derived his characterization of Arsadachus from many sources. Nevertheless, there are several indications that he was directly acquainted with *The Courtier*, *The Discourses*, and *The Prince*.

One of these is his dedication of the romance to Lady Elizabeth Russell, widow of Sir Thomas Hoby, the diplomat and translator of *The Courtier*. In his prefatory letter to her Lodge implied that his latest romance would be of special interest to a person of Lady Russell's great learning. He began:

Madam, your deep and considerate judgement your admired honor & happy readings haue drawne me to present this labor of mine to your gracious hands, and favorable patronage: wherein, though you shall find nothing to admire; yet doubt I not but you may meet many things that deserue cherishing. Touching the subiect, *though of itselfe it seeme historicall*, yet if it please you like our English Sapho, to look into that which I haue slenderly written, I doubt not but that *your memory shoal acquaynt you with my diligence, and my diligence may deserue your applause*. . . Yet what I haue done (good Madame) judge and hope this felicite from my pen, that whilst the memorie thereof liue in any age, your charitie learning, nobilitie and vertues shall be eternized. (III. 3. Italics added.)

It is curious that none of Lodge's commentators has noted the implications of this passage. Although the language is difficult, it is clear that Lodge expected Lady Russell to recognize something in his romance with which she was already familiar. Once she looked into the story, her "memory" would acquaint her with the author's "diligence". Lodge apparently anticipated this recognition because of Lady Russell's great learning and "happy readings". In her own day Lady Russell did indeed have a high reputation for her knowledge, especially her linguistic attainments.6 The other books which were dedicated to her, all of a religious or moral nature, are indicative of her tastes.7 Given Lady Russell's interest in serious writing, it is not likely that Lodge expected her to appreciate his story for its poetry, love affairs, intrigues, or chivalric exploits. He could, however, reasonably assume that since her first husband had popularized Castiglione in England by his masterful translation, she would recognize those aspects of *Il Cortegiano* which he had incorporated into his novel. That this was indeed what Lodge counted on is further implied by his closing remarks to Lady Russ

Thus hoping your Ladiship will supply my boldnesse with your bountie and affabilitie humbly kisse your most delicate handes, *shutting vp my English duety under an Italian copie of humanitie and curtesie*. (p. 3. Italics added.)

Paradise quoted this passage in support of his view that *A Margarite* is "an Italianate and euphuistic novel,"8 but if the assumption concerning an indirect reference to *The Courtier* is correct, Lodge's statement may be viewed as more than a general allusion to Italian literature, for Lodge was either influenced by the most famous "Italian copie of humanitie an
courtsey," The Courtier, or by a close imitation of it. Castiglione's concept of the ideal courtier runs through A Margarite from beginning to end.

Lodge's first-hand acquaintance with the writings of Machiavelli is far more evident. His first reference to him was as early as 1580 when he said to Gosson in the Defence of Poetry: "I feare you will be politick with Machauel, not zealous as a prophet," but that he had been reading Machiavelli carefully immediately before writing A Margarite is clear from Wits Miserie (1596) in which he referred to the Florentine at least five times either by paraphrasing his doctrines or by citing him as an example of perfidy. It was, however, in A Margarite that Lodge first applied his understanding of Machiavelli to the romance by creating three stereotypic Machiavellian figures, two of whom advise the hero, Arsadachus, to conduct himself according to several of the most scandalous principles advocated in The Prince and the Discourses. Finally, the opening episode of A Margarite appears to be taken directly from The Discourses.  

A Margarite of America begins and ends with echoes of the discussions at the court of Urbino in The Courtier. In the early part of the story King Artosogon gives a farewell speech to his son, Arsadachus, in which he advises him how to comport himself as a courtier at 'rotomachus' court. Each piece of his advice reflects some of the most important debates in The Courtier. For example, the general rule of Castiglione is that in all things the courtier must be moderate: he must keep to the "golden mean," for "pestilent curiositie doethlawies give an evil grace unto all things". Specifically, he should be brave but not reckless in quarrels, be able to converse well of serious concerns, be wary of self-pride, and be moderate in his attire. Toward the end of his speech to Arsadachus, the King puts his advice in the form of precepts or maxims advocating moderation in speech, behavior, apparel and courage which reflect these well-known views of The Courtier:

In thy speech be deliberate, without bashfulnesse: in thy behauiour courtly, without pride; in thy apparell princely without excess; in thy reuenges bolde, but not too bloody. (p. 18.)

Artsogon feels that these admonitions are necessary not only because Arsadachus is young and leaving his family for a foreign court, but also because he is "prone to doe ill". The admonitions prove true. The remainder of A Margarite recounts Arsadachus' progress from one evil deed to another.

Castiglione's views are presented once more toward the conclusion of the romance. In The Courtier much of the debates concerns what natural gifts the ideal courtier should cultivate. Generally, it is agreed that besides good apparel, brilliant conversation, and extraordinary courage, he should be skillful at arms, handsome and learned. But in Book IV Lord Octavion argues quite forcefully that all of these accomplishments should be subsidiary to a true knowledge of virtue. Since a courtiers' primary duty is to lead his prince away from vice and toward virtuous action, the courtier armed "with readiness of wit, pleasantnesse, wisdom, knowledge in letters, and so many other things" is better equipped to do so. It is this end only that justifies his efforts to attain such social, intellectual, and moral attributes. Moreover, Lord Octavion contends that the type of courtier the group has defined would, in fact, be a positive menace if he has not framed his mind in the way of virtue, simply because such attributes are not good in and of themselves. Therefore, "hee must . . . overne himselfe with the wisedome that is a companion unto all the other vertues, which
for that they are in the middle, be nigh unto the two extremities, that be vices".

At the end of A Margarite, King Artosogon inveighs against his son in precisely these terms, for he sees clearly that Arsadachus has used his natural gifts as a courtier for evil ends and that he will destroy himself because he lacks the virtue which should accompany them:

Ah woe wo is me that beholdeth thy lewdnesse, and wretched art thou to follow it: well did I hope that thy courage in armes, thy comelinesse in person, thy knowledge in letters were virtues enow to yeelde me hope, and subdue thy follies: but now I say and say againe, . . . that if men which are adorned with natural gifts do want requisit vertues, such have a knife in their hands wherewith they do strike & wound themselues . . . thou hast no touch of conscience, no feare of the gods, no awe of thy parent what then should I hope of thee? (p. 72. Italics added.)

As a Prince, Arsadachus cleverly uses his courtly charms for malevolent ends. As a courtier he leads his King away from virtue. Lacking all conscience, he can be neither courageous, just, nor wise. In him we see Castiglione’s courtier as possessor of all the prescribed external attributes but lacking the most important characteristic of all — a fundamental knowledge of virtue.

The complex action of A Margarite occurs between Artosogon’s farewell speech to his son and his final complaint. The main figure of the plot, Arsadachus, operates entirely according to Machiavelli’s principles, but his two friends, Thebion and Argios, encourage his evil designs by offering him well-known advice from The Prince and The Discourses. Lodge’s audience would have immediately labelled these precepts as “Machiavellian”.

The advice of Machiavelli which most impressed and disturbed the Elizabethans was his insistence that a successful prince will hide his true beliefs and intentions. The suggestion occurs several times but it is especially forceful in Chapter XVIII of The Prince where he claims that it is absolutely necessary for a prince “to understand how to set a good colour upon this disposition, and to bee able to faine and dissemble throughly . . . ” Although a prince need not actually have virtuous qualities, he must seem to have them, “as to seeme pitifull, faithfull, mild, religious, and of integrity . . . ” From such principles many fictional villains such as Arsadachus sprang. Lodge’s early description of him as a cunning dissembler strongly associates him with this type of Machiavellian:

Arsadachus being thus deliuered of his father, fedde himselfe with his owne natural follies; . . . his lewd thoughts aimed at nothing, but wickednesse were the euident signe of his sinister behavior: for being well shaped by nature, there was not any man more estranged from nurture . . . His cruelitie he shadowed with a kind of courtly seueritie; his lust vnder the title of loue; his treasons vnder the pretext of true meaning . . . (p. 1)

From the beginning we are to see Arsadachus as a dangerous hypocrite. Indeed, most of the plot of A Margarite is motivated by his deceptions and duplicity at Protomachus’ court where he wooes Margarita. Immediately he made “signes of great deuotion toward Margana and deluded her with most hatefull doublenesse; it was wonderfull to see him counterfet sighes, to faine loue, dissemble teares, to worke treasons, vow much, performe little; in briefe, vow al faith, and performe nothing but falshoode”. (p. 20.) This characterization of Arsadachus as a deceitful villain, especially in his treatment of Margarita, his plotting age Minecious, the massacre of Thebion, and his love for Diana, is maintained throughout. In all of his motives and actions one recognizes Machiavelli’s dissembling prince.
Another character, the courtier Thebion, is close kin to Arsadachus. Lodge’s description of him leaves no doubt of his origins:

Among all other the counsellors of this young and vntoward here . . . there liued a great Prince in the court of Protomachus, who delighted rather to flatter then counsell, to feede corruptions then purge them, who had Macheuis prince in his bosom to give instance, and mother Nana the Italian bawd in his pocket to shew his artificall villanies . . . who where Arsadachus was prone by nature to doe ill, neuer ceased to minister him an occasion of doing ill. (pp. 20-21.)

Among other recommendations, he advises Arsadachus, who is distraught by Philenia’s refusel, how to go about killing Minecious, and counters Arsadachus’ concern that Protomachus might suspect him of the murder with the suggestion that he “seeme now to be more deuout to the gods then euer, for this opinion to deuotion is a great step to performe any waightly action: for where we offer much to the gods who are most pure, our actions are least suspected”. (p. 24.) The instructions obviously reflect the ignominious passage from Machiavelli in which the prince is urged to seem to be “all pitty, all faith, all integrity, all humanity, all religion; nor is there any thing more necessary for him to seeme to have, than this last quality: for all men in generall judge thereof, rather by the sight than by the touch . . .”

A Margarite’s third Machiavellian character — Argias, duke of Moravia and father of Diana also has Machiavelli’s doctrines at tip of the tongue. Being a prince “of deepe reach, and of great reueneues, following the custome of such who desire to grow in fauour with Princes, [he] entertained Arsadachus with huge feasts and bankets”. (p. 64.) Arsadachus becomes enamored of Argia’s daughter, Diana, and falls immediately into a deep melancholy. Argias perceives at once what has happened and “being maruellous politique, ministred oile to the lamp . . . encreasing his daughters beautie with cost, and Arsadachus loue by her companie”. (pp. 64-65.) When Arsadachus finally admits he is in love, bemoaning at the same time his betrothal to another, Argias convinces him to break his promise to Margarita by arguing that “those conditions that consist on impossibilities may be broken” and that since the only harm done would be “but the breach of a silly vowe,” Arsadachus should call off the marriage to prevent his own harm. (p. 69.)

The surprising suggestion that a prince may break a vow whenever convenient is, of course, Machiavellian: “And therefore a wise Prince cannot, nor ought not keep his faith given, when the observance thereof turns to disadvantage, and the occasions that made him promise, are past”. Argias’ advice to Arsadachus is essentially the same: since his happiness and estate are in danger, and since the conditions under which he made his vow of marriage have altered, he may justifiably break his faith to Margarita, Protomachus, and Artosogon.

Although the influence of Machiavelli is most prevalent in the characterization of the three scoundrels in A Margarite, at least one of its episodes was inspired by The Discourses. In Book I entitled “How great an Influence a Grave Man may have in restraining an Excited Crowd,” Machiavelli writes:

... nothing is more apt to restrain an excited crowd than respect for some man of gravity and standing who in person confronts them. Hence not without reason does Virgil say:

If then some grave and pious man appear, They hush their noise and lend a listening ear.
This being so, a person who has command of an army or who finds himself in a city where a tumult has arisen should present himself before those involved with as much grace and dignity as he can muster, wearing the insignia of whatever rank he holds in order to impress them.

As an example, Machiavelli tells the story of the Bishop of Volterra who restrained a crown that was trying to pillage his brother's house: "On hearing the noise and seeing the crowd, he at once donned his more magnificent robes, put his episcopal rochet over them, confronted the armed crowd, and by his presence and his words held them up". 18

At the beginning of Lodge's romance, an old man, Arsinous, halts the imminent battle between the armies of Cusco and Musco by a lengthy discourse upon the advantages of peace:

... the fatal charge was sounded, and both the armies marched forward to encounter: (when sodainly an old man, whose sober lookes betokened his seuer thoughts, whose morneful garments, shadowed, his melancholie minde,) bearing the Image of the Gods, (whom he most honoreud) between his armes, and the homage a true subject ought to have in his heart, thrust himselfe betweene both the armies, when sending many sighes from his breast to famous pittie, and teares from his eies to moue compassion, he fixed both his hands on their knees (who were neerely encountered to enter combate) and began in their termes to persuade both the monarchs (whilst both the armies withdrew their weapons, to giue diligent attention to his words:) Stay your vnbridled furies, O you Princes ... (pp. 5-6.)

Lodge's presentation of Arsinous as grave and dignified, his reference to the "morneful garments" as correspondent to his grave thoughts and to the "image of the Gods" as his insignia, — all suggest a fictional adaptation of Machiavelli's proposal.

The above discussion suggests that Lodge was not satisfied to write in the tradition of either The Courtier or The Prince but wanted to combine the two for his own thematic purposes. It is not surprising, then, that the other two Italian genres from which he drew material — the love debates and the novelle — are used to intensify the horror of his vision of the Machiavellian courtier as portrayed in Arsadachus. The lengthy section devoted to the questioni d'amore recalls ironically those of The Courtier, and the physical brutality imitated from the novelle follows reasonably as a kind of speculation about what would happen if Machiavelli's theories, as understood by the Elizabethans, were actually put into practice.

English readers had responded enthusiastically to the custom in Italian courtesy books and novelle of having characters discuss "questions" which most frequently concerned matters of love.19 In A Margarite the love-debate is occasioned by the invitation of Asap to an earl of Muscovia, to the ladies and gentlemen of Protomachus' court to join him in a feast at his castle. After dining, the guests retire to the traditional "faire arbor," where the crown Asaphus "after the manner of the philosophicall banquets" and sit down to debate whether love works best by the eye, the touch, or the ear.20 In response to Asaphus' question, Arsadachus argues in favor of the power of sight:

... loue hath soonest entrance by the eie, and greatest sustenance by the sight; for sig whereas it is stirred vp by many motions, with that spirit which it darteth out from it self, doth likewise disperse a certaine miraculous fierie force, by which meane we both doe and suffer many things ... (p. 52.)
Although the entire situation is quite common, it differs from the traditional love-debate in one significant way. Ordinarily such discussions have nothing whatsoever to do with the story itself. After the characters have debated the question at hand, they disperse and the author continues the plot where he has dropped it at the beginning of the game. In *A Margarite*, on the other hand, the situation has a definite artistic function because it brings about that contrast between illusion and reality which is so important to dramatic irony. Knowing that Arsadachus has just caused the deaths of Philenia and Minecius and the exile of Arsinous, the reader is struck by the incongruity of the love-debate in which Arsadachus, guilty of the most barbarous treachery, sits down to a polite conversation about love, only to reveal to Margarita afterwards that he was dissembling all the while. The contrast here between Arsadachus’ true thoughts and his gallant rhetoric produces a strangely ironic situation which the reader familiar with the simplistic morality of Painter and his school encounters happily.

In contrast with this genteel Italianate aspect of *A Margarite* stands its extraordinary amount of violence. In this respect its debt to the *novelle* is patent. In the sixteenth century writers such as Bandello and Cinthio popularized the cult of the atrocious. Unlike the violence of the medieval romance of chivalry which usually involved either hand to hand conflicts between knights or combats between large armies, the killings in the *novelle* are savage and vindictive. Often they occur between people closely related and involve physical mutilation of one kind or another. Frequently, too, the slayings are motivated by unrestrained lust. Lodge had read several of these Italian authors, particularly Bandello, in the original and in English translations such as Painter’s *Palace of Pleasure* and Fenton’s *Tragicall Tales*, and had drawn a number of episodes in *Robin the Diuell* from them. There are, also, several striking parallels in Bandello to the individual crimes in *A Margarite*. For the most part, though, Lodge seems to have selected incidents scattered throughout Bandello’s *novelle* and modified them for the purposes of his own story. Each one of the atrocities which Arsadachus executes while under the spell of the magic box is used by Bandello at one point or another. To give only one instance, in his madness Arsadachus slices Diana to pieces with a carving knife, throws her entrails on the floor, and tears her heart into pieces with his own teeth. In Bandello’s story of Pandora, the heroine, having secretly borne an illegitimate son, smashes him against a wall, tears off his limbs and pulls out his heart and eats it. The point is not that Lodge went directly to the Italian for each specific crime, but that his reading of Bandello had so influenced his thought that such episodes found their way quite naturally into the composition of his novel.

Lodge’s extensive reliance on Italian writers is both an indication of their popularity in England and a reflection of the scissors-and-paste method that many English writers resorted to in their efforts to work in a genre that was relatively new to their literature. However, to complicate matters still further, Lodge had, as stated above, promised his readers something from Spain. Thus he cast (not entirely haphazardly) elements of the Spanish romances of chivalry and the pastoral romance into this elaborate Italian medley. To this latter vogue Lodge was certainly no stranger. He seems, in fact, to have been entirely addicted to it. He based both *Forbonius and Prisceria* and *Rosalynde* upon it and included minor pastoral incidents in *Robin the Diuell* and *Euphues Shadow*. And although *A Margarite* is certainly not an Arcadian romance, it does have a number of important characteristics of the genre, only a few of which can be mentioned here.
The atmosphere of *A Margarite* — its locality and place in time — is entirely pastoral. Traditionally the pastoral romance took place in a faraway land at an indefinite time in history, but the location of Arcadia in *A Margarite* is not only vague but comically confusing. The story opens as the armies of two mighty empires are preparing to do battle for the possession of the city of "Mantinea". The Muscovian empire itself is composed of the most disparate provinces. At Protomachus’ joust are contenders from Garavia, Tamira, and Macarah. Arsinous is awarded the dukedom of Volgradia and Argias is the Duke of Moravia. All situated, apparently, somewhere in Arcadia. The description of the countryside as well is altogether that of the pastoral romance and is especially reminiscent of Sannazzaro. The exiled Arsinous, for instance, finds shelter in a cave within "a solitarie Groue encompassed with hughe hilles ... deckt with ranks of trees, which gave a solitary accesse to the melancholie mansion ..." where he engraves his poems upon the surrounding trees and "the rockes wept their springs "to hear his laments. (p. 43-44.)

Such forests, however, are not consistently beneficent. In Sidney’s *Arcadia* a man-eating bear lurks among the trees; in *Diana* ruffians await passers-by; and in *A Margarite* the countryside is populated by ferocious animals, such as the lion that attacks Margarita and her servant, Fawnia, on their journey to Cusco. Lodge’s source for this particular episode was Book I of the *Faerie Queene* in which Una, separated from her knight, wanders alone through the forest. The verbal parallels between the two passages are especially convincing.

F.Q.  
It fortuned, out of the thickest wood  
A ramping lyon rushed suddeinely,

Lodge: ... when as sodainly a huge lion which was accustomed to refresh himselfe  
at that spring, brake out of the thicket behinde their backes ...

F.Q.  
In stead thereof he kist her wearie feet,  
And lickt her lilly hands with fawning tong,

Lodge: Insteede of renting her limmes he sented her garments, ... hee laied his head  
gentlie in her lap, licking her milkewhite hand.

F.Q.  
Whose yielded pryde and proud submission,  
Still dreading death, when she had marked long,  
Her hart gan melt in great compassion,  
And drizling teares did shed for pure affection.

Lodge: ... and shewing al signes of humilitie, insteede of inhumanitie. Margarita seeing  
this recovered hir sences, and pittfully weeping spake ... 23

Although there is only one real shepherd in the tale (and his function is merely to direct Margarita to the city), at appropriate times various characters assume pastoral attire, a technique which had become conventional by 1596. In Montemajor’s *Diana* the nobleman Marcellus disguised as a shepherd chases Alcinda through the woods, and in Sidney’s *Arcadia* Musidorus pretends he is a rustic in order to woo Pamela, but in *A Margarite* the pastoral attitudes are struck principally to amuse lovely ladies and to insert poems into the narrative. While courting Diana, Arsadachus would frequently "disguise himselfe like a shepheard, and sitting apart solitarily, where he might be in her presence, he would recount such passions as gauue certaine signes in him of an excellent wit, but matched with exceeding wickednes." (p. 74.)
If the pastoral background of *A Margarite* seems incompatible with its Italianate characteristics, it must be remembered that Renaissance authors, as Sidney's *Arcadia* attests, were never adverse to mixing genres. Furthermore, in *A Margarite* the superficial gallantry and idyllic pastoral atmosphere continually clash with the bloody activities of the characters. Thus the pastoral background and the splendid pagan spectacles serve to intensify the horror of the violent action.

Similarly, Lodge's use of yet one other popular type of Spanish literature, the romance of chivalry, provides the startling spectacle of an unregenerate Machiavellian parading as gallant knight. Halfway through the story a tournament is held of the type which Lodge's readers, familiar with *Amadis, Palmerin*, and Sidney would expect from the nobility of Arcadia. The joust is an occasion for Arsadachus to defend the beauty of Margarita against other contenders just as in Book I of Sidney's *Arcadia* Phalantus fights the challengers of Artesia's prééminence. Although there are many similarities between the two episodes (portraits of the mistresses carried about the ring, both ladies displayed in "triumphant chariots," elaborate descriptions of symbolic armor and *impressed*), all are stock features of Spanish romances of chivalry.24

To the literary historian, it is the way Lodge assimilated the most popular modes of Renaissance prose and poetry in *A Margarite of America* that makes the tale so instructive. Furthermore, since Lodge was always concerned with what the public wanted and tried time after time to give it to them, *A Margarite* can be viewed as a fairly accurate indication of public taste in the 1590's. In his essay "Elizabethan Light Reading" Watt accurately noted that *A Margarite* has a "sombre conviction which contrasts with the conventional nature of much of the material, a contrast which heralds the break-down of the pastoral romance, of which it is in fact the last considerable example".25 By 1596 the vogue of the pastoral romance was being rivalled by a new type of more "realistic" fiction. The contrast in *A Margarite* between the pastoral setting and the harsh brutality of the story itself is representative of this change. Arsadachus dominates the scene. Machiavellian villains and ambitious courtiers would continue to appear on the Elizabethan and Jacobean stage. The popularity of violence would increase. Webster and Tourneur would create villains whose cruelty and ambition would make Arsadachus look infantile.

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Notes

2 See the author's "Studies of the Novels of Thomas Lodge". Unpublished dissertation, Department of English, Yale University, 1969.
4 We do know that Lodge returned from Brazil with at least one book of this nature, a small manuscript entitled *Doutrina Christaâ na linguoa Brasilia* which Alice Walker describes as "an elementary text-book of Christian doctrine". The book is in the Bodleian Library and is inscribed "Ex dono Thomas Lodge D. M. Oxoniensis qui sua manu e Brasilia deduxit". See Alice Walker, "The Life of Thomas Lodge," *RES*, IX (1933), 431.
5 Only two collections of novelas as such appeared before Cervantes' *Novelas ejemplares* in 1613 — Timoneda's *Patrahuelo* and Eslava's *Noches de invierno*, neither of which were perfected examples of the short story genre. See Caroline B. Bourland, *The Short Story*.


7 Among them were books such as Thomas Acheley’s The Key of knowledge contayning sundry godly prayers and Geoffrey Fenton’s Actes of conference in religion, holden at Paris. See Franklin B. Williams, Jr. Index of Dedications and Commendatory Verses in English Books Before 1641. (London: The Bibliographical Society, 1962).

8 N. Burton Paradise, Thomas Lodge, The History of an Elizabethan (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1931), p. 120.

9 For example, Lodge’s list of conspirators who failed is taken directly from Machiavelli. See The Discourses, trans. Leslie J. Walker, S. J. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1950), I, 473. His description of the devil “SCANDALE AND DETRACTION” repeats the charge of atheism levelled from the first at Machiavelli: “Well spoken he is, and hath some languages, and hath red ouer the coniuration of MACHIAUEL: In belefe he is an Atheist, or a counterfait Catholike”. IV, 23. Walker’s translation is the one cited for all quotations from The Discourses.

10 Since the plots of sixteenth-century romances are very confusing, a summary of A Margarite of America is probably in order here. The tale begins with an imminent battle between the empires of Musco and Cusco which is thwarted by the intervention of an ancient courtier, Arsinous, who persuades the two Princes to solve their differences by a marriage between Arsadachus, the son of Artosogon, and Margarita, daughter of Protomachus. Arsadachus dutifully sojourns at the court of his prospective father-in-law in order to woo Margarita. While doing so he attempts to seduce Philenia, old Arsinous’ daughter, and failing this, kills both her and her husband Minecius on their wedding day. He next arranges the death of a friend and court favorite, Thebion (along with several other courtiers), all the while looking for a way to escape from the clutches of the lovelorn Margarita. Meanwhile Arsinous (who knew of Arsadachus’ guilt) pleads to Protomachus for revenge, but for his pains he is exiled from court and retires to a solitary cave to bide his time and learn the art of magic. Arsadachus’ desire to evade Margarita is granted when he is called home by his ailing father. Once back in Cusco he immediately falls in love with a beauty named Diana and because his father opposes the marriage, he captures Artosogon, cuts off his tongue and his right hand and dresses him in a fool’s coat, as a result of which both Artosogon and his wife die of broken hearts. Back in Musco Margarita, who has been pining away in a tower, resolves to travel to Cusco, accompanied only by her servant, Fawnia. After surviving an attack by a lion, she encounters Arsinous who then accompanies her to the palace of Arsadachus who is just celebrating his coronation. Remembering a box that Margarita has given him, he calls for it and when he opens it he finds a “hideous odour so straught him of his senses” that he begins killing everyone around him — Brasidas, who had helped him murder Philenia, Diana, and his own son, and Margarita who has, unluckily, just arrived. Finally he repents and commits suicide “to the generall benefit of all the Cuscans.”


12 Ibid., p. 542.

13 Ibid., pp. 578-579. Italics added.

14 Niccolò Machiavelli, The Prince, trans. Edward Dacres (1640) in Three Renaissance Classics, ed. Burton A. Milligan (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1953), Ch. XVIII, pp. 66-67. Machiavelli also warns in The Prince that “that man who will profess honesty in all his actions, must needs goe to ruine, among so many that are dishonest”. Ch. XV, p. 57. Dacres’ translation is the one cited for all quotations from The Prince.

15 Nana is a licentious character in Aretino. Although he does not mention Lodge, Praz points out that the Elizabethans frequently coupled Machiavelli and Aretino, using such hybrids as “Mach-Aretines”. Mario Praz, Machiavelli and the Elizabethans, From the

16 The Prince, Ch. XVIII, p. 67. In his discussion in The Discourses of the political uses of religion, Machiavelli frequently asserts that people are easiest brought to the will of their prince by the force of religion, and that individual rulers have accomplished their desires by seeming to be pious. See Discourses, I, 240-251.

17 The Prince, Chap. XVIII, pp. 66-67.

18 Discourses, I, 332. For the quotation from Virgil see Aeneid, I, 155.

19 These questioni d'amore were readily adopted by the English. They are first found in Gascoigne's Master F. J., later in Lyly's Euphues and extensively in Greene's romances. Morando, for example, is constructed entirely around "dubii".

20 The question was a common one. In The Courtier Lord Julian defends the power of the eyes because they "manie times kindle love in the hart of the person beloved". pp. 524-525.


22 The nature of the savagery of A Margarite indicates that Lodge probably knew at least one other Italian, Giovanni Giraldi Cinthio, whose novelle and dramas were so familiar to Elizabethan playwrights. Moreover, Cinthio's frequent allusions to ghosts and their powers might also account for the surprising introduction of "spirits" at the end of A Margarite. Under the influence of the magic box, Arsadachus is beset by spirits crying for revenge, becomes their Nemesis, and finally appeases them by his own suicide. Although magic and restless spirits are alien to Bandello, they are not far removed from the tragedies of Seneca and his imitator, Cinthio, with their Furies, their ghosts crying for revenge, and their climactic bloodbaths.

23 For Spenser, see Book I, III, iv-ix; for Lodge, p. 81.

24 In the Palmerin cycle, tournaments of this type were held either to entertain royalty, to celebrate festive occasions, or to defend a lady's beauty. See Mary Patchell, The Palmerin Romances in Elizabethan Prose Fiction, Columbia University Studies in English and Comparative Literature, No. 166 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1947), pp. 31-32.