

Anthony Munday's *Palmendos* (1589) in the Early Modern English Book Trade: Print and Reception

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Anthony Munday's *The Honorable, Pleasant and Rare Conceited Historie of Palmendos* is based on the first book of the Spanish romance *Primaleón de Grecia* (Salamanca, 1512), which was in its turn a sequel to *Palmerín de Olivia* (Salamanca, 1511). *Primaleón* was such a big hit in the Spanish book trade that ten editions were published between 1512 and 1588. This work was translated into Dutch, Italian and French, thus enjoying an extraordinary reception abroad. In 1589, Anthony Munday issued his English translation of the first thirty-two chapters of the French edition, which focused on the adventures of Palmendos, Primaleon's eldest brother. The fact that a different English translation of these same passages was published by William Barley in 1596 illustrates the positive reception this story had among contemporary readers. Its popularity would also account for the publication of a second edition, now lost, in the mid-late 1620s, and of two further editions in 1653 and 1663. This article studies the printing history of Anthony Munday's *Palmendos* and examines Munday's position as a professional author/translator in the Early Modern English book trade. The role of Hispanic chivalric literature in the late sixteenth and seventeenth century London book market is also analyzed.

Keywords: chivalric literature; Early Modern English; translations; book trade; Anthony Munday; *Palmendos*

El *Palmendos* (1589) de Anthony Munday en el mercado editorial inglés de la Edad Moderna: impresión y recepción

The Honorable, Pleasant and Rare Conceited Historie of Palmendos de Anthony Munday está basado en el primer libro del libro de caballerías español *Primaleón de Grecia* (Salamanca, 1512), que, a su vez, la continuación de *Palmerín de Olivia* (Salamanca, 1511). *Primaleón*

fue todo un éxito editorial en España, con diez ediciones publicadas entre 1512 y 1588. El libro, que se tradujo al holandés, italiano y francés, obtuvo también un éxito extraordinario en Europa, lo cual explica que Munday decidiera traducir del francés los treinta y dos primeros capítulos en los que se narraban las aventuras de *Palmendos*, hermano mayor de Primaleón. El hecho de que una traducción diferente de los mismos capítulos realizada por William Barley saliera al mercado en 1596 es una clara muestra de la recepción positiva que tuvo esta historia entre los lectores ingleses. Esta popularidad justifica, además, que a mediados-finales de la década de 1620 se publicara una segunda edición, de la que no ha sobrevivido ninguna copia, y que dos nuevas versiones vieran la luz en 1653 y 1663. En este artículo se aborda la historia de la publicación de *Palmendos* y se reflexiona sobre la posición de Munday como autor/traductor profesional en el mercado editorial inglés de la Edad Moderna. Se considera, además, el papel de la literatura caballeresca de origen hispánico en el mercado del libro londinense de finales del siglo dieciséis y principios del diecisiete.

Palabras clave: libros de caballerías; inglés moderno temprano; traducciones; mercado editorial; Anthony Munday; *Palmendos*

*The Honorable, Pleasant and Rare Conceited Historie of Palmendos*¹ (Munday 1589; STC 18064) is based on the first book of the Spanish romance *Primaleón de Grecia*, first published in Salamanca on 3 July 1512 (Wilkinson 2010, 16739). This romance was in its turn a sequel to *Palmerín de Olivia*, also printed in Salamanca one year earlier (16737). The work, which narrates the adventures of Palmerín's two sons, Primaleón and Polendos,² soon became a best-seller in Spain, ten editions being printed between 1512 and 1588 (16740, 16742-16743, 16780-16784), and numerous translations into other continental languages. An Italian version by Mambrino Roseo appeared in 1548 (EDIT16), while a French translation by François de Vernassal was published in 1550 (Pettegree, Walsby and Wilkinson 2007, 44731), with ten subsequent reprints issued in Paris, Antwerp and Lyons (44732-44736, 44743, 44752; USTC 56185). Henry Thomas also mentions a Dutch translation by Felix Van Sambix issued in Rotterdam in 1619 under the title *Het Vierde Boeck Van Primaleon van Grieken* (1916, 141).

Towards the end of 1588, Anthony Munday translated Vernassal's French version and issued his English *Palmendos*, which entered the Stationers' Register on 9 January 1589 (Arber 1950, II, 513). Munday turned the French-Spanish work into two books and so his *Historie of Palmendos* comprised the first thirty-two chapters of his French source, focusing only on the adventures of Palmendos and his quest in Constantinople. The remaining chapters, which deal with the deeds of Palmerín's second son, appeared separately as *The First Book of Primaleon of Greece* in 1595 (STC 20366).³

Munday's decision to make two books out of one was not new, for he had already done something similar in his *Palmerin d'Oliva*, published in 1588 (STC 19157). Such arrangement somehow indicates the status these translations began to acquire in the London book market as profitable leisure items. Munday himself muses on the profit to be made out of those works, in his preface to the *First Part of Palmerin*

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² The name "Polendos" was first changed into "Palmendos" in Jean Maugin's French translation of *Palmerin de Olivia*—see *Palmerin d'Olive* (Paris, 1546; Pettegree, Walsby and Wilkinson 2007, 40395) sig. Dd6v. François de Vernassal emulated Maugin and used this name in his French version of *Primaleón*. Anthony Munday did the same in his English translation.

³ One can only speculate about Munday's reasons for putting off the publication of *Primaleon of Greece* until 1595. During this six-year period, he translated and published the first book of *Amadis of Gaul* (1590; STC 541) and the second part of *Gerileon of England* (1592; STC 17206); he composed, though never published, both his comedy *John a Kent and John a Cumber* (c. 1590) (Collier 1851, v-ix) and his play *Sir Thomas More* (c. 1592-1594). He also translated from the French several anti-Spanish tracts—*Declaration of the Lord de la Noue, vpon his Taking Armes for the Iust Defence of the Townes of Sedan and Iametz* (1589; STC 15213), *The Coppie of the Anti-Spaniard* (1590; STC 684.5) and *The Masque of the League and the Spaniard Discouered* (1592; STC 7)—and other political treatises as *Archaioplutos: Or the Richess of Elder Ages* (1592; STC 23867) and *The Defence of Contraries* (1593; STC 6467). He also Englished the Greek Platonic dialogue *Axiocbus* (1592, STC 19974.6). These other commitments may have prevented the publication of *Primaleon of Greece* at an earlier stage. For a chronological bibliography of Munday's works published in the period 1589-1595, see Hamilton (2005, 201-202).

d'Oliva (1588): “A booke growing too bigge in quantitie, is profitable neither to the minde nor the purse: for that men ar now so wise, and the world so hard, as they looue not to buie pleasure at unreasonable price [since] a man grutcheth not so much at a little mony, payd at severall times, as he doth at once” (sig. *4^r).

Munday advertises his translation as an entertaining piece to be read in one’s spare time, which associates this type of work with the nobility or the leisured classes. However, the author’s insistence on arranging his translations into different books so as to sell them more cheaply points to middle-class readers, more concerned with money, but equally keen on leisure books. By linking pleasure and money, he seems to be helping to shape a new, more specific type of readership.

His aim at making his works accessible to middle-class readers would account not only for the textual segmentation but also for the quarto editions and the use of black letter (a format he would repeatedly employ in his translations of Spanish chivalric romances). According to Sánchez-Martí, “publishing books in quarto reduced production costs, thus allowing a wider distribution among the middle classes, the cornerstone of the romance book trade in early modern England” (2014, 195). The black letter also reveals his interest in reaching a wider reading public, as it was the main font employed in romance and other popular genres (Sánchez-Martí 2014, 195; Bennett 1965, 253; Wilson 2009, 120).⁴ The fact that Munday’s translations were often advertised as entertainment pieces contributed to their early association with the popular literature category, a label they would not lose for centuries.

Munday’s *Palmendos* was printed by John Charlewood (d. 1593), an experienced printer and bookseller, who published all of Munday’s works up to 1593. Charlewood, who had actively complained against the patent system imposed by the Stationers as it highly limited the options of finding non-patented material to publish (Phillips 2013, 129), had become one of the major printers of romances in the late sixteenth century. That would explain his close collaboration with Munday, who practically monopolized the English market for translations of Spanish chivalric books. That collaboration also points to Charlewood’s instinct to identify profitable literary modes, and to his special ability to engage a faithful audience. Munday’s (1589) letter to the reader in his first edition of *Palmendos* is quite revealing as it attests to

⁴ The fact that he addresses his introductory letter to “the courteous Reader” (sig. ㉔^r) may also be significant. Phillips is certainly right when considering such references as being the means to engage middle-class readers (2013, 141). However, Munday’s possible appeal to a noble audience, given the Elizabethan courtly taste for chivalric culture, and the dedications of his early translations to the seventeenth Earl of Oxford (*Palmerin d’Oliva*) and Sir Francis Drake (*Palmendos*) should also be taken into account. By the late 1580s Drake had already become a national hero in England due to his travels to the New World and, above all, because of his multiple raids against Spanish ships and Spain’s dominions in America. Knighted by Queen Elizabeth in 1581, he had become the Vice-Admiral of the English navy that would defeat the Spanish Armada in 1588. In dedicating his *Palmendos* to Drake, Munday was partly acknowledging the interplay between chivalric romance and Elizabethan colonial or imperial discourse, thus allowing for different readings of his translation. The fact that colonial enterprises involved people from all social ranks may also attest to the ability of Munday’s translation to reach a wider audience.

the close relationship he tries to create with his public, and the links between this book and those that came immediately before and after in the series:

Having finished this History of Palmendos, I commit the same to thy fauourable censure [. . .] hope I thou wilt accept it friendly, as thou hast done heretofore my works of the like matter. To make any commendation therof to thee, I will not, first reade thy fill thereon, and after iudge as thou findest occasion: yet with thy wonted fauour, to encourage me in proceeding in translation of Primaleon, which by the next Tearme I hope will be accomplished.

Although his prolific production has been largely criticized by traditional scholarship (Thomas 1916, 124; 1920, 249; Crane 1919, 16; Hayes 1925, 57; Wright 1928, 123-131; Miller 1959, 9; Patchell 1966, xii, 17), recent studies on Munday stress his contribution to a new concept of authorship in late sixteenth-century England (Phillips 2013; Wilson 2013a, 2-4). Munday negotiated, and often submitted to Charlewood's and his other publishers' demands as to the tempo set for the writing, publishing and reading of his texts, with a clear intention of making a living out of his literature. However, such references to preceding and upcoming books in the series had also often appeared in the French editions of the Spanish romances that Munday used for his own translations (Wilson 2013b, 216-217; Braden, Cummings and Gillespie 2010). He was in fact importing to English lands methods already employed by the French translators he was partially emulating. By so doing, he was relating his translation to prestigious continental models and, at the same time, helping to shape the English book market to meet new demands.

His allusions to money, serial reading and time production in the aforementioned letter to the reader must be viewed not just as Munday's attempt to present his work as a simple commodity, but as his means to negotiate the status of his book with his publishing agents and readers. In fact, his concern with the accuracy of his text points to his professional interest in selling a high quality work. The series of stop-press corrections that can be found in the different copies suggests that Munday revised his first edition of *Palmendos* before publication in order to suppress all possible mistakes. That first edition could then be regarded as a liminal space in which the literary, commercial, entertaining, and even didactic, interests of author, publisher and readers alike are all satisfied.

At John Charlewood's death in 1593, his widow married printer and bookseller James Roberts (b. in or before 1540, d. 1618?), who took over Charlewood's shop and stock of books up to 1606, when he sold them to William Jaggard before retiring (Kathman 2006, n.p.). Joseph Ames's transcription of a manuscript note listing all volumes in Roberts's stock shows that, at some stage between 1593 and 1606, there were still seven copies of "The History [*sic*] of Palmendos and Primaleon" available (Ames 1749, 342). That might explain why *Palmendos* was not reprinted, as was the case of most of Munday's chivalric translations, in a second run from 1595 to 1619.

Interestingly enough, a different English version of the French *Primaleon* was issued by William Barley in 1596, under the misleading title *The Delightful History of Celestina the Faire* (STC 4910), for which he had obtained a license on 24 February 1591 (Penney 1954). Despite its title, Barley's work was in fact a different translation of the chapters dealing with Palmendos's adventures in François de Vernassal's French version. Barley was apparently trying to disguise his work, and so changed the title and character names, and started translating at the second (and not at the first) paragraph of his French source. However, he did not plagiarize Munday, he simply adopted a different translation method. Barley was fined, both before and after 1596, for publishing without a license (Arber 1950, I, 555; II, 823), and his printer Abel Jeffes was imprisoned on 3 December 1595 for disorderly printing (Brault 1960, 304-305); their decision to issue this translation suggests their desperate need to make money.

There was apparently no new edition of Munday's *Palmendos* up to 1653 and, as Thomas Hayes states, such an absence is quite puzzling, since the book must have been quite popular (1925, 71).⁵ The fact that the Epistle to the Reader in the 1653 and 1663 editions is signed "A. M." (Munday's initials) reinforces Hayes's argument that there must have been another, now lost edition, issued before Munday's death in 1633. Helen Moore, however, disagrees with Hayes and insists that, for its "style and sentiments" the Epistle must have been written in the 1650s "in order to present *Palmendos* in terms similar to those used in the translations of French heroic romance popular at the time" (2010, 339). Moore adds that the terminology employed by the author of the Epistle—"gracefulness of discourse," "sublimity of conceits" and "fecundity of language" (1653, sig. A3^{r-v})—"is that of the mid- rather than early seventeenth century" and that the writer's description of his romance as "the very Quintaessence of Romancy" (Munday 1653, sig. A4^r) seems to date the composition of this Epistle in the 1650s, when this term became fashionable owing to its relationship with the French romances mentioned above (Moore 2010, 339).

There seems no easy solution to this enigma. On the one hand, if Moore's views are accepted, the "A. M." signature in the Epistle may be considered a mere marketing device employed by the 1653 and 1663 publishers, who would then be suggesting that their editions had been penned by Munday himself. If, as Hayes suspects, this letter could have been part of a lost edition issued before Munday's death (1925, 75), then it may be dated after 1625, when Charles married the French Princess Henrietta Maria and French influence was stronger in England. The fact that the first entry of the word "romancy" registered in the *Oxford English Dictionary* (Murray et al. [1884-1928] 2015, s.v.) dates from 1621 (Mary Wroth's *Urania*, 504), with the same meaning as that used by the writer in this Epistle, would also support Hayes's hypothesis, and thus point to Munday's romance as a predecessor of those

⁵ Francis Meres's inclusion of *Palmendos* in his *Palladis Tamia* (1598, sig. 268^{r-v}) together with other romances, such as *Amadis de Gaule*, *Palmerin d'Oliva*, *Primaleon of Greece*, *Palladine* and *The Mirror of Knighthood*, attests to its popularity among contemporary readers.

that became popular in the 1650s and 1660s.⁶ Munday and his agents' decision to publish this edition in the late 1620s could be explained by Barley having issued his *Celestina the Faire* in 1596, thus discouraging any other works on the same story for some length of time.

The 1653 edition of *Palmendos* was printed by Elizabeth Alsop, to be sold from her own house in Grubstreet. Elizabeth was the widow of Bernard Alsop, an important printer and bookseller active up to his death in 1653. In 1616 Bernard Alsop had been in partnership with Thomas Creede, whom he then succeeded in 1617 after inheriting the latter's printing materials on his death (Plomer 1907, 3-4). Alsop and Creede had published the second and third editions of *Palmerin d'Oliva* (1615, 1616; STC 19159; 19159a) and the third edition of *Palmerin of England* (1616; STC 19163). Alsop's widow's publication of *Palmendos* in 1653 again reinforces the theory of a lost edition, presumably published by Creede and Alsop, or by Alsop alone, late in this second run, even though there is no reference in the Stationers' Registers to any transfer of rights from Charlewood or Watersonne to any of the aforementioned printers.⁷

As no copy of the supposedly lost edition has been preserved, it is not possible to evaluate whether the 1653 work is a new edition or simply a reprint of the "lost" work. However, when compared with the 1589 version, some important conclusions may be drawn. First, there are many alterations, which underlines the editor's intention to intervene in the original text. Second, the editor seems to have made an attempt at "improving" the 1589 text, as the new edition is advertised as "Newly Corrected and Amended" on its title page, and a considerable number of changes in spelling, punctuation and syntax are introduced. And third, the omissions, paraphrases and summaries in this edition suggest that the new editor was also interested in making certain parts clearer and more attractive to contemporary readers, thus adapting the text to their taste.⁸ Her tendency to modernize certain archaic words also reveals this same purpose. However, the fact that most changes do not seem to follow a regular pattern and that opposing types of alterations may occur simultaneously in the text, point to the main problem this edition presents, namely, its lack of consistency.

⁶ The similarity of the titles of the 1653 and 1663 editions (*The Famous History of Palmendos Son to the Most Renowned Palmerin D'Oliva*) to that of the 1619 edition of *Primaleon (The Famous and Renowned Historie of Primaleon of Greece)* may also support the existence of an early seventeenth-century edition.

⁷ Simon Watersonne was an English bookseller active in London from 1584 to 1634. He sold the first edition of *Palmendos* printed by Charlewood in 1589.

⁸ For instance, highly descriptive passages are often simplified by means of summaries. This technique is especially employed in chapter twenty-one, which includes the first encounter between the hero and the heroine, and the dialogue that follows. In the 1589 edition, this chapter is highly descriptive and lyrical as it focuses on the emotions and intimate relationship of both characters. It also recreates the setting (the castle where Francelina, Palmendos's beloved, has been imprisoned for many years) as a *locus amoenus*. On the contrary, the editors of the seventeenth-century editions seemed more interested in the narrative action, which they seem to regard as the main source of entertainment. Hence they omit or shorten long passages that may be deemed distracting, or merely boring, literary discourses dwelling in Petrarchan and Neoplatonic conventions which were already outdated by the mid-seventeenth century.

The 1653 edition was reprinted ten years later with very slight changes, basically consisting in correcting a few errata and reducing the physical space of the text. Its publisher, Thomas Fawcett, was probably a son of Thomas Fawcett, business partner to Bernard Alsop (Hayes 1925, 71), from whom he must have obtained the text. This reprint was to be sold by Francis Coles, quite celebrated at the time for publishing ballads, another extraordinary popular genre when in print. This work is even shorter than its predecessor, for the 1589 book consisted of 199 leaves, whereas the 1653 and 1663 versions had 192 and 176 leaves respectively. The publishers' intention to make the text shorter, and therefore, cheaper, is especially clear in this last version since its chapter titles are compressed, and there is very little space left between chapters, while the poems and letters that appear throughout this version are hardly separated from the rest of the text. Although its quality seems to be poorer than that of the 1653 version, it includes two beautiful engravings, each featuring a chivalric knight on horseback bearing the inscriptions "BELLCAR" and "PALMENDOS," respectively (Munday 1663, A1r, Z4v).⁹ No engravings of this kind are found in the earlier two versions although the fact that neither of them contains a dedication or postscript and that both are much shorter and less ornamented than the 1589 version indicates that they were very likely cheap editions issued basically for commercial reasons. The very existence of the 1663 edition attests to the popularity of its nearest predecessor, as no reprint would have been made if there had been sufficient copies of the 1653 work in stock.

The publication of these seventeenth-century editions of *Palmendos* suggests that the text enjoyed some popularity in the second half of the century, as was the case too of other chivalric translations. A copy of the 1653 edition has been located in Sir William Clarke's (1623/4-1666) library, in a bound volume also containing a 1650 version of *The Honour of Chivalry (Don Bellianis)* and a copy of the 1661 edition of *Parismus*.¹⁰ Clarke, a prominent administrator during the Civil War and Secretary-at-War in the Restoration (Henderson 2008, n.p.), held an important collection of pamphlets and books, among which there were numerous works of prose fiction. For Guyda Armstrong, the presence of these works illustrates "the ownership of such books by a highly literate, but non-literary-specialist audience" (2013, 95). The presence of another copy of the 1653 edition of *Palmendos* in the catalogue of the Earl of Bridgewater's library (Collier 1837, Preface; 204-205) gives further support to Armstrong's thesis. John Egerton (1579-1649), the First Earl of Bridgewater, who began this important collection in the early seventeenth century, had died in 1649, so the *Palmendos* volume mentioned above must have been most likely acquired by his son, John Egerton, Second Earl of Bridgewater (1623-1686), a politician and a "patron of works of learning" who devoted himself to augment his

⁹ Bellcar is the name of the second main hero in the book. At the end of the book there is a list of thirty-six "Histories" (both prose fiction and drama, in quarto and octavo) that could be bought at Coles's shop "at the Lamb in the Old Baily."

¹⁰ This volume would later be gifted to Worcester College with the whole of Clarke's collection by his son George Clarke (1661-1737) on his death in 1736 (Armstrong 2013, 96-97).

father's collection (Espinasse 2007, n.p.).¹¹ The fact that these copies of the 1653 edition of *Palmendos* were present in the libraries of such reputed figures demonstrates that the consumption of popular chivalric literature also extended to the social and cultural elite.

However, despite the vogue for chivalric works in the second half of the seventeenth century, except for the examples above, it has not been easy to find records of contemporary English libraries having any *Palmendos* volumes among their holdings.¹² The only evidence for the existence of a copy of the 1589 edition of *Palmendos* has so far been found in a manuscript catalogue of Dr. John Webster's (1611-1682) books in the archives of Chetham's Library in Manchester (MS.A.6.47).¹³ In his thorough introduction to Webster's library, Peter Elmer states that this manuscript is "almost certainly a copy of an original draft, composed by Webster himself, probably for the purpose of evaluating his estate" (Elmer 1986, 15).¹⁴ His collection consisted mostly of works on medicine, theology and history, but it also included 148 ancient and modern literature volumes, among which forty-one were prose romances and fiction in different languages (English, French, Spanish and Italian), many of them published in the 1640s and 1650s.

¹¹ Despite his royalist sympathies (Espinasse 2007, n.p.), Egerton held important local offices in the 1650s. In the Restoration, he improved his political position both in the Parliament and the Privy Council. Fiercely anti-Catholic and sympathetic to Puritan dissenters, he sided with the Whig party during the Exclusion Crisis and afterwards (Espinasse 2007, n.p.).

¹² A total of 123 catalogues, included in the *List of Catalogues of English Book Sales* and in the *Early English Books Online*, have been consulted by the author in an attempt to locate a copy of *Palmendos*. However, no entry relating to any *Palmendos* edition has been found in any of them. No reference has been identified either in any of the eight volumes edited by R. J. Fehrenbach and E. S. Leedham-Green in their *Private Libraries in Renaissance England* (1992-2014), containing 162 book lists from the inventories of books donated to Oxford University between 1507 and 1653. Few English translations of Spanish romances are found in those catalogues and those which are basically refer to mid- and late seventeenth-century editions. A 1664, a 1679 and two 1673 volumes of *Don Bellianis of Greece* have been located, as well as a 1640 edition of *Amadis de Gaule*, a copy of the 1637 edition of *Palmerin d'Oliva* and two volumes of the 1664 and 1610 editions of *Palmerin of England*. Five undated books of *Bellianis*, *Palladine of England*, *Palmerin d'Oliva*, *Palmerin of England* and *Primalcion of Greece* feature in three of the catalogues. For the undated *History of Palmerin d'Oliva*, *The Famous History of Primalcion of Greece* and *Prince Palmerin of England, 3 Parts*, the 1640 volume of *Amadis* and the 1679 copy of *Bellianis*, see *Catalogus Librorum* (1692, fol. K1r-v). For the undated *Palladine of England*, see *Bibliotheca Curiosa* (1697, Miscellaneous books in quarto, n. 176); for the 1664, 1673 and 1692 copies of *Don Bellianis*, see Shelton (1692, 27), Millington (1687, 56), Kidner (1677, 17) and *A Catalogue of Vendible Books* (1689, fol. 46A). For the 1637 volume of *Palmerin d'Oliva*, see *A Catalogue of Choice English Books* (1687, 14). For the 1610 and 1664 volumes of *Palmerin of England*, see Greville (1678, 61) and *A Catalogue Containing Variety of English Books in Divinity, History, Travels, Romances, Poetry*, etc. (1686, 19).

¹³ A schoolmaster and polemicist, he was born at Thornton-on-the-Hill in Yorkshire. He worked as a chemist, a doctor and a teacher. In 1632, he was ordained minister and sent to the parish of Kildwick (Yorkshire), being deprived of his living in 1637 probably for his radical sympathies. He became well-known during Oliver Cromwell's Protectorate for his attacks against the established church, the clergy and the universities. By the late 1650s he felt deeply disappointed by the English revolution and so he declared his loyalty to the new monarch after the Restoration. By the 1670s he had clearly abandoned his previous religious radicalism. Webster's learning and scientific interests are attested by his own works on multiple disciplines, such as religious controversy, witchcraft, chemistry and mineralogy (Clericuzio 2004, n.p.).

¹⁴ The fact that this catalogue was originally written for private use and never reached a wider public through print might explain why Webster included *Palmendos* and other chivalric works, in contrast with the scarcity of references to this kind of literature in printed seventeenth-century book-sale lists.

Webster's catalogue is relevant in this study since it includes a first edition of *Palmendos* (Elmer 1986, 150; entry number 957) with an estimated value at the time of one shilling and eight pence. In a 1950 article, Francis R. Johnson concludes that book prices remained fairly constant from 1560 to 1635 within the range of 0.40 to 0.55 pence per sheet with a growing tendency to move to 0.55 pence by the end of that period (1950, 89-90). After the sudden rise in book prices by 1635, the average jumped to 0.70 and 0.75 pence per sheet at the end of the decade (1950, 90). The price paid for the 1589 edition of *Palmendos* according to Webster's catalogue would suggest its purchase in the 1640s as its cost per sheet is slightly higher (0.80 pence) than those paid per sheet for printed books in earlier years.¹⁵ The volume must have been new, first hand, and most probably unbound, as no information about binding, which would have increased its price, is given in the catalogue.¹⁶

One can only speculate about Webster's reasons for holding an impressive prose fiction section in his library given his professional activity as a doctor, his puritan background and the overwhelming presence of works on natural philosophy (647 volumes) and theology (397 volumes) among his holdings. His learning and love of reading seem to suggest that his interests went beyond the mere preservation of books, and that most of those volumes were actually read and enjoyed by their owner (Elmer 1986, 37).¹⁷ Their presence in his library attests to the recreational use of this literature in the mid- and late seventeenth century. The prices paid for the volumes also reveal their progressive commodification in the circuits outside the London book trade. Unfortunately, it seems that none of the copies included in Webster's catalogue has survived, which renders the analysis of the aforementioned *Palmendos* volume utterly impossible.

Some further information about the circulation of this first edition of *Palmendos* in the seventeenth century is also provided by a manuscript inscription found in one of the surviving copies of *Palmendos* (1589), now in the Bodleian Library (Vet. A1. e.110). The earliest inscription is situated at the left top corner of the first fly-leaf added at the back of the book (verso). Written in black ink, it reads "returne nine shillings | Rob J Pollard." The price and reference to the bookseller help locate this copy as early as the mid- to late seventeenth century. Robert Pollard was in fact a London bookseller working in the period 1655-1658 (Plomer 1907, 148). The purchaser must have noted the price, which differs considerably from the amount paid for the aforementioned volume at John Webster's library, which cost one shilling and eight pence.

¹⁵ The first edition of *Palmendos* contained ninety-nine leaves in twenty-five sheets. The estimated price in Webster's catalogue is one shilling and eight pence (twenty pence) for the volume, which amounts to 0.80 pence per sheet.

¹⁶ Johnson only considers the prices of new books. He does not work with second-hand volumes. This amount contrasts with that of a first edition of *Palmerin d'Oliva* (Elmer 1986, 149; entry number 953, 4s). Though the volume was considerably larger than that of *Palmendos* with 176 leaves in forty-four sheets, the average price paid per sheet (around one shilling) differs from that paid for *Palmendos*.

¹⁷ This hypothesis also applies to the book collectors aforementioned, Clarke and Bridgewater.

Margaret Willes, who has analyzed notes by Lord Heberston on his purchase of books in the early seventeenth century, concludes that quarto format volumes cost between two and ten shillings bound, “with the number of pages and the presence of pictures as determining factors” (2011, 115). These data agree with the prices paid for some works of prose fiction in these years according to Francis R. Johnson’s article.¹⁸ Thus, in the late 1650s, twenty-five years after the increase in book prices of 1635, the selling of the Bodleian 1589 copy of *Palmendos* for nine shillings would be quite plausible, particularly since it was bound.¹⁹ The production of two further, cheaper editions of *Palmendos* in 1653 and 1663 attests to the contemporary interest in the story and to this economic revaluation of the first edition, seventy years after its publication.

Despite their lasting popularity, contemporary criticism of chivalric romances had increased since the early seventeenth century, when the chivalric mode became a clear object of parody and satire by authors such as Ben Jonson (1572-1637), Francis Beaumont (1584-1616), William Vaughan (1575-1641) and Thomas Shelton (d. 1620). Despite the subsequent boom of chivalric literature in the 1650s-1670s, such prejudices did not wholly disappear, and sometimes became even more virulent. For instance, in *The Essex Champion* (1690), a mock chivalric romance in the mode of *Don Quixote*, William Winstanley recreated a scene not unlike that of Chapter VI in Cervantes’s work: “Next (said the curate) here is Palmerin d’Oliva in three parts, Primaleon of Greece in three parts, Palmerin of England in three Parts and Palmendos in one [. . .] By my say, said Thomassio, these Palmerins and Amadisses were notably cutting and slashing blades, which made a great disturbance in the world, but we shall reconcile them all in one fire together, notwithstanding they were such big fellows in their time” (1690, 339-340).

In the original *Don Quijote*, and also in the 1612 and 1620 English versions by Thomas Shelton (STC 4915, 4916), the only book from the *Palmerin* and *Amadis* series which is cast in the fire is *Palmerin d’Oliva*. Neither *Primaleon* nor *Palmendos* are even mentioned, while *Amadis de Gaule* and *Palmerin of England* are in fact praised, and so they avoid burning. In Winstanley’s text, the complete destruction of all the volumes from both cycles and the detailed allusion to the different parts comprising each book reveal a more prejudiced view than that of their sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century detractors.

¹⁸ Johnson mentions, for instance, two bound copies of a 1619 English translation of Cervantes’s *Persiles and Sigismunda* (STC 4918; 399 leaves) for which two shillings and eight pence and two shillings and ten pence were paid (1950, 99, entry 110). He also refers to two editions from 1580 and 1585 of *The Mirror of Knighthood* (STC 18860, 179 leaves and 18862, 258 leaves), an English translation of Ortuñez de Calahorra’s chivalric romance, for which four shillings were paid, unbound (1950, 107, entry 366). Henry Plomer refers to a “Palmeryn, 2 parts”, sold for two shillings and four pence sometime before 1585 (1916, 328). According to Ronald Crane, this reference must be to *Palmerin of England*, since the first edition of *Palmerin d’Oliva* was not published until 1588 (1919, 39).

¹⁹ The book cover is made of blind tooled original calf leather. The front and rear covers are framed in blind by triple fillets. There are five raised-bands across the spine with no decoration or title inscription. Fore-edges are stained in red. Front and rear paste-downs are made of plain cream paper and are now in very poor condition. The binding of the volume is quite simple and must not have been very expensive originally, although it would have contributed to increasing its value in the late 1650s.

Consequently, the small number of references to such chivalric volumes in contemporary sale catalogues are not surprising. *Palmendos*, like many other English translations of Spanish books of chivalry, was still far from being given proper literary status.

To conclude, the publication history of *Palmendos* covers a span of seventy-four years. Though, apparently, there were only three editions of the book, published in 1589, 1653 and 1663, it has been demonstrated here that the printing history of this work must in fact have been much more complex than a simple three editions suggests. According to Sánchez-Martí, forty-eight percent of the prose fiction works published from 1559 to 1591 were reprinted within twenty years (2014, 206), and this was indeed the case for all of Munday's chivalric translations, except *Palmendos*. William Barley's decision to publish a different translation of the same chapters of the original French text in 1596 could explain why *Palmendos* was not reprinted in the second run of Munday's chivalric translations (1595-1619). The Stationers Company had limited the number of copies per edition to 1250-1500 (Arber 1950, II, 43), so an average of 2,500-3,000 copies related to *Palmendos* (Munday's and Barley's) were accessible to English readers by the late 1590s and that would have restricted any further publication of the same story. The fact that only three copies of *Palmendos* and four copies of *Celestina the Faire* have survived may indicate that both works were heavily read. Moreover, if the hypothesis of the existence of another edition of *Palmendos* issued in the 1620s is accepted, the number of copies in circulation would have increased considerably.

That the book must have been popular through the seventeenth century is also attested by the publication of the 1653 and 1663 editions, by the presence of *Palmendos* volumes in a number of reputable libraries of the period, and by references to this work by other contemporary authors. The history of the book, however, ends at this point. No further edition or reprint appears after 1663. By the turn of the eighteenth century, the remaining copies of the 1589, 1653 and 1663 versions entered the circuits of the leading antiquarians and book collectors. *Palmendos* also featured in the catalogues of the main book sellers throughout the eighteenth century and, most of the nineteenth, which point to the interest this story still aroused among literary scholars and to its progressive commodification as rare material.

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