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# Essex's International Agenda in 1595 and His Device of the Indian Prince

**Abstract**
In the fall of 1595, Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, was poised to attain political greatness, and he knew it. The international political climate had become sufficiently precarious that a statesman with Essex's particular expertise in foreign intelligence and military matters possessed skills well-tailored to address England's current crises. Spain was once again preparing to invade, this time with an armada greater than in 1588; relations with England's key ally France were cooling; and the financial and military advantages of asserting a presence in the New World were becoming increasingly evident. Aware of this moment as opportune for his political career, Essex engaged in a period of intense personal campaigning during the latter half of 1595— campaigning that, significantly, involved two theatrical entertainments produced for Queen Elizabeth I. These dramatic spectacles took place in the final weeks of 1595, and in both, Essex encouraged the queen to endorse his vision for a more internationally assertive England.

**Disciplines**
European History | European Languages and Societies | Literature in English, Anglophone outside British Isles and North America | Political History

**Comments**
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# Essex's International Agenda in 1595 and His Device of the Indian Prince

Linda Shenk

In the fall of 1595, Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, was poised to attain political greatness, and he knew it. The international political climate had become sufficiently precarious that a statesman with Essex's particular expertise in foreign intelligence and military matters possessed skills well-tailored to address England's current crises. Spain was once again preparing to invade, this time with an armada greater than in 1588; relations with England's key ally France were cooling; and the financial and military advantages of asserting a presence in the New World were becoming increasingly evident. Aware of this moment as opportune for his political career, Essex engaged in a period of intense personal campaigning during the latter half of 1595—campaigning that, significantly, involved two theatrical entertainments produced for Queen Elizabeth I. These dramatic spectacles took place in the final weeks of 1595, and in both, Essex encouraged the queen to endorse his vision for a more internationally assertive England.

Essex sponsored the first of these two entertainments for Elizabeth on her Accession Day (17 November) with action that began on the tiltyard and continued after supper with a device scholars have titled *Of Love and Self-Love*. This interlude used the language of love to portray Essex as a selflessly devoted pupil of his queen's wisdom, and it deftly acknowledged two of Elizabeth's recent displays of erudition that were steeped in international politics, particularly Anglo-French relations.[i] Essex used this device to present himself as the candidate whose expertise in foreign affairs made him the most qualified to serve as Elizabeth's next Principal Secretary. During this same period, he entertained the queen a second time with a piece that scholars often refer to as the device of the Indian prince. This interlude, again focused on love, is

so clearly connected to *Of Love and Self-Love* in action and in references that the *Calendar of State Papers* assigns it also to 17 November 1595.[ii] Steven W. May outlines the connections between the two devices and further suggests that the device of the Indian prince probably followed *Of Love and Self-Love*.[iii] Despite their tantalizing links, however, the exact relationship between these two entertainments remains a puzzle, largely because no textual evidence has surfaced to verify when the device of the Indian prince was performed. (There is an eyewitness account suggesting that *Of Love and Self-Love* was staged on Accession Day.[iv]) The uncertainty regarding the performance of the device of the Indian prince has left this fascinating entertainment largely unstudied, and some of the few scholars who do mention it wonder if it was performed at all.[v] In this essay, I will claim not only that it was performed but also that we have a visual representation of its action—an image that supports dating the entertainment to the first three weeks of December 1595.

Because Essex's device of the Indian prince overtly acknowledges international contexts and directly involves the queen, it provides a remarkable window into how the earl sought to woo Elizabeth into accepting his transnational vision. Indeed, Essex and Elizabeth often had conflicting political approaches to foreign policy (to put it mildly), and their disagreements were driven by fundamentally different philosophies. Elizabeth and key statesmen such as William Cecil, Lord Burghley, and his son Robert Cecil viewed international affairs through a domestic lens that was rooted in defensive tactics. Conversely, Essex and the lord admiral (Lord Howard of Effingham) adopted an approach more like that of Spain, which was amassing imperial power by systematically thinking offensively and transnationally.[vi] Essex viewed England's ability to rival Spain as directly tied to relations with France and a greater presence in colonial outposts such as the West Indies. How he integrated these far-flung political arenas is evident when we

examine his device of the Indian prince alongside diplomatic correspondence produced from October to December 1595. From such analysis emerges an Essex who used the language of love to assert personal dedication to his queen while also seeking to negotiate common ground regarding foreign policy. He presents her as a figure who can—in a political sense—continue to be "self-loving" (i.e. focused on preserving the defenses of her own nation) while also accepting the offers of "love" (political alliance) from other nations, particularly France. As a powerful and positive force at the center of the global arena, Elizabeth could, he claims, reach out to other nations without compromising the strength of her own.

Essex's persona as a lover of his queen may seem to be focused on the immediate realm of domestic court politics; however, his literary language of love was just as often geared toward transnational action. As I argue elsewhere, drama, diplomacy, and the rhetoric of love were related enterprises in early modern political culture, and Essex clearly understood these connections.[vii] A study of his entertainment sheds light on his skill as a political strategist as well as the larger trend in which literature was often a vehicle for articulating international political agenda.[viii]

The device of the Indian prince begins when the same squire who appeared in *Of Love and Self-Love* brings before the queen two individuals: a blind prince (purportedly from the Indies) and the prince's attendant. These two figures have insisted on meeting with Elizabeth because they, following the terms of a holy oracle, are seeking a fabled queen who will cure the Indian prince of his sole imperfection: blindness. Not surprisingly, Elizabeth is the queen described, and her mere presence provides the cure. The surprise occurs after this miracle: the attendant admits that the prince has been brought to Elizabeth under false pretences. The prince is not Indian royalty but rather "seeing Loue; a prince indeed, but of greater territories then all

the Indies; Armed after the Indian manner with bowe and arrows, and when he is in his ordinary habitt, an Indian naked, or attired with fethers, though nowe for semelynes clad."[ix] With clever wit, Essex uses the attributes of Indian dress (or lack thereof)—and the image of bows and arrows—to reveal that Elizabeth has, essentially, given sight to Cupid. The revelation of Love's true identity makes clear that this device has really been about love all along, even though the opening context of Anglo-American contact remains important to Essex's strategies. In order to reflect the dominant theme, I will hereafter refer to the entertainment as *Seeing Love*.

Because Love is so grateful to have received his sight, he will place all his skills and authority under Elizabeth's direction. Furthermore, Love's ability to see has implications for Elizabeth, for now "there can be no error in policy or dignity to receive him" (389). In the past, the attendant comments, Elizabeth had rejected Love's service and had adhered more to the words of Philautia, or Self-Love. Now that Love can see, however, even Philautia would endorse accepting his acts of homage. Elizabeth can remain self-loving yet also accept the love of others. Able to embrace both positions, she can presently do what has been attributed only to the gods—to love and be wise (*Amare et sapere*) simultaneously. Before asking the squire to show them the way out, the attendant gives him advice for his master (clearly Essex) on how best to demonstrate love for his sovereign-mistress.

Although the language of love is the dominant discourse in the second half of the entertainment, it is significant that Essex opens the device with the exoticism of the Indies. In his first lines, the squire tells the queen that he has brought before her "two wanderers, the one (as it should seme) some Indian youth, the other white of complexion and expert in language: to mee they will neither giue accompte whence they came, nor whether they would" (fol. 139r). The

youth's attendant soon makes it clear why they have been so circumspect: the youth's situation involves the fate of an entire country. He explains:

> In the most retyred parte of that diuision wch those of Europe call the west Indias neare vnto the fountaine of the great river of the Amazons; there gouerneth at this day a mightie Monarche, whose rare happines in all things els, is onely eclipsed in the callamitie of his Sonne, this yong Prince who was borne blynde. . . . But yet no one thinge hath so much affected both his father and his people towards him, as an ancient prophecy, that it should be he that should expell the Castillians: a nation of strangers, wch as a scourge hath wounde it self about the bodie of that Continent, though it hath not pierced neare the harte thereof. (fol. 139r)

The attendant's opening claim that the prince is from the West Indies would have immediately sparked a chain of political associations pertaining to Spain. On the most immediate level was England's current presence in the West Indies: Sir Francis Drake, Sir John Hawkins, and their fleet of English ships were scheduled to land in the West Indies at that very moment. As originally conceived, the mission was to be a series of offensive manoeuvres to target some of Spain's key colonial outposts. Essex was one of the primary advocates of the venture, but Elizabeth decided to stall the plans once she heard reports that Spain was planning to invade England in the spring of 1596. She was concerned that allowing her most effective admirals, Drake and Hawkins, to leave England with an entire fleet of ships was too risky lest they be unable to return to England in time to ward off the attack. She granted Hawkins and Drake permission to set sail only after hearing that a Spanish treasure ship had been stranded, mastless, off Puerto Rico.[x]

At the very time that *Seeing Love* was performed for Elizabeth, it was hoped that Drake and Hawkins were confiscating the Spanish ship's hoards of treasure— an act that would have two main political benefits for England. It would help fund English military preparations against the impending invasion while also keeping that money out of Spanish coffers. Spain had garnered vast amounts of wealth from its colonial outposts in such places as the East and West Indies and was using these resources strategically to assume global dominance. Reminding Elizabeth of an act in the West Indies that she herself had sanctioned, Essex was acknowledging an instance when the queen had asserted England's presence in the international arena (albeit in a very small way) to diminish Spain's power. It was a contemporary instance of her actions working in harmony with his goals.

Essex also evokes the spectre of Spain in the attendant's opening description of the prince. The prince was destined to be the one who would "expell the Castillians" from his homeland. As one of Spain's geographic regions, Castile conjures up the image of Spain while both minimizing its size and power and distancing it from the term "Spain," which was increasingly associated with that nation's global empire. Essex's reference to a region with a specific geography also emphasizes that its people are, indeed, "strangers" to the West Indies and therefore have no right to force themselves on others, particularly (to a European mindset) on another monarchy. By "curing" this prince, Elizabeth indirectly becomes a righteous liberator and the helpful supporter of a fellow sovereign—roles much in keeping with her own priorities as one ever resistant to intervening abroad out of either expansionistic greed or potential threat to an existing monarch's authority.

Because Elizabeth generally opposed foreign intervention, the way that Essex presents her as a liberator in *Seeing Love* is significant. The miracle Elizabeth enacts requires no action on

her part; her virtue simply exudes a power of its own. This strategy of representing Elizabeth as a passively transnational figure resembles the royal images that individuals in Anglo-Dutch diplomatic circles used when encouraging Elizabeth to assume sovereignty over the Dutch States in the 1570s. They often depicted her as a radiant nymph whose virtuous beams cast peace on the continent.[xi] Essex is essentially employing the same strategy, also with hopes of convincing Elizabeth to assert a transnational presence. In an immediate context related to the West Indies, Essex needed Elizabeth to send a ship to warn Drake and Hawkins' fleet that Spain had learned of England's plans to raid the disabled galleon. Such action was crucial if the Indies expedition was to have any chance of success. But Essex had a second and much more urgent request: that Elizabeth help another monarchy withstand "Castilian" pressure. The lynchpin of Spain's work to crush England as a political opponent in late 1595 was not the West Indies. It was France, and Essex's use of "Castillians" evokes this additional context.

Spain was focusing the majority of its political muscle on strong-arming France into a Franco-Spanish alliance—a situation that would tip the balance of power in Europe decidedly to Spain's advantage. When Essex refers to the Spanish as "Castillians," he is most likely evoking the Constable of Castile (Fernando de Velasco), one of Spain's key military officers. In the fall of 1595, the Constable had been warring successfully against King Henri IV's forces in Franche-Comté. Antonio Pérez, Essex's close friend and informant at the French court, states explicitly that the Constable's successes were weighing heavily on the French king. Pérez emphasizes that Henri is feeling great doubt and grief because Elizabeth had failed to provide aid and because the Spanish Philip II had ordered the Constable of Castile to take his forces to Flanders where he and Count Fuentes could launch a substantial attack on France.[xii] Henri's expressions of anxiety about invasion were most likely overstated for Elizabeth's benefit; nonetheless, the Constable

did play a vital role in Spain's strategies to intimidate France to the point where it would yield to an alliance.

The Constable was also involved in another tactic designed to erode Henri's military strength: he had been working to woo the powerful military figure, the Catholic Duke of Mayenne, back to the Spanish side. The Duke had recently declared fidelity to Henri, and his submission was crucial not only to Henri's forces but also to the king's public image as gaining support from former League members. As Sir Thomas Edmondes (England's resident ambassador in France) writes in a letter to Burghley on November 5th: "The k: of Spayne hath vsed greate practises towardes Monsr de Mayne, to procure him to breake his composition wth the k: and by letters of his intercepted wrytten to the Conestable of Castile, hath geiuen him charge, to entertaine the said duke wth more kindnes then euer."[xiii] Having Mayenne's support was essential because Henri's defences were vulnerable and his finances were rapidly dwindling. Thus, when Essex refers to Spain specifically as Castile, he cleverly evokes a whole range of strategies used by Spain —strategies that integrate the far-flung political theatres of the West Indies, Spain, and France and yet within an image of liberation that Elizabeth might find acceptable.

These overlapping contexts begin with the West Indies in the device, but after the prince's true identity is revealed, the language of the entertainment shifts to a rhetoric of love that, on the surface, may seem less politically charged. However, an examination of the diplomatic correspondence in this period reveals that Essex's specific language of love and self-love is actually steeped in up-to-the-minute Anglo-French relations. Throughout October and November 1595, Elizabeth had repeatedly refused to send Henri additional military aid or to agree to a more formal alliance between her nation and France on the grounds that, with troops

serving in Ireland and much of her fleet in the Indies, her defences were already overextended.[xiv] Elizabeth's language repeatedly stressed the issue of self-preservation, often framing it as self-love in order to justify her unwillingness to give Henri tangible aid or public gestures of a concrete alliance. Most notably, Edmondes uses this language to defend Elizabeth's bait-and-switch tactics regarding her promise to send a high-ranking ambassador to Henri rather than provide the aid he had requested. In a letter to the English court on November 24th, Edmondes explains that Henri commented bitterly on the inadequacy of Elizabeth's offer, for,

> by the Ambr wch she is sending to him, he [Henri] sayd that he could not hoape it, sith her matie alleageth that she cannot helpe him for that she must conserue her meanes for her self. I tould him that I hoaped that reason was alloweable by howe much her owne interestes are dearest vnto her and charitie beginnng euer wth itself. He sayd that he must confesse it seing her matie did avowe such necessitie, and so also that he was no lesse bound in his extremitie, to haue his preseruation in preference.[xv]

Edmondes tries to represent Elizabeth's claims of self-preservation in terms of self-love and the positive notion that charity begins at home. But, as Henri demonstrates, two can play at this game. Employing the same logic, he responds that his own needs may prompt him to do what he must as well. Essentially, the cooling relations between France and England were articulated as entrenchment into self-love now that the English and French monarchs were beginning to adopt more independent positions out of their growing distrust of each other.

This presentation of diplomatic relations as love was not new. They were frequently cloaked in the language of love during periods when decisions and official alliances were under consideration but not formalized. As Daniel Ménager has noted, ambassadors were often depicted as mediators of love, for they worked to nurture the overtures of political affection

between nations.[xvi] Indeed, back in early October of 1595, Anglo-French relations were on a much better footing—and were described as such using the language of love. In this period, Robert de la Fontaine (Henri's *chargé d'affaires* in London) noted that Henri was, he thought, still planning to send the high-ranking ambassador Nicolas de Harlay, seigneur de Sancy to England and that Sancy would be coming with "*le coeur du Roi tout ouvert*."[xvii] The claim of Henri's open and willing heart suggested that Henri was amenable to negotiations, but as October turned into November, such affection began to wane. After Elizabeth snubbed the French king through a series of refusals and a brusque response to his ambassador Antoine de Loménie, Henri decided not to send Sancy to England. By early December when *Seeing Love* was most likely performed, Essex was in despair over the Anglo-French state of affairs, worried that relations would cool to the point where France would ally with Spain.

In light of his frustration, Essex needed to soften Elizabeth's approach to France without dismissing her concerns regarding England's weakened defence. Working to find common ground with her, he used the current diplomatic language of love and self-love in the device. At the entertainment's pivotal moment—when it is revealed that the Indian prince is actually Love—the attendant presents a scenario in which Elizabeth can be both loving and self-loving. In a two-part quotation that is worth providing at length, he first explains that Love

> presents yo$^{r}$ Ma$^{tie}$ with all that is his; His gifte and propertie to be euer yong; his winge of libertie to fly from one to another; his bowe and arrowes to wound where it pleasth yo$^{w}$; And withall humbly desireth that though Philautia hath hitherto so preuayled with yo$^{r}$ Ma$^{tie}$ as yo$^{w}$ would neuer accept of him while he was an vnperfect peece, yet nowe he is accomplished by yo$^{r}$ Ma$^{tie}$ grace, and meanes, that yo$^{w}$ will vouchsafe him enterteynment. (fol. 139v)

Then he includes the idea that Elizabeth, by accepting Seeing Love, can have the best of both worlds: she can adhere to self-love yet also accept love from others.

> But nowe that loue hath gotten posesyon of his sight, there can be no error in pollicie or dignitie to receiue him; Nay Philautia her self will subscribe to his admission. Then yo$^{r}$ Ma$^{tie}$ shall first see yo$^{r}$ owne vnualluable vallewe and therby descerne that the fauours yo$^{w}$ vouchsafe are pure gifts, and no exchanges. And if any be so happie as to haue his affection accepted, yet yo$^{r}$ prerogatiue is suche as they stande bounde and yo$^{r}$ Ma$^{tie}$ is free. (fol. 139v)

Essex shifts the extent of Love's service; it is not limited to Cupid's homage to Elizabeth but rather expands to encompass a larger notion of other individuals seeking the queen's acceptance of their offers of affection. Quite interestingly, Essex emphasizes that if Elizabeth accepts such offers, she nevertheless remains completely free from obligation.

Henri is a likely candidate for this reference to individuals who seek to have their affection accepted. This possibility becomes all the more feasible because the situation in the entertainment echoes the advice that Sir Robert Sidney gives Essex on November 6$^{th}$. Sidney suggests how to approach Elizabeth regarding the recent difficulties in Anglo-French relations when he writes:

> For mine own opinion I know it will be some touch of resolution that the Queen should now, as it were, seek the French king, having so bravely refused him, but, my lord, she must not put *rumores ante salutem*, and if an error have been committed, not to think herself bound to make it good. For questionless the good of the State of England, and generally of all them that confess Religion, is by all means to keep the King of France in affection and in ability a balance against the greatness of Spain. But one point of that

> must be that, things standing as they do, the Queen may seem to doi t [*sic*] with her most honour, and that must be being again entreated and persuaded.[xviii]

As Sidney suggests, Elizabeth must be urged to make amends with Henri in a way that maintains her sense of blameless honor. This strategy mirrors what I see as the central approach in *Seeing Love*: Elizabeth is sought after—by Cupid himself as well as by others—but even in her willingness to accept love, she is pointedly not compelled to reciprocate.

As Sidney also emphasizes, it is worth pleading with the queen because the good not only of England but of all Protestant states hangs in the balance. The situation in France is crucial to keeping Spain from amassing too much power in Europe. Sidney's representative at court, Roland Whyte, describes that the Privy Council was indeed aware that Anglo-French relations were of the utmost importance. According to his letter to Sidney on December 8th, matters regarding France dominated the Council's activities:

> The Lords came of Purpose from the Court vnto hym [Burghley], and satt in Cownsell this after Noone, about *French* Busines, which indeed troubles them very much, for as I hear, the King [of France] answers, that as a Prince carefull of his Subiects; he must by some Meanes or other looke vnto their Safety, and keape his Cowntry from vtter Ruin, that is like to perish, if some Remedy be not found out to comfort it.[xix]

In fact, the Lords are so focused on "*French* Busines" that Whyte is unable to act on Sidney's request to return to England for the birth of his child. All focus at court is devoted, instead, to preparing Sir Henry Unton to serve as the promised high-ranking ambassador to France. Whyte explains that Sidney's friends "answer me, that now they are busy about Sir *Hen. Vmptons* Dispatch into *Fraunce*, that ended, they hope to fynd the Queen at better Leisure to be spoken vnto."[xx] Elizabeth had recently appointed Unton as envoy to Henri in an attempt to prevent

relations between the two nations from disintegrating completely. This position of great responsibility made Unton the central figure in England's most current and pressing political crisis.

It is Unton's embassy that provides support for dating the performance of *Seeing Love*. I believe that the banquet scene famously depicted in his memorial portrait (c.1596. Figure 1) represents *Seeing Love*. This scene shows an attendant, followed by a masked, winged figure (Cupid). These two individuals are followed by a moon goddess (Cynthia) and then a procession of figures that includes ten pairs of naked cupids, of which one in each pair has a black complexion. Until now, scholars have been unable to identify the entertainment represented in the portrait, but elsewhere I provide detailed support for identifying it as Essex's device.[xxi] The portrait does contain added elements such as the figure of Cynthia with the moon on her headdress—a figure that may represent Elizabeth who, throughout the 1590s, was frequently depicted as the moon. The text of a song thought to belong to this device and considered one of Essex's possible compositions also supports connecting Cynthia with the queen. Appropriate to be performed in the device at the moment when the queen grants Love his sight, its opening two stanzas associate her with this action:

Behold a wonder here,
Love hath receiv'd his sight,
Which manie hundred years,
Hath not beheld the light.

Such beames infused be
By *Cynthia* in his eyes,
At first have made him see,

And then have made him wise. [xxii]

Whether or not Essex composed these lines remains uncertain; however, the connection between these verses, Essex's device, and Unton's portrait supports the idea that this song was prepared in conjunction with *Seeing Love*. This possibility is further strengthened by the portrait's depiction of musicians playing while the masquers enter. Using Cynthia to symbolize Elizabeth may have been a way to acknowledge the queen's centrality in *Seeing Love* without detracting from her most important representation in the portrait. At the centre and primary section of the portrait, Unton is pointedly depicted as her ambassador—seated, ready to receive her instructions with pen in hand, and wearing the queen's image that he wore on his embassy to France in 1595.[xxiii] If the device depicted in Unton's memorial portrait is *Seeing Love*, then the performance most likely occurred sometime during the first three weeks of December in the window of time between Unton's official appointment as ambassador to France and his departure for that country on December 22nd.[xxiv]

Linking Essex's device with Unton's mission provides additional benefit beyond support for dating the piece. Examining the entertainment alongside the documents associated with Unton's dispatch adds valuable context to how Essex is trying to coax Elizabeth into acting as he hopes. Essex and Unton had worked closely on previous missions (France in 1591-2 and the Low Countries in 1585-6). Unton's assessment of the current situation was vitally important to Essex, and the earl trusted him so implicitly that he sent him secret instructions for the embassy. These instructions, in addition to Unton's official directions (which include repeated references to the West Indies, appropriately enough), provide key insight into Essex's strategies to involve Elizabeth in his plans for addressing England's precarious situation, especially with France.[xxv]

Unton's high rank and established connections in France positioned him well to have individuals in and around the French court confide in him concerning Henri's inclination to ally with Spain. Repeatedly, Unton's official instructions direct him to ask numerous individuals about the king's disposition in this regard: he is to ask the king's (Protestant) sister and the Constable Montmorency, as well as other Protestants familiar with matters of state. In the secret instructions, Essex stresses that Unton's assessment will be the key factor in determining England's tactics with France. Employing numeric codes to mask the identity of the figures he is discussing, Essex tells Unton that

> If, when he comes there, he discovers 99 [the French king] alienated from us, and treating openly or understand F. [Spain] he is warranted by his instructions to seek by all means to recover him, and upon 15 [Sir HENRY UNTON's] advertisements new overtures will be made to 99 [the French king] to please him, as treaty, and offer of good succours. If he find, at his coming over, that 99 [the French king] is no way looking to F. [Spain] nor so discontented with our courses, as he pretends, then upon this news we will leave all things as they were, and 99 [the French king] and his ministers shall be thought to be but men of words.[xxvi]

Essex's secret instructions, like Unton's official ones, reveal the Court's anxiety concerning Henri's disposition toward an alliance with Spain, but Essex goes on to give Unton advice not found in the official instructions. Essex tells Unton how to stage Henri's response in order to spur Elizabeth into assisting France.

Employing the language of love to describe the interaction between the two monarchs, Essex explains that, "The soundest and surest way then is, to give us [i.e. Elizabeth] jealousy, and to awake us with matter of fact, and not with words and threatnings."[xxvii] Essex elaborates on

this strategy, directing Unton (and through Unton, both Henri and Pérez) to express responses that are geared toward stirring the queen's emotions. He instructs Unton that once Henri realizes that Unton

> brings nothing but words, he must seem to take this worse than all the rest, as either meant to do him a scorn, or else that he hath cause to think he hath some other secret design than is pretended, for on so idle a message he could not believe that we would have sent him. To conclude, he must so use the matter, as 15 [Sir HENRY UNTON] may send us thundering letters, whereby he [Henri] must drive us to propound and to offer. He must give some public shew of coldness at 15 [Sir H. UNTON'S] first coming, and of discontent after he hath heard him, but so as it be without offering him disgrace; and he must welcome him as 15 [Sir H. UNTON], tho' he do not as embassador. He must propound no treaty, nor make no request; for that will make us value him less than we do. He must cast out words, that either 100 [queen ELIZABETH] is carried to some secret treaty with F. [Spain]; the hope of which makes 100 [queen ELIZABETH] abandon him: or else that some of her ministers are corrupted to seal her eyes, and gnaw with their envious teeth the cards of amity betwixt B. [England] and A. [France] asunder. But all this without passion, for any shew of passion will make us think him destitute of all other remedy to his affairs.[xxviii]

Essex hopes that such a cool reception in France will kindle Elizabeth's political affection—affection that Essex will fan, essentially, through high-drama reports. The earl is well-nigh desperate to get her to act, and Unton is not eager to go to France because he knows he comes empty-handed, without offer of tangible aid.[xxix] Both men need Elizabeth to lessen her resistance to helping the French king; thus, Essex both urges Unton to embellish the description of the

situation there and emphasizes that a particularly appropriate venue for the greatest sense of drama is the letters that Pérez will send.[xxx] The strategy is thus to vex Elizabeth by making Henri seem no longer in need of England's affection.

Essex's deep frustration and his expressed tactics in the secret instructions explain the motivation behind his depiction of Elizabeth in *Seeing Love*. He holds up a mirror to his queen that presents her—not as emotional—but as powerfully serene. She exudes love-in-moderation, and Essex claims that she is so wise that all her actions stem from a perspective of stability. This strategy adheres to the type of "saving face" that Sidney advised Essex to pursue in his November letter. Essex begins this image of royal serenity early in the device when the attendant provides the oracle, which reads as follows:

Seated betweene the old world, and the newe,
a land there is no other lande may touche;
where reignes a Q: in peace & hono[r] true
storyes or fables doe describe noe suche
Neuer did Atlas such a burthen beare,
As she in holding vvp the world opprest.
supplying with her vertue euery where,
weaknes of frends, errors of servants best;
No nation breeds a warmer bloud for warr,
and yet she calmes them with her Ma[tie],
noe age hath euer witte refynd so farr,
and yet she calmes them by her pollicie.
To her thy sonne must mak his sacrifice

> if he will haue the morning of his eyes.” (fol. 139r)

The final couplet brings the scenario back to the predicament of the prince, but it is actually the sequence of quatrains in this sonnet (an appropriate genre for Love) that is most significant to Essex’s strategy. In the first quatrain, Elizabeth is poised between the Old and New Worlds but ruling solely over her untouchable nation. This opening image roots her in a self-loving position as a ruler who is, first and foremost, Queen of England. The second quatrain moves outward in scope to present her in the global role as an Atlas who supports oppressed nations, an image that resembles the influence her miracle for the prince will achieve. Then, in the third quatrain, the oracle returns to her national leadership but frames it within her responses to foreign policy and clever court figures. Twice in this last quatrain, Essex describes Elizabeth as the figure who calms. And it is her serenity that serves as the strength with which she rules both the warlike and the witty—individuals who represent, to a certain extent, figures such as Essex who embody the passion of war and the wisdom of wit.

The last sequence of the device returns to and expands on Elizabeth’s control over these notions of wisdom and passion. Essex uses this combination to elevate Elizabeth’s capacity for good judgment when he has the attendant explain to Elizabeth that, by accepting Seeing Love,

> Yo$^{r}$ Ma$^{tie}$ shall obteyne the curious windowe into hartes of w$^{ch}$ the Ancients speake; Thereby yo$^{w}$ shall discerne protestacion from fulnes of harte, Ceremonys, and fashions from a habitt of mynde that can doe no other. Affection from affection. Yo$^{r}$ Ma$^{tie}$ shall see the true proportion of yo$^{r}$ owne fauours so as yo$^{w}$ may deliuer them forth by measure, that they neither cause surfett or faintnes, and take as juiste a tribute of yo$^{r}$ Commandments as yo$^{w}$ vouchsafe an imparting of yo$^{r}$ fauours, and so keepe them as well

> in breath, and exercise, as in strength and in harte. And to conclude yo$^{r}$ Ma$^{tie}$ may be inuested in that w$^{ch}$ the poet sayeth was neuer grannted *Amare & sapere*. (fol. 140r)

Elizabeth can exude the temperance of wise love while expressing this balance with utter moderation because she delivers everything "by measure." In *Of Love and Self-Love*, the self-aggrandizing character of the Statesman articulated this same maxim but applied it to his own self-interested strategies that include feigning to be a scholar of her wisdom (and indeed love was what Elizabeth asked for in her 1592 Latin oration at the University of Oxford).[xxxi] In *Seeing Love*, Essex uses this maxim again but now gives its power to Elizabeth in a manner that echoes the sonnet-oracle and that prepares the way for Essex's intimation of the queen's divine perspective.

Essex subtly evokes Elizabeth's God-like perception when the attendant tells Elizabeth that, once she accepts Seeing Love,

> Then shall yo$^{r}$ Ma$^{tie}$ rede the conditions of euery pretender, who it is that commeth manned out by the plotts and pollicies of others, and who commeth led only by his owne starre. Who is sent in vnto yo$^{w}$ by the frownes of fortune, to haue some commendacion from yo$^{w}$ to her againe. And who both lefte a favourable fortune when he came to yo$^{w}$, and resolues neuer to establish a fortune because he will wholly depend vpon yo$^{w}$. (fols. 139v-140r)

In this series of generalized individuals who possess differing relationships with Fortune, the attendant is making an allusion to Elizabeth's translation of Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy* (1593). In *Consolation*, Lady Philosophy teaches Boethius-prisoner that individuals must not base their happiness on Fortune's whimsy but must rather look beyond external events to ground themselves in the constancy of the divine. In the group of "pretenders" that the attendant

describes, only the individuals who completely disregard Fortune are willing to leave even a favorable set of circumstances in order to come to Elizabeth and lead a life separate from any fortune at all. Knowing that Essex is referring to Lady Philosophy in this passage reveals not only which type of individual has the most enlightened perspective but also that Essex is pointedly placing Elizabeth in the position that Lady Philosophy gives to God.

No wonder Elizabeth is granted the depth of love and wisdom attributed only to the gods—she is already associated with divine presence. This connection further underscores her role as a constant figure who is centred on eternal principles and therefore not vulnerable to the weakness of changeable (Fortune-focused) emotion. Once again, Essex is separating Elizabeth from the image of emotion—an image he hopes to cement so that any decision she later makes (based on the dramatic reports coming from France) can be coloured as arising out of logic and strategy. Essex draws upon the same texts of Elizabeth's erudition that he and Sir Francis Bacon alluded to in *Of Love and Self-Love*. Now, however, he associates Elizabeth directly with the divine serenity that Lady Philosophy connects with God, who orders the cosmos through—appropriately enough—Love.

Indeed, Essex is hoping that Elizabeth will also follow the Boethian principles she translated from *Consolation*: love orders the universe and creates harmony, even between nations. Essex creates a literary piece that places Love in Elizabeth's service, but this love is not merely the intimacy of the heart. It includes the love between nations that arises lightly in *Consolation* and that arises repeatedly and pointedly in the correspondence directly surrounding Anglo-French relations in the fall of 1595. Essex may have been a lover and a poet, but his work in *Seeing Love* demonstrates that he used these tools to assert his highly political, and emphatically transnational, vision for England. He was a rogue of a courtier, but sometimes

when working to entertain Elizabeth, he sought to cajole, to entreat, and to find common ground with her. A shrewd statesman and gifted writer, Essex knew how to epitomize diplomacy. His royal entertainment, *Seeing Love*, bridged the arts of courtiership and the arts of international relations, using drama to place his queen at the epicentre of the transnational world he wanted her to embrace.

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[i] Shenk, *Learned Queen: The Image of Elizabeth I in Politics and Poetry* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), pp. 159–88.
[ii] See the *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series of the Reign of Elizabeth, 1595-1597,* Vol. 4 [Searchable text edition], ed. Mary Anne Everett Green (Burlington, Ontario: TannerRitchie Publishing in collaboration with the Library and Information Services of the University of St. Andrews, 2005), pp. 130–33, item 67.
[iii] May, "The Poems of Edward DeVere, Seventeenth Earl of Oxford and of Robert Devereux, Second Earl of Essex: An Edition and Commentary," *Studies in Philology* (1980): 1–132; May discusses the device on pp. 89–90. James Spedding, although he provides no evidence to confirm the date or the relationship between the two entertainments, notes that the text is produced "in a hand belonging to the end of the sixteenth or the beginning of the seventeenth century." See Spedding, *The Works of Francis Bacon*, vol. 8, ed. James Spedding (London: Longman, Green, Longman, and Roberts, 1862), p. 387.
[iv] Roland Whyte provides the eyewitness account for the performance of *Of Love and Self-Love* in his letter to Sir Robert Sidney on 22 November 1595. See *Letters and Memorials of State*, vol. 1, ed. Arthur Collins (1746; repr. New York: AMS Press, 1973), pp. 362–63.
[v] Paul E. J. Hammer and James Spedding mention that some scholars have speculated that the device of the Indian prince was originally a section of the Accession Day festivities before Essex deleted it. Alan Young wonders if a different combatant used the entertainment instead. See Hammer, "Upstaging the Queen: the Earl of Essex, Francis Bacon and the Accession Day Celebrations of 1595," in *The Politics of the Stuart Court Masque*, ed. David Bevington and Peter Holbrook, 41–66 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 46; Spedding, *Works*, vol. 8, p. 387; Young, *Tudor and Jacobean Tournaments* (London: George Philip, 1987), p. 175. A few other scholars who discuss the device include E. K. Chambers and Timothy J. Reiss. (Reiss believes Bacon wrote it, and he links the device to Sir Walter Ralegh—a connection that may indeed be present based on Ralegh's current interest in returning to Guiana.) See Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage*, vol. 3 (1923; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967), p. 213 and Reiss, "'Seated Between the Old World and the New': Geopolitics, Natural Philosophy, and Proficient Method," in *Francis Bacon and the Refiguring of Early Modern Thought*, ed. Julie Robin Solomon and Catherine Gimelli Martin, 223–46 (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), pp. 227–28 and p. 241.
[vi] Alison Games contrasts Spain's centralized and crown-driven strategy with England's more decentralized tactics in *The Web of Empire: English Cosmopolitans in an Age of Expansion, 1560–1660* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 7.

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[vii] See *Learned Queen*, especially pp. 8–9 as well as Chapters 2 and 5.
[viii] Regarding Essex as a shrewd strategist, I am particularly indebted to the following studies: Paul E. J. Hammer, "The Crucible of War: English Foreign Policy, 1589–1603," in *Tudor England and its Neighbours*, ed. Susan Doran and Glenn Richardson, 235–66 (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005); Hammer, "Essex and Europe: Evidence from Confidential Instructions by the Earl of Essex, 1595–6," *English Historical Review* 111 (Apr. 1996): 357–81; Hammer, *The Polarisation of Elizabethan Politics: The Political Career of Robert Devereux, 2nd Earl of Essex, 1585–1597* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); L. W. Henry, "The Earl of Essex as Strategist and Military Organizer (1596–7)," *English Historical Review* 68 (July 1953): 363—93; R. B. Wernham, *The Return of the Armadas: The Last Years of the Elizabethan War Against Spain, 1595–1603* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994).
[ix] All quotations from this device are taken from the *State Papers* (SP 12/257, no. 67. This quote is found on fol. 139v. Subsequent citations are provided in-text. The device is also included in Spedding, *Works*, vol. 8, pp. 388–90 as well as *Lives and Letters of the Devereux, Earls of Essex in the Reigns of Elizabeth, James I, and Charles I, 1540–1646*, vol. 2, ed. Walter Bourchier Devereux (London, 1853), pp. 501–05.
[x] For more on this expedition, see *The Last Voyage of Drake & Hawkins*, ed. Kenneth R. Andrews (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press for The Hakluyt Society, 1972); Wernham, *Return of the Armadas*, pp. 45–54; Harry Kelsey, *Sir Francis Drake: The Queen's Pirate* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998).
[xi] Shenk, *Learned Queen*, pp. 68–73.
[xii] This passage in Perez's letter reads: "[*S*]*atis dolens referebat et quasi confusus et ignarus, quid sibi deliberandum sit, praesertim cum major pars exercitus Condestabilis Hispaniae ex madato Philippi in Flandriam remittatur ad Comitem de Fuentes, vt majoribus cum viribus Gallia pre*[*mi*] *possit.*" This letter appears in *A Spaniard in Elizabethan England: The Correspondence of Antonio Pérez's Exile*, vol. 1, ed. Gustav Ungerer (London: Tamesis Books, 1974), p. 362.
[xiii] *The Edmondes Papers: A Selection from the Correspondence of Sir Thomas Edmondes, Envoy from Queen Elizabeth at the French Court*, ed. Geoffrey G. Butler (London: J. B. Nichols and Sons, 1913), p. 278.
[xiv] For example, see *List and Analysis of State Papers, Foreign Series, Elizabeth I*, vol. 6, ed. Richard Bruce Wernham (London: HMSO, 1989), no. 226, p. 174.
[xv] *Edmondes Papers*, p. 280.
[xvi] See Ménager's Introduction to *Diplomatie et Théologie à la Renaissance* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2001).
[xvii] *Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Most Hon. The Marquis of Salisbury, K.G., &c., Preserved at Hatfield House, Hertfordshire. Part V* (London: HMSO, 1894), p. 473. De la Fontaine turns out to be wrong: Henri had already decided to send Sancy to the Low Countries instead.
[xviii] *Calendar of the Manuscripts, Salisbury*, p. 441.
[xix] *Letters and Memorials of State*, vol. 1, ed. Arthur Collins (1746; repr. New York: AMS Press, 1973), p. 375.
[xx] Ibid., p.376.
[xxi] For my full discussion of this portrait, see "The Masque Performed on Sir Henry Unton's Memorial Portrait: Unton, Essex, and Performing Anglo-French Relations." (I am currently

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working on this piece to submit to ELR for consideration this fall.) For other studies of this portrait, see Angela Cox, *Sir Henry Unton, Elizabethan Gentleman* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982); Anthony Rowley, "A Portrait of Sir Henry Unton" in *Companion to Medieval and Renaissance Music*, ed. Tess Knighton and David Fallows, 85–92 (New York: Schirmer Books, 1992); Roy Strong, *The Cult of Elizabeth: Elizabethan Portraiture and Pageantry* (1977; repr., London: Pimlico, 1999), chapter 3; and Andrew Stott, "Henry Unton's Little Lives: Inscription and Suture in the Elizabethan Portrait," *Word & Image* 13 (Jan.-Mar. 1997): 1–22.

[xxii] Steven W. May includes the text of this song in *The Elizabethan Courtier Poets: The Poems and Their Contexts* (1991; repr., Asheville, NC: Pegasus Press, 1999), p. 266. For May's notes on these verses, see *Poems*, pp. 108–09.

[xxiii] For a description of this incident, see Cecil S. Emden, *Oriel Papers* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1948), pp. 2–3, p. 5.

[xxiv] Elizabeth's first choice to serve as ambassador to Henri was Sir Henry Killigrew, but he was too ill to serve.

[xxv] A detailed description of Unton's official instructions is found in *List and Analysis*, vol. 6, no. 236, pp. 179-81. References to the West Indies appear on p. 179 and p. 180.

[xxvi] Thomas Birch, *Memoirs of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth, From the Year 1581 till Her Death….* vol. 1 (1754; repr., New York: AMS Press, 1970), p. 353. Birch provides the bracketed identification of the figures Essex mentions.

[xxvii] Ibid., p. 353.

[xxviii] Ibid., pp. 353–54.

[xxix] Ibid., p. 353. Whyte expresses Unton's resistance to going on the mission on December 8th (*Letters and Memorials*, vol. 1, p. 375).

[xxx] Ibid., p. 354.

[xxxi] See Shenk, *Learned Queen*, Chapter 4 for a full discussion of Elizabeth's 1592 oration at the University of Oxford and her translation of Boethius *Consolation of Philosophy.*