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0521820626 - The Duel in Early Modern England: Civility, Politeness and Honour

Markku Peltonen

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THE DUEL IN EARLY MODERN ENGLAND

Arguments about the place and practice of the duel in early modern England were widespread. The distinguished intellectual historian Markku Peltonen examines this debate, and shows how the moral and ideological status of duelling was discussed within a much larger cultural context of courtesy, civility and politeness. The advocates of the duel, following Italian and French examples, contended that it maintained and enhanced politeness; its critics by contrast increasingly severed duelling from civility, and this separation became part of a vigorous attempt in the late seventeenth century and beyond to redefine civility, politeness and indeed the nature and evolution of Englishness. The book ends with a detailed and original analysis of Bernard Mandeville's influential theory of politeness, to which duelling was central. To understand the duel is to understand much more fully some crucial issues in the cultural and ideological history of Stuart England, and Markku Peltonen's study will thus engage the attention of a very wide audience of historians, cultural and literary scholars.

MARKKU PELTONEN is Senior Lecturer in General History at the University of Helsinki. His previous publications include *Classical Humanism and Republicanism in English Political Thought* (Cambridge, 1995) and he has also edited *The Cambridge Companion to Bacon* (Cambridge, 1996).

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PUBLISHED BY THE PRESS SYNDICATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
The Pitt Building, Trumpington Street, Cambridge CB2 1RP, United Kingdom

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 2RU, UK
40 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011-4211, USA
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
Ruiz de Alarcón 13, 28014 Madrid, Spain
Dock House, The Waterfront, Cape Town 8001, South Africa
<http://www.cambridge.org>

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First published 2003

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

Typeface Baskerville Monotype 11 / 12.5 pt *System* L^AT_EX 2_ε [TB]

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data

Peltonen, Markku.

The duel in early modern England : civility, politeness, and honour / Markku Peltonen.

p. cm. – (Ideas in context)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0 521 82062-6

1. Duelling – England – History – 16th century. 2. Duelling – England – History – 17th century.
3. Mandeville, Bernard, 1670–1733. I. Title. II. Series.

CR4595.G7 P45 2002

394.8'0942 – dc21 2002073465

ISBN 0 521 82062 6 hardback

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This book started off from a conversation in Cambridge almost exactly ten years ago. My interlocutor in that conversation was Quentin Skinner, and it was he, needless to say, who broached the topic. I am deeply grateful to him not only for reading the outcome in its successive drafts and for discussing it with me on numberless occasions but also for his friendship, inspiration and support. My debts to Erkki Kouri are no less great. During the whole period of working on this book, I have been immensely fortunate in having the benefit of his constant and friendly advice and encouragement, criticism and collegiality.

I should also like to thank scholars and friends who have helped me in many ways. My warmest thanks to Peter Lake for many discussions, trenchant criticism and good counsel. I owe a special debt of gratitude to Jonathan Scott for reading and commenting on a draft of the whole book. I am also much indebted to Brian Vickers, Richard Cust, David Colclough, Richard Serjeantson, Victor Stater, Susan Amussen, Hiram Morgan, Kustaa Multamäki, Markku Kekäläinen and Sami Savonius.

This book has been made possible by the extraordinary generosity of several institutions. I began the research with the help of a grant from the Academy of Finland. Much of the research for the whole book was done and its initial drafts were written when I was a Junior Research Fellow at the Academy of Finland. I enjoyed the privilege of spending a year at the Institute for Advanced Study as a member of the School of Historical Studies in 1995–6. I wish to record my indebtedness to Peter Paret and Giles Constable for their kindness and help. A fellowship at the Huntington Library and the University of Helsinki Visiting Fellowship at Clare Hall, University of Cambridge 1999–2000 enabled me to finish the research and to write the final version of the manuscript. The Department of History at the University of Helsinki has always been a particularly enjoyable place to work. I wish to thank all these institutions for their generosity and for their stimulating intellectual environments.

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I have had several opportunities to try out parts of the work in seminars and conferences. I learned a great deal from the audiences at Princeton, Utrecht, Baltimore, Leicester, Cambridge, Mass., Newcastle, Helsinki, London and Aberdeen. My thanks also to the students of my special-subject class on 'The culture of politeness in early modern Europe'. The staff at Cambridge University Press have been helpful and forbearing. I am especially indebted to Richard Fisher for his assistance, encouragement and patience, and to my copy-editor, Jean Field, for her vigilance, efficiency and cheerfulness.

My greatest debt of all is to Soili Paananen, with whom I have had countless conversations both civil and otherwise on duelling and politeness as on everything else during all these years. Our children, Frans and Aada, were born whilst I was already working on this book. As they grew, it gradually dawned upon them that their father's job was to study the history of duelling in early modern England. That they have always taken it as any old job, is at the same time the politest and sincerest acknowledgement I could ever hope for.