

SPENSER'S TWIN PILLARS OF THE KINGDOM: ARTHUR, ELIZABETH, AND THE  
MEDIEVAL TRADITION OF TRANSLATIO STUDII ET IMPERII

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by

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## ABSTRACT

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*Translatio studii et imperii* stood as the governing metaphor and principal method of medieval authors to explain changes in political power and romanticize the past. In this project, I examine medieval and early-modern conceptions of political power in Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene* and the medieval Arthuriana. Ultimately, I argue that Spenser's careful selection of medieval tropes from Arthurian romances and Chaucer's poetry expresses a skepticism about the myth of Tudor origins the poet is often credited with popularizing.

KEY WORDS: Edmund Spenser, Geoffrey of Monmouth, Faerie Queene, Historia regum Britanniae, Arthur, Elizabeth I, Translatio, Renaissance, Medieval romance, British poetry, Early-modern literature.

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## CHAPTER I

### Introduction

*The Faerie Queene* embodies two distinct spirits. On the one hand, Spenser's epic stands as a *zeitgeist* of the Renaissance. By this, I mean to say that the poem is often read as a celebration of Elizabeth I and the Protestant Reformation. Julia M. Walker asserts that Spenser's Britomart is "perhaps the greatest portrait of Elizabeth's reign" (172), and Kenneth Hodges maintains that Spenser's *FQ* is not a complement to the medieval Arthuriana but a rival material because of how Spenser's Protestantism persuaded him to revise the original relationship between the faith and the state ("Making Arthur Protestant" 194). In Hodges's view, the Grail Quest takes on an entirely new meaning in Spenser. While in the earlier tradition, the Grail Quest demanded one to serve the faith at the expense of the state, Spenser's Grail Quest insinuates the idea that service to the faith is service to the state. Thus, *FQ* embodies spirit of the Reformation that saw the leader of the state as the leader of the faith. On the other hand, one could argue that Spenser's epic is an application *translatio studii et imperii*, a frequently used literary topos employed by medieval authors. *Translatio*, however, is not just mere translation. Jennifer Goodman defined *translatio* as the "governing metaphor" of the medieval period (89), and medieval authors relied upon the *translatio* topos because of how it represented their authority. By employing the *translatio* topos, an author could not be accused of creating mere fiction. In essence, Spenser's epic does to its medieval sources what medieval authors did to their classical sources, graft them onto a new work to support their own rhetorical purposes. This method is clearly at work in Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia regum Britanniae* in his linking of the genealogies of the Britons to

the Trojans through Brutus. Chrétien de Troyes also used this topos in many of his romances (his linking of Greek and French genealogies in *Cliges* is one such example). Later medieval poets, such as Chaucer and the Gawain-poet, also rely upon this literary technique. Chaucer draws heavily from Ovid and other classical poets in *The Legend of Good Women* and many of his other works, and he thrusts the spirit of the Middle Ages into the fall of Troy in *Troilus and Criseyde*. The Gawain-poet opens and closes his poem with the fall of Troy, and he presents thought-provoking questions about treachery. It is through the *translatio* topos that the Gawain-poet compares Gawain's act of treachery with that of Aeneas, an act of betrayal that ensures the greater good of the kingdom. Medieval authors understood the present in terms of the past. To be beautiful was to possess a Helen of Troy quality. To be a lover was to imitate Troilus. To be a traitor was to transgress as Aeneas, Antenor, or Synon. Spenser relies upon this same literary technique of *translatio* in *The FQ*. One could argue that Spenser weighs the legitimacy of the dynasty of the Renaissance present, the Tudors, against the great ruler of the past, Arthur, and the aim of this project is to demonstrate that the poetic practice of *translatio studii et imperii* is essential in expressing and critiquing the political power of the ruler.

The literary technique of *translatio* presents the rise and fall of empires and westward movement of power from Troy to England and, quite possibly, *Faerie lond*, as something continuous and linear. However, that continuity is something grafted, an artificial bond of poetry holding all of the pieces together, and the linear nature of this movement is selective. For example, Chrétien de Troyes emphasizes the movement of power from Greece to Rome before coming to rest in France while Geoffrey of

Monmouth forges a critical link in that power moving further westward to Britain. One could argue that Chrétien's France owes its proud history to the Britons fleeing the island, but Chrétien chooses not to emphasize this. In knowing just this much, one can see that power does not always move westward in a strict sense, for power moving from the Britons to the French violates the principle of continued westward movement. The linearity is something grafted and artificial. In *Grafting Helen*, Matthew Gumpert defines grafting in literature as "telling a story about coveting the past, stealing it, and covering it up" (*Grafting Helen* xii). When understood as a text participating in the *translatio* topos, Spenser's epic cannot be read as a mere celebration of the Renaissance and the radical changes that take root in its politics and culture. Participation in the *translatio* topos is a form of romanticizing the distant past, or perhaps more accurately, some distant past. In attempting to lend some legitimacy to the Tudor Dynasty and Protestant Reformation, Spenser grafted a sense of continuity between antiquity, the Middle Ages, and the Renaissance. However, Spenser would not have simply authored what Hodges calls a "rival text." Authors who employ the *translatio* topos can choose to emphasize different moments that suit their own rhetorical purposes. However, a complete reworking and dismantling of the earlier tradition would have destroyed Spenser's claim to authority, and Spenser's selection of tropes that bind his epic to the medieval Arthuriana would have resonated with his audience in a particular way. The symbols he grafted into his epic would have already been loaded with meanings created outside the poetic and historical space of *FQ*, so if Spenser were to actively change the meaning of those symbols, then his manipulation of them must have been precise, deliberate, and clandestine. This is precisely why grafting in literature is complex art: the poet works

with a set of symbols that already have meaning, but through her poetry, those symbols may undergo a change in meaning and significance. However, one cannot ignore that the poet selected such symbols precisely because of the meaning those symbols already possessed. That is why such symbols would have resonated with the poet's immediate audience.

The tropes that Spenser's audience would have seen as having some near-universal meaning are what Helen Cooper defines as memes. According to Cooper a meme is "an idea that behaves like a gene in its ability to replicate faithfully and abundantly, but also on occasion to adopt, mutate, and therefore survive in different forms and cultures" (*The English Romance in Time* 3). Cooper claims that while memes and romance motifs (for example, the Grail Quest, the marvel at the feast, the chivalric quest, dragons, damsels in distress, faerie mistresses, the legitimate heir, and the usurper) "remain superficially the same, sometimes even down to the verbal detail, the usage and understanding of them changes over time" (4). There were radical changes taking place in the Sixteenth Century that would have fostered old memes taking on new meanings. The Protestant Reformation and the Scientific Revolution are two very visible cultural moments that mark those changes. The Reformation, in particular, is a cultural moment that looms large in textual criticism on *FQ*, and the Reformation was not just a theological event: it weighed greatly on the relationship between the faith and the state. Hodges is not wrong about that. However, the Reformation was not just a brief moment in time either. Reforms took place over a number of years. One could argue that many practicing reformers in England lamented the theological divorce and yearned for the time of unified faith. Andrew Hadfield detects this exact attitude in Spenser's episode of



the Blatant Beast of the epic's sixth book (*Edmund Spenser: A Life* 224). While attitudes toward faith may exhibit a change after the Reformation, the Reformation itself was a time of transition, and Spenser's epic expresses such a divided attitude. Andrew Hadfield notes that Spenser is not accurately characterized as a hardcore reformer.

Spenser's narrator speaks in a manner diametrically opposed to the concerns of reformers, certainly in its radical Edwardian form, and his words read like a strong defence of traditional religion. We witness the growth of disorder and chaos, which engulfs and overturns order and hierarchy, a fear that shadowed Spenser's life and writing. Here, the traditional pre-Reformation religion is the locus of stability, security, and culture. (*Edmund Spenser: A Life* 225)

However, Spenser is no mere Catholic sympathizer. Hadfield maintains, "It was a consequence of the Reformation that Spenser was able to achieve the rank of gentleman through the acquisition of property, which enabled him to write as he did" (*Edmund Spenser: A Life* 225). In this project, I build on Spenser's wavering between being a Catholic sympathizer on the one hand and Reformation gentleman on the other, and I want to suggest that *FQ* is a work that represents the age of its composition, a transition, a transition in which traditions are examined with a more skeptical eye, and reforms are adopted only under the highest scrutiny. Perhaps, this reflects the work's fluidity of genre as well, for *FQ* is both a medieval romance and a Renaissance epic.

Cooper points out that the first romances were written at a time when England was a multilingual culture, but during Elizabeth's reign, England was a country of fierce nationalists (4). Spenser's language is, of course, laced with Old and Middle English archaisms. While rhetoricians such as John Cheke, Thomas Wilson, and Richard

Mulcaster were aligned in their nationalism and celebration of the English tongue, they were certainly divided on what it meant to celebrate the English language. While Cheke and Wilson saw inhorn and borrowed terms as something that could marginalize English to the point that the English language would no longer have a uniqueness to call its own, Mulcaster maintained that the language would only grow richer and never poorer through borrowing. Spenser's use of archaism also represents a kind of meme that appears the same but takes on a new meaning as it survives in a different cultural context. For example, during the Anglo-Norman period, Anglo-Saxon and Middle English terms would not have been fitting language for a monarchy, and the fact that they do become the language of Arthur's courtship of Gloriana, an allegorical Elizabeth Tudor, is a case in point for grafted continuity. This is because Spenser has covered up something about the medieval past. Historically, the vocabularies of Anglo-Saxon and Middle English are post-Arthurian vocabularies. If Arthur really existed, then his Celtic language, Brythonic, is lost. This issue is covered in greater detail in this project's second chapter.

*FQ* is just as much of a celebration of its classical and medieval past as it is a celebration of its Renaissance present, and it is important to emphasize that what Spenser celebrates about the Renaissance present is articulated in terms of the classical and medieval past. Only then can one see how static symbols from the past can be put to new rhetorical purposes. In *FQ*, Spenser makes a serious effort to show how the Tudor Dynasty and Protestant Reformation could be made legitimate through symbols of the past, but the more important point to be made here is that it is those symbols of the past that really hold the power. Even if their appearance in *FQ* inspired a change in their meaning, such symbols appear in *FQ* because of their prior meaning. Furthermore,

Spenser's twin pillars of the kingdom, Arthur and Elizabeth, primarily exist as symbols of their respective periods. Both Arthur and Elizabeth possess more power in terms of the cultural meanings personified in them than they do as actual people. The Arthur of histories and romances (e.g. *Historia Britonum*, *HRB*, *Roman de Brut*, *Le Morte D'Arthur*, and etc.) possesses a greater significance than the historical Arthur whose remains may or may not have rested beneath Glastonbury. Elizabeth Tudor may not lay claim to the same startling ratio of symbol-to-person as Arthur does, but studies about Elizabethan court life certainly elevate her importance as a symbol, and Elizabeth herself even encouraged such practices. In representing Elizabeth allegorically, Spenser even distances his characters from the Tudor monarch by claiming in his Letter to Raleigh that they only shadow Elizabeth. Spenser also claims to mirror Elizabeth. His language of shadowing and mirroring is rather important because of the metaphysical difference between a shadow or a mirror image and the original object. The object in the mirror is not exactly what is reflected, and the shadow is even less representative of its original. When Spenser mirrors Elizabeth, the image in his mirror may very well represent ideal forms of Elizabeth which have undergone apotheosis, not the historical person of Elizabeth Tudor. Elizabeth J. Bellamy claims that "Elizabeth Tudor, the central 'subject' of Spenser's *FQ*, was less a historical 'person' than she was 'the whole field of cultural meanings personified in her'" (*Translations of Power* 4), and Louis Monstrose's article, "Spenser and the Elizabethan Political Imaginary" exploits Elizabeth's position as a figurehead of the court while people like William Cecil exercised real political power. This idea is developed in this project's fifth chapter.

The multiple allegorical representations, Spenser's "mirrours more than one," of Elizabeth I in *FQ* provoke questions about what power she really possessed. Spenser identifies two of those representations in his "A Letter of the Authors."

In that Faery Queene I meane glory in my generall intention, but in my particular I conceive the most excellent and glorious person of our souveraine the Queene, and her kingdome in Faery land . . . And yet in some places els, I doe otherwise shadow her. For considering she beareth two persons, the one of a most royall Queene or Empresse, the other a most vertuous and beautifull Lady, this latter part in some places I doe expresse in Belphoebe. (33-36)

The important point to be made here is that while Gloriana is shrouded in symbols of political power, Belphoebe is not. However, Belphoebe demonstrates direct and physical power over others. Gloriana never makes an appearance, and her power is a speculative matter. While Gloriana is mentioned in *FQ*, one cannot overlook the fact that she never appears. Whatever power she has exists only in the minds of people who believe she holds power. However, Spenser does offer some scant material regarding her direct interactions with characters of the epic in his "A Letter of the Authors." Spenser's letter was addressed to Sir Walter Raleigh, and he intended it to be a commentary that would clarify the meaning and plot of *FQ*. I quote these passages from Spenser's Letter to Raleigh because they depict characters in the actual presence of the Faerie Queene.

In the beginning of the feast, there presented him selfe a tall clownishe younge man, who falling before the Queen of Faries desired a boone (as the manner then was) which during that feast should happen, that being granted, he rested him on the floore, vnfitte through his rusticity for a better place . . . She falling before the

Queene of Faeries, complained that her father and mother an ancient King and Queene, had bene by an huge dragon many years shut vp in a brazen Castle, who thence suffred them not to yssew: and therefore besought the Faery Queene to assyng her some one of her knights to take on him that exploit. Presently that clownish person vpstarting, desired that adventure: whereat the Queene much wondering and the Lady much gainsaying, yet he earnestly importuned his desire. (53-63)

The second day ther came a Palmer bearing an Infant with bloody hands, whose Parents he complained bene slayn by an Enchauntresse called Acrasia: and therefore craued of the Faery Queene, to appoint him some knight, to performe that aduventure. (70-72)

The third day there came in, a Groome who complained before the Faery Queene, that a vile Enchanter called Busirane had in hand a most faire Lady call Amoretta, whom he kept in grieuous torment, because she would not yield him the pleasure of her body. (73-76).

The second and third days of the feast show no developed characterization of Gloriana. The complaints are merely brought before her. However, the first day of the feast does feature an action, however slight it may be, by the Faerie Queene herself. The clownish young man, presumably Redcrosse Knight, desires to take on the dragon-slaying adventure, and that left Gloriana “much wondering.”

How important is it that Gloriana, the Faerie Queene herself, does *something* in the spatio-temporal world of *Faerie lond*? Gloriana was “much wondering.” Her behavior is narrated, but it is not certain that her state of mind would have been perceived

by the other characters at the feast because the action is not physical and perceivable. While Gloriana was “wondering,” Una was “gainsaying,” verbalizing her state of mind. Una’s action is more easily perceived, and Spenser’s Faerie Queene performs merely a cognitive act. However, given how little she does, and keeping in mind that the representation of Gloriana at this feast is in literature that is only peripheral or attached to *FQ*, how important is it that she does *something*? In terms of establishing Gloriana’s existence, it is of significant importance. Without this “wondering,” Gloriana exists only as a character reported by other characters, or in Arthur’s case, the object of a dream or vision reported by a character. The feast establishes that Gloriana is a person of political power in the Realm of Faerie, another land subject to the cultural conquest of *translatio*. With that being said, it is also worth noting that she is not doing very much. Is she really a person of power, or is she a person only perceived to be powerful? Gloriana seems to have an ambiguous role in assigning knights to their respective quests. It does not seem as if Gloriana assigned Redcrosse Knight his quest because it was his volunteering that left Gloriana “much wondering.”

The actual text of *FQ* in the “Legend of Holinesse” in Book I states that she does indeed take an active role in assigning Redcrosse Knight to his quest.

Vpon a great aduerture he was bond,  
 The greatest Gloriana to him gaue,  
 The great Glorious Queene of Faery lond,  
 To winne him worshippe, and her grace to haue (I.i.3)

The case of Guyon and the bloody infant from the “Legend of Temperance” in Book II is also questionable. According to the Letter to Raleigh, the Palmer requests of Gloriana to

“appoint him some knight,” and the quest is “assigned to Sir Guyon” (71-72). However, in the text of *FQ*, Gloriana is not mentioned. Guyon undertakes his quest after he is nearly moved to tears by Amavia’s condition.

That seeing good Sir Guyon, could vneath  
 From teares abstayne, for grieffe his hart did grate,  
 And from so heauie sight his head did wreath,  
 Accusing fortune, and too cruel fate,  
 Which plunged had faire Lady in so wretched state. (II.i.56)

Scudamor takes on his own quest to rescue Amoret from Busirane, and according to the Letter to Raleigh, it was Britomart “who succoured him, and reskewed his loue” (78). Assuming that it was Scudamor who attended the Faerie Queene’s feast, not Britomart, then this is consistent with the text of *FQ* in Book III.

With this sad hearsall of his heauy stresse,  
 The warlike Damzell was empasioned sore,  
 And sayd, Sir knight, your cause is nothing lesse,  
 Then is your sorrow, certes if not more;  
 For nothing so much pittie doth implore,  
 As gentle Ladyes helplesse misery.  
 But yet, if please ye listen to my lore,  
 I will with prooffe of last extremity,  
 Deliuer her to fro thence, or with her for you dy. (III.xi.18)

These inconsistencies have been covered by Janet Spens in *Spenser’s Faerie Queene* (16), and they received some commentary from A.C. Hamilton and Donald Baker in their

respective notes.<sup>1</sup> Hamilton's solution to these inconsistencies was to note that Spenser adopted a different method for the composition of his poetry (following epic tradition of beginning *in medias res*) from that adopted in the Letter to Raleigh—which was the chronological historiography (484). Baker believes that Hamilton was on the right track in making a distinction between Spenser-as-poet and Spenser-as-historiographer in so far as it explains how a number of quests that occur consecutively in the poem occur concurrently in the Letter to Raleigh. However, Baker believes that this distinction is pushed too far in explaining the biggest point of divergence between the Letter to Raleigh and the text of *FQ*: how could the Palmer bring the bloody baby to the Faerie Queene's feast (as described in the Letter to Raleigh) if the text of the poem states that he found the baby and Amavia on his adventures with Guyon (103-104)? Baker claims, "Here clearly, however one may slice it, Spenser slipped. But it is not a slip of importance" (104).

I want to suggest that this is a slip of importance because of how the feast circulates an important symbol of the medieval past that looms large in the question of Gloriana's political power. For knights to volunteer for or be assigned quests at a feast depicts Gloriana's court as a place of political power. For example, in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, the Green Knight proposes the beheading game, and Gawain answers the call at Arthur's Christmas feast. The tie between *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*'s feast and Gloriana's feast is rather interesting because in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, Arthur's court is untested. The Green Knight refers to Arthur and his knights as "berdles chylder" (280). However, drawing from the "Legend of Holinesse," Spenser has already referred to Gloriana as "The great Glorious Queene of Faery lond" before Arthur

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<sup>1</sup> See: Hamilton, A.C. "Spenser's Letter to Raleigh." *Modern Language Notes*, vol. 73, no. 7, 1958, pp. 481-485 and Baker, Donald. "The Accuracy of Spenser's Letter to Raleigh." *Modern Language Notes*, vol. 76, no. 2, 1961, pp-103-104.



becomes king and assembles the finest fraternity of knights the world would ever see. In Spenser's Arthurian world, is it Arthur who takes power through Gloriana, or is it Gloriana who takes power through Arthur?

This question of priority strikes at the heart of the grafted continuity central to the metaphor and method of *translatio studii et imperii*, and Hamilton's distinction between a poet's method and a historiographer's method may be of some help in illuminating this. From the standpoint of historiography, Arthur comes before Gloriana insofar as she is an allegorical Elizabeth Tudor and the creation of an early-modern author, so there is no way Arthur could come to power through Gloriana in an "objective" history. Spenser appears to be aware of this complication in his Letter to Raleigh. The Arthurian tradition was "made famous by many mens former works, and also furthest from the daunger of enuy, and suspicion of present time." However, from the standpoint of Spenser's poetry, Gloriana appears to be the preeminent figure, and Arthur is a prince only coming into his own. In measuring the present against the past, the beardless child taunted by the Green Knight in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* ought to look like a seasoned veteran compared to Spenser's prince in pursuit of the Faerie Queene, for Spenser's Arthur begins his adventure at such a young age that he is yet to become king. However, that is not exactly the case. The prince coming into his own in pursuit of the Faerie Queene is already depicted as a heroic person by Spenser.

Arthur's first appearance in *FQ* is before Una, who is distraught to learn of Redcrosse Knight's imprisonment by the giant, Orgoglio. Spenser's description of Arthur's armor begins in the canto's twenty-ninth stanza, and it closes with a bit of prophecy in the canto's thirty-sixth stanza:

Ne let it seeme that credence this exceedes,  
 For he that made the same, was knowne right well  
 To haue done much more admirable deedes.  
 It Merlin was, which whylome did excell  
 All liuing wightes in might of magicke spell:  
 Both shield, and sword, and armour all he wrought  
 For this young Prince, when first to armes he fell,  
 But when he dyde, the Faery Queene it brought  
 To Faerie lond, where yet it may be sense, if sought. (I.vii.36)

While many points in Spenser's description of Arthur's armor invoke romance memes and participate in the *translatio* topos, I will reserve most of that discussion for the third and fourth chapters of this project. In those chapters, I argue how closely Spenser's Arthur resembles the Arthur of Geoffrey of Monmouth, the basis for the Arthur of the medieval Arthuriana, and Chaucer's Sir Thopas, a satirical character. However, the point worth making here is that after Arthur's death, it is the Faerie Queene who keeps Arthur's armor. In a way, by claiming Arthur's armor, the Faerie Queene takes power through Arthur. From the standpoint of "objective" history, this is not at all hard to understand. As I have said, Gloriana is an allegorical Elizabeth Tudor who needs to secure power through Arthur. However, keeping Arthur's arms in *Faerie lond* is something that occurs within the poetry of *FQ* where Gloriana is often assumed to be a preeminent ruler.

The prophecy that closes Spenser's description of Arthur's armor also gives way to two other topics of interest regarding the *translatio* topos. The first is that Arthur's epic stature sets him apart from most heroes of medieval romance and Renaissance epics.

Most of Spenser's heroes follow the archetype of a romance hero on a chivalric quest. For example, the Redcrosse Knight who "desires a boon" is eager to prove his worth, much like Malory's Sir Gareth. While Spenser sees himself drafting an epic in the tradition of Homer and Virgil, Spenser's epic does not open with a quarrel between heroes. As Helen Cooper points out, Spenser's epic begins with a romance motif, "a Gentle Knight. ...pricking on the plaine" (*The English Romance in Time* 13). Unlike the rest of Spenser's heroes who struggle physically, like Redcrosse Knight undergoing forms of sacramental penance at the House of Holiness, or psychologically, like Britomart weighing whether or not her love for Artegall conflicts with her virtue of chastity, Spenser's Arthur is always presented as a hero in control of achieving his own destiny, much like a classical hero. One could argue that Arthur seeks a faerie bride because he is already conscious of his own magnificence, but such a line of argument would certainly draw interesting parallels between Arthur and Chaucer's satirical character, Sir Thopas. In this project's fourth chapter, I offer a more detailed analysis of the hegemonic implications surrounding Arthur's pursuit of the Faerie Queene and Spenser's framing of the pursuit through "Sir Thopas." Perhaps, Spenser shows a similar sort of taste for the classical in his mirroring of Elizabeth. In this project's fifth chapter, I offer an extended analysis of how the many mirrors of Elizabeth display tokens of classical characters.

The second topic of interest this quoted stanza presents in regards to the *translatio* topos is Arthur's death. This is the only mention of Arthur's death in the text of *FQ*. However, the complete work would have had to feature such a scene. Spenser's prime source materials, *HRB*, the *Stanzaic Morte Arthur*, the *Alliterative Morte Arthure*, and

Malory's *Le Morte Darthur* all treat Arthur's death. Geoffrey of Monmouth's *HRB* as well as the *Stanzaic Morte Arthur* and Malory's *Le Morte Darthur* also relate Arthur's death to a valuation of fortune. While most sources do this through Arthur's dream of the wheel of fortune, Geoffrey of Monmouth alludes to fortune and Arthur's death through Arthur's dream of the dragon dueling the bear (X.164). While Arthur's retinue interpret the dream as a prophecy foretelling Arthur's victory in a duel against a giant, Arthur believes that it has to do with himself and the Roman emperor. However, Arthur has this dream after he entrusts the country to Mordred and Guinevere (*Ganhumara*). Of course, Arthur's infamous duel that leads to his death is with Mordred. Spenser's epic, an incomplete work, never reaches the scene of Arthur's death. However, Spenser presents a prophecy of Arthur's death, and he makes a subtle allusion to the fortune of monarchs when he claims that "But when he dyde, the Faery Queene it brought" (I.vii.36).

I want to close this introduction by explaining why the transition between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance is an important point in human history to examine the dynamics of political power. In the preface to *Renaissance Self-Fashioning*, Stephen Greenblatt claims that the work was often received as "a grimly pessimistic account of the containment of subversion, a sour recognition that what looks like free choice is actually institutionally determined, a disenchanted acknowledgement of the impossibility of apocalyptic change" (xvi). Regardless of what Greenblatt thinks of the limitations on self-fashioning imposed by powerful institutions, it is not surprising that the early-modern period could have produced such a sentiment. On the surface, it appears as if early-modern monarchs, specifically the Tudors, possessed something like absolute power. Greenblatt's work is essentially a study of how attempts to resist institutional

power have ultimately failed. As Greenblatt says, “even Marlowe’s blasphemy, I argued, had something of the quality of submission” (xvi). However, the tradition of *translatio* might offer something better than just the hope that free-thinking people could inspire an apocalyptic change in the future.

The tradition of *translatio* presents some set of symbolic qualifications that must be satisfied for a person to claim a legitimate right to rule. In this project, I attempt to argue that Spenser is very divided on the matter of whether or not the Tudors could really meet such qualifications. Perhaps a free and liberal social order is not necessarily something the world is waiting for. While the Middle Ages and Renaissance did not count votes in ballot boxes, it would be foolish to think that royal houses did not make a real effort to campaign for the approval of the people. By this, I do not mean acts of benevolence or a tailoring of a platform to a donor. What I mean by this is that Spenser’s *FQ* is one excellent example of the Tudor political campaign for legitimacy. If the power really were in the hands of the Tudors, then there would never have been any need to make the dynasty legitimate through Arthur or express the superficial nature of their connection. Other events in history and poetry also reflect such an attitude. Why would Virgil have made the Julio-Claudian dynasty legitimate through Aeneas? Why would Edward Longshanks have reinterred Arthur at Glastonbury Cathedral to demonstrate his own legitimacy? Rulers and institutions have never had a supernatural power to control people. They could only ever have been appointed by God to rule as kings and queens because governed people accepted their claims to power. Monarchs attaching symbols to themselves that people would recognize as a qualification to rule was an essential part of seizing power. Ultimately, there is some irony in using the *translatio* topos to make such

a claim, but maybe that is because people have more permanent concepts of what makes for a good ruler than obsessing over the contingent acts of succession.

## CHAPTER II

### The Dynastic Complications of Spenser's Language

Language is a significant symbol in Spenser's attempt at *translatio studii et imperii*. However, the linguistic archaism and innovation of Spenser's poetry was not unopposed by Spenser's contemporaries. By making full use of the English language's archaic resources and dialects, Spenser takes influence from Continental Renaissance poets, but he does not draw his vocabulary from the proud history and tradition of the continent. Rather than borrowing characters or terms, Spenser borrowed an artistic manner. In his Letter to Raleigh, Spenser articulates how continental authors such as Ariosto and Tasso had influenced his work, and his translation of Joachim Du Bellay's *Antiquitez de Rome* and *Songe* appeared in his collection titled, *Complaints*. Instead of slavishly imitating his precursors on the continent, Spenser channels the spirit of Elizabethan nationalism and employs Anglo-Saxon vocabulary, Chaucerisms (words and phrasing particularly representative of Chaucer's style), and to a greater or lesser extent, the new poet creates words based on sources with no formal etymology. Some critics claim that Spenser's impression of archaism is greater than his actual use of antiquated terms.<sup>2</sup> By this I mean that the blend of chivalric romance and dynastic epic gives the new poet's archaisms a greater sense of remoteness and prestige than those terms actually possessed. They are words that had undergone changes in meaning, but Spenser's selection of them still pays homage to the mindset of the Middle Ages insofar as the

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<sup>2</sup> For example, Spenser uses superlatives such as *ancientest*, and this kind of superlative also appears in Shakespeare without necessarily conveying the same connotation of archaism. However, within the setting of Spenser's epic, *so called* archaisms that survived into the Elizabethan era, such as *comen*, *ycladd*, and *whylome* add to the overall impression of chivalric romance between characters such as Redcrosse Knight and Una or Arthur and Gloriana. In "Archaism and Innovation in Spenser's Poetic Diction," Bruce Robert McElderberry Jr. is particularly insistent that the impression of archaism in the work is stronger than what an objective source like the *Oxford English Dictionary* can support.

terms he selected, and in some cases created, always represented the idea of something distinctively English. Spenser's interest in archaism may have grown out of his interest in French poets such as Du Bellay and Ronsard, but his own archaisms are English. These archaisms not only create a sense of historical remoteness in *FQ*'s setting, but they also elevate the quality of the English language to equal its rivals on the continent.

*FQ* is a literary work of *translatio*. That is to say that Spenser's epic is representative of a transfer of knowledge and a transfer of power. However, *translatio* is also a kind of process that allows an author to claim a special sense of authority. Michelle A. Freeman defines *translatio studii* as an "elaboration of a metaphor" (*The Poetics of "Translatio Studii" and "Conjointure"* 11), and she attributes to Chrétien de Troyes a special kind of authority. According to Freeman, Chrétien's rich monologues and depictions of chivalry ought to be considered accidental features of his romances. Freeman argues that Chrétien is *authorized* to define the principal features of romance because of his artistic process embedded in the tradition of *translatio* (137). The medieval tradition of *translatio* identifies ancient Greece or Troy as the starting point for all knowledge and learning, and in linear fashion, that knowledge has moved from Greece to Rome and from Rome to France.<sup>3</sup> Some scholars in this tradition choose to emphasize different links in the chain. For example, Chrétien de Troyes's account emphasizes the transfer between Greece, Rome, and France while Otto of Freising emphasizes the transfer between Rome, Byzantium, Franks, Lombards/Longobards, and Germans of the Holy Roman Empire. Spenser plays a part in that knowledge moving from the continent and into England during the Renaissance, so he embodies the same

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<sup>3</sup> Ælfred the Great invokes this same concept in his Preface to Pope Gregory's *Pastoral Care*. Moving beyond the Middle Ages and the Renaissance links England and America to the rest of this chain.



sort of *authority* that Freeman attributes to Chrétien. Likewise, the accompanying concept of *translatio imperii* traces the path of supreme imperial power across the world. As a work of *translatio studii et imperii* Spenser's *FQ* serves as a source of transmission for ancient and medieval learning and power throughout the Renaissance and into early modernity.

Spenser's archaisms play a critical role in *FQ* being a work of *translatio*.

Spenser's Anglo-Saxon vocabulary and Chaucerisms are a direct link between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. In adopting the aesthetics of the continent from poets such as Ariosto and Tasso, Spenser's poetry plays a fundamental role in making the English language equal with its rivals on the continent. It is important that the new poet relies on Anglo-Saxon English and Chaucerisms to do that. Adopting continental or classical terms would have been to offer a greater sense of prestige to those languages. While authors like Sidney wrote epic poetry in English, Milton claims that Spenser was his great original, and his comment implies that there is a special sense in which Spenser's *FQ* elevated English as a language for epic poetry. While Sidney had the manner and aesthetics of epic poetry, Spenser's *FQ* established that history and language of the English people were a suitable subject and medium for epic poetry. The typical outcome of such a work would be to place Elizabeth Tudor as the figure of the *imperium*, the new supreme ruler of the world.

A typical work of *translatio* would likely take a kind of destroyed city or cultural epicenter as its setting, Troy and Carthage being two excellent examples. Homer uses the Trojan War and the Fall of Troy to transfer imperial power to the Greeks. Carthage was Rome's most significant rival, and Virgil alludes to the Punic Wars that lead to the

destruction of Carthage in his work of *translatio* that glorifies Augustus. However, Spenser's epic takes place in *Faerie lond*, and it is not a typical work of *translatio*. Its locations include sites named *Cleopolis* and *Hierusalem*. It would not come to a shock to most readers that the House of Pride and Akrasie's Bower cannot be found on a map of the real world.<sup>4</sup> Helen Cooper argues that "Spenser justified his invention of Faerie Land by an appeal to the new discoveries" (*The English Romance in Time* 76), and this idea also strikes at the heart of *translatio*. Spenser's *Faerie lond* implies that power does not come to rest in England. The discovery of the New World and other remote locales such as Guiana extended the reach of a monarch's power. However, Spenser makes no clear distinction between the geographic coordinates of England and *Faerie lond*, and he conflates the different lineages of the island's inhabitants as well. Furthermore, it is not necessarily true that Spenser really glorifies Elizabeth Tudor in *FQ*. *FQ* appears to be a traditional work of *translatio* because Gloriana, an allegorical Elizabeth Tudor and figure of the imperium, is the object of Arthur's romantic interest, but the match between Arthur and Gloriana is never realized. The closest match of this kind that Spenser offers is between Artegall and Britomart. However, that match also raises questions about Spenser's grafting of the Arthurian legend. Artegall is not Arthur; he is Arthur's equal, and Britomart wears the armor of one of Arthur's traditional enemies, Royns/Ryence. These departures from the traditional Arthurian framework are the essence of Gumpert's concept of grafting. In effect, Spenser is coveting the past, stealing elements of it, and covering his tracks. Spenser's use of archaisms serves as evidence of this practice at the subtlest level, the very language of the work.

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<sup>4</sup> According to Stephen Greenblatt, one of the major achievements of the Renaissance was to reduce the world to a map, and he claims that this idea in very much so at work in Marlowe's *Tambulaine the Great* (*Renaissance Self-Fashioning* 198).

Anglo-Saxon and Middle English terms are not necessarily vocabularies fit for Arthur's people. Anglo-Saxon English would not have been Arthur's language but that of his enemies in his earliest campaigns. Ultimately, Spenser seeks a connection with the past typical of the medieval poet, and by authoring a work of *translatio*, he copes with his separation from the past in a similar fashion. Geoffrey of Monmouth's *HRB* depicts Arthur's Celts as a displaced people. While Geoffrey is now thought to have authored a pseudohistory, his work was relatively unquestioned through the Sixteenth Century, and Alan McColl observes that both the English and the Welsh enthusiastically adopted Geoffrey's pseudohistory as the "cornerstone of their national identity" ("The Meaning of 'Britain' in Medieval and Early Modern England" 249).

The questions of aesthetics, decorum, and authenticity in Spenser's archaisms are of monumental importance! If Spenser's archaisms are for the purpose of developing the epic's decorum, establishing the remoteness of the age in the setting of *FQ*, then they play a crucial role establishing the legitimacy, the distinctively *English* legitimacy, of the Tudor reign. However, what if Spenser's archaisms are archaic in style without *being* antiquated? While that would speak very favorably of Spenser's aesthetic sensibilities, would it not also prop up the Tudor hegemony on a house of cards? That reappraisal of Spenser's aesthetics also entails that the celebrated Renaissance playwright, Ben Jonson, was wrong when he claimed, "in affecting the ancients Spenser writ no language" (128). Spenser would have written at least some novel language, but that would also imply that early 20<sup>th</sup>-century scholars<sup>5</sup> had a better grip on Elizabethan English than Jonson. Does a

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<sup>5</sup> The most sustained treatment of Spenser's archaisms by Renwick, Pope, and McElderberry Jr. took place in the 1920s.

critical approach to language really make a later scholar a better judge of the language than one of its contemporary masters?

The critics who place Spenser's archaisms in the space of innovation, Pope and McElderberry, also say that his archaisms are well within the aesthetic principles of the Continental Renaissance. To hold a praiseworthy place in the aesthetics of the Continental Renaissance, Spenser's archaisms ought to be more antiquated and authentic than innovative and imagined. Without authoring archaisms that are also authentic, Spenser would have violated the aesthetic principles of the Continental Renaissance by inventing where he should have studied. Instead of discovering the full-range of resources of the English language, Spenser would have assisted in their creation.

On the other hand, if those archaisms are authentic, then matters are no less complicated. As Alexander Pope claims, Spenser's archaisms would have been limited to the language of the lower classes of people. Of course, Pope is referring to a time when Middle English was spoken by a large percentage of the population, but the Norman nobility spoke French. Pope says that Spenser "comes near to Theocritus . . . though . . . he [Spenser] is clearly inferior in his dialect" (265). Spenser's archaisms are inferior on Pope's view because of how he perceives the prestige of Theocritus's Doric versus Middle English or Northern English dialects. The comparisons to Theocritus by Alexander Pope and by John Dryden (324) are interesting because of the nature of his Doric (a Greek dialect): it was not spoken (Chomely 2). Spenser's archaisms are also a kind of unspoken language; they are terms that have either fallen out of favor or not at all within the modern English vocabulary. However, while the Doric of Theocritus and Ionic of Homer are esteemed classical dialects, the Northern English dialect and

Chaucerisms of Spenser have no such claim to prestige during the Elizabethan era. Spenser's "inferior," archaic dialect, of course, is based on Alexander Pope's view that Spenser's archaisms were not only "obsolete" but also spoken only by those of the "lowest condition" (265). The greater question based on these observations is why Spenser's attempt at *translatio* would have honored a monarch in terms that were not at all becoming of a monarchy. Could the epic really be that cynical? It seems there is no happy outcome here. The authentic archaisms are unflattering because, historically, the terms lack a prestige factor, but the artificial sense of archaism lacks the sense of authenticity the hegemony demands. The artificial sense of archaism also sets the aesthetics of Spenser's epic against his nearest and most celebrated critics. E.K., Ben Jonson, Alexander Pope, and John Dryden all thought the archaisms were authentic and antiquated, but does the Tudor hegemony have a stake in those critics being wrong? If the archaisms are real, then they also fail to be archaisms representative of the age in which the events of *FQ* take place; the words are not only lacking in prestige, but as I have mentioned earlier, they are also far too recent. There is also a more troubling and final difficulty tied to the tumultuous political history of the island and the pseudohistory authored by Geoffrey of Monmouth. The most recognizable reference from the Prophecies of Merlin is that Arthur is the Boar of Cornwall. The Tudors attempted to use their Cornish roots to their advantage and make themselves appear to be the sovereign rulers prophesized by Geoffrey. However, if Spenser meant to represent the Tudors as such sovereign rulers, then why would Spenser borrow terms from Old and Middle English that have Anglo-Saxon and French origins (e.g. *comen* and *trenchant*)? The historical Arthur would have fought against the Anglo-Saxons, but it is unlikely Spenser

was concerned with the details of the Brythonic language. Geoffrey's use of Latin in *HRB* was a standard genre practice for writing history during the Middle Ages, and Geoffrey claims to be translating "a certain very ancient book." Because Spenser knew Geoffrey's *HRB* he would have known Arthur's people had a language of their own, but he would have had no way to write it. By employing the *translatio* topos, Spenser may be justified avoiding these issues. The *translatio* topos allows authors to speak about such gaps in historical knowledge with great authority because they present history in such a linear matter. Archaizing is one such way of covering up historical details to assert such linearity.

The discrepancies between what Spenser would have thought to be history because it was presented as such in *HRB* and the objective historiography of the Celtic people suggest that a celebration of Elizabeth Tudor in the tradition of *translatio* is an impossible task, so I am content to argue that Spenser attempted no such task. There is no language that could tie Elizabeth I to Arthur. However, what Spenser could do was graft an English history onto an ideal English monarch who could receive that power in a literary and psychological space in which his *translatio* operates. In the remainder of this essay, I aim to show Spenser's transmission of learning by establishing that his archaisms are not only something researched and learned but also something turned creative and innovative to suit the rhetorical goal of his poetry. Spenser's poetry grafts the old symbols selected for their prior meanings and facilitates the adoption of their new meanings. The archaisms were always English, but Spenser's work facilitated their sense of prestige.

The beginning of all criticism regarding Edmund Spenser's linguistic archaism and innovation is Ben Jonson's iconic claim, "in affecting the ancients Spenser writ no language" (128). What Jonson meant to imply was that Spenser's frequent archaisms are exactly that: antiquated words rather than innovative words. While Jonson would have praised Shakespeare's language of invented words, the playwright seems to suggest that the language of Spenser's poetry is an artistic failure. For better or worse, a number of critics have clarified just how right or how wrong Jonson's remark is. The rhetoricians of Spenser's time make it rather difficult to see why Jonson would be wrong, that Spenser "writ no language." Thomas Wilson's work, *The Arte of Rhetoric*, was published in 1560, thirty years before Spenser's epic, but one can see how the poet's work would have drawn the ire of the conservative rhetorician. Spenser, or at least a courtly attitude Spenser found inspirational, is the typical target for Wilson's remarks that lambaste the speakers of a French/Italian English, "typical courtiers who talk nothing but Chaucer," and poetical clerks who author nothing but "quaint proverbs and blind allegories" (188). Wilson's tirade is part of a manifesto that advocates against the use of inkhorn and borrowed terms in the English language. Wilson would have all speak English only in a matter that would be "commonly received" (188). In the preface to Hoby's translation of *The Courtier*, John Cheke expresses a similar anxiety, "I am of this opinion that our own tung shold be written cleane and pure, unmixt and unmanageled with borrowing of other tungen" (12). Whether it is merely an impression, or if it really is genuine archaism, Spenser's English would certainly not have been "commonly received."

The opposition to Spenser's linguistic vision in England was quite strong, but the poet's experiment in language was not without precedent. Like the French Pleiade poets,

Spenser sought to make full use of his language's available resources (Renwick 4-5). The rhetorical basis for this in English would likely be found in the works of Richard Mulcaster. Mulcaster claimed, "eloquence itself is neither limited to language, nor restrained to soil, whose measur the hole world is, whose iudge the wise ear is, not in greatnesse of state, but in sharpnesse of peple" (257). In drawing upon the continental tradition, Spenser certainly embodies Mulcaster's spirit of freeing the English language from the restraints imposed upon it by its soil. Furthermore, Mulcaster does not see continental or classical borrowings as any less proud and pure than limiting oneself to English speech that is "commonly received" or fit for the queen. Mulcaster considers himself no great cleric, but as "a great welwiller to my naturall cuntrie," he declares that "tho we vse & must vse manie foren terms, when we deal with such arguments, we do not anie more then the brauest tungs do" (258). If English as a language paled in comparison to French because it could not express metaphysical ideas or terms of higher learning, then that would do significant damage to poetic attempts at *translatio* in English. Such a shortcoming would prevent any serious transfer of knowledge and power.

As a student of Mulcaster, Spenser would not leave the English language so bereft, but rather than borrowing from continental poets at level of terms, Spenser borrowed the manner of archaizing from continental poets such as Ronsard and Du Bellay. Renwick claims that archaism was not a defining characteristic of Ronsard's poetry, but the poet's occasional archaisms in *La Franciade* are meant to suggest a certain decorum, the remoteness of the age in which the poetry's events take place (5). That is not a strange move in literary works that participate in the *translatio* topos. For



example, the language of Homer is not only thought to be more antiquated than that of his contemporary Greek audience (Bakker 401), but one of the most important threads that bound the ancient Greeks culturally *and* linguistically was Homer's poetry, and Spenser's continental aesthetics are not without a similar element of nationalism. In making full use of the English language's available resources and authoring an epic in the form of *translatio*, Spenser's poetry is about as close to Homer's in cultural significance as an English poet could hope to aspire. In his "A Letter of the Authors" prefacing *FQ*, Spenser does in fact compare himself to Homer.

I chose the historye of king Arthure, as most fitte for the excellency of his person, being made famous by many mens former workes, and also furthest from the daunger of enuy, and suspition of the present time. In which I have followed all the antique Poets historicall, first Homere, who in the Persons of Agamemon and Vlysses hath ensampled a good gouernour and a vertuous man. (715)

One can question whether or not Spenser is correct in his judgment that Homer depicts Agamemnon as a "good gouernour" and Odysseus as a "verutous man," but the main point is that in following "Poets historicall," Spenser sees *FQ* as a work in the tradition of *translatio*. Spenser's remark implies that the epic is meant to bind together the English people as Homer's epics bound together Greek peoples. For both poets, archaic language and style were important means for realizing those ends. However, Spenser faced the additional challenge of his characters' dialect having been wiped out, and Spenser's remarks about Arthur's legend being "furthest from the daunger of enuy and suspition of the present time" are also rather interesting. What other possible choices for Spenser's gentleman and noble person would have sparked envy and suspicion? One possibility

could have been a figure from continental history. Another possibility could have been a contemporary English ruler. Selecting a figure of French, Italian, or Roman mythos to serve as an exemplar in *FQ* might have sparked English envy of those proud cultures in Spenser's attempt to bind together the English people in solidarity. A contemporary English ruler, that is Elizabeth I, would not have been above suspicion amongst the audience of *FQ*. After all, the Tudors' very need for a work of *translatio* is because their claim is so tenuous. In selecting Arthur as a paragon of virtue, Spenser authors the story of a hero who is not only of mythical prestige but also indigenous to the island. Arthur is the one figure of the island who would draw no ire. Arthur's historicity and prestige were established by Geoffrey of Monmouth, and Spenser's contemporary audience would not have perceived that source as a pseudohistory.

Could Jonson and the conservative rhetoricians have been wrong? Critics following Renwick cast doubt on the authenticity of Spenser's archaisms, and in turn, they claim that his language is not as Wilson would have described it. They are not in fact antiquated terms that Spenser's contemporaries would have found unfamiliar. Recovering antiquated terms may have been a more challenging task in English than the Pleiade had undertaken in French because France was not subject to the external events England had suffered, nor was it a nation whose dominant language was spoken by such a small class of people for such a long period of time. The Anglo-Saxon conquest displaced the Brythonic Celts, and their language survived only in Welsh, Cornish, Breton, and similar dialects. One of the reasons why Geoffrey of Monmouth can speak of the Britons with such authority is because he claims to have translated "a certain very ancient book." Geoffrey's account could not be questioned if one did not possess the

book or know the language. While Brythonic place names may have been retained, the Anglo-Saxons had little interest in borrowing and sustaining the language of a people they conquered. Much later, the Norman Conquest of 1066 not only facilitated changes between Old and Middle English that were already underway on the island, but after the end of Anglo-Saxon hegemony, English no longer shared in the prestige vocabulary of the island. Under Norman rule, Anglo-Norman French was the dominant language of the royal court, law courts, schools, and literature, and there was a real need to know French from the 12<sup>th</sup> through the 15<sup>th</sup> centuries if one had any contact with the upper classes. The contact between English and French definitely held consequences for the development of Middle English, especially in terms of spelling and vocabulary. Perhaps one reason why Spenser's diction is so often thought of as both archaic and innovative rather than merely archaic is because of how the advent of modern English obscures some of these changes. The question of whether or not Jonson was right or wrong is not at all easy to answer.

Some critics suggest, as Emma Field Pope does, that the archaism in Spenser's language is whatever terminology his audience would have considered an antiquated style, and there is a distinct difference between antiquated style and antiquated words. Pope suggests that in the case of Spenser's poetry, the words tend to be antiquated in style without *being* antiquated (603). Such words would more likely have survived than been recovered by Spenser. Pope claims, "The outstanding features of Spenser's diction are his copiousness, his use of *so called* archaisms, and the musical quality of his language" (603, emphasis added). However, one can wonder why Pope claims that Spenser's archaisms are both "so called archaisms" and that Spenser drew words and

phrases from Chaucer (Gower, Lydgate, and Occleve as well) “to restore and to enrich the native tongue” (606). What exactly would Spenser have restored if his vocabulary of antiquated style had survived? It would not at all be any kind of *translatio*, nothing would be recovered or transferred.

One of the pieces of archaism Pope calls into question is Spenser’s use of words such as *broughten*, *stroven*, and *liveden* as preterites. For instance, *bounden*, according to Pope, remained a current term in the Elizabethan era as a theological and poetic term (608). The *Oxford English Dictionary* offers some rather interesting insights regarding these terms (“come” and “strive” entries). *Comen*, has significant Old English roots. The word occurs in the *Lindisfarne Gospels* and the *Vespasian Psalter*, establishing the term’s existence in both Mercian and Northumbrian dialects. The word also appears in Ælfric’s *Catholic Homilies*. *Stroven* appears in Chaucer’s poetry, but *broughten* and *liveden* have no unique entries. This suggests that Spenser likely used the formula of such preterites to develop his own terms, but it does not suggest that he did so without due diligence in research. Given that *comen* establishes this form as an Old English preterite, the question is whether or not it remained in fashion during the Elizabethan era. Emma Field Pope points out that these preterites would likely have remained in fashion because of how useful the ending is for iambic structure (608). However, her logic may be questionable. Are terms common to poets also common to people? Wilson, for example, may very well have considered a term archaic because, even if a term were commonly known, that does not imply that the term was also “commonly received.” For example, a modern American speaker, welcoming guests into her home, would not be “commonly received” if she were to say, “Greetings and salutations.” The meanings of such terms would likely

be understood, at least to people of a certain class, but the use of the terms would certainly be considered archaic or expressing excessive decor. In what sense does an antiquated term survive?

In assessing the issue of the poet's language versus common language, Pope turns to Spenser's strong and weak verbs. She attributes the archaism of *plonge*, *hong*, *strook*, *strake*, *song*, *sung*, *sang*, *dronck*, *drunke*, and *dranke* to mere spelling differences (609). *Quooke* and *woxe* are what Pope considers "genuine Middle English forms," and she notes that Spenser further modifies them inconsistently with strong participles and *-en* or *-ed* endings (609). Other verbs Pope analyzes include modified prefixes such as *a-*, *de-*, *dis-*, *en-*, *for-*, *un-*, and *y-*. Her conclusion is that these also are common to a poet's use of language from Chaucer through Shakespeare, so they are once again words that are archaic in style without necessarily being antiquated (610). Such terms have more likely survived than been recovered by Spenser.

In contrast to *-en* endings, Pope also notes that Spenser uses the *-and* endings of the Northern present participle that occurs in words like *giltterand* and *trenchand*, but these same terms also receive the French present participle ending, *-ant*, throughout Spenser's poetry as well (608-609). Other distinctively Northern terms that Pope traces in Spenser include *mickle* and *muchel*, *kemb* and *kirke*, and the distinctive spellings of *theare*, *where*, and *beare* (615-616). However, Elizabethan orthography was still working through the early stages of standardization, so Pope insinuates that the spelling choices are more of a matter of meter, rhyme, and rhythm than décor (616). Pope's overall conclusion regarding Spenser's diction and orthography amounts to just that: choices made for the sake of aesthetics, meter, rhyme, and rhythm (618), and that

Spenser's poetry, laced with *so called* archaisms, is a modification of common forms and not really an archaeology of Old and Middle English terms. What Pope's research seems to imply is that a strong effort to make the meter inspired Spenser to work with the characteristics of Old and Middle English archaisms and apply them liberally, and this is what it means for Spenser's archaisms to be intertwined with the poet's *copiousness* and "musical quality of his language." While Pope argues that Spenser's choice of language was merely aesthetic, and therefore not at all a dimension of *translatio*, one can reject what Pope sees as the purpose of the archaisms without also rejecting her systematic insights into Spenser's language. Her scholarly approach to language is insufficient to establish Spenser's *so called* archaisms as an attempt to make the rhyme, rhythm, and meter. Even if the consequence of using the archaisms were simply making the meter, not all cases require Spenser to use those terms. In fact, Spenser more often resorts to such tactics in *The Shepheardes Calender* than in any poetry published after 1590.

Perhaps one could even argue that Spenser's motive in the *Shepheardes Calender* was also primarily about remoteness and decor rather than mere aesthetics. E.K. addresses this issue in his epistle to the *Shepheardes Calender*.

[H]is dewe observing of Decorum everye where, in personages, in seasons, in matter, in speach, and generally in al seemely simplycite of handeling his matter, and framing his words the which of many things which in him be straunge, I know will seeme the straungest, the words them selves being so auncient. (504)

The *Calender* is obviously a more experimental work in language than *FQ*, but critiques of Spenser that attribute his archaism to mere aesthetics appear to ignore the claims of E.K. in his epistle. At worst, they present themselves as willfully ignorant of it. The

archaism in any of Spenser's works is not just about aesthetics or rhyme and meter.

Spenser's archaisms are meant to weigh the present in terms of past and establish the remoteness of the past.

Bruce Robert McElderberry Jr. develops Pope's systematic approach to Spenser's language without also endorsing the conclusion that the archaisms are merely aesthetic devices. He suggests that establishing determinate criteria for what counts as archaism shows that the impression of Spenser's archaism is greater than his work's actual use of archaic terms. Before the *Oxford English Dictionary*, establishing any such criterion would have been difficult, perhaps impossible, and it may still be an impossible task to this day. One possible criterion in the past might have been E.K.'s glosses to Spenser's *Shepherd's Calendar*. However, as McElderberry argues, at least forty-six words glossed by E.K. would not in fact have been unfamiliar to Spenser's audience (149). As evidence for this claim, he asserts that one could scan the *Oxford English Dictionary* and find at least sporadic entries around Spenser's time for such terms. Some of those terms include *eke*, *ycladd*, and *deign* (all of which are especially common terms throughout *FQ*), but they were not necessarily unfamiliar terms for Spenser's contemporaries. Perhaps, E.K. might have glossed not-so-unfamiliar terms out of enthusiasm or because he was being an overzealous editor. Other words from that gloss are not exactly unfamiliar to the modern reader: *forlorne*, *liege*, *wounds*, *wrack*, and *scathe* (148). It is possible these terms might have scaled upwards in use after Spenser (scanning The *Oxford English Dictionary* entries may shed some light on that), but this brings to light another feature of archaism. Though it may not necessarily be the case for Spenser's poetry, terms that are archaic to Elizabethan readers may very well be more common to

modern readers through the fluid fashion of language. Likewise, terms modern readers might find archaic, such as, *ancientest*, were not necessarily uncommon during the Elizabethan era. Like McElderberry, Pope also suggests that Spenser's comparatives and superlatives of this kind were not at all uncommon in Elizabethan poetry (608).

However, McElderberry would not even call this archaism without being antiquated; this kind of terminology is not archaism at all (157). After all, Spenser's language should not be considered at all archaic based upon the standards of modern readers but only that of his contemporaries. As McElderberry states, the most important factor in assessing the archaism of Spenser's epic, *FQ*, is its very style and setting. The blend of dynastic epic and chivalric romance gives successive generations of readers the impression that the text is more archaic than the etymology of its vocabulary may imply. This also adds to the impression of the text being a foundational part of the Tudor hegemony's *translatio*, but is there any basis for this in the words themselves? If not in the etymology of the terms, could Spenser's preference for particular archaisms shed any light on this question?

While the study of Spenser's archaism seems to have fallen out of fashion after the early 20<sup>th</sup>-century studies spearheaded by Renwick, Pope, and McElderberry, Andrew Zurcher has recently breathed some new life into this area. Zurcher pays particular attention to Spenser's archaic modal auxiliaries, *mote* or *mought*, and their negation and contraction, *ne mote*, *nought*, *note*, and *n'ote*. Zurcher notes that Spenser's proclivity for *mote* over *mought* changed between the publication of Spenser's first work *The Shepheardes Calender* and *FQ*. The more unfamiliar *mought*, according to Zurcher, is used liberally and frequently in Spenser's pastoral, *The Shepheardes Caldendar*, but Spenser's epic features it in only "a handful of instances" (234). In comparison, *mote*



appears two hundred and sixty-eight times in *FQ*. Zurcher claims that when *mought* does appear in Spenser's texts published after 1590, it does so for aesthetic purposes of rhyme and meter (234-235). The more interesting question is why Spenser made such a radical change.

Zurcher cites four possible reasons for Spenser's preference of *mote*. (1) *Mote* is the more antiquated and "purer" form of the modal auxiliary appearing in the Tudor editions of Chaucer (235). (2) The *Oxford English Dictionary* states that *mote* is a past tense modal auxiliary, and this would line up with the past tense narration in the tradition of epic literature. However, Zurcher cites at least twenty-one examples in only the first two books of *FQ* in which Spenser also uses *mote* in the present tense. Amending the word to the present tense stands as considerable evidence that Spenser strongly preferred the Chaucerian form of the auxiliary (235-236). (3) The *mote* auxiliary is researched but not given the inflected form it receives in the works of Gower, Chaucer, or Langland, but Spenser often employs the word in Chaucerian phrases (236). This suggests that Spenser is modifying vocabulary to match the grammatical changes in the language. (4) Contractions of *ne wote* (*know not/ne wit*) to *n'ote* are misleading because Chaucer and Lydgate do not contract *ne wote* (237). This suggests that Spenser *may* be creating such a term.

The most interesting pieces of evidence here concern Spenser's appreciation for and differences with Chaucer. Zurcher states that Spenser does not use the inflected ending of *mote* (*moten*), but Spenser's archaisms of *comen*, *stroven*, and etc. suggest that the new poet had no such qualms about doing so. Zurcher also cites a case of *note* in

which a contraction of *know not* would make perfect sense in the stanza. In addressing Redcrosse Knight, Una's father says,

Then sayd that royall Pere in sober wise;  
Deare Sonne, great beene the euils, which ye bore  
From first to last in your late enterprise,  
That I note, whether praise, or pittie more . . . (I.xii.17)

It makes perfect sense that Una's father would "know not" whether to praise or pity Redcrosse Knight for the peaks and valleys of his quest, but Una's father may also mean that he "must not"/"may not" anymore praise than pity Redcrosse Knight. Which sense of *note* is right? This depends upon whether or not Jonson was right. If Spenser indeed "writ no language," then Una's father must mean that he must not anymore praise than pity the Knight of the Redcrosse. However, if Jonson is wrong, then Spenser may indeed be playing around with Chaucerisms as Pope and McElderberry Jr. claim he does. That would mean *note* contracting *ne wote* is indeed a possible meaning. However, Zurcher's work suggests that Spenser's archaisms are more carefully researched than Pope and McElderberry Jr. argued. As of right now, there is no definitive resource for understanding just how far or how indebted Spenser is to medieval poets such as Gower and Chaucer. However, he is in some debt to them. Zurcher's analysis also implies that Spenser's archaisms in *FQ* are not merely aesthetic devices. *Mote*, the prouder, older archaism that takes root in Chaucer's poetry is preferred by Spenser, and it is likely because of how Spenser *perceives* its prestige factor. Spenser's archaisms are indeed meant to express the remoteness of the age in which these events take place, but read into the poetic tradition of Homer, Virgil, Dante, and Chaucer, Spenser's sense of archaism

cannot be read solely as revisionary poetry or historical archaism. The psychological sense of remoteness and decor that the archaisms are meant to imply is more antiquated than their historical roots. Even if Spenser did not necessarily create the words, he created the sense in which they would be perceived as unfamiliar, archaic, and expressing a prestigious decor.

To understand Spenser's unique sense of archaism, one must find the poet's appropriate place in the epic tradition. To Dante, Harry Berger Jr. attributes a special sense of archaism. According to Berger, Dante's work is laced with archaism as a contrast rather than a complement to Virgil's sense of revision (12-13). While revision brings about a transformation or a Hegelian *aufheben* in the historical past, archaism takes ownership of the historical past. Virgil transformed the proud history of ancient Greece by making the Fall of Troy a prelude Aeneas's journey to find a new home for the Trojans, Rome. However, Dante's archaism not only keeps the spirit of his influence alive, but Berger Jr. suggests that the Italian poet surpasses Virgil by replacing his poetic model. Without adopting Virgil's sense of transformation, Dante fulfills the poetic aspirations of Virgil in a way Virgil himself could not do. While Virgil had Homer, and Dante had Virgil, Spenser had Chaucer. Spenser's Chaucer offers yet another sense of poetic fulfillment. While Dante was shaped by Virgil, Katherine Little argues that Chaucer and Virgil shaped each other (431). This is based on Chaucer's poetry being a source of transmission for knowledge of the Middle Ages to the Renaissance, a source of *translatio*, and Chaucer's role in this transfer of knowledge is all the more important in Spenser's England after the violent iconoclasm of the Reformation. Obviously, Spenser himself has a claim to this poetic lineage. However, instead of being revisionist, archaic,

or revising through archaism, Spenser grafts the old onto the new, and Spenser's craft of grafting the old in the new, at least in the case of his archaism, elevates the old to a higher status than it historically possessed. Vocabulary that had no prestige at time Spenser was writing received considerable prestige in his poetry.

If Spenser means to place his Prince Arthur as a hero in the tradition of *translatio*, then the Anglo-Saxon and Middle English archaisms he takes from Chaucer and the North ought to stand as substitutions, Hegelian *aufheben*, for lost Brythonic/Celtic words. The very setting of *FQ* implies that the terms should be *at least* that old, but the work implies that they ought to be even more remote. Spenser finds himself in Virgil's position, a poet with a lost or problematic history. However, Spenser copes with that difficulty by taking inspiration from Chaucer and thrusting the spirit of his age into a story of the past. The confusion over Spenser's archaisms seems to imply that. Zurcher and Renwick suggest that Spenser really did research his terms, but Pope and McElderberry imply Spenser took creative license when he ran out of resources. The epitome of this dilemma is how Spenser's epic attempts to use a newer language to take the place of an older, mostly lost one.

Spenser complicates matters by setting the epic in *Faerie lond*, a realm of romance. Virgil and other poets working in the style of *translatio* do not do something like this; they do not adopt a purely fictional setting. By this I mean to say that there will always be a greater archaeological promise in Troy than in *Faerie lond*. Furthermore, outside of Aeneas's recapitulation of what happened within the walls of Troy and a few other select moments, it is quite clear where Homer's song of Achilles's wrath ends and Virgil's song of arms and a man begins. Spenser, however, blurs the distinction between

medieval history and fantasy by making mention of Merry England (I.x.60) and the Briton Prince, Arthur (I.I.2). Where does the source material of *FQ* end and Spenser's epic begin? Just as Virgil adopted Homer's poetry in an attempt to show the divine lineage of the Julio-Claudian dynasty, Spenser attempts to show the proud lineage of the Tudors through Arthur. Singling out Arthur as a mythical character of noble lineage is much like what Renaissance poets from the continent, specifically Ariosto and Tasso, had done. Arthur plays the role of an epic hero of an uncertain historical origin. Arthur is to Spenser as Roland is to Ariosto and Godfrey is to Tasso. They are all characters from a mythical age who are not entirely without basis in history. As mentioned earlier, Spenser even identifies himself as a historical poet in his "A Letter of the Authors" that is meant to clarify the meaning of the poem. From the perspective of objective history, it is doubtful that *Faerie lond* is as historical of a setting as Charlemagne's Europe or the Jerusalem during the First Crusade. However, Spenser's belief in *Faerie lond* may be as honest and true as Dante's belief in the *Inferno*, *Purgatorio*, and *Paradisio*. They are settings most would consider imagined, but their authors and their immediate audience might consider them historically or psychologically real. However, while Dante can appeal to faith and theology, Spenser cannot. This also sheds some light on Spenser's relationship to his poetic companions. Virgil's history was simply missing, Dante's history was metaphysical, but Spenser's history was problematic. Perhaps that destruction is repeated, consistently. The Anglo-Saxon invaders initially desecrated the Brythonic Celts. Later, the Normans relegated the Anglo-Saxons and their language to a lower class. Finally, under Henry VIII, the violent iconoclasm of the Reformation decimated England's connection to the Middle Ages. One can wonder whether or not the

Elizabethan-era expansion could be a link in this chain. If so, then why would Spenser glorify such a monarch? Such a monarch ought to fall short of the "gratious government" expressed in the work's dedication.

This research on Spenser's language implies that grafting the old onto the new through archaism is a tactic typical of Spenser. To apply psychoanalytic terminology to a psychoanalytic phenomenon, Spenser's language seizes the inner life of archaic terms and they become signifiers of a remoteness and decor for the other that those historical terms do not possess, become signifiers for other signifiers. In the same fashion, it is within the domain of poetic theory to argue that Spenser indeed glorifies the psychological ideal of Elizabeth I more so than the historical Queen of England. In Lacanian terms, this is "the subversion of the subject and the dialectic of desire." Spenser's Elizabeth, whom the poet shadows in "mirrours more than one," does exactly what Stephen Greenblatt argues psychoanalytic phenomena cannot do.<sup>6</sup> Spenser's imagined and idealized monarch "seizes Elizabeth's inner life." Spenser's representing of a subject for the other, the representing of the monarch for the world, makes the allegorical queen a signifier for another signifier rather than a signifier for a subject. Elizabeth J. Bellamy articulates that there is a difference between Elizabeth Tudor and "the whole field of cultural meanings personified in her" (4). However, she does not assess whether or not Elizabeth's being such a figure makes Spenser's attempt at *translatio* any more or less successful. That same difference is at work in Spenser's language and throughout *FQ*. Perhaps, Spenser's project of *translatio* in *FQ* is as

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<sup>6</sup> Greenblatt's essay is an attack on psychoanalytic approaches to criticism, and he claims that, in the example of Arnaud du Tilh, the subject can manipulate appearances but can never "take over the other man's inner life" (214). In *Translations of Power*, Elizabeth J Bellamy presents a psychoanalytic counterargument to Greenblatt (5-7).

successful as one could wish, but it does not necessarily succeed in transferring power from Priam and successive rulers to the historical Elizabeth Tudor. It may be the case that it more likely succeeds in transferring power to the fictional or psychological subject that Spenser poses as a foil to Elizabeth Tudor. Such an ending suggests that Spenser may be concealing a veiled skepticism regarding the historical Elizabeth's claim to power.

The most successful aspect of *FQ* as a work of *translatio* is the creation of a British pseudohistory that serves as a foil for the real one. In the objective history of the island, the language of Arthur's Brythonic Celts is known only through Welsh, Cornish, Breton, and other dialects, and there is no conclusive evidence that suggests that Elizabeth Tudor is a descendant of Arthur. There are no idyllic locations such as *Cleopolis* and *Hierusalem*. However, *FQ* presents these ideas as something emblematic of a proud British history and proud dynastic lineage. The question is whether or not Spenser aims to transfer these symbols of power and prestige to an objectively real historical subject. That would depend upon how closely the monarch lives up to her foil presented in Spenser's poetry. For a long time, it has been taken for granted that the two were a close match, but the more recent readings of Spenser that develop the poet's sense of anxiety about the Elizabethan-era expansion and the violent nature of the Protestant Reformation cast doubt on how closely the historical Elizabeth I matches Spenser's ideal and imagined monarch.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Julia M. Walker's collection of essays, *Dissing Elizabeth*, is one such resource that presents unflattering depictions of Elizabeth. Joseph Campana's book, *The Pain of Reformation* does not weigh Spenser's commitment to Elizabeth, but it certainly does show Spenser's distaste for the violence of the reformation.

## CHAPTER III

### Spenser's Translation of Arthur

In *The Anxiety of Influence*, Bloom states, “the poet is condemned to learn his profoundest yearnings through an awareness of *other selves*. The poem is within him, yet he experiences the shame and splendor of *being found by* poems—great poems—*outside* him” (26). Like Bloom’s potentially strong poet, Edmund Spenser is an “all but perfect solipsist” (26). While *FQ* is certainly a most original work of poetry, one perceives Spenser’s expression of finding himself through the works of other poets in how he borrows from classical and medieval traditions. As a poet writing at the height of the Renaissance, Spenser’s grafting of the classical and Arthurian traditions was not outside the norm, but unlike other poets who used such allusions more so for aesthetic and moral purposes, Spenser’s grafting of old and new was meant to buttress his attempt at *translatio studii et imperii*. In *Grafting Helen*, Gumpert argues that grafting in literature forges a link between the past and present (xii), and Spenser shows a definite concern for linking the Arthuriana of the Middle Ages to the Renaissance. To transfer the knowledge and power of the Middle Ages, especially as it is embodied in Arthur, to an idealized incarnation of Elizabeth Tudor, Gloriana, Spenser writes about Arthur’s pursuit of the Faerie Queene before he was king. Spenser chose to write about Arthur because the history was “made famous by many mens former works, and also furthest from the daunger of enuy, and suspition of present time” (“A Letter of the Authors” 11-12). The poet’s comment suggests that there is an important political purpose for using the Arthuriana to assess claims of legitimacy during the Renaissance. If the Tudor Dynasty could be made legitimate, then its legitimacy would be expressed through the lineage of



Arthur. Spenser's grafting does not erase Arthur's exploits as king, but suspected differences or omissions in Spenser's epic versus the Arthurian matter known to a Renaissance audience generate some serious interpretative difficulties that concern the relationship between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. Many scholars, such as Kenneth Hodges and Robert Lainer Reid, place protestant theology and chastity at the center of Spenser's contribution to the Arthuriana.<sup>8</sup> For example, Spenser's adoption of the Grail Quest elements in Book I of *FQ* removes the importance of transubstantiation. However, a greater concern may be that Spenser's magnificent picture of an Arthur perfecting all virtues is not a grafting of old and new but a rewriting of one of the great matters of Medieval romance, the matter of Britain. While some critics like Hodges might argue that Spenser's alleged rewriting of the Arthuriana creates a rival text to those of Geoffrey of Monmouth and Sir Thomas Malory ("Making Arthur Protestant" 198), I maintain the position that *FQ* is neither a rewriting nor a rival text. Instead, Spenser grafts a continuity between the Arthuriana and the Renaissance in a way that might lend some legitimacy to the Tudor Dynasty and the Protestant Reformation, but Spenser's fashioning of a Protestant Arthur is rather incomplete. This is evident in the parting gifts that Arthur and Redcrosse Knight offer each other when they part ways in the "Legend of Holinesse." Arthur offers Redcrosse Knight a healing liquor encased in box of diamonds, but Redcrosse Knight offers Arthur a book of "wondrous grace, and hable soules to save" (I.ix.19). Arthur does not begin his adventure as a perfect Protestant. For one, his gift to Redcrosse Knight shows that he values treasure, an ideal counter to the Reformation. This is also a way of paying homage to the enchanted gifts in the tradition of medieval

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<sup>8</sup> See Hodges' "Making Arthur Protestant: Translating Malory's Grail Quest into Spenser's Book of Holiness" (194) and Reid's "Spenser's Reformation Epic: Gloriana and the Unadulterated Arthur" (28).

romance. Furthermore, Spenser claims that Redcrosse Knight's book contains "his Saueours testament," (I.ix.19). Why would Spenser refer to such a savior as the savior of Redcrosse Knight rather than "their saueour," the savior of all parties present, Redcrosse Knight, Una, and Arthur? Arthur's language of "heavenly cause" and "eternal might" during the exchange implies that he is not likely one of pagan faith (I.ix.6), so why should Redcrosse Knight need to present Arthur with a work of wondrous grace? I want to suggest that the key to understanding Spenser's fashioning of Arthur lies in the comment the poet makes in his letter to Raleigh, Arthur is not open to suspicions of the present time. A Protestant Arthur would be a more controversial figure of the present rather than an authority of the past. This is one reason why I say that Spenser's Arthur does indeed resemble the conqueror developed by Geoffrey of Monmouth and Sir Thomas Malory, a conqueror grafted into a new sociocultural milieu where the legitimacy of reform and the authority of a female monarch hang in the balance.

In grafting his own legend into the preexisting Arthurian timeline, Spenser is not necessarily rewriting the legend, but he is engaged in a form of poetic revision. The approaches of Hodges and Reid do not engage Spenser's revisions concerning Spenser as a poet. Rather, they engage Spenser as a theologian and politician interested in lending some legitimacy to the Protestant Reformation through poetry.<sup>9</sup> In other words, they compromise Spenser's faithfulness to the poetic tradition to serve political and theological ends that they assign to him. Because Bloom's poetic theory treats the works of successive poets as one long poem, his revisionary ratios ought to be helpful in explaining Spenser's grafting of the Arthuriana. One revisionary ratio that is particularly

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<sup>9</sup> In his biography on Spenser, Hadfield claims that Spenser's views on religion were not those of a "straightforward Protestant" (*Edmund Spenser: A Life* 224). Hadfield's Spenser looks much more like an Englishman who laments the division in the country's faith than a stone-cold reformer.

applicable to Spenser's poetry is Bloom's *clinamen*. Borrowing the term from Lucretius, Bloom states that *clinamen* is "a 'swerve' of atoms so as to make change possible in the universe. A poet swerves away from his precursor . . . This appears as a corrective movement in his own poem, which implies that the precursor poem went accurately up to a certain point" (14). Furthermore, Bloom claims that "Poetic history, in this book's argument, is held to be indistinguishable from poetic influence, since strong poets make that history by misreading one another, so as to clear imaginative space for themselves" (5). As a strong poet, Spenser's precursor is the Arthuriana, and that is to say his struggle for a poetic identity is against the Arthuriana. As Bloom puts it, "every poet begins (however 'unconsciously') by rebelling more strongly against the consciousness of death's necessity than all other men and women do" (10). In essence, Spenser's swerve away from the Arthuriana is not so much a conscious change but what a strong poet "(mis)reads" into the tradition. In light of Bloom's theory, Spenser would not have seen his alleged revisions to the Arthuriana as revisions at all but what he thought the Arthuriana was. Following Bloom, the strong poet reads only his own poem, so Spenser would read the precursor Arthuriana as part of his poem.

In Spenser's case, perhaps the goal was to write something grander than any one work of the Arthuriana, and if Spenser had completed his plan, he may very well have succeeded. In his letter to Raleigh, Spenser articulates the plan for *FQ*. In the first twelve books, Spenser would write the history of Arthur before he was king, the history of a brave knight perfecting Aristotle's twelve private virtues. Should the original work be a success, Spenser claims that he would have been inspired to write a history of Arthur as king depicting his political virtue in another twelve books (20-21). My claim is not that a

“complete” edition of *FQ* would be grander than the Arthuriana. However, when taken as the work of one man, then it may very well have dwarfed any single work of Geoffrey, Malory, or Chrétien de Troyes in its scope and completion. Not only would Spenser’s epic have been long, but it would have been long and in epic verse. In a comparison between a poet and a tradition, few poets will represent themselves favorably. Could any poet other than Homer survive such a struggle? In itself, that is a loaded question, but the mere temptation to compare a poet to a precursor tradition may very well be a testament to such a poet’s ambition and rebellion against death and insignificance. Regarding Spenser’s ambitious plan for *FQ*, David Wilson-Okamura once asked, “What about the poet though? *Orlando* had two authors and *Amadis* had even more. Could one man have enough stamina” (68)? His point is that even though *FQ* is not the longest work of epic poetry authored during the Renaissance, the completed work would have been the period’s longest work written by any single author, and the Renaissance features some long poems. If indeed one poet could not have had enough stamina to outright dwarf the period of Renaissance literature, then finding a place for himself as an important figure in the Arthuriana or as a poet translating the Arthuriana into an early-modern context would have been Spenser’s best defense against death.

In assessing Spenser’s *clinamen*, it is important to remember that *clinamen* is not only how a poet swerves away from his precursor to forge his own identity. Because *clinamen* implies that the precursor’s poem was right up until a certain point, it communicates the new poet’s admiration for the precursor poet. Spenser’s need to establish himself against the prestige of the Arthuriana provides great insight into his poetic innovations within the Arthuriana. Two British sources of the Arthuriana Spenser

must have known were Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia regum Britannie* and Sir Thomas Malory's *Le Morte Darthur*. These works are not written in epic verse, and while the *Stanzaic Morte Arthur* is in verse, it certainly does not provide the comprehensive treatment of Arthur's exploits that the works of Geoffrey and Malory do. Geoffrey authored a pseudohistory in Latin and Malory wrote a prose romance in English. However, in the prologue to the *Historia regum Britannie*, Geoffrey of Monmouth refers to himself as a poet with a reed pipe and invokes the muse (Prologue.3-3n). Spenser, in what Bloom's critic would identify as an act of misreading or poetic misprision, willfully changes the genre of the Arthuriana from a history or a romance to epic verse. In the proem to Book I, Spenser not only invokes the muse, but he announces the change to "trumpets sterne" from "oaten reeds." Some critics, Andrew King in particular, suggest that this is a moment of self-reflection of Spenser (226). In casting aside his oaten reeds and adopting stern trumpets to orchestrate the songs of "Knights and Ladies gentle deeds," Spenser himself has shifted from the pastoral poetry of *The Shepheardes Calendar* to the dynastic epic of *FQ*. This comment is self-reflective insofar as it explains the changes in Spenser's own poetry, but it does more than that. It is what Bloom would call a *daemonization* or negation of the precursor (102). Helen Cooper claims that "Spenser made an unusual choice at this date in following Chaucer and Ariosto in his selection of a long stanza rather than prose for this near-epic romance: prose was to be the preferred choice of future generations of serious readers" (*The English Romance in Time* 35). While this is certainly true insofar as it identifies an aesthetic convention of medieval romances, Cooper's comment downplays the importance of the rediscovery of classical texts during the Renaissance. According to

Hadfield, “English and Continental books were often absent from the institutional libraries, which concentrated largely on works in Latin and Greek” (*Edmund Spenser: A Life* 58). Furthermore, Spenser’s choice is not at all hard to understand from the standpoint of English nationalism. *FQ* serves not only as the point of departure for Milton’s effort to author a work of epic verse in English, but it matches or bests Ariosto’s *Orlando Furioso* and Tasso’s *Le Gerusalemme liberata* in terms of stanzaic complexity in the classical tradition of epic verse. Spenser’s choice of epic verse stands as both a way of paying tribute to his 16<sup>th</sup>-century precursors on the continent as well as negation of his English precursors in his poetic struggle against death.

In the act of negating earlier authors of the Arthuriana, Spenser represses their influence by writing outside of the medieval genres of prose history and romance, but this allows the ideas of his precursors to resurface in Spenser’s own genre, epic verse. While Geoffrey saw himself as a poet who authored a history and Malory crafted his own romance by translating literary sources, Spenser’s correction and negation was to author a work of this great matter in what he would have seen as a more fitting genre—the most ambitious genre of his own period—epic verse. Geoffrey and Malory may see themselves as poets, but it was Spenser who wrote about Arthur following “antique Poets historicall, first Homere” (“A Letter of the Authors” 13). As a Renaissance author writing about a medieval matter, Spenser, in effect, places medieval authors in the space they would have placed classical authors. By this, I mean to say that Spenser romanticizes the Middle Ages and offers Arthur a higher place in the constellation of heroes for an early modern audience than medieval authors writing for a medieval audience ever could have offered. This is not just a simple matter of reverence. The

historical distance between Spenser and Arthur puts Spenser in a more favorable position to romanticize Arthur's heroism. Medieval authors treat Arthur as a matter of legend.

When I say that Spenser had done to medieval authors as medieval authors had done to their classical counterparts, I mean to follow Matthew Gumpert and Jennifer Goodman. Goodman claims that *translatio* ought to be thought of as the "governing metaphor of the whole period" (89). Gumpert maintains that *translatio* is the principal method of the medieval romance of antiquity (123). What Gumpert means is that *translatio* is both the method employed by medieval authors in the development of their genre, romance, and their method of romanticizing antiquity.

Gumpert's own examples of *translatio* focus on Troy as the point of origin in French romances such as Chrétien de Troyes' *Cligès* and Benoit de Sainte-Maure's *Le roman de Troie*. The following passage from *Cligès* is what Gumpert takes to be representative of a Trojan-Roman-French trope of *translatio*:

From the books in our possession we know of the deeds of the ancients and of the world as it was in olden days. These books of ours have taught us that Greece once stood preeminent in both chivalry and learning. Now they have come into France. God grant that they be sustained here and their stay be so pleasing that the honor that has stopped here in France never depart. God had lent them to the others. For no one ever speaks now of the Greeks or the Romans. Talk of them is over; their burning coals are spent. (87)

Gumpert notes that Chretien's position is a mixed blessing (127). In occupying the last known link in the genealogical chain, the Trojan and Roman past lives on in medieval France. However, the progression of *translatio* is such that medieval France will only

occupy that position for some time. Eventually, its culture will exist only in books, written about by people who have read those books. In the words of Gumpert, “France may one day fall as silent as Greece and Rome and live on only in someone else’s books and someone else’s voice” (127). The anxiety, of course, in Bloomian fashion, is consciousness of death. This anxiety is depicted by Chretien de Troyes in a most explicit form. Chrétien himself claims that *Cligès* is a story of “a Greek youth of the line of King Arthur” (87). By way of Brutus, it is Arthur’s departed Britons who link Chretien’s France to the old stories of Troy. Such a grand idea is Chrétien’s way of expressing the death of Geoffrey of Monmouth. Regarding the rhetorical purposes of *translatio*, perhaps *Cligès* is to the French as Book I of Geoffrey’s *Historia regum Britannie* was to his audience. It is the story of a Roman youth who had freed his people from the Greeks and found them a new home in Albion, an island that later took his name. Spenser’s epic turns out to be the Renaissance link in this chain of *translatio*.

The very idea that Spenser refers to Arthur as a figure “furthest from the danger of enuy, and suspition of present time” demonstrates his romanticizing of the Middle Ages, but how does Spenser’s engagement in *translatio* mirror that of his medieval predecessors? Geoffrey and Malory clearly state their engagement in *translatio*. Geoffrey translates “a very certain ancient book,” and Malory translates a “Freynshe book.” Spenser alludes to such a practice, but he is not so straightforward in disclosing to his audience how he participates in the *translatio* topoi. What I mean by this is that Spenser’s authorial persona does not explicitly state that there is an act of translation. When Spenser invokes the muse, he calls for aid in *his* task as a *poet*, not his task of *translation*.



While *FQ* never presents itself as a work of mere translation, medieval histories and romances were never mere translations. Like its medieval precursors, *FQ* features a strong authorial persona who directly engages the audience. At times, Spenser's authorial persona states his purpose of *translatio*. Gumpert argues that through *translatio*, medieval authors "provide the nascent European state with genealogies of national origin, apologies for cultural conquest, and strategies for achieving political hegemony" (124). Spenser certainly participates in all of these tropes in Book II, canto x of *FQ*.

Ne vnder Sunne, that shines so wide and faire,  
 Whence all that liues, does borrow life and light,  
 Liues ought, that to her linage may compaire,  
 Which though from earth it be deriued right,  
 Yet doth it selfe stretch forth to heuens hight,  
 And all the world with wonder ouerspred,;  
 A labor huge, exceeding far my might:  
 How shall fraile pen, with feare disparaged,  
 Conceiue such soueraine glory, and great bountyhed? (II.x.2)

I quote this stanza in its entirety because of how well it shows Spenser giving himself the task of *translatio*. In this stanza, Spenser questions how he will provide 1) a genealogy of national origin, 2) an apology for conquest, and 3) a strategy for achieving political hegemony. In essence, he questions how he will fulfill Gumpert's exact ends of *translatio*. While first half of the stanza compares the sovereignty of Gloriana's line to the reach of the sun, the second half of the stanza discloses Spenser's anxiety in

attempting such a task, for he claims the task is a “labor huge, exceeding far my might.” The remainder of Book II indeed shows that the labor far exceeds Spenser’s own powers as a poet. Book II, canto x closely follows Geoffrey’s *Historia regum Britannie*, and Spenser may very well draw upon other sources of the tradition. When Spenser claims that the labor of establishing Gloriana’s lineage was a task that exceeds his own might, he is in effect drawing himself even closer to Geoffrey and Malory. Spenser’s audience would have known that this (hi)story is not really Spenser’s own, and Spenser pays homage to his precursors when he notes that Arthur and Guyon *read* these works of history in *books*. Outside of the opening and closing stanzas of this canto, there is indeed very little of Spenser’s poetic genius outside of *translating* this history into epic verse. It is a quintessential moment of poetic anxiety in which the strong poet battles a precursor. I quote the following passages in succession because they show just how closely Spenser follows Geoffrey in his task of *translatio*, and such passages demonstrate Spenser’s firm commitment in remaining faithful to the tradition.

Thus Brute this Realme vnto his rule subdewed (*FQ* II.x.13)

Brutus named the island Britain after himself and called his followers Britons. He wanted to be remembered for giving them his name. (*HRB* I.21)

The noble daughter of Corineus

Would not endure to bee so vile disdaind (*FQ* II.x.18)

When Corineus eventually died, Locrinus repudiated Guendoloena and made Estrildis queen. Guendoloena, enraged, went to Cornwall, gathered all the forces of the region and began to harry Locrinus. (*HRB* II.25).

Next him king Leyr in happie peace long raynd,  
 But had no issue male him to succeed,  
 But three faire daughters, which were well vptrained (*FQ* II.x.27)  
 Leir became king and for sixty years ruled the country well . . . He had no male  
 offspring, only three daughters. (*HRB* II.31)

Donwallo dyde (for what may liue for ay?)  
 And left two sonnes, of pearelesse and prowess both:  
 That sacked Rome too dearly did assay (*FQ* II.x.40)  
 Dunuallo's two sons, Beli and Brennius, both wished to succeed him as king and  
 fell prey to their disagreement. (*HRB* III.35)

Then all the sonnes of these fiue brethren raynd  
 By dew successe, and all their Nephews late (*FQ* II.x.45).  
 Morvidus had five sons, the eldest of whom, Gorbonianus, ascended to the throne  
 (*HRB* III.49).

These passages recapitulate the stories of the island from Brutus's conquest of the island to the five kings born of Morvidus. Perhaps Craik's comment that this canto that so closely follows Geoffrey's *Historia regum Britannie* contained "few passages of eminent poetical beauty" (234-235) portrays a bias of what is good poetry far outside the *translatio* aesthetic of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. I want to suggest that this faithfulness ought to extend to the matter of Arthur as well, and Spenser himself promises

such a commitment in his history. After introducing the betrayal of Androgeus, Spenser prophesizes Arthur's destiny as the future king of the Britons who did many battles.

So by him Caesar got the victory,  
 Through great bloodshed, and many a sad assay,  
 In which himself was charged heuily  
 Of hardy Nennius, whom he yet did slay,  
 But lost his sword, yet to be seene this day,  
 Thenceforth this land was tributarie made  
 T'ambitious Rome, and did their rule obay,  
 Till Arthur all that reckoning defrayd;  
 Yet oft Briton kings against them strongly swayd. (II.x.49)

What could be a clearer statement that the Arthur of *FQ* is the Arthur who would go on to claim that the emperor's head was all the tribute he need pay and "What is obtained by force of arms is never the rightful possession of the aggressor" (*HRB* IX.159)?

Spenser's Arthur is indeed Arthur the person of a conqueror who believes that what is taken by force can only be held by force. The image of a magnificent knight, one perfecting all the virtues, and a warring conqueror are one and the same for Spenser. Later, before storming the tyrant's castle in Antwerp, Spenser's Arthur proclaims to Belge,

Nathlesse (said he) deare Ladie which me goe,  
 Some place shall vs receiue, and harbor yield;  
 If not, we will it force, maugre your foe,  
 And purchase it to vs with speare and shield:

And if all fayle, yet farewell open field:  
 The earth to all her creatures lodging lends.  
 With such his cheareful speaches he doth wield  
 Her mind so well, that to his will she bends

And bynding vp her locks and weeds, forth with him wends. (V.x.24).

The point of Arthur's quest with Belge is to restore her to rightful place as ruler, a skirmish on a smaller scale that represents Arthur's conquest of Rome. Could the "cheareful speaches" wielded by Spenser's Arthur take the tone of Geoffrey's Arthur who once claimed, "What are you doing, men? Why are you letting the women get away unharmed? Let none of them escape with their lives" (*HrB* X.174)? What about Malory's Arthur who struck fear into the hearts of the Roman senators? Indeed, one could argue that Arthur is the ultimate figure of conquest, so much so that even Spenser's Arthur is used by later authors to evoke the image of a conqueror. Consider Christopher Marlowe's depiction of the infamous Scythian conqueror, Tamburlaine the Great:

Through the streets with troops of conquered kings,  
 I'll ride in golden armor like the Sun,  
 And in my helm a triple plume shall spring,  
 Spangled with Diamonds dancing in the air,  
 To note me Emperor of three-fold world,  
 Like to an almond tree ymounted high,  
 Upon a lofty and celestial mount,  
 Of ever green *Selinus* quaintly decked  
 With blooms more with than *Hercina*'s brows,

Whose tender blossoms tremble every one,  
 At every little breath that through heaven is blown. (4.3 4094-4113)

These lines of Marlowe's are essentially a copy of Spenser's Arthur:

Vpon the top of all his loftie crest,  
 A bunch of haire discoloured diuersly,  
 With sprinkled pearle, and gold full of richly drest,  
 Did shake, and seem'd to daunce for iollity,  
 Like an Almond tree ymounted hye  
 On top of greene *Selinus* all alone,  
 With blossomes braue bedecked daintily;  
 Whose tender locks do tremble euery one  
 At euery little breath, that vnder heauen is blowne. (I.vii.32)

Perhaps the modern reader, one who reads from the Renaissance backwards would be shocked to see the magnificent Briton prince, Arthur, and the Scythian Scourge of God, Tamburlaine the Great, as mirror images of each other. In *Renaissance Self-Fashioning*, Stephen Greenblatt claims, "What is sung in praise of Arthur is sung by Tamburlaine in praise of himself; the chivalric accoutrement, an emblem of Arthur's magnanimous knighthood is here part of Tamburlaine's paen to his own power lust" (224). To reconcile their differences in character, Greenblatt speculates as to whether or not Arthur and Tamburlaine one and the same.

What if they are two faces of the same thing, embodiments of the identical power. Tamburlaine's is the face Arthur shows his enemies or, alternatively, Arthur's is the face Tamburlaine shows his followers. To the Irish keen, Spenser's Prince of

Magnanimity looks like the Scourge of God; to the English courtier, Marlowe's grotesque conqueror looks like the Faerie Queene. (224)

Marlowe's grafting of Spenser's Arthur is just another link in chain of *translatio*, and this may be some of the best evidence to show how the medieval practice of *translatio* performs the same function for Renaissance authors as it did for medieval authors. What I mean by this is that a poet who critiques state authority (Marlowe) uses the same grafted image as the precursor poet who celebrates state authority (Spenser). The grafted symbols are static, but how those symbols are regarded changes. Gumpert's work shows the same kind of development with the tradition of Helen when she is transformed from a whore, to a virgin, and back to a prostitute. Somewhere in this chain, perhaps beginning with Marlowe, the idea of a conqueror as one perfecting all the virtues was lost. However, such an idea was not lost on Spenser: Arthur's image as a conqueror does not change; only how conquerors are regarded changes.

While Spenser demonstrates faithfulness to the Arthuriana, what exactly is the *clinamen*? What correction does he make to the precursor poem? Robert Lainer Reid argues that Spenser purifies Arthur. Of course, the magnificent knight's conception is "far from immaculate" (28), and in translating a history from "Brut vnto Vther's Rayne," Spenser makes no mention of Uther Pendragon disguised as Gorlois at Tintagel. Reid claims that the *narratus interruptus* that closes the history before Arthur's conception "erases" the impurity in Arthur's origin (29).

After him Vther, which Pendragon hight,  
Succeeding There abruptly did it end,  
Without full point, or other Cesure right,

As if the rest some wicked hand did rend,  
 Or th' Author selfe could not at least attend  
 To finish it: that so untimely breach  
 The Prince him selfe halfe seemed to offend,  
 Yet secret pleasure did offence empeach,  
 And wonder of antiquity long stopt his speech. (II.x.68)

The erasure of the rape appears to be quite a radical correction. According to Reid, *FQ*'s improves upon history by showing “*what might best be*” (29). I do not wish to dispute that one dimension of *translatio imperii* in *FQ* is the idea of what would be the best form of government and service. However, I am tempted to question whether or not Spenser purifies Arthur's origin or if the moment is merely postponed. Reid claims that Spenser reforms Merlin into Timon, and he reserves Merlin's prophetic talents for the dynasty beginning with Britomart and Artegall<sup>10</sup> (29). However, at the *naratus interruptus*, Spenser implies the impurity of Arthur's origins by referencing what that “wicked hand did rend.” However, what is wicked? Is it Arthur's “far from immaculate” conception, or is the author's hand rendered wicked because it stops short of prophesizing Arthur's exploits as king? I would like to point out that Spenser's chronicle is not entirely without such prophesy. The canto's forty-ninth stanza prophesizes Arthur's triumph over the Romans. While such a campaign would certainly fall on the right side of moral purity for Spenser, it also serves as evidence that Spenser does not intend to rewrite the substance of the Arthuriana. Earlier, in Book I, Spenser's narrator prophesizes Arthur's death and the resting place of his arms in *Faerie lond* (I.vii.36). The prophecy of Arthur's death and the resting of his arms in *Faerie lond*, Spenser are a subtle allusion to Geoffrey of

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<sup>10</sup> The importance of Merlin as a prophetic figure is developed in this project's fourth chapter.



Monmouth's Isle of Avalon where Arthur is supposed to recover his strength after being mortally wounded in his duel with Mordred (XI.178). I want to suggest that whatever Spenser is revising, it is not the character of Arthur; and the most radical revisions are made through silence rather than verse.

Another revisionary ratio operating in Spenser's six completed books is Bloom's *tessera*, antithetical completion. This is the idea that "the strong poet must 'rescue' the beloved Muse from his precursors" (63). According to Bloom, "In the *tessera*, the later poet produces what his imagination tells him would complete the other 'truncated' precursor poem and poet, a 'completion' that is as much misprision as a revisionary swerve is" (66). How could Spenser have seen the Arthuriana as *truncated*? Spenser must have seen the Arthuriana as truncated in some way because he felt compelled to publish is a history of Arthur before he was king. While the Letter to Raleigh presents the possibility of Spenser authoring a history of Arthur's political virtue as king, all that remains is half of the history of Arthur's private virtue before he was king. No one can say for sure what would have been in those later books. Could Lancelot and Guinevere have finally made an appearance? Could Mordred have made an appearance? Though the appearances of such characters would likely conflict with Spenser's ideas of moral perfection, these characters make their appearance after Arthur becomes king, and there is nothing in *FQ* that could outright negate the possibility of their appearing. While the existence of such characters in *Faerie lond* would certainly necessitate a change in what is often thought to be the hegemonic purpose of Spenser's epic, could Arthur have abandoned the pursuit of the absent Faerie Queene and attached himself to Guinevere? Such a plot change would have been unlikely, but once again, there is nothing in *FQ* that

absolutely negates the possibility of its happening. I do not want to suggest that Spenser would add Guinevere as yet another allegorical representation of Elizabeth, but Spenser's potential source for Arthur's vision of the Faerie Queene, Chaucer's "Tale of Sir Thopas," suggests that Arthur's romantic interest in Gloriana is errant.<sup>11</sup>

What Spenser would have brought to the Arthuriana in the completed epic is the idea of the perfect state, what Reid refers to as the state that "*might best be*," but such a state may never come to pass. On the other hand, Spenser's precursors, Geoffrey and Malory, show the downfall of the state. However, in depicting the downfall of the state, do Geoffrey and Malory also appear to express their desire for that state that *might best be*.

Paul Dalton argues that one of the most fundamental concerns of Geoffrey's *Historia Regum Britannie* is to "warn his contemporaries about the destructive dangers of conflict and thereby to promote unity and peace during a time of civil war" (690). This is an important dimension of Geoffrey's *translatio* topos. Insofar as *translatio* is a transfer of power, that power has to be transferred to somewhere. In the prologue to most extant manuscripts of *Historia regum Britannie*, Geoffrey addresses Robert of Gloucester and Waleran of Meulan, and he advocates transferring power to "a Henry reborn for our time" (3). As a work of *translatio studii et imperii*, Spenser issues himself the goal of promoting unity and peace and transferring power to an idealized figure of the imperium. Though Spenser did not live through a time of civil war in an austere sense, the Elizabethan-era expansion and Protestant Reformation were rather violent events, and Spenser did not view the events from a comfortable position at court either. His estate, Kilcolman, was raided, and he was forced to return to England. He died not long after

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<sup>11</sup> This issue receives a detailed treatment in chapter four.

fleeing Ireland. The absence of a formal civil war does not imply the presence of peace. As Joseph Campana claims, “Spenser, naturally, would have responded to a more particular history of vulnerability. In spite of those fantasies of dominion later to become realized, England was, in the Renaissance, environed by a wilderness of sea with enemies in all directions” (5). Given the violent opposition between the Reformers and Roman Catholics, England’s enemies existed inside and outside of its borders. While Spenser claims that “Fierce warres and faithfull loues shall moralize my song” (I.proem.1), the poet also calls for Venus and her son to come to his aid (I.proem.3). The aim of invoking Venus and Cupid is to achieve disarmament and peaceful unity by way of the *translatio* topos and its static, grafted images. *FQ* is not a work about religion; it is a work about the ideal state, the state that might best be and its ruler who inspires a commitment to virtue. Ultimately, like Geoffrey and Malory, Spenser express a desire for peace and unity, and all three authors look to the cultivation of virtue as the way to bring about peace and unity.

In *Marriage, Adultery, and Inheritance in Malory’s Morte Darthur*, Karen Cherewatuk maintains that “Adultery lies at the heart of Arthurian tragedy” (56). While Malory’s views on adultery and sexuality are certainly those of a medieval Catholic was his expressing a religious precept the important point for him? I want to suggest that the breaking of the Round Table is the breaking of a hegemony that is built on chivalry but destroyed by adultery. Following Geoffrey, is Malory’s rhetorical purpose not a political one that applies the *translatio* topos to the War of the Roses? In essence, Malory politicizes affairs, and perhaps this is one reason why Malory and Geoffrey both liken castles to women. Entering a woman stands as metaphorical to entering a chamber of

political authority.<sup>12</sup> Whatever the case, the focus upon private virtues for all three authors ought to shed some light on Spenser's swerve from his precursors. An obvious difference between Spenser and his precursors may lie in his Protestantism, but the fashioning of a gentleman or noble person in *FQ* is not meant to serve a theological purpose. Spenser's fashioning of a gentleman or noble person is meant to serve a political purpose.

Hodges maintains that Malory's Arthurian legend is not a source for *FQ*, but it is rather a rival material ("Making Arthur Protestant" 197-198). To provide evidence for his argument, Hodges looks to Spenser's grafting of Grail Quest elements into Book I of *FQ*. Malory's Grail Quest sets the interest of the faith at odds with the interest of the state. Before Galahad was even conceived, King Pelles prophesized to Lancelot that the appearance of the Grail would mark the end of Arthur's fellowship, that "whan this thing gothe abroad, the Rounde Table shall be brokyn for a season" (XI:2). Foreseeing the disaster brought about by Gawain's vow to pursue the Grail, Arthur himself bemoans it and refuses to participate.

"Alas," seyde King Arthure unto Sir Gawayne, "ye have nygh slayne me for the avow that ye have made; for thorow you ye hae berauffte me of the fairest and the trewyst of knyghthode that ever was sene togydir in ony realme of the worlde. For whan they departe frome hense, I am sure they all shall never mete more togydir in thys worlde; for they shall dye many in the Queste. And so hit forthynkith me nat a lital, for I have loved them as well as my lyff—wherefore hit

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<sup>12</sup> A more complete argument for such a claim can be found in Susan E. Murray's article, "Women and Castles in Geoffrey of Monmouth and Malory." *Arthuriana*, vol. 13, no. 1, Spring 2003, pp. 17-41. While there is not space for an extended argument here, Spenser's Acrasia's Bower of Bliss and the chamber in which Amoret is tortured by Busirane evoke a similar image.

shall greve me right sore, the departicion of thys felyship, for I have had an olde custom to have hem in my felyship.” (XIII:7-8).

Hodges implies that Malory’s Catholic message is that service to God is more important than service to the crown; in a way, Pelles confirms this when he calls the Grail “the richest thyng that ony man hath lvyng” (XI:2). However, Spenser’s Redcrosse Knight (an aesthetic appropriation of Galahad) begins his grail quest in the service to a figure of a state authority, Gloriana. For this reason, Hodges contends that one of Spenser’s great breaks with the Arthuriana is that he does not see service to the faith in conflict with service to the state, “Spenser does not simply revise the theology. He also revises the relation between religion and nation” (“Making Arthur Protestant”194).

Could the extent to which Hodges sees Spenser revising the relationship between faith and state be a bridge too far? Elsewhere, even Hodges claims that “Spenser’s purpose is to ‘fashion a gentleman,’ not a theologian” (“Reformed Dragons” 111). After slaying the dragon, Redcrosse Knight is betrothed to Una, and her father claims that Redcrosse Knight ought to “deuize of ease and euerlasting rest” because he has suffered so many great perils throughout his quest (I.xii.17). However, Redcrosse Knight cannot take part in a life of ease and everlasting rest.

Ah dearest Lord, said then that doughty knight,  
 Of ease or rest I may not yet deuize;  
 For by the faith, which I to armes haue plight,  
 I bownden am straight after this emprise,  
 As that your daughter can ye well aduize,  
 Back to retourne to that great Faery Queene,

And her to seurve six years in warlike wize,  
Gainst that proud Paynim king, that works her teene”

Therefore I ought to craue pardon, till I there haue been. (I.xii.18)

The betrothal episode that closes the “Legend of Holinesse” greatly complicates questions of service to faith, state, and family. The marriage between Redcrosse Knight and Una is postponed for six years because Redcrosse Knight is “bownden” in service of Gloriana against the heathen king for that time. Is Redcrosse Knight bound in service to the state or in service to the faith? During Spenser’s time, the term bownden would have carried a connotation of being tied to the will of a religious or political authority (*OED*). The very task of crusading against the heathen king also blurs the boundaries of state and political authority. Hodges is right to the extent that Spenser would have seen being bound to the faith and the state as being bound to one and the same thing. In serving Gloriana by fighting against the heathen king, Redcrosse Knight would be taking part in a crusade because of a vow given to a figure of state authority, but I think there is a better answer. Spenser was in no position to see service to the faith and service to the state as interests that could be in conflict. It is not politics or theology at work here but poetic misprision, a strong poet (mis)reading a precursor. The revision of the relationship between the faith and the state is a better reflection of Spenser’s cultural milieu than his assessment the comparative value.

The betrothal episode in the “Legend of Holinesse” not only prompts questions about service to the faith and service to the state. It prompts questions about service to which state. While one might be inclined to think of marriage as a sacrament because of Catholic traditions, Spenser was likely enough of a Calvinist not to see marriage that way

even if the “Legend of Holinesse” contains other sacramental events.<sup>13</sup> The important point in bringing this up is that in delaying the marriage, Redcrosse Knight is not delaying a service to God, so his responsibilities to the state are not in conflict with his responsibilities to the faith. However, marriage is hegemonic for Spenser. One of the poet’s veiled criticisms of Elizabeth throughout *FQ* is that it is chastity and not virginity to be valued. Of course, this is because marriage leads to procreation and procreation leads to successive heirs. Spenser weighs this responsibility heavily on one of his allegorical representations of Elizabeth, Britomart. One can imagine that the same sort of hegemonic responsibility would weigh on Redcrosse Knight and Una. Of course, Una’s position as a princess implies that the timetable for marriage is not so pressing, but that is not part of the discussion in the “Legend of Holinesse.”

Yet swimming in that sea of blissful ioy,  
 He nought forgot, how he whilome had sworne,  
 In case he could that monstrous beast destroy,  
 Vnto his Faery Queene back to retourne:

The which he shortly did, and Vna left to mourne. (I.xii.41)

The penultimate stanza of the “Legend of Holinesse” states that the vow made to Gloriana is more important than whatever blissful joy Redcrosse Knight experiences in the company of Una. In a way, this is very Arthurian. Arthur responds to Gawain’s vow to pursue the Grail is “ye have nygh slayne me for the avow that ye have made.” Arthur implies that in just making the vow the act is as good as done; the fellowship of the Round Table is broken. Spenser gives a vow the same sort of weight. However, in having made his vow to Gloriana, Redcrosse Knight is a victim of a different sort of

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<sup>13</sup> Of course, the episodes of penance, repentance, obedience, and etc. in Book I, canto x are the reference.

conflict. His service to Gloriana conflicts with his service to his new kingdom. Given that Spenser has also compared Gloriana's hegemony to the reach of the Sun, this may also be a way of expressing the interests of the imperial over the local.<sup>14</sup>

Ultimately, Spenser's grafting of grail quest aesthetics is not *the* Grail Quest. Like Percival, Redcrosse Knight is seduced by the false woman. Like Galahad, Redcrosse Knight is young and eager to prove his worth. However, Spenser's Redcrosse Knight is neither Galahad nor Percival. Spenser may have closed that issue when Redcrosse Knight learns of his true identity, St. George. Furthermore, Redcrosse Knight's awkward encounter with Britomart at Castle Joyous suggests that he is a figure far more susceptible to temptation than the transubstantiated Galahad.

While Spenser engages question of the relationship between religion and nation in the "Legend of Holinesse," one has to wonder whether or not Spenser ever could have intended to revise the relationship between religion and nation through that work. The aesthetics of the Grail Quest appear throughout Book I; however, the only real discussion of political opposed to theological affairs concerns the marriage between Redcrosse Knight and Una. The Grail Quest in the medieval Arthuriana is also something that takes place towards the end of the Arthur's hegemony. Why would Spenser place it at the beginning of the work before Arthur even becomes king? The Grail Quest of the Arthuriana is about political virtue, but Spenser places it in the context of a private virtue. Perhaps, for Spenser, the grafting of grail quest elements is not at all a political commentary and simply a feature of poetic influence. This is the position that one would arrive at reading Spenser in the sense of poet-as-poet. In applying Bloom's revisionary

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<sup>14</sup> This same sentiment is echoed throughout Malory, but one place in particular is "The Fyrste Boke of Sir Trystams de Lyones." Malory notes that the kings of England, Wales, Scotland, and many other realms were all really under the rule of Arthur (VIII:1).



ratios of *clinamen*, *tessera*, and *daemonization* to Spenser's task of *translatio studii et imperii*, one could argue that Spenser-as-poet is inserting himself into the Arthuriana rather than creating a rival text. The Arthuriana, ultimately, is a history of political failure, and its authors, Spenser included, have seen the cultivation of virtue as the saving grace of the kingdom. However, one could argue that Spenser's authoring of a history of Arthur before he was king is meant to provide Spenser's precursors with exactly what they were missing: the conqueror's private virtue.

## CHAPTER IV

### Arthur's Dream of the Faerie Queene

Arthur's pursuit of the Faerie Queene is one of the most noticeable differences between Spenser's *FQ* and the medieval Arthuriana. Anne Higgins is one such scholar who marks Arthur's pursuit of the Faerie Queene as a kind of perfection of Chaucer's "Tale of Sir Thopas" (27). However, one cannot ignore that "Sir Thopas" is a satire of medieval romance heroes that is not at all a flattering source for the myth of Tudor origins. Of course, in the medieval Arthuriana, Arthur does not pursue a faerie queen of any sort. Instead, he takes Guinevere as his queen. Robert Lainer Reid asks, "How can Arthur attain mythic grandeur without the beautiful, majestic Guenevere?" (32). Though Reid poses this as a rhetorical question, there is good reason to ask it in a serious manner. Guinevere is an important figure, and she has far more to offer than her beauty. In Malory's *Le Morte Darthur*, she is tied to the dowry of the Round Table and one hundred knights. Both pieces of the dowry represent what Reid calls Arthur's "mythic grandeur." Arthur receives the Round Table because, in the words of King Lodegreuns, "he [Arthur] hath londis inow, he nedith none" (III.1). Lodegreuns's remark suggests that his daughter, Guinevere, has a crucial role to play in how King Arthur is perceived through the lens of *translatio studii et imperii*. An Arthur without Guinevere is yet to establish his hegemony. Worse yet, an Arthur without Guinevere is symbolic of a land in disarray ravaged by rebel kings (Ryence/Royns) and Saxon antagonists. Obviously, Spenser's Arthur is without Guinevere, so how could the Briton Prince become a mythic figure of imperial power? I want to suggest that Arthur does not achieve such epic glory in *FQ*. This is not to say that Guinevere necessarily plays an irreplaceable and singular role, nor

is my judgement meant to be a slight against Arthur. *FQ* takes place before Arthur becomes king, so he has no need to live up to such expectations. Rather, I say this because Arthur's pursuit of the Faerie Queene lacks the blessing of a most important medieval matchmaker: Merlin. Spenser obviously realized the importance of Merlin playing the role of matchmaker otherwise he would not have given Merlin the same sort of responsibility in matching Britomart and Artegall. These observations suggest that Spenser did not at all "perfect" or misread the "Tale of Sir Thopas" by using it as a frame for Arthur's pursuit of Gloriana. Instead, he cleverly disguises its satirical meaning to express his cynicism about the myth of Tudor origins he is often credited with popularizing.

Chaucer's "Tale of Sir Thopas" from *The Canterbury Tales* is one of two tales narrated by Chaucer's narrator persona, Geoffrey. Geoffrey's narration of the tale is in response to the pilgrims' request for "a tale of myrthe" following the somber "Prioress's Tale." (706). Geoffrey fulfills this request for levity by satirizing romance heroes<sup>15</sup> and the conventions of the romance genre. Unlike many of Chaucer's poems that penetrate the psychological depths of their characters, Chaucer's "Tale of Sir Thopas" focuses on action. After a brief description of Sir Thopas's fair and gentle features, the knight "priketh thurgh a fair forest" (754). The reason for Thopas's mad riding through the forest is because he searches for an elf-queene whom he had dreamt of all night. Sir Thopas is in love with the elf-queene of his vision, and because no other woman can match her beauty, Thopas claims that no other woman is worthy to be his mate in town (790-796). However, Thopas's search is interrupted by a giant, Olifaunt (807-816), and

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<sup>15</sup> Among the heroes satirized by Chaucer are Bevis of Hampton, Guy of Warwick, Sir Launfal, Perceval, and Arthur.

because Thopas is caught without his armor, he flees (823-833). Thopas is armored in the tale's second fit, but after Thopas, "knyght auntrous," drinks water from a well, the pilgrims protest Geoffrey continuing this tale. The Host even claims that "Thy drasty rymyng is nat worth a toord!" (930).

Surely, Spenser adopts the framework for his *FQ* from Chaucer's "Tale of Sir Thopas." While it is not Arthur, Spenser's *FQ* begins with a gentle knight "pricking on the plaine" (I.i.1). Spenser also shows his debt to Chaucer when Redcrosse Knight, bereft of his armor, is confronted by the giant, Orgoglio (I.vii.8). Of course, it is Arthur who rescues Redcrosse Knight from Orgoglio's captivity (I.viii.10). Because Spenser allows for Redcrosse Knight to suffer Sir Thopas's pitfalls, it does seem as if Spenser perfects not only the character of Sir Thopas but the entire narrative of "Sir Thopas." However, I intend to argue that Spenser fails to perfect Arthur's character. Like Sir Thopas, Spenser's Prince Arthur is engaged in an errant pursuit of the Faerie Queene.

The idea that Spenser "perfects" the matter of "Sir Thopas" by elevating it from a satire on romance to a work of *translatio* rests on Spenser misreading the poem. While Spenser certainly refines the "Tale of Sir Thopas," he never frames Arthur's pursuit of the Faerie Queene as anything but an errant romance. That is exactly what a knight's pursuit of an elf-queen/faerie queen is supposed to represent. Helen Cooper claims, "One does not set out to find a fairy mistress: Sir Thopas's decision that nothing less will do for him shows, as usual, that he has got his memes<sup>16</sup> in a twist" (*The English Romance in Time* 211). Of course, Cooper draws upon the following passage from Chaucer's tale to

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<sup>16</sup> Cooper defines a meme as "an idea that behaves like a gene in its ability to replicate faithfully and abundantly, but also on occasion to adapt and mature, and therefore survive in different forms and cultures" (*The English Romance in Time* 3).

show that Thopas plays the part of a fool with his romance memes in a twist. Without a declaration of love from his elf-queene, Thopas forsakes all other women.

An elf-queene wol I love, ywis,

For in this world no womman is

Worthy to be my make

In towne;

Alle othere wommen I forsake,

And to an elf-queene I me take

By dale and eek by downe. (790-796)

Spenser reproduces this meme in the following stanza:

Most goodly glee and louely blandishment

She to me made, and badd me loue her deare;

For dearly sure her loue was to me bent,

As when iust time expired should appeare.

But whether or dreames delude, or true it were,

Was neuer hart so rausht with delight,

Ne liuing man like words did euer heare,

As she to me deliuered all that night;

And at her parting said, She Queene of Faeries hight. (I.ix.14)

The way in which Spenser reproduces the meme of a knight in pursuit of a faerie mistress appears to be different from Chaucer's, but this is not because the Faerie Queene makes her sexual favors immediately available to Arthur. Arthur's experience reflects that of Sir Launfal, whose fairy mistress immediately offers the knight the pleasure of her wealth

and herself. Cooper claims that unlike Chaucer's Thopas, who has his memes in a twist, Spenser's Arthur only pursues the Faerie Queene after she has declared her love for him. According to Cooper, "What has happened is that a woman with the absolute autonomy of the 'Queene of Faeries,' and her freedom to dispose of her favour and her love wherever she chooses, has chosen Arthur" (212). To be seduced by a faerie mistress is ideal, but to blindly seek a faerie mistress is errant. The case of Spenser's Arthur is particularly hard to judge because the proem of *FQ* states that Arthur seeks the Faerie Queene (I.proem.2), but Arthur himself claims that he has set out on this quest because the Faerie Queene has expressed her love for him (I.ix.14). Spenser's commitment to the myth of Tudor origins seems to rest on whether or not the more authoritative voice is his own authorial voice or that of his character, Prince Arthur.

It is not hard to understand why Spenser would be pressured to present this episode as a dream vision. The Cult of the Virgin Queen was one such entity of the Elizabethan Political Imaginary that discouraged speculation about the queen's sexual proclivities and behaviors.<sup>17</sup> As the author of an affectionate encounter between Arthur and the Faerie Queene, an allegorical Elizabeth Tudor, Spenser would have felt a need to distance himself and the content of this episode from Her Majesty the Queen. Jacqueline T. Miller argues that a dream vision was a common technique employed by medieval authors who felt a need to distance themselves from the authorial voice in their works, and to establish an authoritative perspective that could articulate the "truth" of the dream.

The medieval dream vision, in particular, can be considered a literary form especially suited to, and even generated by, the attempt to locate an authoritative perspective or interpretation with which the author may associate himself or from

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<sup>17</sup> These ideas are developed in greater detail in chapter five.

which he may speak—one that differs from his personal voice, which discovers, produces, and wrestles with the difficulty of the dream content. (35)

Spenser employs the technique of a dream vision to distance himself from the authorial voice in *FQ* that speaks about controversial matters of the queen's sexuality and responsibility to produce heirs. However, Arthur and Gloriana are not the only characters Spenser uses to assess such issues. Spenser weighs the queen's responsibility to produce heirs on Britomart throughout Books III, IV, and V, and Spenser resorts to the technique of a prophetic vision to distance himself as a subject of Her Majesty the Queen from his authorial voice. It is through Merlin's magic mirror that Britomart first views the knight who would subject her to "loues cruell law" (III.ii.38), and it is through Merlin's prophecy that she learns of his identity and her destiny to marry him, "The man whom the heauens haue ordained to bee/The spouse of Britomart, is Arthegall" (III.iii.26). I want to suggest that Spenser's treatment of Britomart's vision of Artegall is of a qualitatively different order than that of Arthur and The Faerie Queene. This is because of the role Merlin plays as an authoritative prophetic figure in Britomart's vision of Artegall, and Miller emphasizes the need for such a figure to appear in a dream vision.

Medieval dream theory, then, centered around questions of authority and authorship. False and deceptive dreams had to be distinguished from authentic and prophetic dreams. To establish the existence of a true and significant dream, one had to locate origin of a vision and then either a figure within it whose very appearance would sanction the dream or one outside of it whose interpretation of its meaning was dependable. (41)

Merlin's authority is first established by Geoffrey of Monmouth in *HRB*. What is particularly brilliant about the way Geoffrey establishes Merlin's authority is that Geoffrey's Merlin makes a grand prophecy about the changing hegemony of the island. The climax of this prophecy is, of course, that the Boar of Cornwall, an allegorical Arthur, will lay waste to the land (VII.117). However, Geoffrey establishes Merlin's authority not only by recanting Arthur's campaigns Merlin had prophesized but by consistently proving Merlin to be right. Before Merlin even breaks into inspired prophecy, he overturns Vortigern's magicians. While Vortigern's magicians claim that it is Merlin's blood that would make Vortigern's tower stand erect, Merlin declares that it is two sleeping dragons beneath a pool of water that inhibit the tower's construction (VI.108). After Merlin breaks into prophecy, Vortigern asks Merlin to prophesize how his life will end. Merlin claims that Constantius' sons will besiege Vortigern's tower and burn him, and the next dawn, the sons of Constantius, Aurelius Ambrosius and Uther Pendragon, arrive with ten thousand knights (VIII.118).

Sir Thomas Malory may very well have seen the importance of Merlin as prophet, and I want to suggest that he exploited Merlin's prophetic authority in matters of romance. In *HRB* and Wace's *Le Roman de Brut*, Arthur does not seek Merlin's council regarding his romantic interest in Guinevere.<sup>18</sup> However, in *Le Morte Darthur*, Arthur actively seeks Merlin's council to guide his romantic interest. "My barrownes woll let me have no reste but nedis I muste take a wyff—and I wolde none take but by thy counceile and advice" (III.1). When Arthur expresses his love for Guinevere, Merlin

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<sup>18</sup> According to Geoffrey, "Arthur took as his wife Ganhumara, a woman of noble Roman ancestry brought up at the court of duke Cadur, who was the most beautiful woman in the island" (IX.150-152). Wace only states that "Arthur loved her and cherished her" (9655).



concur with Arthur's judgment that Guinevere is a beautiful and fair lady, but he also advises the king that she is a poor match.

But Marlyon warned the Kyng covertly that Gwennyver was nat holsom for hym to take to wyff, for he warned hym that Launcelot scholde love hir, and sche hym agayne. And so he turned his tale to the adventures of the Sangkreal. Than Merlion desired of the Kyng for to have men with him that scholde enquire of Gwennyver, and so the Kyng graunted hym. And so Merlyon wente forthe unto Kyng Lodgreaun of Camylerde, and told hym of the desire of the Kyng that he wolde have unto his wyff Gwennyver, his doughter. (III.1)

Despite this dismal prophecy, Arthur does not exactly reject Merlin's council. In their discussion of Guinevere, Merlin declares, "I scholde fynde you a damesell that sholde lyke you and please you—and youre herte were not sette: but there as mannes herte is sette, he woll be loth to returne" (III.1). In essence, Merlin's words are an underhanded approval of the marriage insofar as Merlin realizes that Arthur's heart is set on Guinevere. The idea that "the heart wants what the heart wants" is what Cooper would call a kind of reproducible romance meme. For example, this same force of attraction presents itself in the romances between Erec and Enide, Yvain and Laudine, and Tristan and Iseult. I would argue that Uther and Igera/Igrayne also have a place in the star charts of Arthurian romance, and that Merlin's crucial role in the affair further enhances his status as an authoritative figure.

Merlin's status as an authoritative figure also reaches its peak in Malory's *Le Morte Darthur*. In Geoffrey of Monmouth's *HRB*, Merlin is summoned by Uther. However, Geoffrey's Merlin does not bargain with Uther or appear to be at all preoccupied with the

hegemonic or moral implications of Uther's affair. Merlin is commanded (*iussus est consilium*) to advise Uther, and he is moved by Uther's passionate love for Igerne (VIII.137). After Uther's health declines by way of the Saxon poison, it is British nobles who urge the archbishop of Caerleon to crown Arthur as Uther's successor (VII.143). Wace creates some tension in his *Le Roman de Brut* and offers a greater place of prestige to Merlin. He essentially places Uther at the mercy of Merlin. While Geoffrey's Uther commands Merlin to aid him, Wace's Uther begs Merlin to help him.

He [Uther] begged and pleaded for his help.

He would give him what he desired,

For he was sick and in much pain.

“Sire,” said Merlin, “you will have her;

You'll never die for Ygerne's sake.

I'll fix things so you'll have your pleasure,

But you will give me nothing back. (8684-8694)

However, it is Malory's Merlin who truly towers over Uther as the preeminent figure of authority. He says to Uther, “I know al your hert, every dele, So ye wil be sworn unto me, as ye be a true kynge enoynted, to fulfille my desire, ye shal have your desyre” (I.2). Malory's Merlin is in the position of power, for it is only by Uther fulfilling Merlin's desire that he can fulfill his own. Merlin then capitulates exactly why he is willing to aid Uther in his quest to bed Igrayne.

[T]his is my desyre: the first nyght that ye shal lye by Igrayne ye shal gete a child on her; and whan that is borne, that it shall be delyvred to me for to nourishe

there as I wille have it—for it shal be your worship and the childis availle, as Mykel as the child is worth. (I.2)

Once again, Geoffrey's Merlin is commanded. Wace's Merlin is begged, yet he asks for nothing in return. However, Malory's Merlin bargains with Uther, and in return, he receives Arthur. Merlin tutors Arthur, and when Uther's health declines, he asks whether or not Arthur will be king. One can wonder whether or not there is already an answer implied in the question because Malory's Merlin is the agent who brings together the British nobles and councils the Archbishop of Canterbury about the matter of succession (I.3,4,5). Essentially, Merlin becomes a kingmaker, and he demonstrates the authority of his words when he claims that Arthur would "shewe somme miracle, as He was come to be Kynge of Mankynde (I.3,4,5). Of course, Arthur fulfills Merlin's prophecy of a miracle by pulling the sword from the stone.

Spenser clouds Merlin's role in Arthur's development, but he does not challenge Merlin's authority. Arthur claims that a faerie knight delivered him to old Timon, the "expertest man aliue" in "warlike feates," who tutored Arthur in "vertuous lore" (I.ix.4). Merlin only enters the picture later.

Thether the great magician Merlin came,  
 As was his vse, offtimes to visitt mee:  
 For he had charge my discipline to frame,  
 And Tutors nouriture to ouersee.  
 Him oft and oft I askt in priuity,  
 Of what loines and what lignage I did spring.  
 Whose aunswere bad me still assured bee,

That I was some heire vnto a king,

As time in her iust term the truth to light should bring. (I.ix.5)

Reid argues that “Spenser’s Reformed Merlin shapes a nobler Arthur by enlisting Timon and by crafting supernatural arms” (29). The reason for this is that Merlin is so closely related to a history of adultery that conflicts the virtue of chastity so important in Spenser’s fashioning of a Reformation gentleman and a female monarch. The medieval Merlin does not only play an instrumental role in Uther’s affair with Igrayne/Igerna, but he also prophesizes that Arthur’s incestuous affair with Morgause will produce a child who will end his reign.<sup>19</sup>

While Spenser does not question Merlin’s credibility as a prophet, Reid’s critique implies that Spenser questions Merlin’s ability to provide moral guidance. However, Spenser does so ambiguously. Maybe Arthur is incorrect in referring to Timon and Merlin as two different people. Arthur refers to Timon as the “expertest man aliue” in “warlike feates,” but Merlin typically plays the role of the expert. In Geoffrey’s *HRB* and Wace’s *Le Roman de Brut*, Merlin plays the role of prophet and council for Vortigern, Aurelius Ambrosius, and Uther Pendragon. One could argue that all of his council is ultimately tied to warlike feats. Vortigern’s tower is essentially a military matter, and it is Merlin who knows the true reason why the tower will not stand. Aurelius Ambrosius heeds Merlin’s council about moving the stones of the Giant’s Ring out of Ireland, and these stones are meant to be a memorial for his soldiers. Uther Pendragon relies upon

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<sup>19</sup> The matter of Arthur’s affair with Morgause is a complicated matter. While Malory’s Mordred is a product of incest, Geoffrey of Monmouth’s is not. Helen Cooper observes that Mordred was first made Arthur’s son in the Vulgate cycle, and that this likely a French attempt at slandering a British hero. (“Counter-Romance” 150-151).

Merlin to breach the walls of Tintagel, but after Arthur's conception, Merlin plays no major role in *HRB*.

I admit that there is no conclusive evidence that Timon is really Merlin; there are only some shared tropes. However, Merlin's shape-shifting abilities further support this possibility,<sup>20</sup> and this would certainly explain Arthur's possible misidentification of Merlin. Arthur's ignorance about his lineage also suggests that Spenser does not depict Arthur as a reliable reporter of his arc in the story. This has serious consequences for the narration of his dream, for the difference between a true dream vision and a false dream is often determined by whether or not the interpreter of the dream really has authority to evaluate it. Merlin's authority in the medieval Arthuriana and *FQ* is never questioned, but Arthur's word is much more questionable.

Arthur appears to be more respectable than Thopas insofar as he *believes* that the Faerie Queene has already expressed her love for him. However, does Spenser's Arthur, like Sir Thopas, really have his memes in a twist? Cooper remarks that Arthur's report of his night with the Faerie Queene, Tanaquill, falls somewhere between a sexual encounter and the innocent pillow talk that begins Chaucer's "Wife of Bath's Tale" (*The English Romance in Time* 212), but as I noted earlier, Cooper unambiguously proclaims that the Faerie Queene has declared her love for Arthur. Cooper does not say anything about whether or not it matters that Arthur actually received a declaration of love from the Faerie Queene or merely dreamt of it. The uncertain metaphysical status of the dream does not seem to interest her. However, Chaucer's framing of Thopas's vision of the elf-

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<sup>20</sup> For example, the enchanted herbs change the appearances of Uther, Merlin, and Ulfin at Tintagel. Charles Long also makes an argument that Merlin does indeed take on a new identity. In his essay, "Was the Green Knight Really Merlin," he contextualizes Merlin's shape-shifting abilities and relationship with Morgan le Fay to argue that the Green Knight may very well have been Merlin.

queen, a framing Spenser reproduces in the deluded dream of Arthur, suggests that Thopas and Arthur may tarry with a similar complication, that they both do indeed have their memes in a twist.

J.A. Burrow, John King, and Anne Higgins all attempt to show that Spenser authors a very different tale of Arthur than the one Chaucer had wrote! Burrow claims that Spenser moralized Chaucer's Thopas insofar as he saw Chaucer's love for the elf-queen as a form of chastity (87). One can see why Spenser might be tempted to read Chaucer in such a way because Thopas vows to forsake all other women and commits himself to the elf-queen. King argues that this sort of moralizing is in indeed tendentious of how Spenser deals with romance memes.

Within the comprehensive frame of allegorical epic, Spenser incorporates a complexly layered pattern of allusion to characteristic conventions . . . to evoke a broad movement from deficient and worldly forms of romance, pastoral, and tragedy to a set of purged and elevated Christian counterparts. (183)

The arguments presented by Burrow and King imply that Spenser was taking romance memes and elevating them insofar as he frames them in a Christian or moral context. Kenneth Hodges adds to these observations and claims that plenty of romances were Christian enough for Spenser, "but their Christianity was Roman. These did not need to be spiritualized but reformed" ("Making Arthur Protestant" 198).

I want to suggest that there is a significant oversight in these readings. They depict Spenser as a poet who engages in a close reading of Chaucer's tale and still misses the joke. This would not be problematic if the humor of "Sir Thopas" were not so blatantly obvious. Cooper points out that "For parody to work, its serious origins must be

familiar, so it is interesting that Chaucer parodies the blazon of male beauty in “Sir Thopas,” his mock romance in which the hero is the object of all-too-many-female gazes” (*The English Romance in Time* 19). For Spenser to miss the joke in “Sir Thopas” implies that he was a terrible reader of medieval romances. If King is right, and Spenser’s framework of his allegorical epic is a “complexly layered pattern of allusion,” then Spenser must have been an astute enough reader of medieval romances to catch the joke in “Sir Thopas.” Anne Higgins’s analysis of Spenser as a reader is slightly different. She points out that while Chaucer’s Thopas is a chaste hero, it is not because he takes chastity to be a virtue. Rather, Thopas turns out to be a chaste hero because Chaucer is satirizing the romance heroes known for “luf-talkyng.” Sir Thopas does not exercise virtuous discipline in abstaining from the sexual favors offered to him by other women; he simply rejects other women because they fail to match the beauty of his elf-queen. According to Higgins, Spenser’s decision to tell his own tale of Sir Thopas is “to tell another story than the one Chaucer wrote” (25). However, (unlike Burrow, King, and Hodges) Higgins does not argue that Spenser selected “Sir Thopas” for its moral import. She instead ties Spenser’s reading of Chaucer to the myth of Tudor legitimacy.

The pilgrim Chaucer broke off his “Tale of Sir Thopas” because of the vehement objections of his companions, and the interruption itself is no small part of the tale’s humorous effect. Ignoring the comedy, however, Spenser seized the opportunity to perfect the tale in both senses of the word. And surely that perfection included shifting the tale’s frivolous comedy to the deeply serious myth of the English nation, a myth central to Tudor claims of legitimacy. (27)

I want to make an even stronger point than Higgins: Spenser not only knew “Sir Thopas” and understood its humor, but Spenser selected “Sir Thopas” as a romance motif to frame Arthur’s pursuit of *FQ* precisely because of how it would represent the Tudor claims of legitimacy. What I mean by this is that Spenser is just as skeptical of the Tudor connection to Arthur as Chaucer is of Sir Thopas seducing an elf-queen, and Spenser represents this skepticism by making Gloriana the ever-absent object of Arthur’s romantic interest. However, the issue is not so much that Gloriana never appears in *FQ*. Rather, the issue is that without Merlin’s blessing, there is no authoritative word on whether or not Gloriana really has declared her love for Arthur. This suggests that Arthur’s pursuit of her is indeed as errant as Thopas’s pursuit as his elf-queen.

In his Letter to Raleigh, Spenser claims that *FQ* is “a continued Allegory, or darke conceit” (4), and Elizabeth J. Bellamy claims that Arthur’s pursuit of the Faerie is one of Spenser’s many “darke conceits.” Spenser’s skepticism about the myth of Tudor origins could certainly be identified as a conceit the poet would be wise to cloud in allegory. Bellamy suggests that Arthur’s narration of his dream produces an “Adriadne’s thread” that stretches the text towards an end goal, and that generations of readers willingly follow this Ariadne thread<sup>21</sup> to construct the entire poem’s meaning (*Translations of Power* 213). In other words, the very idea of Gloriana as the ultimate object of Arthur’s quest is more likely an end assigned to the text by the reader and not necessarily the author. While romance motifs often come to a predictable conclusion, epics require a retroactive reading. In the case of Arthur’s dream, Bellamy suggests that this is especially problematic.

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<sup>21</sup> Bellamy borrows this concept from Andre Green’s essay, “The Unbinding Process.”



Like every mythic hero, Arthur struggles to know the meaning of his history, hence his eagerness to respond to Una's invitation to speak of his "name and nation." It is a quintessentially epic moment, reminiscent of Dido's desire to hear Aeneas's story *a prima origine*. But the problem is that a dream language is unassimilable as conscious language; a dream, in short, cannot speak for itself. For that matter, we cannot even be certain what it means for Arthur to proclaim that he has *had* a dream. (*Translations of Power* 214)

It would seem as if this is where a retroactive reading of *FQ* ought to direct the reader to the medieval Arthuriana. However, is an epic supposed to point to sources outside of itself? While Virgil's *Aeneid* certainly owes an aesthetic debt to the poetry of Homer, Virgil's Aeneas can report the Fall of Troy as an event. Arthur cannot report his dream of the Faerie Queene as an event, so there is a need for some sort of prophetic blessing to make the episode significant or real. Bellamy acknowledges the importance of Britomart and Artegall receiving a prophetic blessing of their romance while Arthur does not (*Translations of Power* 215), and the very idea that the value of that prophetic blessing is not at all arbitrary suggests a retroactive reading of the medieval Arthuriana.

Reading Arthur's romantic interest back into the medieval Arthuriana also provides evidence for the errant nature of Arthur's love interest. Geoffrey of Monmouth makes no mention of Merlin having a role in bringing Arthur and Guinevere (*Ganhumara*) together, nor does Geoffrey give Merlin an opportunity to bless the marriage. According to Geoffrey, "Arthur took as his wife Ganhumara, a woman of noble Roman ancestry brought up at the court of duke Cador, who was the most beautiful woman in the island" (IX.150-152). Geoffrey says nothing more. Surely, there is

nothing wrong with Arthur taking a beautiful bride, and it is certainly a kind of tribute to Arthur to present him as a king worthy of beautiful Roman bride. Following Geoffrey's lead, Wace subtracts Arthur's children by Guinevere.

Arthur loved her and cherished her [Guinevere].

But they produced no heirs as two;

They were not able to have children. (9655-9657)

While Wace may be impressed by Arthur's love for Guinevere despite the barrenness of their marriage, the veiled criticism of both Geoffrey and Wace is that Arthur has made an errant choice in selecting a queen. The implication is that Arthur has married for charm rather than dynasty, and perhaps Malory spins his own Ariadne thread out of Geoffrey's and Wace's veiled criticisms or poetic caesura. Malory's Merlin emphasizes the fact that it is Arthur's *heart* which is set on Guinevere, and this choice certainly leads to the downfall of his kingdom.

Spenser certainly fulfills the objective of *translatio studii* with his careful selection of medieval romance memes that survive in a Renaissance context. By framing the myth of Tudor origins through the romance motif of *Sir Thopas*, he is not only able to express his serious belief in chastity and elevate the matter of the narrative, but he can also express his skepticism or "darke conceit" about the Tudor origins as he proves himself to be a most careful reader of his medieval source material. The consequence of expressing this skepticism or conceit severs the link between Elizabeth Tudor and the Arthur. One could also argue that in doing this, Spenser might have approached the project of *translatio* in *FQ* with a sense of futility, and Spenser's tacit prophecy reveals its own truth in Elizabeth's failure to produce an heir.

## CHAPTER V

### Spenser's Abduction of Helen

The aim of this project has been to examine Spenser's grafting of symbols in his attempt at *translatio imperii* and to show that it is the symbols possessed by figures of political power that really hold power. In grafting Elizabeth, Spenser tells a story of the past, and in that story, he steals symbols of beauty, power, and justice in which he shrouds Elizabeth. A typical feature of a work of literature engaged in the *translatio* topos is a representation of the figure of the imperium. However, in the proem to Book III of *FQ*, Spenser presents such an undertaking as an impossible task because he dooms any representation of Elizabeth I to failure. The poet claims, "But liuing art may not least part expresse/nor life-resembling pencill it can paynt" (III.proem.2). The new poet implies that even Zeuxis and Praxiteles, the classical artists renowned for their depictions of ideal beauty, would be unlikely to succeed in this task. Spenser declares, "In picturing parts of beauty daynt/so hard a workemanship adventure darre/for fear through want of words her excellence to marre" (III.proem.2). His comment implies that even the most adept artistic hands will fall short of representing Elizabeth because the source material is perceived to be so magnificent. Perhaps Sir Christopher Hatton and another knight found themselves in this same predicament. As Paul Manningham records in his diary, Hatton, who would eventually serve as Elizabeth's lord chancellor, and another knight challenged each other to present the most flattering portrait of Elizabeth, one knight presented a picture, and the other produced "the truest picture that might be" (130-131), a mirror image of her majesty the queen. While it is unknown which representation Elizabeth preferred, the fact that Spenser identifies his representation as a mirroring speaks

volumes about the how the courtiers must have perceived the challenge. Manningham was particularly impressed by the mirroring insofar as it allows the queen's own face to serve as a metaphor for virtue. The mirror episode suggests that the most careful workmanship of the painter and sculptor and the most meticulous choice of words from the poet may still fail to portray the brilliance of the Tudor monarch. While Spenser expresses his inadequacy in the third stanza of the proem, the poet also accepts this daunting task, and he requests the queen to pardon him in his effort to "shadow" her figure using "antique praises vnto present persons fitt" (Proem to III.3). I want to suggest that Spenser's language of mirroring and shadowing is intimately linked with his attitude towards his task of *translatio* because there is a metaphysical difference between what is mirrored or shadowed and the original object. Spenser's mirrors and shadows often portray an idea of what Elizabeth should be or how Elizabeth is perceived as a cult figure opposed to Elizabeth herself.

By referencing Zeuxis, Spenser engages the *translatio* topos insofar as he compares his own ability to represent beauty with that of Zeuxis, but Spenser may be alluding to Aristotle to make a curious point about the abilities of painters or poets in imitating beauty. The ancient philosopher claimed that while Polygnotus was deft in depicting character in his works, Zeuxis achieved nothing of that sort in his painting of Helen (1450a). Aristotle believed the work of Polygnotus was superior to that of Zeuxis because the former's painting imitated the taking of Troy, and the latter took on the challenge of painting Helen's beauty by combining the features of Croton's five most beautiful women. Aristotle's point was likely that Zeuxis failed to imitate Helen's beauty. In combining the features of Croton's five most beautiful women, if Zeuxis

imitated the beauty of any woman, then it was the beauty of his own imagined Helen, not *Helen*. Likewise, Spenser's use of "mirroures more than one" in his representation of Elizabeth produces an imagined Elizabeth, not *Elizabeth*.

One could say Zeuxis tried his hand at a portrait when he should have held up a mirror, but Zeuxis was separated from Helen by the past. There was no one to whom he could hold up a mirror. While Spenser is not separated from Elizabeth by a wall of time, one could argue that he still takes great inspiration from Zeuxis. In mirroring Elizabeth, Spenser mirrors more than one just as Zeuxis relied upon five women in his depiction of Helen's beauty. However, one could also argue Spenser set for himself a more modest task. Rather than imitate Elizabeth I, Spenser claims that it was his effort to shadow her. In essence, Spenser's task was to shadow Elizabeth with unquestionable symbols of beauty. To attach such symbols to Elizabeth is a form of engaging in the *translatio* topos, and once again, the metaphysical difference between Spenser's shadowing or mirroring of Elizabeth and Elizabeth herself is rather significant. Spenser applies those symbols to his shadows of Elizabeth and not Elizabeth herself.

Spenser's effort to "shadow" Elizabeth using "antique praises" also alludes to another great philosopher of antiquity, Plato. In Book VII of his *Republic*, Plato famously makes a sharp distinction between the objects held by the puppeteers and the shadows those objects produce on the wall of the cave that the prisoners view (515c). The implication here is that shadows are undesirable. In his *Cratylus*, Plato writes, "Then let us seek true beauty, not asking whether a face is fair, or anything of the sort, for all such things appear to be in a flux" (439d). In the *Symposium*, Socrates believes that exchanging his intellectual beauty for Alcibiades' physical beauty would be unequal.

Alcibiades offers Socrates “the merest appearance of beauty,” but he would in return receive “the thing itself” (218e). The point worth making here is that it is precisely the role of the poet to provide not “beauty itself” but its mere appearance. In his self-deprecation, Spenser claims that he only attempts to shadow Elizabeth. Viewed through a Platonic lens, there is nothing flattering about shadowing. However, to be Platonic in an evaluation of shadowing is to reject the very function of the poet.

What is yet to be said is why this function of the poet is something desirable. This world is not that of Plato’s Republic; through their grafted representations, poets connect people with concepts that cannot be grasped through mere perception. Poets ought to be praised and not criticized for that. A poet’s power is in *mimesis* or imitation. According to Matthew Gumpert, “The true versus the false, knowledge versus opinion, good versus bad—all these distinctions operate along the same Platonic axis, pitting *being* against *appearance*” (14). Regarding Spenser’s poetry, or rather, the sources of Spenser’s poetry, no one can possess the Platonic *being* of Elizabeth’s beauty or Arthur’s magnificence, and one could argue that the historical persons of Elizabeth and Arthur failed to possess the Platonic being of their own beauty and magnificence. However, through his poetry, Spenser can acquaint his audience with such ideas.

For Plato, this was a source of anxiety. The difference between the philosophers and the lovers of sights and sounds is precisely that philosophers know the difference between the thing itself and its appearance, and they favor the thing itself (*Republic* 476a-b). Poetry is seductive. A good poet will represent source material so well that the audience will take that imitation to be the thing itself. Gumpert notes that “Homer’s fiction, Plato asserts, pose as truths: they seduce and deceive the listener” (14). Perhaps

the reason why fictions of a poet pose as truths is because the truths are inaccessible. Plato's forms do not exist in the material world, and the things themselves, goodness, truth, and beauty, can only be seen in their purity after a long and difficult journey out of Plato's cave. However, poets do have a way in reaching the inaccessible, and *translatio* is one important example. Poets who graft the continuity of knowledge and power from empire-to-empire acquaint their audience with what has been lost in a way that suits the poet's own rhetorical purposes. In *Grafting Helen*, Gumpert roughly defines this sense of grafting as telling "a story about coveting the past, stealing it, and covering it up" (xii). For Gumpert, the figure who best represents this practice is Helen. He claims, "Helen is this study's emblem, then, for the past as something valuable: something to be stolen, appropriated, imitated, extorted, and again, coveted" (252). In *FQ*, and in Elizabethan England, it is Elizabeth who is stolen, appropriated, imitated, extorted, and coveted. While Gumpert's study does not cover British literature, he acknowledges that such practices exist elsewhere (254). Elizabeth is the coveted figure in *FQ*, and like Helen, Spenser shows how she was something to be stolen, appropriated, imitated, extorted, and coveted to serve a variety of court interests. Perhaps there is no better way to understand Elizabeth's position in relation to her politicking courtiers.

I imagine that the initial resistance to such an idea is precisely that the Cult of the Virgin Queen should suggest that Elizabeth is not a graft of Helen, but rather, quite the opposite of Helen. While Elizabeth and Helen are both perceived to be beautiful, Elizabeth is a virgin, Helen is prostituted by Aphrodite. Furthermore, while Elizabeth is a ruler, Helen has no such claim to power. However, I want to suggest that such flattery, limitation, and accusation against both Helen and Elizabeth are questionable. Such

limitations are better representations of how modern audiences grasp Elizabeth and Helen than how Elizabeth was perceived in her own court or Helen in the Greek poetic tradition. As a symbol of power, one could argue that Elizabeth was prostituted by politically-savvy courtiers, and Euripides draws his Helen as a chaste or virgin woman held captive by Theoclymenus in Egypt.

In the tradition of *translatio*, Spenser's grafting of Elizabeth is meant to transfer knowledge and power of previous ages and empires to an idealized incarnation of Elizabeth, or more precisely, an idealized incarnation of Elizabeth. In grafting Elizabeth, Spenser is grafting Helen onto Elizabeth. At the very least, Spenser circulates Helen tokens (for Spenser's characters shadow Elizabeth only in part), and he circulates many of them. Gloriana, Belpheobe, Britomart, and Florimell all shadow Elizabeth, and in so far as they are beautiful, they shadow Helen as well. The individual characters also have their own ways of shadowing Helen. While Belpheobe is a more complicated graft who departs from Helen and the "monarch" Elizabeth, Gloriana is absent, and Britomart disarms her opponent through her beauty. However, none do it so well as Florimell. Not only does Florimell possess that gentle beauty knights fought over as Menelaus and others did for Helen, but Florimell also has a shadow or *pharmakon*. Furthermore, Florimell and Helen are both recognized to be distinct from their shadows because of their virtue: they do not offer their sexual favors to other men as their shadows do. Not all of these tokens necessarily come from Homer, but they must take inspiration from the Greek poetic tradition.

Certainly, Spenser does not appropriate material from the Greek sources as clearly as he appropriates material from Latin sources such as Virgil, Ovid, and Lucretius.



Andrew Wadoski makes a similar claim (75). However, Spenser may deserve more credit for his treatment of Greek source material than Wadoski is willing to offer.

Wadoski argues that the de Sponde/Divus Latin translation of Homer was influential and known throughout Spenser's time. It is not my intention to debunk this claim as much as it is to say that Spenser's appropriation of Greek sources may have been more meticulous and authentic than Wadoski's note implies. Maybe Gordon Teskey's claim that Spenser was the first English poet to read Homer in Greek was not so misguided. In his speculative biography of Spenser, Andrew Hadfield notes the importance of Greek at the Merchant Taylor's School, and the libraries of Spenser and his close associate, Gabriel Harvey, contained texts by Greek authors, including Euripides (*Edmund Spenser: A Life* 181).

While one can argue that Spenser was familiar with Greek sources as Teskey claims, Spenser would likely have understood medieval renditions of those Greek stories better. One source in particular that comes to mind is Chaucer's works. Chaucer had no access to Greek texts, but he references Greek characters throughout his corpus. Chaucer would only have known these characters through a Latin filter, but how would a poet like Spenser understand this framework? Spenser would have known Greek characters filtered through Latin sources in the works of Chaucer, but he would have had access to the Greek sources as well. Whatever his level of comprehension, the curriculum at the Merchant Taylor's School would have demanded Spenser show some competency in reading Greek sources. His education at Cambridge would have demanded knowledge of classical sources as well. Furthermore, in a work of *translatio*, authority is critical, so if appealing to classical sources was crucial means of demonstrating authority during the

Renaissance, then Spenser would have had to have been able to speak of his classical sources apart from their medieval filter.

Grafting is Spenser's key to the task of *translatio* he sets for himself in the proem to Book III: mirroring Elizabeth I. One particular variation of grafting Spenser practices in Book III, is what Gumpert calls *idolatry*: the valuing of the present in terms of the past. Spenser does not value Elizabeth apart from her symbols, nor does he believe that Elizabeth's qualities could be expressed apart from her symbols. Grafting Elizabeth in classical allusions removes *FQ* from the context of "living art." By invoking the classical past, Spenser appeals to an art form "dead" in its meaning. Even if Elizabeth's perceived qualities are exemplary, grafting those qualities in classical terms might as well be grafting the qualities themselves (placing a Platonic limit on this claim, one could say that the grafting is the best imitation that can be grasped). However, in removing that Platonic limit, or in modifying the axes of Platonic ontology so that the poet's imitations dead in their meaning roughly equal the idea of Platonic forms themselves, one could argue that the grafted elements, the symbols of beauty, power, and virtue are really more significant than the person or regime staking a claim to such symbols.

The only graft of Elizabeth defended by Spenser is Raleigh's *Ocean to Scinthia*, a piece of poetry in which Raleigh bestows his own antique praises upon Elizabeth through Cynthia. This difference in medium sets Spenser and Raleigh apart from the artists doomed to failure in attempting such a task. While Spenser might not have used the vocabulary of *idolatry* himself, taking his work as *idolatry* would pose complications for the politics of the Protestant Reformation. Certainly, the concept of the monarch as something of antique divinity would go along nicely with the narrative of absolute power

inextricably linked to Elizabeth I and her father, Henry VIII. However, the very idea that the best vehicle to represent their absolute power is also forbidden by the reforms surrounding their reign is a tasteful bit of irony. Through *idolatry*, Spenser makes the monarch a treasure and a gravenimage, but through Reformation iconoclasm, the reforms inextricably linked to the Tudors' hegemony made a grasp of absolute power impossible to represent. Spenser's attempt at *translatio*, presents him with the task of transferring power from past empires to the present Tudor regime, but the only way for such a mission to succeed in his poetry would be, in essence, to graft an icon of Elizabeth. The most flattering graft of Elizabeth in Book III, and arguably the entire epic, is Britomart. Julia M. Walker asserts that Britomart is "perhaps the greatest portrait of Elizabeth's reign" (172). While Spenser makes it clear in Book III that Elizabeth's or Britomart's classical counterpart ought to be Cynthia/Diana/Artemis, he also claims to have portrayed Elizabeth using "mirrours more than one" (Proem to III.6). This remark could refer to what Spenser says in his "A Letter of the Authors:"<sup>22</sup>

In that Faery Queene I meane glory in my generall intention, but in my particular I conceive the most excellent and glorious person of our souveraine the Queene, and her kingdome in Faery land . . . And yet in some places els, I doe otherwise shadow her. For considering she beareth two persons, the one of a most royall Queene or Empresse, the other a most vertuous and beautifull Lady, this latter part in some places I doe expresse in Belphoebe. (33-36)

The marking of Gloriana, the Faerie Queene, and Belphoebe, the Beautiful Diana, as allegorical representations of Elizabeth Tudor is not at all surprising. Between Gloriana, Belphoebe, and Britomart, there are already two mirrors more than one. However, that

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<sup>22</sup> Of all people, the letter is addressed to Raleigh.

should not suggest that Spenser only presents the idol of Elizabeth in three mirrors. Florimell, like Britomart and Belphoebe, makes her first appearance in Book III, and she embodies at least two of the values Spenser most frequently associates with Elizabeth, beauty and chastity. The beautiful Florimell is desired by many, but she demonstrates her virtue of chastity in reserving her love only for Marinell. What is worth noticing here is that all four of these Elizabeth grafts share in beauty and chastity, but they differ in other ways. Gloriana and Britomart are alike insofar as they are royalty whose destinies are made known to the audience in visions. Arthur's vision puts him on a quest to find Gloriana and link the proud history of the Britons with the proud history of the British. Britomart, by way of a prophetic vision, falls in love with Artegall, and it is her destiny to marry him and begin a proud line of kings and queens. Belphoebe and Florimell make no such claims to beginning or continuing a proud lineage. Their chastity leads to virginity, so in a way, they may be even better mirrors of Elizabeth than the absent Gloriana and the fierce Britomart.

Beauty and chastity are not the only shared dynamics among these characters, Elizabeth, and Helen. Britomart and Belphoebe are fighters, and they are also invulnerable. Britomart's armor shields her against Artegall's blows, and she attacks her challengers with that enchanted Heben spear. Belphoebe defends her own way of life against Trompart and Bragadocchio, and she (now referred to as Diana) responds to her voyeur, Faunas, with emasculation in the *Mutability Cantos*.<sup>23</sup> These traits are not so much of Helen, but they are very much so a graft of Elizabeth. Furthermore, the lover's quarrel between Belphoebe and Timias bears an uncanny resemblance to Elizabeth and Sir Walter Raleigh when his eyes landed elsewhere. Gloriana and Florimell do not share

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<sup>23</sup> This is a graft of Ovid's myth of Diana and Actaeon.

in this form of physical force. On the contrary, Gloriana and Florimell are often marked by their absence. In Gloriana's case, the absence is absolute while Florimell's absence is more so marked by the presence of the False Florimell. What I am suggesting here is that Spenser's grafts of Helen seem to have two axes: one of beauty and chastity that Elizabeth shares with Helen and one of justice and power that is constitutive of Elizabeth as a figure of the imperium. After shrouding the queen in such powerful symbols, is there anything of Elizabeth Tudor that remains?

### **Britomart**

Britomart stands as the de facto choice to begin any extended analysis of Spenser's allegorical Elizabeth for a number of reasons. One practical angle here is simply that Spenser writes more about Britomart than any other character who appears in *FQ*. Britomart certainly seems to play a larger role in events that take place outside of her own legend than the other knights who appear in other books. The only possible rival, fittingly, is the magnificent prince, Arthur, and his own "Legend of Magnificence" was never published. Redcrosse Knight, Guyon, and Artegall certainly make important appearances in other books, but those episodes are not necessarily triumphs of those characters. Redcrosse Knight shows himself prone to lust at Castle Joyous. Guyon is defeated in one-on-one combat. Artegall places second in the tournament for Florimell. In fact, these characters are often shown in a light that makes them seem inferior to Britomart, and Britomart's appearances outside of Book III are more than arbitrary aesthetics. Her actions in Book IV and Book V at Satyrane's tournament and saving Artegall from Radigund are some of the most heroic actions of any character in *FQ*. In book IV, Britomart defeats strong competition in a tournament to win (False) Florimell.

In book V, Britomart rescues Artegall after he is taken prisoner by Radigund and the Amazons. Clearly, Britomart has a kind of importance in *FQ* that other characters simply do not have. In the proem to Book III, Spenser suggests why. Britomart's virtue is chastity: "the fairest virtue, far about the rest" (III.proem.1).

The superiority of Britomart's virtue of chastity is made evident in her first appearance. Rather than present his captive, Acrasia, to Gloriana himself, Guyon instead sends the defeated witch on her own to seek forgiveness from the Faerie Queene and opts to travel with Arthur to rescue Florimell (III.1.2). Guyon's alternate route puts him on a crash course with Britomart, and after crossing-spears with her, Guyon falls with "great shame and sorrow" (III.1.7). While this encounter may imply the superiority of Britomart's virtue of chastity over Guyon's virtue of temperance, the way Guyon reacts to his defeat represents a typical conflict between Elizabeth and her dissenting gentry. When Guyon realizes that it was a woman who brought him to the ground, "Full of disdainfull wrath," he rises to challenge Britomart again, and Spenser expresses the degree of Guyon's rage when he articulates that the Knight of Temperance would sooner die than suffer another defeat against a "single damzell" (III.i.8-9). Guyon rages not only at the fact that he has fallen for the first time, but he also rages at the fact that it was a woman who stands as his superior. It is only the Palmer who can quell his rage when he realizes that Guyon is no match for Britomart and her enchanted Heben spear.

Britomart's contest of arms with Guyon is one of many battles of the sexes in *FQ*. The gendered nature of the conflict in this case is even more evident because Guyon expresses his rage in gendered terms, so the outcome of the fight also ought to be expressed in gendered terms. Britomart's triumph is Spenser's way of demonstrating the

superiority of a female virtue over a male virtue. This kind of gendered conflict begins Spenser's circulation of Helen tokens in Britomart.

Guyon expresses his contempt for Britomart in gendered terms, but the more significant gendered conflicts for Britomart involved her prophesized husband, Artegall. Britomart and Artegall not only showcase Spenserian ideas of the superiority of female virtue to male virtue, but they circulate a token of a classical allusion insofar as the two very closely reflect the relationship between Helen and Menelaus in *Trojan Women*. When Menelaus first approaches Helen in Euripides' *Trojan Women*, his objective is not to listen to what the woman has to say. He claims, "I did not come to talk with you. I came to kill" (905). Helen's virtue is her beauty and her desirability. Menelaus' virtue is his brute strength. The battle between Menelaus and Helen is one in which brute force and beauty fight and beauty wins. However, it should be noted that this is but a token. Guyon and Britomart are not a past or future couple, but Menelaus and Helen are both. The token being circulated here is the superiority of a female's virtue over a male's virtue, and this token is repeatedly circulated when Britomart is challenged. At Castle Joyous, Britomart rescues Florimell from the six lusty knights because of the superiority of her female virtue. Inside Busirane's chamber, Britomart rescues Amoret because of the superiority of her female virtue. At Satyrane's tournament in Book IV, Britomart rescues the False Florimell from, yet again, lusty knights with her enchanted Heben spear. However, one of the knights she bests in that tournament is her destined lover, Artegall, and this is the beginning of a Helen token that develops into a more fully-fledged allusion to Helen and Menelaus in *Trojan Women*. After being defeated by Britomart at Satyrane's tournament, Spenser dramatizes Artegall's rage.

But thereat greatly grudged *Arthegall*,  
 And much repynd, that both of the victors meede,  
 And eke of honour she did him forestall.  
 Yet mote he not withstand, what was decreed;  
 But inly thought of that desightfull deede  
 Fit time t'awaite auenged for to bee. (IV.v.9).

Artegall attempts to satisfy his need for vengeance in the next canto (vi). After Britomart bests Artégall's traveling companion, Scudamor, he rides against her, "full of dispiteous ire" (IV.vi.11). After falling from his horse, Artégall strikes a blow against Britomart, "So sorely he her stroke, that thence it glaunst/Adowne her back, the which it fairely blest" (IV.vi.13). The strike was mighty, but it does not break Britomart's armor and draw blood. Artégall strikes again, but even with the force of Jove's thundering fury, the Knight of Justice still fails to pierce Britomart's armor.

Yet she no whit dismayd, her steed forstooke,  
 And casting from her that enchanted lance,  
 Vnto her sword and shield her soone betooke;  
 And therewithal at him right furiously she strooke. (IV.vi.14)

When she retaliates, Britomart's blow does indeed draw blood from Artégall (IV.vi.15). Judith H. Anderson argues that the reason for this not simply because Britomart's armor is her chastity.

The armor is at once multivalent and response to specific context. By this point in the poem it signals her agency and specifically her will to resist and act freely. It further represents her virtue, not merely in its moral form, but also its



Machiavellian *virtu*, control and ability to effect, and Latin *virtus*, “power, strength, value. (89-90)

While Anderson states that Britomart’s armor is thought to symbolize her masculinity, she also points out that the armor never receives the pun of being a mail/mayle/male that Spenser frequently applies to other knights, thus retaining its feminine identity (90). The point at which this battle between the sexes comes to a halt is when Artegall perceives Britomart’s beauty.

From his reuengefull purpose shronke abacke,  
 And cruell sword out of fingers slacke  
 Fell downe to ground, as if the had sence,  
 And felt some ruth, or sence his hand did lacke,  
 Or both of them did thinke, obedience  
 To doe to so diuine a beauties excellence. (IV.vi.21)

This is the point at which Spenser engages in full *idolatry* of Britomart as a Helen figure, for beauty is always Helen’s defense against her attackers. Furthermore, Artegall enters conflict with Britomart as Menelaus does with Helen. Both aim to fight the women, not talk with them, and what brings the conflict to an end is not strength but beauty. In *Trojan Women*, Hecuba urges Menelaus not to look upon Helen because none can resist the persuasive force of her beauty. In the case of Artegall and Britomart, it is once again the perception of the beauty that brings the conflict to an end. Artegall ceases his assault and loses the battle, not because he succumbs to Britomart’s force, but because he succumbs to Britomart’s beauty.

Artegall's sentiments echo those of Robert Deveraux, Earl of Essex. Deveraux was once thought to be a suitor to the queen, but when it became a reality that the two would never marry, he quickly fell out of favor. It can be argued that Spenser regarded Deveraux as a potential match for the queen, and the way Artgall's story plays out in *FQ* bears an uncanny resemblance to Deveraux's service to Elizabeth, at least up until the point of rebellion. In a dedicatory sonnet addressed to Deveraux, Spenser refers to him as a "MAGnificke Lord, whose vertues excellent/Doe merit a most famous Poets witt" (DS 6 1-2). Magnificence is Arthur virtue, so for Spenser to attach such a term to Deveraux would be to identify him as Arthur's equal, *Arthegall*.

Artegall seeks revenge against Britomart because she bested him in Satyrane's tournament and deprived him of his prize, the False Florimell, and what initially drew the ire of Deveraux was the non-renewal of his sweet wine monopoly and primary source of income, the seizing of something he thought to be his. In both cases the female seizes an asset from the male, and the Knight of Justice, Artgall ought to be a qualified judge of what is "mine and thine." However, like his classical counterpart, Jove, Artgall may have a warped perspective when his own desires are part of the equation. Of course, Deveraux can only make a tenuous claim to such virtue. However, it is the case that both men seek revenge against the woman who they believe to have seized what rightfully belongs to them that builds the allegory, and there is some prophetic irony in the sense that both men fail in their respective conquests.

Artegall's quest is appointed to him by the Faerie Queene (V.i.4), and while the adventure concludes with Artgall besting the tyrant, Grandtorto, a critical point of allegory between Artgall and Deveraux concerns the knight's captivity in Radigund's

castle while Deveraux was ultimately left without support in Ireland. When Artegall and Talus encounter the hapless Turpine, Turpine is at the mercy of a number of well-armed amazons, and he is just one of many knights to be captured by Radigund.

For all those knights, the which by force or guile  
 She doth subdue, she fowly doth entreate.  
 First she doth them of warlike armes despoile,  
 And cloth them in women's weedes: And then with threat  
 Doth them compel to worke, to earne their meat,  
 To spin, to card, to sew, to wash, to wring;  
 Ne doth she giue them other thing to eat,  
 But bread and water, or like feeble thing,  
 Them to disable from reuenge aduenturing. (V.iv.31)

Turpine finds himself facing a death sentence because he refused to suffer such feminizing humiliation (V.iv.32), and Artegall, moved by Turpine's sad story, pledges to overthrow Radigund for her crimes against knights (V.iv.34). However, Artegall's efforts against Radigund are not so successful. When Radigund sees Turpine fighting on the field, she smites him and "Proudly stands ouer, and a while doth pause/To hear the piteous beast pleading her plantiffe cause" (V.iv.40). Artegall balances the conflict with a blow of his own against Radigund (V.iv.42), and the fighting eventually ceases at nightfall. It is at that time that Radigund offers terms to Artegall: should she defeat him in single combat he would, "euer to my lore be bound/and so will I, if me he vanquish may" (V.iv.49).

Such terms ought to have favor Artegall, and when the fight begins, it seems as if he will prevail. However, after Artegall strikes Radigund and “downe she fell vpon a grassie field/In senceless swoune, as if her life forsooke” (V.v.11), the Knight of Justice once again proves to be susceptible to the charms of beauty.

But when as he discoursed had her face,  
 He saw his sens straunge astonishment,  
 A miracle of natures goodly grace,  
 In her fair visage voide of ornament,  
 But bath'd in bloud and sweat together ment;  
 Which in the rudeness of that euill plight,  
 Bewrayd the the signes of feature excellent:  
 Like as Moone in the foggie winters night,  
 Doth seeme to be her self, through darkned be her light. (V.v.12)

When Radigund perceives Artegall to be defenseless and weaponless, “With fresh assault vpon him she did fly” (V.v.14), and Artegall becomes bound to her law. She then humiliates Artegall, “Tho with her sword on him she flatling strooke/In signe of true subiection to her power, and Turpine fate is to be hanged” (V.v.18).

After receiving word from Talus of Artegall’s defeat, Britomart speeds to rescue her betrothed. The only she stops she makes is at the Isis Church. In laying the scene, Spenser describes the Osiris of legend as “the iustest man aliue, and truest did appeare” (V.vii.2), but is this just an aesthetic device contributing to the remoteness and décor of the “Legend of Justice”? Throughout this project, I have taken the stance that Spenser is not interested in simple aesthetic devices (such symbols always fulfill the aim of

*translatio imperii*), and I maintain that position here as well. The Isis and Osiris symbolism is not only applied to Artegall as the Knight of Justice, but it is applied to Britomart as well. The point of the Egyptian myth is a story of succession, and Osiris' resurrection allows for Horus' conception and the restoration of order to Egypt. This symbol enhances the prophecy of Merlin in Book III, canto ii, that Britomart and Artegall are to marry and produce a dynasty. However, after Britomart defeats Radigund (V.vii.34), she perceives Artegall as anything but a magnificent prince.

Ah my deare Lord, what sigh is this (quoth she)  
 What May-game hath misfortune made of you?  
 Where is that dreadful manly look? Where be  
 Those mightly palmes, the which ye wont t'embew  
 In bloud of Kings, and great hoastes to subdew?  
 Could ought on earth so wondrous a change haue wrought,  
 As to haue robde you of that manly hew?  
 Could so great courage stouped haue to ought?  
 Then farewell fleshly force; I see thy pride is nought. (V.vii.40)

Of course, Artegall's condition is no surprise to the audience. After falling in combat against Radigund, he is bound to a woman's wear and work. The problem is that such an appearance is not at all befitting of Arthur's equal.<sup>24</sup> Spenser shows Artegall/Arthegall to be equal to Arthur only in name. *Arthegall* (an alternative spelling often used by Spenser) may mean "Arthur's equal," but Artegall never lives up to being Arthur's equal. In demonstrating the superiority of Uther's son, Arthur's magnificence is never doubted,

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<sup>24</sup> Merlin also capitulates to Britomart that Artegall is a son of Gorlois, making Artegall Arthur's half-brother (III.iii.27). However, this also means that Arthur is the son of a king with Artegall is only a son of a duke.

so I want to suggest that this makes the Isis and Osiris allusion all the more important in symbolizing Britomart and Artegall. The allusion removes Artegall and Britomart from the context of living art. Like Osiris, Artegall has fallen, and like Isis, Britomart plays the role of the redeemer. The importance of the Isis and Osiris allusion is not only that it justifies Artegall's fall, but it also serves to situate Arthur's equal against the allegorical Elizabeth. Like Osiris, Artegall becomes a kingmaker, and like Isis, Britomart is worshipped as a goddess. The dynasty Spenser realizes through a prophetic vision is between Britomart and Artegall, not Arthur and Gloriana.

So there a while they afterwards remained,  
 Him to refresh, and her late wounds to heale:  
 During which space she there as Princess rained,  
 And changing all that forme of common weale,  
 The liberty of women did repeale,  
 Which they had long vsurpt: and them restoring  
 To mens subiection, did true Iustice deale:  
 That all they as a Godesse her adoring,  
 Her wisdom did admire, and hearked to her loring (V.vii.42)

This stanza has attracted a great deal of attention, and the idea of how Spenser mirrors Elizabeth with "mirrours more than one" resurfaces here.<sup>25</sup> Could Britomart and Radigund both shadow Elizabeth in some way? The relationship between Britomart and Elizabeth is practically taken for granted now, but Radigund has certainly not received

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<sup>25</sup> See Phillips, James E. "The Background of Spenser's Attitude Towards Women Rulers." *Huntington Library Quarterly*, vol. 5, 1941-42, pp. 5-32. Idem. "The Woman Ruler in Spenser's Faerie Queene." *Huntington Library Quarterly*, vol. 5, 1941-1942, 211-234. Woods, Suzanne. "Spenser and the Power of Women." *Huntington Library Quarterly*, vol. 48, 1985, pp. 141-158. Bowman, Mary R. "'she there as Princess rained': Spenser's Figure of Elizabeth." *Renaissance Quarterly*, vol. 43, no. 3, 1990, pp. 509-528.

the same treatment. Kerby Neill identifies Radigund as an allegory for Mary Stuart, and perhaps Radigund's attraction to Artegall is a way of expressing a lustrous quality Mary Stuart was perceived to have. However, so much is shared in these fights. Artegall becomes bound to Britomart and Radigund because he falls in exactly the same way: as a knight disarmed by beauty. Susanne Woods tracks the differences between Artegall's fights against Britomart and Radigund, and the outcome of the Britomart and Radigund episodes are radically different. While Radigund humiliates Artegall and subjects him to feminization, Britomart restores justice to the island. Furthermore, Britomart's restoration of justice and order fulfills the Isis role, while Radigund represents the person who upset that order. Susanne Woods does not focus on the Isis and Osiris allusion, but she does make the mirroring of Elizabeth by Britomart explicit:

Women's subservience to laws made and interpreted by men presumably represented the natural order of things; Elizabeth's reign considered a God-given exception, made no substantial difference in cultural attitudes or their theoretical justification. (144)

Mary R. Bowman adds that Britomart's restoration of the masculine order is what elevates her above the hierarchy the natural world and its politics, completing her apotheosis from "Princess" to "Godesse" (521), but the apotheosis from princess to goddess is not a straightforward symbol of Britomart's or Elizabeth's "transcendent" political power. In her apotheosis, it is important to note well that Britomart surrenders her position as ruler and restores the reign of men in the "former" Radegone. In effect, Spenser is crafting an allegory of Elizabethan court life that mystifies the female monarch and empowers the male bureaucrats. According to Louis Adrian Montrose,

The vexed relationship of gender and power that saturates Spenser's poetic writings needs to be seen not only as instancing a pervasively masculinist early modern culture, but also as a particular late Elizabethan articulation of the interplay between dominant gender paradigms and emergent political paradigms.

("Spenser and the Elizabethan Political Imaginary" 907)

Of course, the emergent political paradigm is that of the female monarch but taken in consideration with Bowman's comment that Elizabeth's reign was "a God-given exception" to the natural order of things, Montrose's observation of Spenser's pervasive masculinity provokes questions about Elizabeth's real political power. As the figurehead of the Elizabethan Political Imaginary, Elizabeth occupies an important place as a symbol. However, in taking her place as symbol, does Elizabeth abdicate her place as a ruler all-but-symbolically?

The Cult of the Virgin Queen certainly presents Elizabeth as a transcendent being, a monarch who has completed the apotheosis from princess to goddess, and Montrose argues that the Cult "made the queen the inviolable object of universal desire" (917). Spenser's Britomart stands as a poor representative for the "inviolable object of universal desire." Britomart's virginity is destined to end. Virginity is not Britomart's virtue, for she is the Knight of Chastity. I would also suggest that Britomart is not desired by all because she is shown in conflict with men more often than she is shown being pursued by men. However, Spenser shadows Elizabeth with "mirroures more than one," and the other dimensions of the cult attitude surrounding Elizabeth are certainly shown in the other mirrors. While Britomart may be the best representation of apotheosis, Belpheobe



represents inviolable virginity, and Florimell certainly presents an aura of universal desirability.

### **Belphoebe**

Belphoebe's very namesake denotes virginity, for she is the "Beautiful Diana." Like Diana, Belphoebe uses her physical force to preserve virginity against those who would violate her. This is evident from her first appearance in the epic. When Braggadocchio and his squire, Trompart, espy Belphoebe, Spenser speaks of the blinding fire in the Beautiful Diana's eyes.

In her faire eyes two liuing lamps did flame,  
Kindle aboue at th'heauenly makers light,  
And darted fyrie beames out of the same,  
So passing persant, and so wondrous bright,  
That quite bereau'd the rash beholders sight:  
In them the blinded god his lustfull fyre (II.iii.23)

Spenser, aware of this power, questions his ability to represent Belphoebe's beauty, "How shall frayle pen descriue her heauenly face/For feare through want of skill her beauty to disgrace" (II.iii.25). Of course, such a sentiment is certainly a precursor to Spenser's self-deprecation in the proem to Book III. However, in this effort to bestow antique praises onto persons fit, the poet succumbs to his fear when he ceases the next stanza's closing alexandrine.

All in a silken Camus lylly whight,  
Purfled vpon with many folded plight,  
Which all aboue bespinckled was throughout,

With golden aygulets, that glistred bright,  
 Like twinckling stares and all the the skirt about  
 Was hemd with golden fringe (II.iii.26)

This Spenserian stanza's alexandrine is cut short at the point that Spenser would predictably describe the subject's crotch. In "The Elizabethan Subject and the Spenserian Text," Montrose maintains that Spenser, though he does it in protest, cuts that alexandrine short because he cannot violate the Virgin Queen in such a way (328). In doing so, Spenser seems wiser than Braggadocchio's foolish squire, Trompart.

Such when as hartlesse Trompart did her vew,  
 He was dismayed in his coward minde,  
 And doubted, whether he himself should shew,  
 Or fly away, or bide alone behind:  
 Both feare and hope he in her face did finde, (II.iii.32)

Of course, Trompart succumbs to temptation and continues to gaze upon Belpheobe. When she confronts him, Trompart pleads his defense in terms fit for the Elizabethan Political Imaginary and the Cult of the Virgin Queen:

O Goddesse, (for such I thee take to bee)  
 For nether doth thy face terrestrial shew,  
 Nor voice sound mortall; I auow to thee,  
 Such wounded beast, as that, I did not see,  
 Sith earst into this forrest wild I came.  
 But mote thy goodlyhed forgiue it mee,  
 To weete, which of the Gods shall thee name,

That vnto thee dew worship I may rightly frame. (II.iii.33)

The Trompart and Belpheobe encounter is laced with both allegory and allusion. Merritt Y. Hughes claims, “It may seem absurd to compare Trompart, who is traditionally identified with the mischief-making valet of Elizabeth's unpopular suitor, the Duc d'Alencon, to Aeneas. The replies of Aeneas and of Trompart, however, have too much in common for accident” (697). Of course, the evidence Hughes draws upon is Trompart’s quip, “Nor voice sound mortall; I auow to thee,” for it matches Aeneas’s claim “your voice does not have a human ring” (I.327-328). However, while Trompart remarks that he merely takes Belpheobe to be a goddess, Aeneas claims of Venus disguised as Diana, *o dea certe*. This is a rather significant difference. Trompart implies a doubt where Aeneas expresses certainty. Trompart makes a claim about his perception where Aeneas makes a claim about the woman who stands before him.

I want to suggest that the allusion can only be pushed so far. Trompart and Braggadocchio do not encounter Belpheobe in the way Aeneas encounters Venus. An argument stating that Spenser was looking to belittle Roman antiquity also misses the mark. In the Arthuriana, Romans who are also Trojans are not so besmirched. Such an attack would also strike Brutus. Only Romans conquered by Belinus and Brennius or Arthur are embarrassed in such a way, so what is the meaning of the *Aeneid* allusion? Is the allusion purely aesthetic? David Scott Wilson-Okamura, against Montrose, claims that the ceased alexandrine is exactly that, a form of aesthetic *discipleship* (“Belpheobe and Gloriana” 49). He points to five other instances in which ceased alexandrines allude to Virgil’s *Aeneid*. Among them are Arthur’s duel with Pyrochles, which takes Aeneas’s duel with Turnus as its model, and Paridell’s engagement in the *translatio* topos as he

tells the story of how the Trojans came to Britain.<sup>26</sup> Perhaps something worth pointing out here is that in drawing allusions to Aeneas in both Trompart or Braggadocchio and Arthur, Spenser does not fix any particular character as an allegorical Aeneas in his epic. The allusion of Belpheobe to Dido/Elissa insofar as Belpheobe is a mirror for Elizabeth is far more important for Spenser than the allusion to Aeneas, but even that allegory is broken if one pays close enough attention to how Trompart and Aeneas recognize their respective women as goddesses.

The more important point about the allegory and allusion in this episode is its connection to the *translatio* topos. In this allusion, Belpheobe, a mirror of Elizabeth, is compared to Venus. Venus certainly has an important role to play in the transfer of power from Troy to Greece and then to Rome, for she is the mother of the hero who will found a new home for the Trojans. However, Trompart and Braggadocchio are less suited to play the role of Aeneas and far better suited to play the role of Jean de Simier and the Duc d'Alencon. Like Simier, Trompart plays the role of wooing the goddess, and also like Simier, Trompart puts on this act in the service of one who would have been perceived as a man of hollow virtue in Protestant England. In other words, Braggadocchio, Spenser's allegorical Francois, Duc d'Alencon, represents a threat to court interests of a political and theological nature. The Cult of the Virgin Queen is the countermeasure for that threat, and Montrose further develops the allegory of this episode in terms of the Elizabethan Political Imaginary.

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<sup>26</sup> I take issue with Wilson-Okamura calling this a form of Virgilian discipleship. Wilson-Okamura claims that Paridell's story takes the form of Aeneas's story of how the Trojan's abandoned Troy. However, Paridell's story is not based on a Virgilian source. Of course, the original source material is Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia regum Britanniae* or Wace's *Roman de Brut*.

This served [the Cult of the Virgin Queen], at least in part, as a coded assertion of opposition to the queen's marriage negotiations with the Duc d'Alencon, an alliance that was widely perceived to represent a threat to the future of the Protestant English commonwealth. From this perspective, the quasi-idolatrous “cult of the virgin queen” had its origins in a symbolic resistance to royal will. (“Spenser and the Elizabethan Political Imaginary” 917)

Montrose’s observation is important for two reasons. 1) It emphasizes the importance of how the Cult of the Virgin Queen was an entity of significant political power, and 2) it shows the Cult of the Virgin Queen as something that held power over Elizabeth. In this case, the royal will to romance is denied in favor of safeguarding political and religious sovereignty in England. While the initial impetus for the Cult of the Virgin Queen was to restrain the queen’s will, Montrose goes on to say that the final phase of the Cult of the Virgin Queen was to “catalyze popular support in the face of radical and potentially destabilizing religious and political initiatives and widespread socio-economic discontent” (“Spenser and the Elizabethan Political Imaginary” 917). Montrose makes this claim in such a way that he makes it seem as if the Cult of the Virgin Queen had undergone some revision in its function. However, that is not an easy case to make. Whether the consequence of the Cult’s actions was to restrain the queen or safeguard her reign, the end result was the perpetuity of the regime. In its final phase, one could argue that the mission of the Cult of the Virgin Queen was really no different than it was at its inception.

Montrose’s Elizabethan Political Imaginary, of which the Cult of the Virgin Queen is a rather significant part, appears to conflict with Spenser’s mirror of Elizabeth,

Belphoebe. While Montrose locates real political power in the Elizabethan Political Imaginary, Spenser's mirror of Elizabeth, Belphoebe, exercises power herself. It is not some external force, but Belphoebe herself who engages with Trompart and Braggadocchio. In his plea for Belphoebe to accompany him, Braggadocchio claims, "The wood is fit for beasts, the court is fit for thee" (II.iii.39), and Belphoebe provides her own defense in the next stanza.

Who so in pompe of prowde estate (quoth she)  
Does swim, and baths him selfe in courtly blis,  
Does waste his days in darke obscuritee  
And in obliuion euer is buried is (II.iii.40).

After Belphoebe's defense of her lifestyle, Braggadocchio and Trompart depart her forest, "Perdy (said Trompart) lett her pas at will/Least by her presence daunger mote befall" (II.iii.44). The implication is that the two fools (as Spenser often refers to them) fear Belphoebe's divine power. Belphoebe again demonstrates her power when she perceives Timias's and Amoret's lustful behavior in the forest.

She left the gentle Squire with Amoret:  
There she him found by that new louely mate,  
Who lay the whiles in swoune, full sadly set,  
From her faire eyes wiping the deawy wet  
Which stoffly stild, and kissing them atweene. (IV.vii.35)

The result of this episode is Belphoebe in rage "Yet held her wrathfull hand from vengeance sore" (IV.vii.36) and flees the forest while Timias casts aside his weapons and lives as melancholic hermit.

The grip of Timias's lovesick despair is made evident when Arthur sees *BELPHEBE* engraved on every tree outside Timias's solitary abode (IV.vii.46). Obviously, this is a demonstration of what sort of power Spenser's mirror of Elizabeth holds over Prince Arthur's squire. A great number of critics have identified this episode as an allegory between Elizabeth and Sir Walter Raleigh. Upton's account in the 1751 variorum edition is the earliest. Jewel Wurtsburgh in *Two Centuries of Spenser Scholarship* (86), and Josephine Waters Bennett in *The Evolution of the Faerie Queene* (148-149) also makes such a claim. The allegory has not gone uncontested. For example, Edwin Greenlaw draws a much softer allegory between Elizabeth and the Earl of Leicester (131-132). While the ending for Raleigh is on the scaffold, the end for the Earl of Leicester is knightly service. This is of course, befitting of *FQ* in the sense that Spenser promises redemption for Timias (IV.vii.47). However, in more recent scholarship on the Raleigh/Elizabeth allegory, William Oram claims that "in discussing Raleigh's relation to Elizabeth, he [Spenser] needed not only to avoid antagonizing Raleigh but the Queen herself who was not fond of criticism, however gentle" (349).

I want to suggest that the allegory between Elizabeth and Raleigh or Elizabeth and the Earl of Leicester stops short. As Oram has surveyed, a critic may take her pick on what she deems as evidence of the allegory. Is it the fact that Raleigh did not see his flirtations with Elizabeth Throckmorton and their clandestine marriage as a crime that stops the allegory short, or is it the fact that Belpheobe at one point heals Timias's wounds with a tobacco leaf that Spenser extends the allegory (III.v.32)? My interest in analyzing the episodes with Trompart and Timias is that they do represent Belpheobe as a

figure of some intimidating power. However, my question is whether or not that power belongs to Elizabeth herself or the Elizabethan Political Imaginary.

Belphoebe, despite what Spenser says in the Letter to Raleigh, is a much better representative of the Montrose's Elizabethan Political Imaginary than she is of Elizabeth Tudor. Something David Scott Wilson-Okamura was keen to observe is how Belphoebe differs from a typical heroine. He claims, "The exception is Belphoebe: unlike the other women warriors in Renaissance epic, she refuses domestication at every level; she never falls in love and obviously she never gets married" (53). Belphoebe's differences from the standard heroines of Renaissance epic also stand out as an obvious criticism in a work that focuses so heavily on dynasty and royal lineage. In essence, Belphoebe appears to take the blame for Elizabeth's "refusal" to marry and produce an heir. According to Wilson-Okamura, "Why if he means Elizabeth, does Spenser blame Diana? The answer is because he does *not* mean Gloriana. Gloriana is the same person as Diana, or Belphoebe, but she is not the same thing" (67). I see that this line of criticism can be pushed further. Spenser avoids criticizing the queen herself, and he instead attacks the political imaginary surrounding her and personified in her. Once again, Elizabeth J. Bellamy's observation that Elizabeth Tudor was less so a historical person and more so the field of cultural meanings personified in her looms large. Spenser's treatment of Belphoebe as a very particular and powerful cultural idea is evidence of his acute awareness of such a distinction.

One could argue that Belphoebe is the kind of person Elizabeth I would like to have been, one who refused domestication. Belphoebe is the independent goddess of the forest. She has no consort, and her virtue of virginity/celebrity, of course, is a relief from



the royal burden of producing an heir. When lustful eyes attach themselves to her, Belphoebe responds with a threat. However, it was not Elizabeth herself but the Elizabethan Political Imaginary, specifically the Cult of the Virgin Queen that maintained Elizabeth's virginity. This is evident from the Duc d'Alencon case.

The distance created between Belphoebe and Elizabeth herself by allegory is also supported by way of allusion. While Britomart (and as I will argue in the next section Florimell) receive Helen tokens, Belphoebe receives the Diana token. This perspective, of course, emphasizes the classical tokens attached to Belphoebe. However, in a thought-provoking article titled, "Belphoebe's Misdeeming of Timias," Allan H. Gilbert attaches a medieval token to Belphoebe that is in no way becoming of Elizabeth: Guinevere. Gilbert claims that Lancelot's affair with Elayne and Timias's kissing of Belphoebe's sister, Amoret, circulate tokens of a knight banished by his lover because of a physical transgression she had witnessed (622).

While the previous two chapters of this project have emphasized Spenser's debt to the Arthuriana, I have only stressed the importance of Arthur's character remaining the same. Spenser's Arthur, like those of Geoffrey and Malory, is a conqueror. That does not extend to Elizabeth and Guinevere as queens. While Elizabeth is represented as the inviolable object of desire, Guinevere is violated in the worst ways. Though he does not develop the infamous affair, Geoffrey of Monmouth makes mention of it. Wace sends Guinevere to a nunnery after her affair with Mordred. Chretien de Troyes's Guinevere and his Knight of the Cart circulate a similar token of shame that Gilbert addresses. Finally, Malory escalates Lancelot's affair with Guinevere into something that leads to the demise of both Arthur and his kingdom. Though it is extremely unlikely, I do not

preclude the possibility of Arthur abandoning his search for the Faerie Queene, Gloriana, and marrying a Guinevere figure in a completed *FQ*. However, Belpheobe is obviously not that figure. In some ways Belpheobe might shadow Elizabeth, just as Spenser claims in his Letter to Raleigh, but in some ways, she does not. My purpose here is to argue that the ways in which she shadows Elizabeth really shadow the cultural meanings personified in Elizabeth by way of the Cult of the Virgin Queen.

### **Florimell**

Because this chapter opened with Gumpert's idea of poetic grafting and how this form of *translatio studii et imperii* straddles a number of Platonic axes: being and appearance, form and shadow, true and false, reality and illusion, original and imitation, it is fitting that it closes with an analysis of Spenser's character who so comprehensively embodies such philosophical perplexities. Lyndsey McCulloch claims that the False Florimell is a kind of "false icon" that tests the poet and the poet's audience's susceptibility to charm (70). According to Kenneth Borris, the False Florimell represents the corrupting siren song censored in Plato's Republic (209). Furthering this observation, Genevieve Guenther remarks that Florimell stands as an excellent representative for the affective power of aesthetics (3-6). The fact that Arthur pursues Florimell because he believes or wishes that she is the Faerie Queene of his vision speaks volumes about how Spenser represents the power of appearance.

But gentle Sleepe enuyde him any rest;  
 In stead thereof sad sorrow, and disdain  
 Of his hard hap did vexe his noble brest,  
 And thousand fancies bett his ydle brayne

With their light wings, the sights of semblants vaine:

Oft did he wish, that Lady faire mote bee

His faery Queene, for whom he did complaine:

Or that his Faery Queene were such, as shee:

And euer hasty Night he blamed bitterlie. (III.iv.54)

Without the gratification of being with Florimell, Arthur endures a sleepless night in Belphoebe's forest and finds himself in "sad sorrow and disdain." The question is, and this is of Platonic importance as well, does Arthur want Gloriana, *the* Faerie Queene of his vision, or does he want Florimell *to be* the Faerie Queene of his vision? Perhaps this question is covered by Plato in the *Meno* when Socrates and Meno discuss whether or not virtue is merely the desire for apparently good things or desiring good things and also possessing them (77a-e). Plato's answer is that the desire for apparently good things is common to everyone; it is those who have the power to acquire and keep good things who are virtuous. In this case, Gloriana stands analogous to the good or true, and Florimell stands analogous to what is believed to be good or true. While Plato's answer is clearly that all desire is for the good and not what is merely believed to be good, Arthur's answer is not so obvious.

Arthur's case is a radicalization of this Platonic problem. He does not merely desire Florimell, believing her to be Gloriana. Arthur wishes for "his Faery Queene were such, as shee [Florimell]." To give the appearance of Florimell's beauty that kind of power threatens the very nature of the distinction between being and appearance. When Florimell makes her first appearance in *FQ*, Spenser makes the force of her attraction evident: "Which outrage when those gentle knights did see/Full of great enuy and fell

gealously" (III.i.18). The fact that Arthur not only pursues Florimell because he believes her to be the Faerie Queene of his vision but *desires* her to be the Faerie Queene of his vision further emphasizes the force of her attraction. Perhaps it is also Spenser's way of saying that even a prince who is the embodiment of magnificence is susceptible to the charms of appearance. Furthermore, Arthur's fascination with Florimell provokes interesting questions about whether or not Florimell is yet another mirror of Elizabeth.

This force of attraction is not at all uncommon in Spenser's poetry. Redcrosse Knight abandons Una, the embodiment of truth and faith, at the end of the poem's first canto, and he succumbs to the charms of the False Duessa, Fidessa. However, Duessa is not attractive. Her horrid nature is revealed: "Which when the knights beheld, amazd they were/And wondred at so fowle deformed wight" (I.viii.49), and perhaps it is because of her unmasking that Redcrosse Knight is able to reform and become the Knight of Holinesse. Duessa is not a counterpart for the True and False Florimell. A better counterpart for Florimell is Acrasia from the "Legend of Temperance." Even Guyon, the Knight of Temperance, one who can resist all that Mammon has to offer, shows some susceptibility to charm when he sees the maidens at Bower of Bliss, "Now when they spyde the knight to slacke his pace/Them to behold, and in his sparkling face/The secrete signes of kindled lust appeare (II.xii.68). In the next stanza, Guyon recovers because the old Palmer pushes him forward. However, when Guyon reaches the heart of the Bower of Bliss, there is no unmasking of Acrasia revealing her to be something ugly. While my claim may be controversial, perhaps Guyon's overly-enthusiastic destruction of the Bower of Bliss (II.xii.84) is an expression of his frustration in abstaining from such pleasure. Certainly Florimell is much more like Acrasia than Duessa because not even

the False Florimell is revealed to be something ugly. She is perceived to be beautiful up until the moment she vanishes.

Like Britomart, Florimell circulates tokens of Helen's beauty. However, consistent with my analysis of Britomart, the Helen tokens that Spenser grafts onto Florimell are not of Homer's Helen. Euripides's *Helen* dramatizes a number of Greek sources that explain Helen's departure for Troy. Gorgias defends Helen by presenting her as a victim of chance, force, rhetoric, and love. In Fragment Sixteen, Sappho celebrates Helen's place at Troy because she left for love. However, the sources that Euripides grafts onto his *Helen* most closely represent the sentiments of Stesichorus and accounts of Herodotus. Stesichorus claims that he once attacked Helen in a poem and was blinded. However, his sight was restored when he made amends and claimed that Helen never went to Troy. She landed in Egypt after being set adrift. Herodotus asserts that Helen remained in Egypt with Proteus after he sent her abductor, Paris, back to Troy. Euripides grafts Helen onto his own tragedy by making her a captive of Theoclymenus, Proteus's son.

Like Herodotus's Helen, Spenser's Florimell is a captive of Proteus himself. Perhaps, one could argue that the grafted Helen and Spenser's Florimell find themselves in captivity under similar circumstances. While Helen is set adrift in the work of Herodotus, Euripides' Helen is flying through the air with Hermes before she finds herself in Egypt (44). Spenser's Florimell also arrives at her location of captivity by flight.

All that same evening she in flying spent,  
 And all that night her course continewd:

Ne did she let dull sleepe once to relent,  
 Nor wearinesse to slack her hast, but fled (III.vii.2)

While Euripides's Helen laments her fate to sit at a luxurious table with a "barbarian" (295), Helen's captor, Proteus, also embodies the markers of a typical tyrant of a Greek tragedy.

This wicked woman had a wicked sonne,  
 The comfort of her age and weary dayes,  
 A laesy loord, for nothing good to donne,  
 But stretched forth in ydlenesse always,  
 Ne euer cast his mind to couet prayse,  
 Or ply him selfe to any honest trade,  
 But all the day before the sunny rayes  
 He vs'd to slug, or sleepe in slothful shade:  
 Such laesinesse both lewd and poore attonce him made. (III.vii.12)

It is remarkable that Spenser would knot this allusion so tightly. While Eurpides's Helen seals herself in Proteus's tomb, Spenser's Florimell is held captive by Proteus himself. Eurpides's Helen goes to Troy and is besmirched like a whore, and Spenser's False Florimell also finds herself being fought over.

Then turning to those Knights, he gan a new;  
 And you Sir Blandamour and Paridell,  
 That for this Ladie present in your view,  
 Haue rays'd the cruell warre and outrage fell,  
 Certes me seems bene not aduised well,

But rather ought in friendship for her sake  
 To join your force, their forces to repell,  
 That seek perforce her from you both to take,  
 And of your gotten spoyle their owne triumph to make. (IV.ii.24)

Now this may be reaching to extend the allusion, but the fact that Blandamour and Paridell are lectured by the Squire of Dames to join their forces to keep the False Florimell to themselves rather than lose it to the likes of Satyrane presents a battle for a woman in a context befitting of a medieval romance. In essence, I want to suggest that this is another important dimension of *translatio studii* at work. Surely, Spenser could not have thrust the world into war over the False Florimell's beauty as Homer did for Helen. However, in placing the False Florimell as the object in a quarrel between heroes, Spenser emphasizes the fact that her beauty possesses a Helen quality.

The allusion, however, is not without its breaks. In Euripides's tragedy, Helen is the figure of strength. She goes to Theoclymenus to make the escape possible, but Spenser's Florimell has little to do with her own escape. Spenser's Marinell is also a poor substitute for Menelaus, for Marinell is a conflicted and ineffective hero.

Now gan he in is griued mind deuse,  
 How from that dungeon he might her enlarge;  
 Some while he thought, by faire and humble wise  
 To Proteus selfe to sue for her discharge:  
 But then he fear'd his mothers former charge  
 Gainst womens loue, long giuen him in vaine. (IV.xii.14)

It is only after Marinell's mother, Cymodoce, sees her son in deadly pain that she excuses him from his vow to love no woman (IV.xii.27). However, Marinell still does not take up the mantle of the hero, for it is his mother, Cymodoce, who brokers a deal with Neptune to free Florimell from Proteus.

To whom she answerd, This it is by name  
 Proteus, that hath ordayn'd my sonne to die;  
 For that a waift, the which by fortune came  
 Vpon your seas, he claym'd as propertie:  
 And yet nor his, nor his in equitie,  
 But yours the waift by high prerogatiue.  
 Therefore I humbly craue your Maiestie,  
 It to repleuie, and my sonne repriue:  
 So shall you by one gift saue all vs three aliue. (IV.xii.31)

The question that remains is how does Florimell, a graft of Helen, shadow Elizabeth. Certainly, the emphasis that Spenser places upon Florimell's virginity and chastity shadows Elizabeth. While Britomart's Helen token proved to shadow Elizabeth in the sense that Britomart and Helen both possess the beauty to disarm a hero. Florimell's Helen token shadows Elizabeth insofar as Florimell and Helen must resist their captor's advances so that their husband/betrothed may recognize them. When Marinell perceives the False Florimell, he claims that she is not Florimell but "some fayre Franion" (V.iii.22). The True Florimell is then brought forth and the False Florimell vanishes. Artegall, the Knight of Justice, then vindicates Marinell's judgment when he attaches the



spoil left behind by the False Florimell, the golden girdle, a symbol of chastity, to the True Florimell.

Full many Ladies often had assayd,  
 About their middles that faire belt to knit;  
 And many a one suppos'd to be a mayd:  
 Yet it to none of all their loynes would fit,  
 Till Florimell about her fastned it.  
 Such power it had, that no woman wast  
 By any skill or labour it would sit  
 Vnlesse that she were continent and chast,  
 But it would lose a breake, that many had disgrast. (V.iii.28)

When Florimell dons her golden girdle, all of the Knights who fought for the False Florimell at the tournament are here exposed, and one could argue that the way Spenser places Florimell on a pedestal as a symbol of chastity is yet another form of Elizabeth's apotheosis from princess to goddess. The knights who fought for the False Florimell express a sense of shame, for they failed to recognize the chaste woman and instead fought for the favor of a phantom.

In addition to a Helen token, this moment is also bestows a Guinevere token on Florimell because the very idea of a true and false woman would have been an immediately recognizable meme from the prose *Lancelot* and the prose *Merlin*. The latter received a word-for-word translation into Middle English. Arguably, the Guinevere token would have been more recognizable to Spenser's immediate audience than the

Helen token, and this is worth some analysis because of the romance dynamic between Florimell and Arthur.

Throughout this project, I have made great efforts to show Spenser's overall consistency with the Arthuriana. In a way, Florimell provides a convenient point of escape for Arthur to abandon his pursuit of Gloriana, the Faerie Queene. Though Marinell has vowed never to entertain the love of a woman (III.iv.26), he is released from the vow and marries Florimell in Book V.iii. The golden girdle event is, as one might say, the highlight of their ceremony. The meme continues to reproduce itself in the sense that the garter ritual stands as proof of consummating the marriage. Could this marriage put a stop to Arthur's pursuit of the Faerie Queene? After all, Arthur not only pursues Florimell as if she were the Faerie Queene, but her beauty has such an effect on him that he *wishes* she *be* the Faerie Queene of his dream vision.

Perhaps in a perfect world, the world that might best be, Arthur would view the marriage between Florimell and Marinell as proof that Florimell is not the Faerie Queene of his vision. If Arthur is that peerless and magnificent prince, then why would the Faerie Queene accept anyone else, especially, Marinell, a Knight sworn to love no woman? This is the most likely and most conservative conclusion, especially if one insists on Spenser constructing a picture of the world that might best be, for adultery would surely mar Arthur's moral purity.

The Arthuriana is the medieval nexus of chivalric virtue and the downfall of the state. If Spenser is consistent enough with the Arthuriana to prophesize Arthur's conquest of Rome, then why would he fail to cover the downfall of Arthur's kingdom? Obviously, the last completed book of *FQ* is a long way from establishing Arthur's court,

but the original plan would have offered Spenser time to complete six more books on Arthur's private virtue before authoring another twelve books on Arthur's political virtue. The downfall of the state may very well have been a topic he meant to cover, and what a grand allegory it would have been if the downfall of Arthur's kingdom is the result of his failure to marry the ever-absent Faerie Queene. While Spenser would have found it desirable to secure Arthur's future in marriage (almost all significant characters in *FQ* marry or are destined to marry), he knew the queen would not have tolerated any criticism, no matter how gentle. If it is conceivable that Spenser would have had to represent the destruction of Arthur's kingdom and open up allegorical periods of Anglo-Saxon hegemony, the Norman conquest, and the War of the Roses before an heir of Arthur's again unites the kingdom, then it is inconceivable that Elizabeth could have had any role to play in the downfall of the kingdom. If Arthur's kingdom falls because the Faerie Queene never appears, then in turn, one could argue that this would also complete Spenser's attempt at *translatio*. Arthur's kingdom would fall because Arthur failed to marry the allegorical Elizabeth Tudor. In other words, Arthur could never marry the monarch the Renaissance could boast that the Middle Ages lacked. Furthermore, the historical period of the Middle Ages is a period of Arthur's absence, so another dimension of Spenser's *translatio* is claiming Arthur for the Renaissance. Spenser does this in a most unusual way because it seems as if Spenser claims Arthur for the Renaissance only to cast him away. The romance between Arthur and Gloriana is never realized, so that should suggest a sense of cynicism about how Spenser understood the early-modern era. Perhaps Spenser saw Arthur as the rightful heir, but he did not believe that the Renaissance would be the return of the once and future king.

## Conclusion

Spenser shadowed Elizabeth using mirrors more than one. In this essay, I have covered three of those mirrors in some detail. However, there are many other female characters in *FQ* who have some potential to shadow Elizabeth. Given the importance I have placed upon Montrose's Elizabethan Political Imaginary, one could argue that Mercilla and Night are also rather important figures. Mercilla presides over Duessa's trial that stands as an allegory for the trial of Mary Stuart (V.ix.41). This likely drew the ire of James Stuart who banned the book in Scotland. Night, in the House of Pride, is an inaccessible character whose associations are tightly bound to the Elizabethan Political Imaginary. The walls of the House of Pride are high, laced with golden foil, and the bricks are laid without mortar (I.iv.4). This symbolizes an unhealthy and sinful obsession of appearance over substance. Furthermore, Night sits so high no subject could see her (I.iv.8), and allegorical characters of sin run rampant throughout the House of Pride. Attacks on Elizabethan court life certainly have a point of genesis here, and Montrose's study of the Elizabethan Political Imaginary certainly exposes Elizabeth's court of secrecy and inaccessibility. Spenser's Caelia and the House of Holinesse represent a direct foil to Night and the House of Pride. While Night is inaccessible, Caelia is grounded amongst her court (I.x.4). Instead of allegorical characters of sin, like Lust, Gluttony, and Wrath, the House of Pride features allegorical characters of Catholic sacraments: Penance, Remorse, and Repentance (I.x.27).

Does the House of Pride represent Elizabeth's court while the House of Holinesse represents the court that might best be? I doubt there is conclusive evidence for this. However, Spenser has followed the path Plato laid out in the *Republic*. He shows the

difference between government by an aristocrat and government by a tyrant, but this project has shown that Spenser's mirrors of Elizabeth do very little governing. That itself ought to demonstrate that Spenser did not really see the figure of the imperium as the one governing the empire.

The most recognizable mirrors of Elizabeth—Gloriana, Britomart, Belpheobe, and Florimell—only matter because they are symbols. The princess undergoes apotheosis, and the real ruling is left to others. In the Elizabethan court, this is best represented in the person of someone like William Cecil, Lord Burghley. One could argue that Spenser himself challenges this sort of political authority in *Mother Hubbard's Tale*. The work certainly drew the ire of Cecil and his son, Robert. Spenser's mirrors of Elizabeth are beyond such reproach and circulate the grafts of Helen, Guinevere, Diana, and feature a number of medieval romance motifs. One could argue that these symbols undergo a change in their meaning. However, one cannot avoid recognizing that Spenser selected these tokens and grafted them into a hegemonic epic because of their prior meaning. As I had mentioned earlier, Helen is prostituted and exploited, but later, she is celebrated as a virgin. Likewise, Guinevere is given an ambiguous treatment in Geoffrey of Monmouth before she is represented as committed adulterer by later authors. Though she is a goddess, Diana's virginity ought to distance her from a monarch, but she represents the inviolable virginity of Elizabeth. The question that remains is how do these grafts of Elizabeth impact the project of *translatio* between Elizabeth and Arthur. Certainly, Arthur is that figure who would be the most significant symbol of Tudor legitimacy. The very idea of matching Elizabeth to Arthur is *prima facie* evidence of that. However, the fact that Arthur is searching for an allegorical Elizabeth and never

finds her is the moment of *translatio* in which all of these symbols undergo a change in their meaning. In the case of Arthur and Elizabeth, Arthur goes from being the symbol of legitimate rule to a mythological figure no one can claim, and Elizabeth looks much more like a ruler whose claim is based on force rather than succession.

## CHAPTER VI

### Conclusion

The way in which Arthur and Elizabeth as symbols of political power dwarf their historical persons is astounding. Geoffrey of Monmouth was the first author to write the history of Arthur as king, and evidence of the historical Arthur offers little more than the picture of a person who fought against the Anglo-Saxons. While Geoffrey Ashe has assembled some interesting evidence that shows Geoffrey of Monmouth's debt to historical sources, Ashe admits that his own Arthurian reading of history is "guesswork rather than serious reconstruction" (313). Ashe's research presents the possibility of a King of the Britons courted by a Roman emperor, and the absence of that king, Riothamus, could explain the eventual displacement of the Britons. However, Ashe's research cannot furnish evidence of the legendary Arthur who killed 960 men in combat, and even Ashe claims that such a feat is "plainly legendary." The legendary Arthur is a knight who represented the pinnacle of chivalric virtue, performed miracles such as pulling a sword from stone, and conquered the Romans. By way of Geoffrey of Monmouth's pseudohistory, Arthur's lineage can be traced back to the original seat of imperial power, Troy. In essence, the lineage of Arthur is the quintessential example of legitimate rule. My purpose here is not to evaluate the historicity of Arthur, I only claim that Arthur's importance as a symbol dwarfs what historical evidence of Arthur has been able to furnish. Likewise, the historical Elizabeth Tudor is not such a supernatural figure. The most flattering portrait of Elizabeth's reign, Spenser's *Britomart*, undergoes apotheosis after rescuing Artegall from Radigund in Book V, but Elizabeth Tudor herself does not become a goddess in the literal sense. John Knox's sentiment in his "blast"

further develops such a cynicism about Elizabeth's political power and her perceived apotheosis.

See a woman sitting in judgement, or riding from Parliament in the midst of men, having a royal crowne upon her head, the sworde and sceptre borne before her, in signe that the administration of justice was in her power; I am assuredlie persuaded, I say, that such a sight shulde so astonishe them, that they shulde judge the hole worlde to be transformed into Amazones, and that suche a metamorphosis and change was made of all the men of that countrie, as poetes do feyn was made the companions of Ulises, or at the least, that albeit the outwarde forme of men remained, yet shuld they judge that their hartes were changed from the wisdome, understanding, and courage of men, to the foolish fondnes and cowardise of women. (4:374-75)

Knox is keen to observe how Elizabeth was shrouded in symbols of political power, and he even uses the language of "signe" to describe the source of her perceived power. Men had undergone a metamorphosis because of how they perceived Elizabeth's power. According to Knox, this metamorphosis was not of their bodies but of their minds. Knox implies that the men of England are responding not to Elizabeth herself as a historical person; they are responding to what Elizabeth J. Bellamy identified as the field of cultural meanings personified in Elizabeth (4). Like the historical Arthur who is dwarfed by the legendary Arthur, the historical Elizabeth is dwarfed by the apotheosized Elizabeth who exists as a symbol. While it is true that the historical Elizabeth I was a monarch, her legitimacy was controversial. Elizabeth's mother, Anne Boleyn, was executed by Henry VIII for adultery, incest, and high treason, and Eric Ives argues that a political power



struggle with Thomas Cromwell led to her downfall (319-329). I do not mean to overemphasize questions about Elizabeth's legitimacy because of the alleged crimes of her mother. Elizabeth's legitimacy was questionable not only because of her mother's alleged crimes but because the legitimacy of the Tudor dynasty itself is questionable. I do not care to entertain questions of whether or not the Tudors really were a legitimate dynasty, nor am I interested in analyzing whether or not their reign was good for the country. I am interested in how the House of Tudors was presented as a legitimate dynasty, and I want to suggest that Spenser's *FQ* is an important critique of how successful those efforts were.

Henry VII, the founder of the dynasty, won the throne on the field of battle and not by succession. He was the last British king to do so. However, winning the crown and ruling with the crown require very different strategies. Political power cannot be maintained by the use of force alone, and that is why it is worth noting how closely the Tudor administration adopted symbols of British political power from Geoffrey of Monmouth's *HRB*. To quote Geoffrey's Arthur, "What is obtained by force of arms is never the rightful possession of the aggressor" (IX.159). Whether or not England was the rightful possession of Henry VII can be called into question, but the symbols adopted by Henry VII and the House of Tudors certainly presented England as their rightful possession.

One of the ways in which the House of Tudors presented England as their rightful possession was in the form of Arthurian prophecies. In "Henry VII's Book of Astrology and the Tudor Renaissance," Hillary M. Carey examines the Arundel 66 manuscript and observes that "[t]he manuscript concludes with a series of robustly English sources that

attest to the prophetic and mythic origins of the Tudor dynasty” (665). I reference the Arundel 66 manuscript here because it contains two sections that develop the Tudors’ appropriation of Arthur. One is a reproduction of Geoffrey of Monmouth’s “Prophecies of Merlin,” and the other is the manuscript’s final section which contains prophecies about the Tudor reign by Merlin, Robert of Bridlington, Birgitta of Sweden, and others. Based on my observations and argument in this project’s fourth chapter, the fact that the Arundel 66 manuscript contains not only Geoffrey of Monmouth’s “Prophecies of Merlin” but suspected prophecies of Merlin about the Tudors is rather significant. Through great effort, Geoffrey of Monmouth builds Merlin’s credibility as a prophet. Merlin first overturns Vortigern’s advisors who claim that spilling the blood of a fatherless child (Merlin) will make his tower stand. Merlin then prophesizes the end of Vortigern’s reign and return of the House of Constantine before Aurelius Ambrosius and Uther Pendragon arrive the next dawn. These events are meant to persuade the skeptics of Merlin’s inspired prophecy which states that the island will be lost to the Anglo-Saxons, and it is the Boar of Cornwall, Arthur, who will restore power to the Britons. Given the symbols attached to the Tudors from Geoffrey’s *HRB*, such as the Red Dragon of Cadwallader, anyone who knew the Arthurian narrative would have been tempted to see the Tudor dynasty as a return of the island’s political power to the Britons. In naming his son Arthur, Henry VII must have bought into the Arthurian narrative at some significant level. However, in *Images of Tudor Kings*, Sydney Anglo dismisses the view that there is a significant connection between the prophecies of Merlin in the Arundel 66 manuscript and Henry VII’s son, Prince Arthur (52-53). Ultimately, Anglo’s argument relies upon the ubiquity of Arthurian tropes attached to British monarchs to

deflate their significance, so this implies that the appropriation of Arthurian tropes by the Tudors may not have been intentional. Anglo would likely argue that the name, “Arthur,” was used to naturalize the Welsh. One could also argue that Henry VII would not likely have understood the weight of Arthurian tropes attached to the House of Tudors because he was not a great reader of Latin. Therefore, Henry VII would not have had an intimate knowledge of Geoffrey’s *HRB*. However, according to Carey, interest in Arthurian Britain was “greatly accelerated” after Caxton’s publication of Malory” (665). Caxton’s edition of *Le Morte Darthur* was published in 1485, the same year Henry VII seized power, and it was the standard edition of Malory’s *Le Morte Darthur* until the discovery of the Winchester Manuscript in 1934. Furthermore, in commissioning Caxton to produce a translation of Christine de Pizan’s *Faits d’armes et de chevalerie*, there is substantial evidence of Henry VII having a significant relationship with Caxton. The ubiquity of Arthurian symbols also ought to undercut Anglo’s skepticism. While Henry VII may not have been able to read Geoffrey’s *HRB* himself, the ubiquity of his motifs may still have held meaning for him. Furthermore, the “translation” of Geoffrey’s *HRB* into romance languages by authors like Wace provides for the possibility of Henry VII having some understanding of the Arthurian legend. However, it should be noted that Wace abbreviates Merlin’s prophecies, so Henry VII could not have had a thorough knowledge of the prophecies without understanding them in Latin. Whether appeals to the authority of Merlin, the Red Dragon of Cadwallader, and the return of Arthur were intentional elements of political propaganda by Henry VII should not matter. The more important point is that anyone knowledgeable of the Britons and their history of displacement would have seen the Tudors in an Arthurian light because of how the

Tudors used these symbols. The question is whether or not such people would have believed that the Tudors really were the Britons of Merlin's prophecies.

Spenser was certainly a poet qualified to critique the House of Tudor's appropriation of the Arthuriana. Throughout this project, I have argued that Spenser was quite a close reader of his medieval sources, and Spenser's own "Chronicle of the Briton kings/From Brute vnto Vthers rayne" in Book II, canto X of *FQ* is the single best piece of evidence to demonstrate how well Spenser knew Geoffrey of Monmouth's *HRB*. While Spenser's chronicle stops short of Geoffrey's displacement of the Britons, it is not without prophecy of Arthur's reign. Arthur is prophesized to end Roman rule over Britain (II.x.49). Spenser can say little more than that because his Arthur is currently living through the events that would make him King of the Britons. The question that arises out of this current discussion is whether or not Spenser's Prince Arthur could have been an allegorical Arthur, Prince of Wales. This is extremely unlikely. Arthur, Prince of Wales died in 1502, fifty years before Spenser was born, so Spenser could not likely have had much interest in Arthur Tudor as a historical figure fulfilling the prophecies of Merlin. Furthermore, in his Letter to Raleigh, Spenser states, "I chose the historye of king Arthure, as most fitte for the excellency of his person, being made famous by many mens former workes, and also furthest from the daunger of enuy, and suspition of the present time" (715). Arthur, Prince of Wales, could not have been that figure "furthest of the daunger of enuy, and suspition of the present time" because the very idea of establishing Tudor legitimacy through a member of the House of Tudors would have been an ill-advised project.

Skepticism about Tudor legitimacy may very well have colored contemporary perspectives on periodization of medieval and Renaissance England. One cannot overlook that the War of the Roses and the triumph of Henry VII weakened, and in some cases, eliminated English lines of nobility (*The War of the Roses* 269). This was the beginning of a national identity crisis that reached its peak when a Scottish king, James VI, became James I, King of England. According to Andrew Hadfield,

*The Faerie Queene* is a poem which appears to make an explicit rejection of the sovereignty and independence of England. This manoeuvre occurs in the first edition of the poem (1590) as St. George of England (the Red Cross Knight) gives way to the British Knight, Britomart. (“Spenser, Drayton, and the Question of Britain” 585)

Of course, *FQ* was written before James VI of Scotland became James I of England, so the rejection of English independence in *FQ* is not a reaction to his accession. Furthermore, a Scottish king crowned King of England was not a motivating anxiety for Spenser, Hadfield notes that *FQ* is not necessarily a poem that supports a “British project” or expansionist political policies (“Spenser, Drayton, and the Question of Britain 587). According to Hadfield, *FQ* ends with the destruction of Spenser’s dear pastoral world in Book VI (587). Alan McColl provides more evidence for this view when he claims that “*The Faerie Queene* has always been seen as a quintessentially English poem, and attempts to redefine its national character as ‘British’ in some wider sense are less than convincing” (“The Meaning of ‘Britain’ in Medieval and Early Modern England” 267).

Hadfield argues that the problems of a British project and legitimate succession reach critical mass in Spenser's *Two Cantos of Mutability*. The *Mutability Cantos* were published posthumously in 1609 as "parcel of some following Booke of the *FAERIE QVEENE*." In the *Mutability Cantos*, Mutabilitie, the Titanesse, claims that all are subject to the ravages of time, so she can rebel against the institutionally-sanctioned power of Jove.

When these were past, thus gan the Titanesse;  
 Lo, mighty mother, now be iudge and say,  
 Whether in all they creates more or lesse  
 CHANGE doth not raigin and beare the greatest sway:  
 For, who sees not, that Time on all doeth pray? (*MC.vii.47*)

The Titanesse, Mutabilitie, also advances the argument that Jove is the real usurper.

For, Titan (as ye acknowledge must)  
 Was Saturnes elder brother by birth right;  
 Both, sonnes of Vranus; but by vniust  
 And guilefull meanes, through Corybantes slight,  
 The younger thrust the elder from his right:  
 Since which, thou Ioue, iniouriously has held  
 The Heauens rule Titans sonnes by might;  
 And them to hellish dungeons downe has feld:  
 Witnessse ye Heauens the truth of all that I haue told. (*MC.vi.27*)

Hadfield identifies Mutabilitie's claim against Jove as an allusion to Henry VII overthrowing the usurper, Richard III. However, according to Hadfield, most European

dynasties would follow this line of succession not to Elizabeth I but to Mary, Queen of Scots (“Spenser, Drayton, and the Question of Britain” 589). Of course, Mary was executed by Elizabeth in 1587, but the allusion to Mary’s trial in *FQ* produces a different result. At Mercilla’s court, the False Duessa, the witch who seduced Redcrosse Knight in Book I is brought before Mercilla to answer for her crimes. Arteggall favors swift and efficient justice (V.ix.49). However, Mercilla, another one of Spenser’s mirrors of Elizabeth, is moved by Arthur’s pity for Duessa.

But she, whose Princely brest was touched nere  
 With piteous ruth of her so wretched plight,  
 Though plaine she saw by all, that she did heare,  
 Yet would not let iust vengeance on her light;  
 But rather let in stead thereof to fall  
 Few perling drops from her faire lampes light;  
 The which she couering with her purple pall  
 Would haue passion hid, and vp rose withall. (V.ix.50)

One could argue that Spenser shows a sympathy for the “legitimate” line in both the *Mutability Cantos* and at Mercilla’s court in Book V of *FQ*, and Hadfield is right to draw an allegory between Mutabilitie’s claim over the heavens and Henry VII’s claim over England. However, their claims are not so substantial if their claims to legitimacy are narratives that they have given themselves. Furthermore, Spenser’s solution to the problem of succession in the *Mutability Cantos* and at Mercilla’s court do not lead to the restoration of the “rightful” heir. However, what might be more revealing is how Spenser’s medieval source for the *Mutability Cantos*, Chaucer’s *Parliament of Fowls*

provides a contrasting view of the natural order. Spenser even alludes to Chaucer's *Parliament of Fowls* in the *Mutability Cantos* as a source of inspiration.

So hard it is for any liuing wight,  
 All her array and vestiments to tell,  
 That old Dan Geffrey (in whose gentle spright  
 The pure well head of Poesie did dwell)  
 In his *Foules parley* durst not with it mel. (*MC.vii.9*)

Chaucer's *Parliament of Fowls* is a dream vision narrated by a student of the art of love who seeks to learn a "certeyn thing." The poem begins with the narrator reading Cicero's "Dream of Scipio" (30) when a visionary guide appears and leads him through Venus's temple. Chaucer's appreciation of love and tributes to St. Valentine in the poem are not what provide a framework for Spenser's *Mutability Cantos*. Rather, Chaucer's *Parliament of Fowls* provides a framework for Spenser's *Mutability Cantos* in the way that Dame Nature presides over a flock of birds choosing their mates (303). A dispute arises when a majestic formel eagle enters the temple and three tercel eagles vie to love her and become her mate (372). Spenser takes the bickering between Chaucer's tercel eagles and birds of a "lower kynde" and morphs in into the chaotic dispute between Mutabilitie, Jove, and Cynthia on Arlo Hill. Also, just as in Chaucer's *Parliament of Fowls*, the dispute only ends when Dame Nature speaks with authority.

"Now pes," quod Nature, "I commaunde heer!  
 For I have herd all youre opynyoun,  
 And in effect yit be we nevere the neer.  
 But finally, this is my conclusion,



That she hireself shal han hir eleccioun  
 Of whom hire lest; whoso be wroth or blythe,  
 Hym that she chest, he shal hire han as swithe. (617-623)

The formel eagle then elects not to make a choice, and she asks Dame Nature for respite (647). In essence, the formel eagle is delaying her revelation. Likewise, Spenser's Mutabilitie suffers a delay in revelation. Spenser's Dame Nature resolves the dispute over the heavens between Mutabilitie and Jove by telling Mutabilitie to wait her turn.

Cease therefore daughter further to aspire,  
 And thee content thus to be rul'd by me:  
 For thy decay thou seekst by thy desire;  
 But time shall come that all shall changed bee,  
 And from thenceforth, none no more change shall see. (*MC.vii.59*)

The difference between the poems authored by Spenser and Chaucer concern how Dame Nature asserts her authority. Chaucer's Nature asserts her authority; she commands the birds to stop their bickering, "'Now pes," quod Nature, "I commaunde heer!" However, Spenser's Dame Nature is put under pressure to make a decision. Everyone on Arlo Hill looks to Dame Nature for an answer.

So hauing ended, silence long ensewed,  
 Ne Nature to or fro pake for a space,  
 But with firme eyes affixt, the ground still viewed.  
 Meane while, all creatures, looking in her face,  
 Expecting th'end of this so doubtfull case,  
 Did hang in long suspence what would ensew,

To whether side should fall the souveraigne place:

At length, she looking vp with chearefull view,

The silence brake, and gaue her doome in speeches few. (*MC.vii.57*)

Nature eventually issues her judgment that Mutabilitie must wait, and that all things will change until all things cease to change. If this is how Spenser handles the idea of usurpation in England, then he tackles the question in a rather deferential way. John Guillory points out that “Nature’s verdict declares that within time there is continuity; or rather, within continuity . . . there is motion of time. Mutabilitie forgets that continuity, in this larger sense, just as Jove forgets discontinuity that established his lordship (*Poetic Authority* 63). Spenser’s Dame Nature articulates a kind of cynicism about the question of a rightful error, and this can be applied to the case of Henry VII. Henry VII won the throne on the field of battle, and this aligns him with Mutabilitie who claims rule over the heavens because of how all things must suffer the ravages of time. This is an element of discontinuity providing for the possibility of their respective reigns. However, Henry VII and Mutabilitie both justify their claims through continuity of the original, “legitimate” line. Just as Mutabilitie appeals to Titan, Henry VII appeals to Arthur. Because Spenser’s Dame Nature is so deferential in her response to Mutabilitie one can argue that Spenser approaches the question of the rightful heir with cynicism, skepticism, and disillusion.

In the project’s introduction, I claimed that *FQ* is a text representative of the age of its composition, a transition. An examination of the *Mutability Cantos* also presents the work as a kind of transition. The ultimate statement of Spenser’s Dame Nature is an unhelpful remark that things will continue to be the same until they are not, and this is

certainly representative of the transition from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance and beyond because of how it presents the matter of *translatio imperii*.

The Middle Ages is the disruption of Arthur's line and the displacement of the Britons, and the Anglo-Saxons, of course, had no real need to be concerned about that. They could even take pride in it. However, after the Norman Conquest of 1066, Geoffrey of Monmouth was able to bring about a renewed interest in Arthur's Brythonic lineage and the question of the rightful heir, and his efforts were so successful that *translatio imperii* became a ubiquitous theme of medieval romance. However, one could argue that *FQ* is the last work of epic poetry in which the concept of *translatio imperii* matters in the sense of political power. It is in this way that *FQ* reveals itself to be a work representative of a transition: the celebration of Arthur in the tradition of *translatio* shows the influence of the Middle Ages on the work, but the poem also contains a sense of cynicism and skepticism emblematic of modernity. *FQ* is an unsatisfying work for those who would see the Tudors as rightful heirs: The romance between Arthur and Gloriana is never realized, and the dynasty founded by Britomart and Artegall is only prophesized. *FQ* is at once the last medieval romance and a pessimistic work of modern poetry.

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## VITA

### EDUCATION

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**Sam Houston State University: MA English (In Progress)**  
(Dec 2018)

- Received graduate conference funding
- Received CHSS scholarship
- Received OGS scholarship

**University of Chicago: MA Philosophy and Humanities**  
(Jun 2012)

- Received graduate research grant

**University of Denver: BA Philosophy**  
(Apr 2010)

- Minor in psychology
- Received undergraduate conference funding

### CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS AND ONLINE PUBLICATIONS

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**Hera (Humanities Education and Research Conference)**  
(Chicago, IL) (Mar 2018)

- Presentation: “The Dynastic Complications of Spenser’s Language”

**Houston Community College Humanities Conference**  
(Houston, TX) (Nov 2017)

- Presentation: “Twain’s Text, Sensitivity, and Literary Morality”

**Conference of the Cormac McCarthy Society**  
(Austin, TX) (Sept 2017)

- Presentation: “Judge Holden and the Violent Nature of State Authority”

**EuroAcademia Conference of Critical Studies**  
(Lucca, Italy) (Nov 2016)

- Presentation: “Spenser’s Lacanian Assault on the Classical Hero”

**UChicago Humanities Thesis Works**

(Chicago, Il) (May 2012)

- Presentation: “A Subtle but Crucial Difference Between Kant and McDowell”

**SUNY Oneonta Undergraduate Philosophy Conference**  
(Oneonta, NY) (Apr 2010)

- Presentation: “Sensibility and Inclinations in Kant’s Moral Philosophy”

## TEACHING AND ACADEMIC WORK EXPERIENCE

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### **Adjunct Faculty Experience** (Three Colleges)

(Aug 2015 – Present)

Winner: 2018 Lone Star College Adjunct Faculty Excellence Award

Face-to-face, online, and dual-credit instruction

100% of classes exceeded enrollment thresholds

Created unique syllabi for a wide variety of courses

Outstanding reviews on Ratemyprofessor.com

Authored letters of recommendation for transfer

students and for students applying to organizations such as

Model United Nations

Represented institutions at academic conferences

Completed administrative tasks (book orders, official-day roll)

### **Lone Star College System** (Adjunct Professor)

(Aug 2015 – Present)

#### ▪ *Courses taught:*

Humanities 1301: Prehistory to Gothic

Humanities 1302: Renaissance to Present-Day

Philosophy 1301: Introduction to Philosophy

Philosophy 2306: Introduction to Ethics

### **San Jacinto Community College** (Adjunct Professor)

(Aug 2016 – Present)

#### ▪ Courses Taught

English 1301: Freshman Composition

English 1302: Introduction to Literature

### **Houston Community College System** (Adjunct Professor)

(Feb 2017 – Present)

#### ▪ Courses Taught

Humanities 1301: Classical Heroism

### **Pearson Assessment** (Regional Test Scorer)

(Mar 2015 – Jul 2015)

Qualified to score standardized essay tests for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade research and literary analysis tasks

Maintained a scoring validity rating well above group target

Reached daily bonus threshold

### **Varsity Tutors** (Contract Tutor)

(Mar 2015 – Present)

Certified tutor in a variety of subject areas, including English, Writing, Essay Editing, Literature, STAAR, PSAT, Philosophy, American History, European History, Psychology, and Sociology  
 Developed individualized learning plans for a wide variety of student clients (elementary-college)  
 Worked with international students.  
 100% of clients reported significant grade improved in tutored subject areas  
 Guided composition and revision of high-stakes documents such as college-entrance essays

**Patrick Henry Middle School Citizen Schools**  
 (Teaching Fellow) (Jul 2014 – Feb 2015)

Taught English courses with experienced co-teacher  
 Created curricula for extended-learning time  
 Taught reading intervention groups  
 Communicated with parents  
 Worked with ESL students  
 Worked with SpEd students

**PEDAGOGY TRAINING AND COURSEWORK**

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**Lone Star College**  
 (May 2016)

*Adjunct Instructor Certification Program*

**CERTIFICATION**

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**K-12 Certification**

Passed English Language Arts and Reading 7-12 TExES Content Exam  
 Texas Teachers Probationary Certification

**SACS Accreditation for College-Level Instruction**

Philosophy  
 Humanities  
 English