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SCENES OF DESIRE IN THE FAERIE QUEENE

by

ARTHUR R. CORRADETTI

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in
English in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University
of New York.

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Date

11 January 1996
Date

James West
Chair of Examining Committee

James West
Executive Officer

Professor Patrick Cullen Patrick Cullen

Professor W. Speed Hill W. Speed Hill

Joseph A. Wittreich
Professor Joseph A. Wittreich

Supervisory Committee

THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Abstract

SCENES OF DESIRE IN THE FAERIE QUEENE

by

Arthur R. Corradetti

Adviser: Professor Patrick Cullen

This study of The Faerie Queene focuses on "scenes of desire," defined as moments in which one allegorical figure first sees and desires another. The scenes of desire discussed are Arthur's with Gloriana in I.ix, Redcross's with the false Una in I.i, Britomart's with Artegall in III.ii, and Calidore's with Pastorella in VI.ix. As essentially and intensively originary moments, on a literal and tropic level, these scenes of desire inform one's reading of the larger designs of Spenser's allegory.

The paradigmatic scene of desire is Arthur's with Gloriana. The erotic Arthur's first feeling desire is a figure of the masculine impulse to the creation of the poem, an alter image of the poet. Spenser imagines an Arthur who is both originary to his own private poem--Spenser's and Arthur's, as it were--and proleptic of the Tudor dynasty.

Against this paradigm the other scenes of desire may be measured and interpreted. An obvious parody, Redcross's scene of desire with the false Una anticipates the

Arthurian paradigm, and the fictive space opened up by Spenser between the image of the false Una in I.i and that of the real Una in I.ix marks the gap between Redcross's failing faith and the apocalyptic promise of his destiny. On the other hand, Britomart's scene of desire with Artegall offers an alternative to the Arthurian impulse to the creation of the poem. Britomart's magical globe becomes the figurative womb from which she can imagine the birth of the English nation. Finally, Calidore's scene of desire with Pastorella turns the Spenserian gaze on the poet himself. It reprises an originary moment in Spenser's career, the vision of Eliza in The Shepheardes Calender, and the figure of Pastorella fulfills the epic promise Spenser wrote into his own poetic career.

In sum, the study of these scenes of desire opens up important new connections among Arthur, Britomart, and Calidore. As they mark convergences of multiple poetic features publicly shared, scenes of desire also mark thresholds across which the poet ultimately writes his personal place in history.

To my parents,
With endless gratitude and love.

To my adviser,
Professor Patrick Cullen,
With heartfelt thanks and appreciation.

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INTRODUCTION:

SCENES OF DESIRE IN THE FAERIE QUEENE

Definitions and Methods

This study is intended to be a new way of looking at The Faerie Queene. Naturally, this critical perspective does not answer all the questions posed by a close reading of the poem. But it is intended, finally, to open up the poem in a new way and to reveal patterns that reinforce what Spenserians know all too well: that The Faerie Queene is an extremely rich poem.

My approach to the poem focuses on what I call scenes of desire. As I define them, scenes of desire in The Faerie Queene are moments in which one allegorical figure first sees and desires another allegorical figure.¹ I argue that exploring scenes of desire informs one's reading of the larger designs of Spenser's allegory. Finally, I believe that the very nature of desire, a

¹A list of scenes of desire might include, in chronological order, Redcross's dream-vision of the false Una in I.i, Arthur's vision of Gloriana in I.ix, Braggadocchio's gaze at Belphebe in II.iii, Arthur's pursuit of Florimell in III.i and iv, Malecasta's gaze at Britomart in III.i, Britomart's gaze in the magical globe in III.ii, Timias's gaze at Belphebe in III.v, Argante's pursuit of the Squire of Dames and Satyrane in III.vii, Paridell's lust for Hellenore in III.ix, Artegall's gaze at Britomart in IV.vi, Lust's abduction of Amoret in IV.vii, Scudamore's abduction of Amoret in IV.x, Artegall's gaze at Radigund in V.v, the cannibals' gaze at Serena in VI.viii, Calidore's gaze at Pastorella in VI.ix and at the dancing maidens in VI.x. My study will be limited to selected, and representative, scenes of desire.

resonant one in contemporary criticism, is explored quite fruitfully in scenes of desire.

Opening up the poem, scenes of desire disclose traditions, conventions, and expectations peculiar to Spenser, his readers, and his culture. As a Renaissance poet whose purported aim is to fashion a gentleman, Spenser realizes that the reader's reading is bound up with the poet's activity. As A. Leigh DeNeef remarks, in Spenser and the Motives of Metaphor, when Spenser decides to call his books "legends" (from the latin legere: to read, to pass through), he "refuses to allow the reader a passive role." The reader's reading becomes "a metaphoric quest which imitates those of the poet and his heroes" (142). In this dynamic relation, the poet's desire is to express his meaning correctly, and the reader's to interpret that meaning correctly. "To write poetry and to read it are equal opportunities for proper or improper entry into that activity we call the work of art" (DeNeef 3). Naturally, this activity raises questions. Is the poet's meaning expressed correctly? Can the reader distinguish, for example, the poet's voice from Archimago's (DeNeef 11-12)? When I discuss scenes of desire, I describe how the reader's experience of a moment in the poem enriches the experience of the larger work. Sometimes, as I discuss the nature of desire, my reading will reflect Lacanian psychoanalysis. Sometimes, as I discuss the patterns of

expectations aroused by poetic traditions and conventions, my reading will reflect a formalist criticism.² Sometimes, as I discuss the interpenetration of poetic product and culture, my reading will reflect a New Historicism. And sometimes, as I discuss the construction of gender in the poem, my reading will reflect a feminist perspective. In short, I intend the term, desire, to remain as flexible and protean as my interpretive strategies. If possible, I wish to have no one allegiance, but to use critical perspectives as they help me to open up scenes of desire to the larger poem. To paraphrase C. S. Lewis, my experience of reading scenes of desire is like living The Faerie Queene (358).

Convergences

- i) Romance Narrative
- ii) The Gaze
- iii) Poetic Traditions

But what makes scenes of desire particularly worthy of study in the first place? I believe that they have

²I might call this an affective mode of reading inherited from Kenneth Burke's Lexicon Rhetoricae and disseminated through reader-response strategies from formalist to structuralist to post-structuralist. Years ago, in Counter-Statement, Burke defined form as "an arousing and fulfillment of desires" (124), ultimately deriving his "dramatistic" project. More recently, in Reading for the Plot, in an attempt to overgo formalism, Peter Brooks introduced the term, textual force, to discuss "the motor forces that drive the text forward, of the desires that connect narrative ends and beginnings" (xiv).

distinguishable features that set them apart as a topos, as distinguishable as the locus amoenus, for example, that Ernst Robert Curtius describes in his magisterial study of European literature in the Latin Middle Ages. Besides their originary quality, scenes of desire mark the convergence of multiple poetic features, each informing narrative and allegory.

i) Romance Narrative

To begin with, the structure of scenes of desire recapitulates that of the romance narrative, as romance "is characterized primarily as a form which simultaneously quests for and postpones a particular end, objective, or object" (Patricia Parker, Inescapable Romance 4).³ The three main stages of the quest--the agon or conflict, the pathos or death-struggle, and the anagnorisis or discovery (Northrop Frye, Anatomy 187)--form the narrative structure from which scenes of desire borrow their movement: interruption of quest, interlude, and resumption of quest. Northrop Frye might call scenes of desire a "centripetal gaze," when the poet looks toward his mistress, friend, or deity, very much like "the court gazing upon its sovereign" (16). But scenes of desire are also dynamic because

³Richard Helgerson argues (59) that The Faerie Queene is, on the whole, romance rather than epic. Whereas epic promotes a more centralized, focused vision, romance is a "Gothic" form, decentered, filled with marvels.

allegorical figures are meant to confront one another for the first time⁴ and to engage in an exchange, perhaps of "lines of dialogue" (Barthes, S/Z 154). When the romance narrative proper resumes, the reunion promised reflects the kind of deferral that Patricia Parker likens to the Freudian Aufschub, "a delay of gratification for the sake of a consummation which may never come" (Inescapable Romance 87-88). In sum, scenes of desire recapitulate, in miniature, the general movement of romance narrative, though the characteristic reunion of allegorical figures of that movement is only implied.

A little literary history may prove helpful here. Robert Kellogg and Robert Scholes trace the literary lineage of romance narrative to its origins in epic (Nature of Narrative 12-15). Normally, bringing epic and romance narrative together would cause confusion. Still, epic narrative is germane to scenes of desire because, as epic narrative recreates the traditional story of a nation, so scenes of desire recreate the originary moment when famous heroic figures first encounter their beloved. If the epic story-teller "is retelling a traditional story, and therefore his primary allegiance is . . . to the mythos itself" (Kellogg and Scholes 12), then Spenser's scenes of desire recreate the mythos of the heroes whom he borrows

⁴Roland Barthes would call this moment ravishment--the popular name, love at first sight, the scholarly name, enamoration (Lover's Discourse 188).

from classical, medieval, and romantic sources.

Not only do scenes of desire recapitulate the general movement of romance narrative, but they also expand on it. As Parker explains, the Renaissance concept of dilatatio (derived from dilatare), applies to romance narrative (Inescapable Romance 63-64). Further, this dilatatio suggests a religious parallel. As Andrew Fichter explains Augustine, "Movement away from God may in the long run be movement toward him. With this principle Augustine gives new meaning to the circuitry that characterizes the movement of the epic hero" (51). Circumflectere cursus, "the injunction under which the epic hero moves," and also the hero of romance narrative, "translates into the Christian precept that to be saved one must first be lost." This continual questing underlies the fecundity of romance narrative. Scenes of desire have this fecundity, rejuvenating the quest and the questers and anticipating its end, usually unfulfilled within the poem.

As they emerge from the romance narrative, scenes of desire benefit from several poetic techniques. For example, when a poet recapitulates earlier material, he uses reprise, when he anticipates later material, prolepsis. These two narrative techniques inform both the larger romance narrative and the scenes of desire within it. Since scenes of desire juxtapose allegorical figures, they also benefit from an allegorical technique common to

Spenser's romance narrative. When a poet demonstrates how one allegorical figure needs a complementary figure to perfect his individual virtue, he uses complementarity. For example, Redcross, whose pride makes him susceptible to Duessa's falsehood, needs to wed Una, or true faith, to perfect his holiness. This allegorical technique discloses the strengths and weaknesses of the allegorical figures in scenes of desire. To paraphrase Stephen J. Greenblatt, the self "is at its most visible, most expressive, perhaps most interesting" (in Parker and Quint 215) when allegorical figures converge. Techniques like reprise, prolepsis, and complementarity foreground the poetic connections between scenes of desire and romance narrative.⁵

From this narrative ground, various poetic features emerge: the gaze, including dream-visions, prophetic visions, and mirrors, Petrarchism and epithalamism, Ovidianism, pastoralism, chronicle, invocation, and portraiture. The rhetorical devices, invocation and portraiture, I intend to describe in individual cases.

ii) The Gaze

Perhaps the primary feature of scenes of desire is

⁵See Maurice Evans, Spenser's Anatomy of Heroism 47-68. And cf. A. C. Hamilton, Structure of Allegory 1-43.

the gaze with which allegorical figures regard one another.⁶ This may be true precisely because, as Theresa M. Krier notes, "Spenser's work takes the female body as the normative human condition of greatest interest" (16).⁷ Krier's argument not only reaffirms the importance of the gaze as it is filtered through Virgilian and Ovidian registers, it also reaffirms the specular nature of scenes of desire. "The Faerie Queene develops a very large group of episodes about a numinous woman observed" (10).⁸ Krier's beholder and beheld also suggest the reader, privy to scenes of disclosure just as allegorical figures are--for example, to Belphoebe revealed to Braggadocchio. What Krier contends is that Spenser develops, from this relation between beholder and beheld, "a model of the body as an eloquent, vulnerable surface and a creative, hallowed interior space" (13).⁹ Taken together, the space of scenes

⁶As Camille Paglia notes: "The aggressive eye is the conceptualizing power of The Faerie Queene and the master of its largest ideas" (Sexual Personae 172).

⁷In "Raleigh's Discoverie of Guiana," Louis A. Montrose calls discovery and blazon the "two Renaissance rhetorical forms that organize and control their subjects . . . by means of display, inventory, and anatomy" (13).

⁸Reversing the topos, Sarah Stanbury argues that the "haptic" function of the gaze (from Barthes, Responsibility of Forms 238)--"its power to seize, to take"--marks the Virgin Mary's "arrested gaze" at Christ, which transfixes, not Christ, but her "as a spectator" (1087-88). Norman Bryson describes the gaze as a "penetrating, piercing, fixing" form of vision (93), cited in Moira P. Baker 22.

⁹Cf. Greene, Vulnerable Text xii.

of desire and the "hallowed interior space" of the beheld become vulnerable surfaces infolding one another.¹⁰ Entering the fictive space of scenes of desire, one reads (into) the interior space of the allegorical figures.¹¹

To study the gaze here, I borrow a structural model from Lee W. Patterson. Patterson argues that the "entranced gaze" of classical, medieval, and Renaissance literature submits the gaze of stupefaction to the discourse of explication, by which the gazer gains self-knowledge.¹² Patterson's model¹³ provides me with an

¹⁰On the literary history of the woman/land trope, see Annette Kolodny 10-25; on the rhetorical and ideological aspects of this trope, see Parker, Literary Fat Ladies 126-54 (both cited in Montrose, "Raleigh's Discoverie" 38 n25).

¹¹In "The Spenserian Dynamics," Harry Berger argues rather that "Spenserian landscape for the most part evolves from the projection of inscape" (Revisionary Play 23). On the projection of the human body into made objects, see Elaine Scarry 278-326, especially 281-87.

¹²Without a general survey of this topos, Lee W. Patterson 473 n5 suggests Frederick Goldin and Robert Morrissey.

¹³Patterson's primary example is Dante's gaze at Beatrice. In Purgatorio 32, this gaze is part of the larger experience of the procession of sacred history in the Earthly Paradise, including the Scriptures, the Church, Christ, and the Gryphon, drawing a car that bears Beatrice. As with other entranced gazes, Dante's both stops him short and impels him forward. But, in the Paradiso, the usual dialectic in the entranced gaze is transformed because the moment of stupefaction is identified with the moment of cognition. What is incomprehensible to Dante in Beatrice's teachings in the Purgatorio is a pedagogical device that prepares Dante for the higher instruction of the Paradiso.

Other examples abound: Petrarch's gaze at Laura in the Canzoniere; Narcissus's gaze in The Romaunt of the Rose or numerous gazes in the Orlando Furioso and Jerusalem Delivered; or even the parodic burlesque in Sir Thopas. I

interpretive mode for looking at scenes of desire in The Faerie Queene.¹⁴ For example, in Book I, Arthur's "stupefied gaze" at Gloriana in his dream is followed, after the narration of it in canto ix, by Una's affirmation of the truth of his vision, the necessary discursive complement to his gaze. In Book III, Britomart's gaze at Artegall in the magical globe is followed, in canto iii, by Merlin's prophetic vision of their dynastic line, the discursive complement to her gaze. For the purposes of exploring the consequences of scenes of desire, I will turn again and again to Patterson's model for entranced gazes.

Three manifestations of the gaze with which I deal are dream-vision, prophetic vision, and the mirror.

Dream-vision. The visionary, of course, traditionally underlies the oneiric (John Arthos 31). In his commentary on Cicero's Somnium Scipionis, the first dream-vision in Western literature (J. Stephen Russell 7 ff and 102 ff), Macrobius divides dreams into five categories (in William H. Stahl 87-90). As A. C. Spearing describes them, the insomnium and the visum "can be fully explained in naturalistic terms, either psychologically or

am particularly interested in the way in which Patterson's dialectic informs a reading of scenes of desire.

¹⁴Unlike my scenes of desire, Patterson's "entranced gazes" are not necessarily moments of erotic desire, nor of first encounter. Whereas Patterson considers Aeneas's gaze at the temple walls the locus classicus (455-58), I would call Aeneas's gaze at Dido, certainly Aeneas's gaze at his mother Venus, much better candidates.

physiologically, and are of no prophetic value" (10).¹⁵ The somnium, visio, and oraculum, however, have prophetic value. The somnium is an enigmatic dream. The visio is a prophetic vision, a precognitive glimpse of the future (Macrobius, in Stahl 88). Finally, the oraculum is an oracular dream, a visitation by a parent, or pious or revered man or priest or god to give information or advice (Macrobius, in Stahl 90; Spearing 10 f and Winny 22 ff).

To draw the parameters within which dream-visions fit, Paul Piehler offers (7) a list of general features:

the preliminary anguish; the subsequent prayers and invocations by which the hero of the allegory obtains access to the visionary world; the loci, the landscapes and habitations, of this world; the character of the chief person or persons he meets there; the dialogue which ensues between the hero and these persons.

As Piehler admits, this list is inclusive. In brief, the dreamer has a vision of someone revered, supernatural, or divine, and a dialogue ensues. After the dreamer experiences an uncharacteristic clarity, the vision dissolves (19-20), but his experience transforms him. Two aspects of dream-vision particularly concern me--"the hero's awakening" (Fletcher, Allegory 348) and the transformation. Dream-vision emerges with particular significance in Arthur's scene of desire with Gloriana and

¹⁵Also see James Winny (1973) 26-27 on the insomnium, an associative dream, and 27 ff on the visum or phantasma, a dream with a source in physical disorders.

Redcross's dream of the false Una in Book I.

Prophetic vision. The second manifestation of the gaze with which I deal is prophetic vision. Spenserians are generally agreed that The Faerie Queene is largely a visionary poem.¹⁶ Visionary moments to which ample criticism has been devoted are numerous.¹⁷ My primary text for thinking about prophecy is Joseph A. Wittreich's Visionary Poetics. I wish to enumerate the general features of prophetic vision described so lucidly in it.

In Visionary Poetics, Wittreich examines how prophecy comes to inform the epics of the two greatest prophets in the Renaissance, Spenser and Milton. Prophecy is the poetic vehicle through which the visionary reinterprets the Book of Revelation. Spenser and Milton can attain the encyclopedic character of John's Apocalypse, the model for prophecy in the Middle Ages and Renaissance, by expressing it through epic. The four principal

¹⁶My primary text is Wittreich's Visionary Poetics, another useful text Fletcher, The Prophetic Moment. On the convergence of the visionary, prophetic, and apocalyptic in The Faerie Queene see Josephine W. Bennett; Robert Gleckner; John E. Hankins; Carol V. Kaske; Theresa M. Krier; Isabel E. MacCaffrey; Michael Murrin; Gerald Snare; Kathleen Williams, "'Eterne in Mutabilitie,'" Spenser's World of Glass, and "Milton, Greatest Spenserian."

¹⁷Examples include the vision of the hermit Contemplation in Book I; the British and fairy chronicles of Book II; Merlin's chronicle, the Garden of Adonis episode, and the Masque of Cupid in Book III; Scudamore's abduction of Amoret and the marriage of the Thames and Medway in Book IV; the vision in Isis Church and the vision of Mirabella in Book V; the vision of the Graces on Mount Acidale in Book VI.

characteristics of prophecy are its historical expansiveness, its reformatory objective, its elaborate structure, and its political ideology.

The first general characteristic of what Wittreich comes to call visionary poetics is its expansive aspect, mirroring the same "plenum of vision" (Wittreich's phrase, 9) of John's Apocalypse. The ultimate objective of the prophetic vision is to alter the reader's eye, to make the visionary's gaze the audience's gaze. In the Renaissance, epic prophets take the classic epic of memory, whose biblical equivalent is the Old Testament, and submit it to the Christian epic of inspiration, whose biblical equivalent is the New Testament, specifically Revelation. The result is the emergence of a new literary form whose generic mixture mirrors that of John's Apocalypse. Following Tasso's poetic theory of the inclusiveness of epic, the poet of this new literary form produces a creation to mirror God's Creation (10-12).

While the subject of prophecy is history, its objective is to reform it.¹⁸ John's Apocalypse is meant to be a new vision of history, a new way of seeing that brings

¹⁸During visionary moments, as A. Bartlett Giamatti explains, "Spenser hopes to discover permanence behind change and thus shape the perspective of his reader. The poet's goal is to teach us to distinguish between magic and miracle, between what is only vain appearance and a moment of divinity. He wants to reform our sight from that of voyeurs to that of voyants, from the gaze of spies to the vision of seers" ("From Magic to Miracle" 83).

deeper understanding. This latent theme is reflected in the dramatic aspect of prophecy--not the drama of conflicting characters, but the interior drama in which the reader is meant to discover the truth through a process of unveiling. The strategies of vision that help the reader to participate in this discovery are generic mixture, obscurity,¹⁹ and allusiveness. Generic mixture in prophecy implies that the poet prophet's creation is "like God's creation" (Wittreich 31). The obscurity of prophecy is a metaphor for the veil that hides the truth contained in it. Prophecy is meant to be digested and interpreted. The result is enlightenment and access to the truth. Finally, the allusiveness of prophecy is the allusiveness of contexts: "prophecy is a literature of contexts, depending upon the power of its allusions to return men to their sources" (32). Unless one learns to penetrate these contexts, prophecy remains "a self-enclosed, self-contained work of art" (32). Keeping in mind the model of John's Apocalypse, one may consider "the breaking of each seal" as "a new discovery, an unfolding of visionary meaning" (33).²⁰ This process of discovery testifies to the legislative function of the poet prophet to renovate

¹⁹On enigma in allegory, see Fletcher, Allegory 71-75.

²⁰Cf. Frye's description of the seven phases of the Bible--creation, exodus, law, wisdom, prophecy, gospel, apocalypse--as the unfolding of meaning (chapter 5 in The Great Code 105-38). "Each phase is not an improvement on its predecessor but a wider perspective on it" (106).

history and to the dramatic experience of the reader seeking to transform the inspiring word into act.²¹

The third general characteristic of prophecy is its structure, the threefold and sevenfold structure borrowed from John's Apocalypse (Wittreich 36-37). Commentators on the Book of Revelation note that, as the narratives overlap, the reader discovers with each opening seal deeper meaning. The result is the experience of internal drama, deeper understanding, and spiritual growth (41-42). With John's Apocalypse, surface disorder conceals an internal order, a biblical discordia concors. This surface disorder is translated into the figure of the labyrinth, which in Revelation conceals the New Jerusalem at its center (47).

Finally, Wittreich argues that, as exemplars of vision, Spenser and Milton adopt two disparate political ideologies. Even though "Spenser and Milton are the first poets after John of Patmos to harness epic to the prophetic mode" (Wittreich 57), one remains conservative, the other revolutionary. Though both poets "appropriate from prophecy its rhetorical strategies and structure" (57), Spenser has the temperament of the epic poet, whose work is "written to preserve . . . the collective ideology of the

²¹"Panoramic apocalypse gives way, at the end, to a second apocalypse that, ideally, begins in the reader's mind as soon as he has finished reading, a vision that passes through the legalized vision of ordeals and trials and judgments and comes out into a second life" (Frye The Great Code 137).

culture producing it" (50), while Milton has the temperament of the prophetic poet, revolutionary rather than conservative and aiming to alter that ideology (53). In Spenser, the revolutionary aspect of prophecy is refocused through the lens of Gloriana's "mirrours more then one" (III.Pr.5-6).

The mirror. The third manifestation of the gaze with which I am concerned is the mirror. As a scene of desire, Britomart's gaze into the magical globe at the figure of Artegall in III.ii is the only gaze into a mirror in the poem. The magical globe may be considered a crystal ball or a mirror; either way it is meant to have great magical powers, and great prophetic significance for Britomart. Considering its visionary and prophetic capabilities, it provides Britomart with the equivalent of the dream-vision that Arthur experiences. As it is a unique moment in the poem reserved for Britomart, I discuss the significance of the magical globe at greater length when I discuss her scene of desire.

iii) Poetic Traditions

Poetic traditions like Petrarchism and epithalamism, Ovidianism, pastoralism, and chronicle are implicated in scenes of desire. A brief overview of them follows.

Petrarchism and epithalamism. The authority for linking Petrarchism to epithalamism is Spenser's Amoretti

and Epithalamion, the poetic account of Spenser's own courtship and marriage (Donald Cheney, "Spenser's Fortieth Birthday"). The conjunction of sonnet sequence and marriage poem is unusual in literary history (Thomas P. Roche, "Menace of Despair" 78). But Spenserians have already argued convincingly that the Epithalamion is the logical poetic fulfillment of the Amoretti, that the two belong together as their publication indicated.²² I agree.

This point made, I must admit that, with one exception--Redcross's dream of the false Una--epithalamic imagery is absent from the scenes of desire that I wish to discuss. Why do I persist, then, in putting epithalamism with Petrarchism? I argue that, even though poetic features characteristic of the epithalamion are largely absent, their presence is anticipated. Marriage is seen as the proper fulfillment of genuine love between man and woman, both to Spenser in his real life and to his poetic

²²Most recently, Reed W. Dasenbrock has argued, in Imitating the Italians, that Spenser appropriated Petrarchism even more faithfully than Wyatt or Sidney to produce a sonnet sequence that transformed the ultimate closure of death into the completion of marriage, which is further articulated in the middle books of The Faerie Queene. Louis L. Martz would agree (in William Nelson, Form and Convention 152). On the relation between the Amoretti and Epithalamion, see Carol V. Kaske, "Spenser's Amoretti and Epithalamion" and Charlotte Thompson. A seminal numerological analysis is A. Kent Hieatt, Short Time's Endless Monument, a more recent is Shohachi Fukuda.

creations²³--most important, to Britomart and Artegall, whose marriage fulfills the promise of marriage celebrated in epithalamia, progeny (Greene, "Epithalamic Convention"). The anticipation of marriage and its consequences are particularly significant in Arthur's scene of desire with Gloriana and in Britomart's with Artegall.

Whereas epithalamism is only anticipated, Petrarchism obviously emerges in scenes of desire, where allegorical figures first fall in love. The poetic conventions inherited from Francis Petrarch's Canzoniere, which included sonnets, canzoni, sestinas, ballads, and madrigals, came to inform the sonnets of Renaissance poets like Spenser. Petrarchan features include shifts in the mood of the lover, from triumph to despair and back again, the characteristic disdain of the beloved that augments desire, the lover's preoccupation with himself, his developing and evolving emotions, and the lover's melancholy of separation and absence.²⁴ The perspective from which Spenser grapples with these Petrarchan developments is spiritual. According to Reed W.

²³Giamatti believes that, in many ways, The Faerie Queene is Spenser's greatest marriage poem. "But unlike his Epithalamion and Prothalamion, which celebrated actual nuptials, Spenser's epic celebrates rather the ideal marriage and union in all things while it remains acutely conscious of the obstacles to perfect consummation here below" (Play of Double Senses 77). Cf. John N. Wall 93.

²⁴On the ontology of the self in Petrarch, see Greene, Light in Troy 104-26.

Dasenbrock, overgoing the Petrarchism adopted by Sidney and his followers, in which the self winds up hopelessly mired in "instability and discontinuity" (Imitating the Italians 34), Spenser establishes a keener connection to the Petrarch of the latter half of the Canzoniere, in which the poet finds peace in his love for the heavenly Virgin Mary rather than in the earthly Laura. Spenser's means of establishing this connection is through the holy institution of marriage and proper sexual love, chastity, "marked by an equality of position and an equality of desire" (67). Unlike those sonneteers reduced to frustration, "Spenser enjoys a spiritualized earthly union" (Alexander Dunlop, in the Yale Edition 588).

As I look at scenes of desire, I wish to explore how Spenser's own Petrarchism emerges and how the epithalamism of its fulfillment is anticipated.

Ovidianism. The Ovidianism to which I refer reflects the poetic features found in Ovid's Metamorphoses, in which great human or divine passions are fulfilled or thwarted through transformations from one bodily form into another, usually from human to animal. The Ovidian incorporates originary myths of animals, flowers, trees, fountains, and streams. Its cast of characters is all humanity and the Olympian gods and goddesses. My objective

is to trace how the Ovidian informs scenes of desire.²⁵

Presumably, the manifestations of Ovidian metamorphosis are expansive, as Leonard Barkan notes (242):

Immoral love and immature love; immature love and the process of growth; growth and fruition through love; fruition through love and a cosmos ordered by love; a cosmos ordered by love and a divine harmony expressing itself through nature; the changes of nature ultimately transcended by a great change beyond which there is no change: all are expressible through the image of metamorphosis.

Barkan's list indicates that Ovidianism reflects both the metamorphoses inherent in the cosmos and the perspectives from which these metamorphoses are interpreted.

Even as one realizes that the cosmos is fluid, one must also acknowledge that the essences in the cosmos are immutable. The lesson of Renaissance Neoplatonism is that "material reality" provides just "the beginning level of a series of translations into ultimate reality" (Barkan 231). The Platonism that Ovidianism includes assures that the multivariate forms of nature are finally revealed in their true essences when metamorphosis joins opposites, momentarily suspending the mutable world into a discordia concors.²⁶ When metamorphosis unites the two extremes, it

²⁵Studies of Ovid's influence on episodes in The Faerie Queene generally focus on the Two Cantos of Mutabilitie. For example, William P. Cumming; Anthony E. Friedmann; Helen C. Gilde; M. N. Holahan; Richard N. Ringler, in Essential Articles; all conveniently cited by Richard J. DuRocher 203n. Also William Nelson, Edmund Spenser 297.

²⁶Berger explains this concept lucidly in "The Spenserian Dynamics," in Revisionary Play 19-35.

describes "at once the beastly condition of the passionate lover and also the transfigured state of an individual who has seen ultimate reality" (Barkan 232).

The perspective from which one interprets this metamorphosis reflects the dispositions of Ovid's interpreters. As Richard J. DuRocher notes, Ovid's Metamorphoses has had three levels of reading--allegorical, rhetorical, and epical--dialectically opposed (20). The allegorical method that flourished during the Middle Ages explained Ovid's poem as Christian theology and morality (21).²⁷ The rhetorical method, which emphasized the verbal texture of Ovid's poem, transformed the Metamorphoses into a Renaissance educational guide in rhetoric. But both of these methods overlooked the overarching unity of the poem. Departing from Aristotelian ideas about the nature of the epic, critics like Giraldi Cinthio and Torquato Tasso developed an idea of the Metamorphoses as "an original form of the heroic poem" (DuRocher 27). Contrary to Virgil's, Ovid's heroic poem, with "its multiple plot, historical framework, and prominent narrator," suggested closer ties to Italian epic and romance (28). Rather than a univocal argument, Ovid's poem revealed "fundamental changes, at once mythic and psychological," guided by his "mercurial narrative presence" (28).

²⁷Several critics have documented this method of reading: Douglas Bush, Don Cameron Allen, and Clark Hulse.

The idea of Ovidian metamorphosis helps one to explore how Spenser describes the emergence of desire between allegorical figures. For my purposes, I wish to concentrate on Britomart's first sight of Artegall and the elaborate description of her emerging desire in III.ii through iv.

Pastoralism. Pastoralism emerges in The Faerie Queene most explicitly in Book VI.²⁸ From the perspective of scenes of desire, pastoralism would apply to the representative scene of desire there, Calidore's gaze at Pastorella in canto ix. The pastoral retreat among the shepherds and lasses has, in fact, become one of the critical cruxes of Book VI.²⁹ Presumably, then, an exploration of Calidore's scene of desire should illuminate the nature of Calidore's otium and the connection between pastoral and epic in The Faerie Queene.

Associating scenes of desire with pastoralism makes sense. For the general movement of scenes of desire reflects the classical rhythms of the pastoral mode-- withdrawal, contemplation, and return--from which

²⁸The most recent full study of pastoralism in The Faerie Queene is from John D. Bernard. Two earlier solid works on the subject are from Paul J. Alpers, in chapter 11 (370-405), and Cheney, Image of Nature.

²⁹Examples of criticism include Harry Berger, "A Secret Discipline," in Revisionary Play; Richard Mallette; J. C. Maxwell; David L. Miller, "Abandoning the Quest"; George E. Rowe; Harry Rusche; Stanley Stewart; Susanne Woods.

understanding is intended to emerge.³⁰ In chapter 1 of Ceremonies of Innocence, John D. Bernard argues essentially that the classical idea of otium, which allowed one to contemplate one's place in the culture and in the cosmos, became associated with the vita contemplativa just as the epic became associated with the vita activa, what Thomas H. Cain calls "an original and significant association which adds some profundity to our sense of the relevance of pastoral in the Renaissance."³¹ In Book VI, Spenser will suggest that the "withdrawal into the center of the human and material world is a creative prelude to the resumption of normal human activities" (Bernard 38), and so the vita contemplativa comes to complement and lay the foundation for the vita activa (Bernard 44-47). In fact, contemplation comes to be considered an activity in itself, by which poets, for example, "share in the pure creativity of God" (18).³² In Book VI, these associations are explored specifically. As Calidore's scene of desire is the only representative scene of desire from which pastoralism emerges in its most characteristic form, I

³⁰On the rhythms of pastoral, see Leo Marx and Ellen Zetzel Lambert. For a complete survey of Renaissance pastoralism, see W. W. Greg; for an overview of European pastoral, see Helen Cooper. On the Arcadian and Mantuanesque in Spenser's pastoralism, see Patrick Cullen.

³¹Although he applauds Bernard's learning, Cain objects to his too-inclusive description of pastoralism.

³²Richard Cody argues (5-9) that Renaissance pastoral is largely a "platonizing" mode.

treat pastoralism at greater length when I get to my discussion of that scene of desire.

Chronicle. The chronicles from which Spenser drew are the traditional chronicles of English history--those of Geoffrey of Monmouth, Holinshed, and John Hardyng. Spenser borrows and revises to embellish his romance narrative, and the materials are both factual and romanticizing.³³

Almost without exception, chronicle emerges from only two scenes of desire in The Faerie Queene--Arthur's with Gloriana and Britomart's with Artegall.³⁴ In each case, Spenser appropriates traditional sources to overgo them. That is, he fills gaps in the historical record that allows his allegorical figures to emerge as truly his own. I explore this historical connection in greater detail when I discuss these two, most important, scenes of desire.

Origins

Besides marking a significant convergence of poetic features, scenes of desire are primarily, by definition, originary moments. They mark the moment when desire begins, and they show how it is augmented, displaced, or deferred.

What is the origin of desire? Etymology suggests a

³³Though Spenser's chronicle history is well documented, the most complete is still Carrie A. Harper.

³⁴The only exception is Paridell's scene of desire with Hellenore. But, in this case, the chronicle told really applies more to Britomart than to Paridell--in fact, acts to distinguish Britomart's from Paridell's lineage.

clue. Derived ultimately from the Latin desiderare (de-, [away] from + sidus, star, + infinitive suffix -are), the verb, desire, originally perhaps "to note the absence of the stars," has come to mean "to regret the absence of" and, by extension, "to long for."³⁵ The idea latent in desire, "absence of," is the ultimate source of its fruitfulness. In Desire, Dialectic, and Otherness, William Desmond notes (18):

As Socrates reminds us in the Symposium, when we desire something, we experience the lack of something. The first point we should make about this lack is that it shows that desire cannot be completely self-enclosed. Desire is desire for something. . . . Negatively understood, it is witness to unfulfillment; positively understood, it may make desire aware of itself and so awaken it to what is more than itself.

To answer what the origin of desire is like in The Faerie Queene generally, I wish to explore the origin of desire in scenes of desire specifically. By definition, scenes of desire re-enact myths of the origin of desire between allegorical figures. By association, origins can reflect origins of persons, families, and nations, of ideas, traditions, and cultures, of societies and the cosmos. In Spenser, myths of origin can range from the personal to the social to the cosmic level. In scenes of desire, myths of origins have this resonance as well.

To find the ultimate source of desire in The Faerie

³⁵From Walter W. Skeat and Eric Partridge, s.v. desire.

Queene, one must turn to its principal absence, Gloriana. Regardless of Gloriana's absence in "a narrative not itself conspicuously integrated," Jeffrey Fruen still infers from the poem's title "that Gloriana's role is meant to be focal" (147). Without pursuing Fruen's argument that the precedent of biblical typology makes the absent Gloriana present in the same sense that Christ is made present throughout the Bible,³⁶ I argue that Gloriana's absence locates a gap in The Faerie Queene from which desire emerges.³⁷

Perhaps an analogy can explain the origin of desire in Gloriana. One might compare the gap named Gloriana to the vanishing point used to organize spatial perspective. All vectors in the drawing lead to that vanishing point. All figures are connected with respect to those vectors converging on the vanishing point. Yet the actual point, though intuited from the perspective, disappears from the drawing. Similarly, Gloriana vanishes from the poem, even

³⁶Parker calls the "veiling of Elizabeth . . . an opportunity to play one 'shadow' of her identity off against another," though this refraction and multiplication, as "forms of evasion," ultimately prevent a single truth from emerging (Inescapable Romance 81).

³⁷Jonathan Goldberg maintains that, when Spenser describes Amoret as "perfect hole" (III.xii.38.9), he puns on her restored health and, in the new ending, on the "fulfillment through want" that marks her frustrated desire to rejoin Scudamore (Endlesse Worke 3).

if all the allegorical figures tend toward her.³⁸ Using the same image, David L. Miller compares the organizing principle of the vanishing point to that of "the anticipated-but-deferred wholeness of an ideal body, which serves to structure the reading of the text" (Poem's Two Bodies 4).³⁹ While Miller's aim is to demonstrate how Tudor ideology is inscribed on the aesthetic body of the poem,⁴⁰ I wish to explore how Gloriana's absence marks the

³⁸Camille Paglia argues that the "opening up of secular space in Italian painting through perspective is paralleled in the vast distances of The Faerie Queene" (172).

From a narrative perspective, Gloriana's absence locates the origin of the poem's textual force. Used by Peter Brooks, this phrase develops the "experience of reading narrative as a dynamic operation" (47). To overgo "the static models of much formalism, toward a dynamics of reading and writing" (47), Brooks argues that one can point, at the core of narrative, to the "motor" that activates "a field of force." Metaphorically, the vanishing point of perspective would locate the focus of this field of force.

³⁹In "The Renaissance Imagination: Second World and Green World," Berger uses focused perspective, which implicates the eye of the artist and that of the observer, to examine the second world of Renaissance fiction-making (in Second World and Green World 17-20). In "Levels of Meaning in Literature," Frye considers the second world the imaginary or hypothetical world of fiction (cited in Berger, Second World 14 n11). Meyer H. Abrams's designation is heterocosm (in The Mirror and the Lamp 272 and 327, cited in Berger 14 n12).

⁴⁰Cf. the argument in "The Work of Gender in the Discourse of Discovery," in which Montrose claims that Raleigh's Discoverie of Guiana, Queen Elizabeth, and her courtiers "share a common discourse of discovery, grounded in a territorial conception of the female body" (13).

poem's ultimate source of desire.⁴¹

Even if Gloriana is narratively absent from the poem--and here I mean absent, with one exception, from Books I to VI, though not from the Letter to Raleigh--she is still the primary presence through whom the male figures define themselves.⁴² For Gloriana constitutes and is constituted by the male culture in which Spenser participates, much as the spatial perspective constitutes the drawing in the analogy. In scenes of desire, the female form is the symbolic register by which the male can redefine his idea of himself and the continuity of his line.⁴³ Gloriana's elusiveness, then, is compensated, for

⁴¹In The Great Code, Frye speaks of Saint "Paul's brilliant phrase for the Incarnation, 'He emptied himself'" (Philippians 2:7, italics mine). As Christ "'descended' or was born into the world of vanity or total emptiness, his return to the spiritual world was 'resurrection'" (129).

⁴²In chapter 1 of The Feminine Reclaimed, Stevie Davies argues that Spenser's view of the feminine principle is one of internalization. "He seems to locate and see, not an image of the 'other'--foreign, alien, antithetical--but figurative reflections of the psyche itself" (41). The focus of this argument, Britomart/Elizabeth draws "the 'female' element of the nation into a fuller equivalence with the 'male'" (57). This reconciliation is manifested in the reconciliation of Venus and Diana in III.vi; the procreateness displayed in the Garden of Adonis episode implies the more active role of the feminine (89). Alternatively, the inclusiveness implied here only reflects once again how the male figures project on the female features necessary to fashion themselves.

⁴³"Women's bodies," according to Montrose, provide "a veritable matrix for the Elizabethan forms of desire" ("Shaping Fantasies" 47). That the human body is a primary symbolic medium for articulating social relations is attested in Mary Douglas, Purity and Danger and Natural Symbols. Also see Kirsten Hastrup.

example, by Arthur's conceptual image of her and the dynastic line she represents. As Robert J. Mueller explains, "Gloriana is the creation solely of Arthur's quest for her" (757). Arthur's symbolic return and ultimate union with Gloriana overgo the disrupted Tudor line ending with Elizabeth. In this sense, Arthur's scene of desire bridges the gap between Spenser's conception of a perfect gentleman and Arthur's self-defining idea of himself embraced by Gloriana's poetic body.

If the ultimate objective of the poem for Spenser is to fashion a gentleman,⁴⁴ then scenes of desire discover moments in the poem when the process of fashioning becomes personal, erotic, and (pro)creative. As glimpses of the process at work, scenes of desire explore the threshold between the creative impulse, in the poem largely associated with Arthur, and the procreative impulse, largely associated with Britomart. For Britomart, the most prominent female figure in the middle books of the poem, is fulfilled only when she assumes the role of wife to Artegall and mother to a dynastic line and disappears into the historical niche prophesied for her.⁴⁵ As glimpses of

⁴⁴A detailed discussion of Spenser's intention in the Letter to Raleigh will appear in chapter 1.

⁴⁵The condition of female figures in the poem largely results from male projection, dominance, and possession. Simon Shepherd argues that the experiences of male allegorical figures are "marked by competition over female sex objects" (62), rather like a sexual economics. As The Faerie Queene, though addressed to Elizabeth, is intended

the process of fashioning, scenes of desire connect the personal origins of erotic desire between allegorical figures to the historical continuities in which these figures participate--poetic traditions, conventions, and the culmination and perpetuation of famous lineages.

In these terms, the centrality of Gloriana figuratively and symbolically in the poem, though it necessarily pays homage to Spenser's monarch, questions the centrality of the creative male impulse governing the poem. Three major figures, and major figures in my study--Arthur, Britomart, and Calidore--help me explore the origins of poetic desire in the poem. As Gloriana is the central figure in the poem, Arthur's scene of desire with her marks a fundamental origin. Superficially, it sparks his first pangs of erotic desire. But, more important, it has intensely creative aspects. Arthur discovers his true self just as Spenser figures his own masculine impulse to the creation of the poem, complementary to the dynastic lineage whose poetic vehicle is Britomart. The second major figure, Britomart, locates the fertile center out of which the Tudor dynasty will emerge. Britomart's union with

for a male audience, it also seeks to affirm the male power structure of Elizabethan England ruled over by a female monarch. In this scheme, female allegorical figures are reduced to mediators between men. In society, this mediator is played at the highest level by Elizabeth, in the poem by Britomart (Shepherd 79).

Coincidentally, the illustrious progeny that Britomart and Artegall foster is primarily male. Its culmination, Elizabeth, is an unavoidable historical fact.

Artegall will provide the progeny that Arthur's union with Gloriana can never provide because of the historical fact of Elizabeth's virginity. Finally, to reaffirm the masculine role in the creation of the poem, Calidore's scene of desire reinvents Spenser's own origins. Just as the origins of epic, according to the Renaissance model for poetic careers, and the roots of Calidore's strength as a hero of epic (VI.Pr.) lie in pastoral, so does Spenser's creativity spring from pastoral, pointing to a new emphasis on the masculine impulse to the creation of the poem. Fundamentally, the movement of Calidore's scene of desire recapitulates, in miniature, the Virgilian process of poetic development that informs Spenser's poetic virtue.

Structure of the Argument

The organizing principle behind my study of The Faerie Queene is comparative analysis of scenes of desire both paradigmatic and parodic--a complementary and redefining relationship that enriches one's reading of scenes, cantos, books, and the entire poem. The three major allegorical figures covered are Arthur, Britomart, and Calidore, whose scenes of desire may be considered paradigmatic by reputation, placement, and incident. But, since it is Arthur and Gloriana that are most central to the overall designs of the poem, I establish in chapter 1 that Arthur's scene of desire with Gloriana in I.ix is the paradigm in

the poem.⁴⁶ Discussing first the importance of these figures and the frame around their scene of desire, I take a close look at the poetic features that establish it as paradigmatic. The ensuing chapters examine the obvious parody of this scene of desire, Redcross's scene of desire with the false Una in I.i, and the later paradigms and selected parodies that reinterpret the Arthurian original.

For my purposes, I wish the term parody to indicate, following Linda Hutcheon, "a form of imitation, but imitation characterized by ironic inversion, not always at the expense of the parodied text" (6).⁴⁷ Somewhere between the self-reflexivity described by Margaret Rose in Parody//Metafiction and the intertextuality of Gerard Genette in Palimpsestes, Hutcheon's theoretical perspective, both formal and pragmatic, places parody in the process of communication, what she calls "the

⁴⁶The term, paradigm, is meant to be synonymous with model. But, even though I do not mean to imply the revolutionary character of paradigms inherited from Thomas S. Kuhn's Structure of Scientific Revolutions, I do imply that this is meant to be a new way of looking at the poem.

⁴⁷Thomas M. Greene calls Renaissance imitation an idea and activity that "embraced not only literature but pedagogy, grammar, rhetoric, esthetics, the visual arts, music, historiography, politics and philosophy" (Light in Troy 1).

John N. King explains that, during the Protestant Reformation, parody "had not yet acquired exclusively derogatory associations" (6-7). Also see Rosemond Tuve, "Sacred 'Parody,'" and Angus Fletcher, Prophetic Moment 99. In the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, parody was considered "a composition that seriously transfers conventions from one genre to another" (King 179; also Tuve 250-51, 254-55).

enonciation or the contextualized production and reception of parodic texts" (24). As the etymology reveals, Greek para may also mean "beside." Hutcheon argues that parody is "repetition with a difference," in which the critical distance between parodied text and new incorporating work "is usually signaled by irony," either "critically constructive" or "destructive" (32). As "a personal act of supersession and an inscription of literary-historical continuity" (35), parody contains its own paradox: "even with critical difference, parody reinforces" (Hutcheon 26; cf. Kathryn Gravdal on "transgressive parody"). In sum, when I discuss scenes of desire as parodies, I explore not only how Spenser interrogates Renaissance poetic traditions and conventions, but also his own parodic transgressions.

Significantly, the obvious parody of Arthur's scene of desire, Redcross's dream of the false Una in I.i, precedes the paradigm, which--though intuitively suspect--is allegorically sound. The proleptic parody, discussed in chapter 2, explores how the relation between the parody and the paradigm informs a new way of looking at related incidents early in the poem.

The second paradigmatic figure, whose scene of desire is also paradigmatic, is Britomart, who pervades the middle books of The Faerie Queene. Remembering the paradigm from chapter 1, I demonstrate in chapter 3, first, how Britomart's role in the poem appropriates Arthur's and,

second, how her scene of desire in III.ii compares with Arthur's scene of desire as a paradigm. To a degree, the structure of chapter 3 will recapitulate that of chapter 1. Just as I devote some attention to the place of Arthur and Gloriana in the poem before I turn to the context of their scene of desire, so I try to locate the place of Britomart in the middle books before I turn to the context of her scene of desire. From this comparison a richer view of the poetic features in Britomart's scene of desire emerges.

The third major figure, and subject of chapter 4, is Calidore, whose gaze at Pastorella in VI.ix is the final, Calidorean, paradigm. What is particularly interesting about Calidore's scene of desire is that its generally paradigmatic nature is undermined by features and omissions uncharacteristic of the paradigmatic, as if it parodies itself. The Spenserian gaze reflected in this scene of desire, parodied by the cannibals' gaze at Serena in canto viii and refigured in the vision on Mount Acidale in canto x, shifts the focus from the central figure of the poem, and its guiding inspiration, Gloriana, to the figure of the poet himself.

Finally, what do scenes of desire tell one about the general nature of desire in The Faerie Queene? This study aims to provide a partial answer to that question.

CHAPTER 1:
THE ARTHURIAN PARADIGM

Arthur and Gloriana

The Letter to Raleigh offers evidence that Spenser considered Arthur and Gloriana the two central figures in The Faerie Queene. For Spenser, Arthur represents "Magnificence."¹

So in the person of Prince Arthure I sette forth
magnificence in particular, which vertue for that
(according to Aristotle and the rest) it is the
perfection of all the rest, and conteineth in it
them all.

(Letter)²

¹"Magnificence" probably includes magnanimity or is synonymous to it, though critics have disagreed. D. Douglas Waters, "Prince Arthur as Christian Magnanimity" 53n and John E. Hankins 17-33. Although Viola B. Hulbert (quoted in Waters) "explains the possibility that [Spenser] followed the late medieval and Renaissance practice of incorrectly using magnificence and magnanimity interchangeably," later critics have explained that "the former includes the latter." Studies of Spenser's use of magnificence rather than magnanimity include Michael F. Moloney 58-62, Maurice B. McNamee 144-47, and S. Mary Anne Winkelmann 204, 211, 239-41. But McNamee clarifies that magnificence, according to Aquinas and other commentators on Aristotle, "merely means the external impressive manifestation in deeds (magna facta) of the internal virtue of magnanimity (magna anima)" (145, quoted by Waters). J. J. Jusserand cites other models, of lesser stature--for example, Lodowick Briskett's Discourse and Alessandro Piccolomini's Della Institutione (382).

²All quotations from the Letter or The Faerie Queene come from Hamilton's annotated edition of the poem. All references to Hamilton, unless otherwise noted, come from his glosses in this edition. All references to the minor poetry come from the Yale Shorter Poems edited by William A. Oram et al.

It is Arthur who sees Gloriana "in a dream or vision" (Letter) and, ravished by her beauty, seeks her out in fairyland. By Gloriana, Spenser says that he generally intends "glory," though, more particularly, "the most excellent glorious person of our soueraine the Queene" (Letter). Figuring magnificence and glory, Arthur and Gloriana underlie the entire narrative of The Faerie Queene.³ As a consequence of Arthur's magnificence, his quest to reunite with Gloriana enables him to redeem other figures from danger, including Redcross, Guyon, Placidas, Samient, Timias, and Serena. At Gloriana's annual feast, "vppon which xii seuerall dayes, the occasions of the xii seuerall aduentures hapned" (Letter), twelve knights vow to return to their queen at the conclusion of their quest.⁴ Noting this variety, S. K. Heninger explains that the "unifying theme of Arthur's quest develops from the

³Chrys Armbrust argues that Spenser's concept of magnificence and glory are indebted to Jeronimo Osorio, Bishop of Silves, whose De nobilitate civile et christiana (1552) and De gloria (1552) might have been known to Spenser through a 1576 translation by William Blandie. Osorio's books are indebted to ideas developed by Albrecht Durer and Wilibald Pirckheimer for the woodcut, "The Great Triumphal Car."

⁴Much has been made of the number twelve in the Arthurian tradition--as it pertains to Spenser's projected twelve adventures, twelve knights, twelve books--relevant to my discussion because Arthur is the embodiment of these twelve virtues. On the importance of twelve see, for example, Charles B. Millican 115-16.

multifarious quests of the other twelve knights."⁵ The purpose of this allegorical design is "to fashion a gentleman or noble person in vertuous and gentle discipline" (Letter).⁶

But the reliability of the designs described in the Letter has been questioned.⁷ Answering this charge, Balachandra Rajan makes two useful points (44-50). If one considers his career, Spenser was not unfamiliar with situating a reader to his work. Not only The Faerie Queene, but also The Shepheardes Calender and The Fowre

⁵"The Aesthetic Experience of Reading Spenser," in Frushell and Vondersmith 91. "The Faerie Queene by this structure convincingly demonstrates . . . the paradox of unity out of multiteity."

⁶James Nohrnberg explains that this fashioning, "in the language of the Italian critics," corresponds "to the 'end of the poem'" (46-47). Foster Provost sums up how critics of the 1950s and 1960s looked at the term "fashion" in Spenser's Letter (in Frushell and Vondersmith 9). Both Harry Berger and M. Pauline Parker, Provost says, emphasize the psychomachic tendency of the poem. Since Arthur is actually "the sum of the other heroes," one may consider that "the whole poem would constitute a grand psychomachia of the general protagonist, Arthur, and each book a subordinate psychomachia of the individual protagonist" (Frushell and Vondersmith 9).

⁷In "Spenser's Letter to Raleigh and the Averroistic Poetics," Jerry L. Mills ranges critics from those who see the Letter "as a useful though imprecise indication of the poet's intent" to those who scorn "it as something close to a hoax on the reader" (246). Other opinions, conveniently arranged by Mills, include Josephine W. Bennett 24-38, A. C. Hamilton ("Spenser's Letter to Raleigh" 481-85), W. J. B. Owen 195-97, Graham Hough 86-94, and O. B. Hardison 80-84. In "Spenser's 'Twelve Private Morall Virtues,'" Robert M. Cummings offers an extremely detailed bibliography about the sources of the twelve virtues described in Spenser's Letter (52-53 n1).

Hymnes have epistolary material. What is particularly questionable about the Letter's content is the text's divergence from the designs that the Letter describes. Further, Rajan notes the position of the letter.⁸ Since it appears after the three books of the 1590 edition, it is meant to be read with the poem in retrospect. As such, the letter seems at first to offer the "principles of cohesiveness" (46) by which one can interpret the "darke conceit" of the poem. And yet, considering how unsatisfactorily the letter describes its final form, The Faerie Queene "must stand in an unstable connection to any potential specification of it" (47). In short, from the disparity between the designs described in the letter and those of the poem itself emerges the experience of reading allegory. Now, using his distinction between the "incomplete" and the "unfinished," Rajan argues that the incomplete poem described in the letter, which "it [was] possible and proper to complete," became the unfinished poem formed "in such a way as to make it improper to finish" (44).⁹ If so, the unreliability of the letter

⁸For a history of the Letter's placement or omission from editions of The Faerie Queene, see Gordon Teskey, "Positioning Spenser's 'Letter to Raleigh.'"

⁹The issue of closure and openendedness in Spenser criticism endures. "For the imagination every end is necessarily a new beginning, and the open-endedness of Spenser's poem is expressed in a pattern of reiterated inconclusiveness" (Isabel MacCaffrey 330). Cf. Angus Fletcher's earlier view of the tendency of allegory "toward infinite extension" (Allegory 177) with his later in The

provides authorial evidence that the experience of reading Spenser's allegory is continually retrospective, continually reinterpreting the "darke conceit."¹⁰

No matter how unreliable one may consider the Letter, Arthur and Gloriana, true to their privileged place in the allegory, propagate within the poem itself wonderfully suggestive "shadows" (Rosemond Tuve, Allegorical Imagery 91). To demonstrate their privileged place, I wish to appropriate a distinction from Gordon Teskey. In "Milton's Choice of Subject," Teskey distinguishes between the metaphorical and the metonymical conception of poetic authority. The metaphorical conception describes a heroic poem's affinity to epic through similarity: "Whatever its subject, an epic had in some way to refer to a generic ideal inferred from the examples of Homer and Virgil" (Teskey 56). For Spenser, this metaphorical conception means that "Arthur is but one possibility in a generalized class any of whose members may anchor the floating abstraction of a 'good governour and a vertuous man'" (62). By contrast, the metonymical conception of poetic authority describes a contiguous "principle of authority by descent from an origin" (56).

Prophetic Moment that The Faerie Queene is satisfactorily closed. Also see Susanne Woods and Stanley Stewart.

¹⁰For a comprehensive analysis of the Letter as an independent text that is meant to mark a well-planned publishing event and that embodies a rich array of authorial agendas, see Wayne Erickson.

But, as Teskey observes, Spenser is conceptually ambivalent enough that he can also organize his poem on the metonymical principle: "the twelve quests of The Faerie Queene are contiguous at their origin where each one begins on one of the twelve days of Gloriana's feast" (64). Teskey argues that Spenser's ambivalence reflected the transition in European aesthetic sensibility from the root metaphor of the broad-branching tree to that of the organism (64). In this conception of poetic authority, Gloriana, seen only once in The Faerie Queene (the dream-vision of I.ix), still exerts a profound influence both on Arthur and on the titular knights. With the exception of Britomart, whose allegiance is to Artegall, each titular knight at some point in the narrative specifically acknowledges his allegiance to Gloriana.¹¹ From one origin Spenser derives multiple allegorical figures and a variety of quests.¹² Unlike Gloriana, however, Arthur reappears

¹¹In Book I, Redcross acknowledges that he cannot remain with the Hermit Contemplation, but must fulfill his quest, given to him by Gloriana, to save Una's parents' realm from the dragon (x.63-68). After Guyon's conquest of Acrasia, the knight sends the witch to Gloriana to bear witness to his heroic achievement (III.i.2). After Artegall has redeemed Irena from her distress and re-established justice in her realm, he is recalled to fairyland and obeys the summons unconditionally (V.xii.27). Finally, Calidore recognizes that he must leave Pastorella with Bellamore and Claribell so that he can resume his quest for the Blatant Beast (VI.xii.12-13).

¹²Heninger observes that Gloriana's feast, held annually, also represents "the annual unit of time, the integer of eternity" (Frushell and Vondersmith 94). From unity comes multitude. "The quest of each knight makes an

throughout the poem. Although his part seems more peripheral than Gloriana's central one, the Prince intercedes at strategic moments as the instrument of God's grace.¹³ In turn, the quest of each titular knight allegorically expands on Arthur's central quest for Gloriana.¹⁴ In short, "metaphor" and "metonymy" merge.

Arthur's Scene of Desire

The scene of desire between Arthur and Gloriana in Arthur's narration at I.ix may be considered paradigmatic not only because of what the Letter has to say about them and their role in the entire poem. When Arthur falls asleep, dreams, and awakes renewed, his experience reprises the spiritual death and rebirth often implied in the allegory of the quest romance. In chivalric romances, "quests usually have allegorical implications. For example, when the knight travels to fairyland and back in pursuit of some special object, spiritual death and rebirth is often implied

individual and distinct contribution to the meaning of Arthur's quest. We can comprehend the quest of Gloriana's knight, in fact, only by following the fortunes of the other twelve" (91). See Nohrnberg (36 f) on the "multiple unity" of The Faerie Queene with "Arthur for its emblem."

¹³A. S. P. Woodhouse, in Hamilton, Essential Articles 71. On the eighth-canto intervention as symbolic regeneration, see Alastair Fowler, Numbers of Time 53. But Carol V. Kaske argues that the "Protean Arthur" does not reconcile Christian and classical values (Frushell and Vonderemith 141-42).

¹⁴Fowler, "Emanations of Glory," in Kennedy and Reither 72; also Fletcher, Allegory 195.

allegorically" (James J. Wimsatt 219). Scenes of desire refigure this movement from spiritual death to rebirth, opening up the fictive space of the poem, a "dilatory" movement--spatial and temporal--grounded in the Latin roots of "dilation," differre and dilatare.¹⁵ Similarly, in the paradigm, Arthur falls asleep to a vision--a temporary "death"--then, reborn, channels his new ardor into the larger fictive space of the fairy landscape, where his quest exemplifies those of the other knights.

But Arthur's scene of desire is also paradigmatic because of its strategic place in Book I and the consequences of it for Redcross, Una, and the Legend of Holiness, for canto ix marks a pivotal point in the narrative of Book I.

Even a cursory look reveals the confluence of significant moments right before and right after canto ix. Before canto ix begins, Redcross lies, without Una, helplessly despairing in Orgoglio's dungeon; after canto ix, he travels, with Una, to the House of Holiness. Farther back, at the beginning of canto viii, Spenser celebrates the spiritual strength and necessity of grace, embodied in Arthur, who will redeem the fallen Christian soldier, Redcross. Farther ahead, at the beginning of canto x, Spenser recapitulates the consequences of Arthur's

¹⁵Patricia Parker, Inescapable Romance 57-58; cf. Derrida's neologism, différance, noted in Parker 9-10.

victory over pride: Redcross, overly proud of his "fleshly might" (1.1), now redeemed "through grace" (1.7). Not only does the despair from which Redcross suffers in Orgoglio's dungeon in canto viii anticipate his actual encounter with Despair in canto ix, but the lessons of faith, hope, and charity that Redcross learns in canto x also reprise the lesson of love that Arthur narrates in canto ix. Finally, of course, whereas Arthur's vision of Gloriana in canto ix prefigures the end of the poem, Redcross's vision on the mount of Contemplation prefigures the Apocalypse.

In sum, Arthur's vision takes place in the same canto where Redcross has his most difficult trial, the Despair episode, and at the point right before the knight's most important revelation. Besides this juxtaposition, the rich convergence of poetic features in the structure of Arthur's narration indicates that the first half of canto ix is more complex than previous critics have indicated.

Context and Convergences

Canto ix has a tripartite structure: Arthur's narration, Trevisan's narration, and the Despair episode form a triple argument of love--inspiring when it is based on faith, despairing when it is based on doubt. As Thomas P. Roche points out: "We must inquire how and why these three episodes function in this canto and to what extent Arthur's vision is threatened by the menace of despair" ("Menace of

Despair" 72). How, then, is this complex structure in the canto mirrored by the convergences in the structure of Arthur's narration?

The constituents usually discussed include folklore and myth.¹⁶ Rather, I wish to explore Petrarchism, chronicle, origins, invocation, and dream-vision and prophecy. I argue that these poetic features explore more fruitfully the scene of desire in canto ix.

Petrarchism

From the relations in each of the three couples of canto ix--Arthur and Gloriana, Terwin and his scornful beloved,

¹⁶According to the Variorum, the three most obvious constituents in Arthur's scene of desire are the fairy-tale motif, Sir Thopas, and dream-vision (1:267-68). Lucy A. Paton remarks (29) that the fairy-tale motif connected to the name of a great hero is rather commonplace. Noting that "Arthur's love-story, as he himself narrates it, is plainly derived from the poem of Sir Thopas," Lilian Winstanley wonders that "the tale which Chaucer selects as a fitting subject for burlesque should be treated with entire seriousness by Spenser." Edwin Greenlaw agrees with Paton ("Spenser's Fairy Mythology" 115). The Variorum editor notes that both Chaucer and Spenser knew the traditional lore of the Celtic fairy princess (268). On this tradition, he cites T. Peete Cross 585-644.

Douglas Brooks-Davies also considers the familiar tradition of the Celtic fairy princess and Chaucer's Sir Thopas (87). On the former, see Isabel E. Rathborne 167 ff. He considers two variations of Arthur's vision: Redcross's dream in canto i and Diana's love for Endymion (see Apollonius Rhodius, Argonautica IV.57). Edgar Wind mentions (154) the Diana-Endymion myth, too. Further, Arthur's nine-month search for the Fairy Queen reprises the story of Cupid and Psyche in Apuleius's Golden Ass. According to Harry G. Lotspeich, citing Boccaccio, De Genealogia Deorum V.22: "Since Psyche means soul in Greek, the tale was interpreted allegorically," as the union of soul and pure love (104).

Redcross and Una--emerge the poetic conventions of Petrarchism. In one view, erotic experience for the Petrarchan lover "constituted a continual experiment in prolongation and excess," whose only recourse seems "the equally extreme gesture of total renunciation."¹⁷ At the center of canto ix is the perfectly characteristic complaining lover, Terwin, "whom we have heard speak for himself in so many sonnet sequences, poems that do not end but merely stop with the poet-lover in a state of despair" (Roche, "Menace of Despair" 78).¹⁸ But, at the very beginning of canto ix, I would argue, there appears a revisionary Petrarchan lover: Arthur. Though he is also smitten with love and complains of his wound, the lady whom he loves is not the kind of scornful lady that Terwin loves. Besides this, when Una affirms the truth of Arthur's dream-vision (ix.16), the Prince acquires the necessary faith in Gloriana herself not to suffer from despair, faith inspired by "the spiritual loveliness which is the object of prince Arthur's quest" (Janet Spens 114). According to Mark Rose, fidelity is characteristic of the heroic lover (Heroic Love 110). Because of this faith in

¹⁷Christopher Martin 239. The Petrarchan lover is committed to "a psychological quest that sought to explore the utmost limits of consciousness and desire" (Northrop Frye, Fables of Identity 106, cited in Martin 257 n1).

¹⁸Only three sonneteers avoid this impasse in the Renaissance. Spenser and William Habington chose marriage. Barnabe Barnes chose rape (Roche 78 and 91-92 n8).

love, Arthur avoids Terwin's demise and is proof against the despair to which Redcross is so susceptible.¹⁹ Each part of canto ix, therefore, treats a different kind of love: "love as visionary quest, love as despair, and despair as the total absence of love" (Roche 74).

But, before Arthur experiences true love, he experiences the Petrarchan opposite, scorn for love. Ironically, this response is usually associated with the beloved in sonnets. One way to understand why Arthur has experienced this early disdain is to anticipate the Mirabella episode of Book VI, for Mirabella's ill-fated career reprises the earlier phase of Arthur's career.²⁰

Comparing Arthur's narration to Mirabella's story, I think that the Petrarchan link is borne out. First, both episodes in the poem are narrated by the Petrarchan figure involved: Arthur in Book I, Mirabella in Book VI. Second, both Arthur's narration and Mirabella's story draw attention to their literariness. Arthur's narration not only re-examines Petrarchan conventions, but also Arthur's

¹⁹Arthur searching for Gloriana implies Magnificence "seeking its earthly reward, Glory, and the import of this quest is mainly moral. Trevisan's story of Terwin and his despairing love is a negative example of human love meant to balance the positive love vision of Arthur and to show the potential danger inherent in love as a passion" (Roche 74). Theologically, Redcross's despair reflects his lack of faith in Una's love, the true Church, and in God's love.

²⁰Rosemary Freeman argues that the "court-of-love form" of the Mirabella episode "provides a structural scheme but the subject matter has its origin in the Elizabethan sonnet" (Companion 320).

own personal origin. Mirabella's story has similar allusiveness to Petrarchan conventions of lover and beloved. But the very nature of Spenser's disclosing her story a little at a time over three cantos also draws attention to the poetic technique of the episodic narrative within which that Petrarchan mode fits. Third, both Arthur and Mirabella begin their career with the kind of proud disdain normally associated with the Petrarchan beloved. In fact, the language used by Mirabella at the beginning of her narration echoes Arthur's. At I.ix.9.1, for example, Arthur begins: "It was in freshest flowre of youthly yeares." Similarly, at VI.viii.20.1-2, Mirabella begins: "In prime of youthly yeares." Finally, both at I.ix.12.1 and at VI.viii.2.7, one is asked to make an example of these scornful Petrarchan figures. Arthur asks Una to make an example of him and of Redcross in Book I; Spenser asks "Ye gentle Ladies" (viii.1.1) to make an example of Mirabella in Book VI.

But, even with these similarities, Arthur's destiny is not Mirabella's. As Anne Shaver argues: "the harsh absurdity of Mirabella's punishment" results more from her class and gender than from the scorn she shares with Arthur and others in the poem (215). According to Shaver, Cupid must punish Mirabella in the most definitive way he does because, as a low-born woman whose overweening pride causes her disdain for love, she claims "power over high-born men

. . . that could endanger a conservative, masculine notion of a courteous society and a privileged self" (215). If this is true, it is not surprising that Mirabella's disdain for love is transformed into an ongoing re-enactment of her crime, as Disdain leads her "by force" (VI.vii.44.3-4) and Scorn, a whip in his hand, lashes her from behind and laughs to "see her sore lament" (44.9). Cupid's Justice sentences Mirabella to have acted out on her the scornful disdain of the Petrarchan beloved that she originally acts out herself.

Unlike Mirabella, Arthur, originally just as "wont to laugh" (I.ix.10.5) as Scorn is to laugh at Mirabella, transforms his initial erotic denial into fervent love after the vision. For some, love may cause the "mournfull Tragedy" (10.4) that Petrarchan lovers lament, but for others, including Arthur, it becomes the vehicle for transcending "fleshly might" (11.6) and for attaining the divine.²¹ By contrast, Mirabella learns that, as fervently as she seeks to transcend Renaissance decorums of class, gender, and courtesy, she actually forces Cupid to imprison her in an eternal re-enactment of her crime. Arthur learns, however, that, as soon as he succumbs to Cupid and

²¹Discussing the Two Cantos of Mutabilitie, Spens uses Plotinus's tripartite divisions of body, soul, and spirit to explain the aspirations of Arthur, who "performs by virtue of his quest of Gloriana, as the Soul becomes 'more creative' the more it is 'turned toward' that which is above itself" (50).

submits to love, he becomes free to exercise his virtue. In fact, he and Redcross provide two kinds of example, one might say: Redcross as the lover who yields too swiftly--for example, to Duessa--and Arthur as the disdainful prince who scorns too vehemently.

In sum, I would argue that the Mirabella episode reinvests Arthur's narration retrospectively with one poetic impulse to erotic denial in Arthur.²²

But there are other analogues to Mirabella's case in The Faerie Queene, as Shaver notes (212-14), including the monster Echidna, the Squire of Dames, and Redcross himself, whose erotic denial of the false Una turns to lust for Duessa. Even Amoret and Pastorella trouble their lovers by their initial reluctance, though their destiny is far different from Mirabella's. In another variation, Florimell causes trouble merely from her loveliness, which Arthur mistakes for Gloriana's, in Book III. Finally, like Mirabella, Belphebe "attracts love through her beauty but refuses . . . ever to love in return" (Shaver 213), an erotic denial that reduces Timias to abjection. These analogues suggest that erotic denial, for good or ill, forms an early stage in the growth of an individual toward

²²In remarks to a session of Spenser at Kalamazoo in 1991, called "Eumnestes Meets Phantantes: History and Fable in Spenser's Later Books," Richard Neuse argues that Mirabella, who rides an ass and is led by Disdain, is Arthur's Una, his Gloriana--unrecognized by Arthur, however, because he fails to understand his own connection to disdain.

sexual maturity, the kind of completeness Spenser celebrates in Britomart's virtue, married chastity.

Arthur may experience erotic denial at first for another, less obvious, reason. According to the chronicles, Arthur became king when he was fifteen years old (Hardyng ch. 73). Spenser's poem, of course, deals with the Arthur prior to his kingship, which means that this Arthur is fifteen or younger. Considering that he has been searching for nine months before one meets him in I.vii and that much happens before his kingship, one can presume that he is thirteen or younger during the events narrated in I.ix. As a mere boy, Arthur might very well experience such disdain for love. In fact, this scene of desire may mark Arthur's coming-of-age, the first stage in the fashioning of a king from a prince.

Another way to illuminate why Arthur experiences erotic denial is to reconsider "magnificence," the concord of virtues. If one considers that the image of Dame Concord (IV.x.31-35) includes both Love and Hate, the two brothers whom she tempers, and her children, Peace and Friendship, perhaps one finds Arthur's initial intransigence more understandable. As Hamilton notes, Wind interprets this allegory of Love and Hate as the "infolding" of opposites into one (211). Fowler maintains that the mother Concord is "unfolded" into her two children, Peace and Friendship (Numbers of Time 27 n1).

Using these terms, one may say that love and hate are infolded into Arthur and that Arthur is unfolded into peace and friendship, as his exchange of gifts with Redcross suggests. Further, as Ruskin (Works App. 2) suggests that Caelia is "Heavenly Grace, the mother of the Virtues" (noted by Hamilton), I argue that the matron of the House of Holiness is complemented by Arthur: while Caelia gives birth to the virtues, Arthur infolds them.

To offset the peculiarly Petrarchan disdain that the Prince recounts in stanzas 9 through 11, Arthur's dream, a traditional vehicle for self-exploration (Steven F. Kruger 74), turns the once-scornful prince into the devoted lover. Whereas curbing Mirabella's liberty means turning her into a token victim for women who try to take advantage of love, curbing Arthur's liberty means turning his "looser life, and heat of hardiment" (12.6) into desire to seek out Gloriana "with labour, and long tyne" (15.7). This new pursuit for glory removes Arthur from the narcissistic excesses of self-abandon ranging "the forest wide on courser free" (12.7) and thrusts him into the public domain where the exercise of his magnificence gains social, political, and even cosmic significance.

But, as Spenser's career will show when he gets to the Amoretti and Epithalamion, set against the Petrarchan conventions of despairing lover and scornful beloved is the poet's own revisionary Petrarchism: a sonnet sequence that

culminates in marriage.²³ Coincidentally, two of the three couples in canto ix are destined for marriage themselves. Arthur's projected marriage to Gloriana, in the final unwritten book, is particularly important because it would figure, according to Roche, "not only the union of all virtues--magnificence--with its proper reward--glory, but also the historical union of Elizabeth with the most worthy Protestant prince" ("A Response to A. Kent Hieatt" 345).²⁴ Redcross will ultimately marry Una, but their marriage must be deferred until the end of Redcross's pilgrimage, when he achieves sainthood. As it is to other epic poets--Virgil, Ariosto, and Tasso among them--marriage is important to Spenser because it "forges the genealogical chain that links the world of his poem with his contemporary world" (Andrew Fichter 15-16).²⁵ The individual poet or

²³As G. K. Hunter hypothesizes, Astrophil and Stella "may have provided the [Amoretti] with what looked like an exact model. Spenser and Bryskett seem to have believed that Lady Sidney (Frances Walsingham) was Stella. In this way, Astrophil and Stella seems to trace a courtship leading up to marriage, even though it ends with themes of separation and mourning" (in Kennedy and Reither 128). Besides his own successful courtship, Spenser gave his sonnet sequence the impress of Sidney's real-life courtship.

²⁴Kaske believes that Arthur's "hoped-for marriage to the Faerie Queene, the only case of such intermarriage in the poem . . . is felt as a goal remoter and less imaginable than Redcrosse's with Truth; and it recedes as the poem goes on" (Frushell and Vondersmith 141).

²⁵Fichter continues: "With the dynastic marriage the Renaissance poet sees the history of his nation recapitulating the universal history of mankind as it begins with the union of Adam and Eve and ends with the

allegorical figure "is to find relevance to his own moral state in historical patterns" (O'Connell 40). For Spenser, marriage celebrates not only the heroes of his poem (Arthur or Britomart and Artegall), but also the fruits of marriage, Elizabeth (Roche, "Menace of Despair" 73).

The lesson of Spenser's revisionary Petrarchism is affirmed, not only in Arthur's vision of Gloriana, but also in the larger structure of canto ix. At the proper moment, in a canto devoted to three aspects of love, Arthur discloses his vision. Placing the Petrarchan figure of Terwin at the center of this canto reveals the tendency toward despair both for Arthur and for Redcross. Making his inner wound public here allows Arthur to transcend the despair from which the typical sonneteer suffers. For, unlike Merlin, who only tells the prince that he is "sonne and heire vnto a king" (5.8),²⁶ Una as Truth names Arthur²⁷ and brings to light the truth of the dream, renewing Arthur's faith in love and hope for reunion. Armed with faith, hope, and love, Arthur can avoid the twin perils associated with Terwin and Redcross in the same apocalyptic wedding of the Lamb in Revelation" (15-16).

²⁶In Malory (Vinaver 42-46), when Arthur is already king, Merlin reveals to him who his parents are and, ultimately, the circumstances of his birth and upbringing.

²⁷Is it really important how Una knows Arthur's name, even though no one has told her? I believe that it is only important that, as Truth, Una must know. Her knowledge is important to Arthur and to Una's own integrity as Truth.

canto: love as despair and despair as the absence of love (Roche, "Menace of Despair" 91). This lesson anticipates the one Redcross learns in the House of Holiness.

Chronicle

As Arthur's love complaint traces roots to Petrarchan sources and raises themes of dynastic continuity, so too does it borrow from British chronicle, known to Spenser, that one finds in Geoffrey of Monmouth and in Malory.²⁸ Responding to these "historical" traditions, Arthur's own "Arthurian" account reveals the origin of his love.

According to Spenser, Arthur, unaware of his precursors and father, knows only that, taken from his mother's breast as a babe, he was delivered "to a Faery knight" (ix.3.8), who tutored him "in gentle thewes and martiall might" (9), presumably the Timon "who in youthly yeares hath beene/ In warlike feates th'expertest man aliue" (4.2-3). It is Merlin's duty "Tutours nouriture to ouersee" (5.4). This account corresponds to that in the Letter to Raleigh, in which Merlin takes Arthur from Lady Igrayne (not in canto ix) and brings him to Timon.

To explain the absence of Sir Ector, who appears in Malory's traditional account (Vinaver 9-11), from Spenser's

²⁸According to Carrie A. Harper, Spenser borrows principally from Geoffrey of Monmouth, but also from Hardyng, Holinshed, Stow, and The Mirror for Magistrates (184-85, cited in O'Connell 200 n4). He may have borrowed from still others.

account, the Variorum editor, disagreeing with Upton (1:265), concludes that Merlin himself brings the babe Arthur to Timon. Given this simple explanation, he avoids the confusions raised by Upton in the Variorum and those raised by Hamilton in his edition. He concludes that the "Faery knight" (ix.3.8) is Timon, not Sir Ector, and so reconciles the account in canto ix with that in the Letter.

Besides leaving out Uther Pendragon, Lady Igrayne, and Sir Ector from his version, Spenser omits something else out of Geoffrey of Monmouth and Malory. According to them, Merlin transforms Uther Pendragon into the shape of Gorlois, Duke of Cornwall, to allow him to sleep with Igrayne, with whom Uther has fallen madly in love.²⁹ Upton notes that this romance interpolation is borrowed from the fable of Jupiter and Alcmena.³⁰ But, in Spenser's account, this story, only an allusive potential, remains hidden.

Considering these changes, Arthur's account is significant mostly for its omissions: no Uther Pendragon,

²⁹Geoffrey of Monmouth VIII.19. Cf. Holinshed I.5.10. Hardyng chapter 72 has the same account as Geoffrey of Monmouth. For more details of Geoffrey's account of Arthur's birth see J. S. P. Tatlock 313-20. On the figure of Arthur, pre- and post-Geoffrey, in the romances, see Tatlock 178-229.

³⁰On the actual content of the legends of Britain, William of Malmesbury's Chronicle notes two kinds of Arthurian "matter": the historical and the fabulous (11). On the side of the fabulous, for example, Layamon (in Barron and Weinberg 21) mentions that, once Arthur is born, fairies take charge of him. Their enchantment bestows on the prince strength, ability to be a mighty king, longevity, and generosity.

no Lady Igrayne, no Sir Ector. The only thing it adds is the figure of Timon, who may be Spenser's version of Sir Ector and a precursor of Arthur's squire, Timias.³¹ The lack of basic detail in Arthur's account lends added significance to two features given emphasis in the account: Arthur's nurturer and the place where he is nurtured.³²

As Timon rears Arthur "in a valley greene" (ix.4.5) in Merioneth, Wales, not Cornwall (traditionally associated with Arthur's ancestry through the wife of the Duke of Cornwall), Spenser links Arthur's Welsh upbringing to the ancestral home of the Penmynydd Tudors of North Wales, from whom Henry VII was descended and, of course, Spenser's monarch, Elizabeth.³³ This association suggests that Merlin attends to Arthur's "Tutours nouriture" (5.4) in two ways. Not only does he oversee Timon's upbringing of the prince, but he also attends to an essential link in the

³¹Geoffrey of Monmouth says nothing about Arthur's upbringing; the account skips from his birth to his kingship at age 15. Hammer's variant version has the same account. Holinshed and Hardyng also omit any details of his upbringing.

³²Agreeing with Howard Maynadier 263, Bennett notes that, in Book I of The Faerie Queene, Spenser actually alludes very little to the matter of Britain for his figure of Arthur. The only part of Arthur's description from legend is the dragon crest on his helmet, detailed in canto vii; even his sword and shield borrow from other traditions. It seems that he borrowed more from Chaucer, Ariosto, and the non-Arthurian romance of St. George (53-79). On Arthur's reputation during the sixteenth century, see Millican passim and Robert H. Fletcher chapter 11.

³³Brooks-Davies 86; Variorum 1:266; Millican 37, 145-46, 150n.

Tudor lineage.³⁴ To make Arthur, the focal point in history, the agent of union between Wales and England, Spenser describes "the riuer Dee" (4.7), binding Wales to England, where Timon nurtures the young Arthur.

Two aspects of the place of Arthur's upbringing, the first less important than the second, are its wildness and its strategic location. A characteristic associated with one brought up in the wild is uncorruptibility (Richard Bernheimer 19). A characteristic of the Wild Man of the forest, one of the two faces of primitivism (the other is the Shepherd), is self-reliance (Donald Cheney 174). From this uncorrupt and primitive soil, the Tudor monarchy associated with the Welsh Arthur arises (Brooks-Davies 86). Berger notes that "the native virtue of the Welsh would provide the redeeming element in the English character,"

³⁴Arthur and Artegall, half-brothers, are pivotal figures in the Tudor renovatio that Spenser details in Books I through III. In III.ix.33-51, Paridell recounts for Britomart the period from the fall of Troy to the arrival of the Trojans in Britain. The chronicle of Briton kings, at II.x.5-68, details the long line of Arthur's ancestry and ends just as it reaches him. The chronicle concludes beginning at III.iii.27, with Artegall and Britomart, who inaugurate the Tudor dynasty. The lineage culminates with Elizabeth. For a historical account of Arthur's lineage as it is carried through Cadwallader, the last king of the Britons, to Owen Tudor, to Henry Tudor, Earl of Richmond, descended out of Wales, the Briton Messiah, as it were, to Queen Elizabeth, see Millican 7-105, especially 8-12. Millican offers a detailed bibliography of the Arthurian legend in the English Renaissance (147-49 n9). For a comparison of Spenser's British chronicle history to its possible sources, see Harper; for the probable sources of his British chronicle history see 24-30.

including Britons, Saxons, Danes, and Normans ("Structure of Merlin's Chronicle," in Revisionary Play 128).

The other more important aspect of the place of Arthur's upbringing, its strategic location, weds the Prince's nurture to his virtue. Just as the river Dee binds Wales to England, so does Arthur's magnificence bind all the virtues in concord. Not surprisingly, Arthur's narration is bracketed by references to universal concord and friendship.³⁵ Canto ix begins with an invocation to the "Goodly golden chaine" (1.1), and Arthur's parting from Redcross and Una is marked by the exchange of "fast friendship" and "goodly gifts" (18.6, 8). In this way, Arthur's individual friendship figures cosmic concord, as the golden chain suggests.³⁶ In the struggle of Christian epic--"the effort to transform a literature of discord into one of concord" (Fichter 60)--Arthur's scene of desire locates a poetic place where the emerging Arthur and the poet's created concord coincide.

There are other means of marking this occasion than the images of concord around Arthur's narration. The very manner of it--that it is a narration by Arthur, isolated from Spenser's poem proper--marks it as well. That it is

³⁵See Mark Heberle on three distinct aspects of friendship (108-9): the natural (Lucretian and Pythagorean), the ethical (Aristotelian and Ciceronian), and the social (Lucretian, Aristotelian, and Christian).

³⁶On the union of opposites as a cosmic principle, see Robin H. Wells 93-96.

an isolated narration draws attention to its literariness. Not only does this narration establish an historical lineage--into the past to the Welsh birthplace, into the future to the Tudor dynasty³⁷--but it also draws a connection between his lover's complaint and the Petrarchan lover's complaint. Establishing this literary lineage corresponds to the public function of Arthur's visionary disclosure later in his narration and to the parallel function of the poet-prophet Spenser.

While the preoccupation with lineages anticipates Arthur's kingship after the reunion with the Fairy Queen, it also celebrates Elizabeth. Making the transition from the despairing Petrarchan lover to the Arthur of legend who prefigures Elizabeth parallels Spenser's transition, following the Virgilian model, from his earlier poetry to the dynastic epic of his maturity. The Faerie Queene is the great public, poetic expression of Spenser's life. The expression of Spenser's Arthurian material in Book I raises his status from the poet of lyric to that of national epic.

But why, with disclosures from Arthur and Una, is Merlin's account of Arthur's ancestry left incomplete? Why should Arthur find out these things only when "in her iust terme the truth to light [them] should bring" (5.9)?

³⁷Evoking the struggle against the vastness of time, epic "also celebrates those moments when individuals and communities locate themselves in relation to parents and children, ancestors and posterity, beginnings and ends" (Fichter 4).

First, Arthur's only partial disclosure of his origins is mirrored in the partial disclosure of his private wound. When Arthur answers Una's question--"what secret wound/ Could euer find, to grieue the gentlest hart on ground?" (7.8-9)--his narration becomes the verbal equivalent to the public disclosure of his magnificence, exercised because of the wound that rankles in his breast.³⁸ In fact, when Arthur calls himself "blest" (7.7) for having helped Una, Spenser puns on the French blessé, which indicates how that wound shapes Arthur's destiny.³⁹

Second, and more important, Spenser's purpose ultimately is to fill a gap in the historical record left by Merlin's reticence. Even in the Briton Moniments of Book II, the record ends just before it names Arthur. Then, when the record is resumed at III.iii.27, Artegall, Arthur's half-brother, closes the gap with Britomart and inaugurates the Tudor dynasty. Knowing that readers familiar with the Arthurian tradition would recognize this gap, Spenser deliberately rewrites the Arthurian figure to suit his poetic technique--the gradual disclosure characteristic of romance narrative. As a prince, Arthur

³⁸If A. Bartlett Giamatti is right, that the "commencement of incontinence is insidious, covert, inner" (The Earthly Paradise 277), Arthur's disclosure is physically liberating.

³⁹While discussing Andreas Capellanus on the art of courtly love, Wimsatt explains: "It is the first sight that inflicts on the lover a wound which never heals" (69).

is an unknown in the historical record. It is only after he becomes king that Geoffrey of Monmouth and Malory, for example, really become interested in him. But Spenser is shaping his own Arthur, still only a prince, before the chroniclers get hold of him, making his own account, and, to paraphrase the Letter, fashioning a king.⁴⁰ The historical gap left open by the chroniclers becomes the fictive space from which The Faerie Queene emerges.⁴¹

Origins

If the Gloriana who presides over the annual feast at Cleopolis is the feminine impulse to the creation of The Faerie Queene, then the Arthur who narrates his vision is the masculine impulse. Elizabeth J. Bellamy's latest work, Translations of Power, may be used to show how Arthur's account reflects this alternative masculine impulse.⁴²

Before I turn to her work, I have two points to make. First, when I use the phrase, the masculine impulse

⁴⁰David L. Miller would agree. As Spenser makes Arthur a prince in the poem, Arthur's allegorical figure reveals "magnificence in the making" (Poem's Two Bodies 128). Also see Kenneth Gross 125.

⁴¹Or, as Nelson notes, "so little was recorded about [Arthur] historically . . . that the poet was free to make fictions, precisely the activity that defined him as a poet" (Kennedy and Reither 85).

⁴²Miller would call it Spenser's allegory's "scene of conception" (Poem's Two Bodies 130), in which the phrase, veritas filia temporis, is allegorically enacted. Arthur's dream "offers a psychogenetic account of the human need to project . . . images of perfect wholeness" (131-32).

to the creation of the poem, to describe how Arthur's account figures in Spenser's epic, I refer both to the great originary event in Arthur's career and to the poetic means by which Spenser unfolds the truth about Arthur. As the originary creative impulse inside the poem, Arthur's experience complements Gloriana's originary feast outside the poem. Second, though the purpose of Arthur's account is to disclose his origins, the gaps in his narration undermine the very unfolding of the truth that the scene of desire is meant to enact. But, far from recapitulating the traditional one, Arthur's own "Arthurian" account actually overgoes chronicle and legend by filling in the gap with Spenser's own Arthur. The truth that Una establishes, therefore, forms an alternative poetic origin for the figures of Arthur and his beloved Gloriana.⁴³

In her sustained look at Arthur's dream, Elizabeth J. Bellamy examines Arthur's originary experience from a psychoanalytic perspective.⁴⁴ Psychoanalytic criticism is appropriate, as Bellamy explains. Since "epic is

⁴³Miller argues that Gloriana is also The Faerie Queene, "a gestalt constituted by Arthur's ego ideal and realized progressively as he transforms that ideal into heroic action" (139). On the ethical, historical, and anagogical levels of truth unfolded when Arthur reunites with Gloriana, see 140-41.

⁴⁴In chapter 5 of her recent book (189-233), Bellamy largely expands on an earlier treatment of the same material in her essay, "Reading Desire Backwards." My use of Bellamy is relegated, unless otherwise noted, to her more complete statement in Translations of Power.

traditionally concerned with the tracing of origins," then "Arthur's dream fantasy precariously situates the narrative premise of Spenser's epic in the imaginary" (212). In short, "epic history" is "infolded within the psyche." When Arthur responds to Una's request to reveal his origin, "a quintessentially epic moment," the narrated dream, characteristically Lacanian because it reflects "Arthur's desire to speak, to communicate" (214), is really a narrative of desire, "structured around a quest for an elusive object (211)," ⁴⁵ the absent Gloriana. As a linguistic moment, the narration of the dream "functions so that Arthur can name his desire (retroactively) as Gloriana" (214). I would argue that Gloriana's elusiveness connects her to Arthur in two ways: her absence reflects both the historical gap Spenser's account seeks to fill and the elusiveness of his final apocalyptic battle, undisclosed but presumed by epic precedent.

Bellamy's problem with the elusiveness of Arthur's heroic pursuit is its lack of prophetic affirmation. Unlike Britomart, "Arthur is the only dynastic avatar in The Faerie Queene who is given no prophetic validation of his imperial destiny" (215); his only assurance comes in a

⁴⁵Examples of studies demonstrating the structural dependence between narrative and desire in epic and allegory include: Eugenio Donato, in Parker and Quint 45; Parker, Inescapable Romance 89; Roland Barthes, S/Z 77; Joel Fineman, in Stephen J. Greenblatt, Allegory and Representation 27.

dream. The "pressed gras" (ix.15.2) that "inscribes both the grass and Arthur with loss" (216) is the only trace of Gloriana. Using Freud's concept of Nachtraglichkeit, or deferred action, Bellamy contends that, whether the visionary experience involves a real encounter or a dream of a presupposed, wished-for encounter, Arthur's account "must instead be perceived as a belated temporality," as Arthur's "representation of a (pre)supposed encounter" (217). As such, Arthur's dream revision enacts "a dialectic between forgetting and a latency that can only be inferred from the repression that makes us suspect its presence in the first place" (217). This repression probably reflects Arthur's prior loss of his mother, from whose "pap" he is taken "vnfit" (ix.3.7). In her essay, "Reading Desire Backwards," Bellamy argues that "the real source of [Arthur's] desire for Gloriana" is "the limits of representation" (798). Using Lacan's concept of the petit objet a, Bellamy argues that the infant's earliest images, the parts of his mother's body that "are the fundamental raw materials of the infant's perceptual field," occupy "a liminal boundary between the Real of the mother and the Imaginary of the infant's signifying system" (798). Between that Real presence and this Imaginary absence "a temporal space is opened for representation." But the petit objet a marks "the loss of the body whose gap must be compensated for through representation." In other words,

if "the infant experiences the objet a only belatedly, then representation itself is belated," and the "belated dialectic between presence and absence" determines "our first representations of self" (799).⁴⁶ Following the maternal absence, Gloriana figures "a temporal lag opening up the space of representation for Arthur" (Translations of Power 217). It is from the just-missed "place deuoyd" (ix.15.1) that Arthur "can emerge as the speaking, desiring protagonist of The Faerie Queene" (219).⁴⁷ Ironically, Bellamy argues (218) that Spenser has created an allegorical figure so integral to his narrative structure that the poem is sustained only through Gloriana's absence.

Diverging from Bellamy, I would argue that from the elusiveness shared between Arthur's object of desire and the final exploit of his heroic pursuit emerges the masculine impulse to the creation of the poem. This elusiveness is genuine. First, the Tudors who claimed Arthur as their precursor were unsure if he was really historical or only legendary. Second, Arthur's terminus ad

⁴⁶Bellamy 808 n18 acknowledges her debt to a paper by Ellie Ragland-Sullivan, "Lacan, the Death Drive and the Dream of the Burning Child," delivered at the Conference on Representations of Death, Harvard University, Nov. 1988.

⁴⁷In "Modern Psychoanalytic Criticism," Elizabeth Wright calls this mythic moment of coming-into-being, via Lacan, "the mirror stage," which Wright describes as "a fictional self-concept, not requiring a concrete mirror or even a reflection, but merely pointing to an image which does not involve self-knowledge" (Jefferson and Robey 155).

quem is as elusive as his historical existence."⁴⁸ In a bold hypothesis, A. Kent Hieatt suggests that Arthur's signal exploit would be to reclaim Rome from the Papacy, a conclusion meant to overgo Tasso, whose "great Catholic epic" bears "witness to the liberation of the Holy City from the infidels."⁴⁹ But Roche disagrees.⁵⁰ Taking a hint from Bellamy, who believes that Arthur awakes from his dream "because it is time to respond to the call of the many myths and ideologies of The Faerie Queene that are seeking to structure its hero as the rex quondam rexque futurus (221), I argue that Una's affirmation marks an originary threshold in Book I. When Spenser's Arthur, both

⁴⁸According to Brooks-Davies, when Arthur would at last have found Gloriana, "their coming together would presumably have signified on the political level that Elizabeth was literally the second Arthur. On the spiritual level his attainment of her would have meant that he had reached a state of contemplative ecstasy: Gloriana as an emanation of the divine sun" (3). Also see Fowler on the Neoplatonic triad: emanatio, raptio, remeatio (Kennedy and Reither 61 and 74-76).

⁴⁹"The Projected Continuation" 339. Also see Hieatt's earlier essay, "The Passing of Arthur in Malory, Spenser, and Shakespeare: The Avoidance of Closure," in Baswell and Sharpe 173-92. In Hardyng, Merlin prophesies that the two-way beam of the blazing star, which signals Uther Pendragon to the wizard, indicates, on the one hand, Arthur's conquests into France, Alemaine, Germany, and Rome and, on the other hand, Arthur's daughter's conquests into Ireland (chapter 72).

⁵⁰"A Response to A. Kent Hieatt." Considering that Books IV-VI look like a departure from the original plans of 1590, Roche argues, in the same essay, that Spenser seeks "closure outside the dynastic marriage in the manner of Ariosto. His choice was to hoist himself on the petard of Mutabilitie as the universalizing pulley of his epic venture" (347).

borrowing from and overgoing the historical version of Arthur, narrates his dream, he momentarily crosses the threshold between Briton prince and "the 'Arthur' of imperial destiny" (214). David L. Miller's argument fits well here. As the "elusive body of The Faerie Queene," Gloriana fulfills the feminine impulse to the creation of the poem at the "vanishing point for the allegory" (Poem's Two Bodies 131 and n) when Gloriana and Arthur converge and the quests of the twelve knights will have been achieved. Alternatively, as the elusive central hero of the poem, Arthur fulfills the masculine impulse proleptically in his scene of desire when the "Arthurian Torso," as it were, momentarily looks more complete.⁵¹

Invocation

From Arthur's narration emerges the obligatory invocation--in this case, to Cupid: "Ah Loue, lay downe thy bow, the whiles I may respire" (ix.8.9). The very source of Arthur's magnificence is love, Cupid, the cause of Arthur's wound. And the love that Cupid instills is one aspect--hate the other--of the discordia concors that makes up concord, manifested either as peace and friendship on the

⁵¹On the "Arthurian Torso," see Frye, in Hamilton, Essential Essays 153 and 160; Nohrnberg 35-58; Fletcher, Allegory 35-38.

social level or as universal harmony on the cosmic level.⁵²

Despite the pain of his wound, Arthur's invocation seeks the inspiration to disclose his love. Arthur explains to Una that, whether he keeps his love hidden or discloses it to her, his pain is the same: either "it flames" or "it does glow" (8.7). The fire imagery in this stanza, including "huge flames" that keep growing until "their feruent fury" turns "liuing moysture" into "smoke" (8.2-4), anticipates the Apocalyptic fire that melts the elements (2 Pet. 3.12, suggested by Hamilton). This proleptic imagery complements the later apocalyptic image, in stanza 13, when Arthur's heavy sleep reprises the biblical heavy sleep to which Adam succumbs. It suggests that Arthur's invocation to Cupid empowers his visionary disclosure with cosmic significance.

Dream-Vision and Prophecy

The obvious convergence in Arthur's scene of desire is that between dream-vision and prophecy. Patterson's dialectical model helps one to unravel the structure of Arthur's visionary experience. The dream corresponds to the gaze of stupefaction, Una's affirmation to the discourse of explication. It takes nine months for the discursive complement to reinterpret Arthur's dream-vision: Una

⁵²Roche, Kindly Flame 17, 23, passim; Berger, "The Spenserian Dynamics," in Revisionary Play 19-35.

affirms its truth. This affirmation compels Arthur to rededicate himself to the quest for Gloriana. Further, Arthur's newly found truth compels Redcross to reconceive his faith in Una. The discursive complement, including Una's affirmation and Redcross's rededication, is further articulated in Redcross's visionary experience in canto x, when the knight learns the truth of his destiny that he is actually Saint George, patron saint of England. Arthur's dream, a "critical juncture when the prophetic order of history is revealed" (Fletcher, Prophetic Moment 45),⁵³ anticipates the discursive complement that retrospectively invests it with poetic truth.

The capacity for prophetic visions is traditionally associated with the magus or arch-magician. As John S. Mebane points out, during the Renaissance, humanists, artists, poets, and philosophers presumed that "divine grace grants power to human art" (25). Believers in the occult like Ficino and his successors in the occult tradition--Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, Cornelius Agrippa, John Dee, Giordano Bruno--tried to overgo human limitation, even as their critics accused them of forgetting the limitations imposed by original sin (25). Spiritual or daemonic magic tempted poets, however, because

⁵³"Moments," like "doorways between two spaces of time, . . . diagram the emergence of vision" (Fletcher 45-46).

of its apparently transcendent powers (26-27).⁵⁴ Using this visionary imagination, the poet's art coincided with the magus's magic. The magus connected the real with the archetypal, much as the allegorist (34).

The visionary, of course, traditionally underlies the oneiric, as I suggest in my discussion of Macrobius's Commentary in the introduction. Just as Macrobius observes (in Stahl 90) that the Somnium Scipionis belongs to all three categories of the prophetic dream at the same time--somnium, visio, and oraculum--so does Arthur's vision. For example, in the Commentary, Macrobius defines five varieties of the enigmatic dream--personal, alien, social, public, and universal (Stahl 90)--each applicable to Arthur's oneiric experience. The enigmatic dream

is called personal when one dreams that he himself is doing or experiencing something; alien, when one dreams this about someone else; social, when his dream involves others and himself; public, when he dreams that some misfortune or benefit has befallen the city, forum, theater, public walls, or other public enterprise; universal, when he dreams that some change has taken place in the sun, moon, planets, sky, or regions of the earth.

Like Scipio's dream, Arthur's partakes of all five dimensions. He dreams about himself, the personal dimension, but also about Gloriana and their reunion at

⁵⁴Cf. Sidney, in "The Defence of Poesie": "Among the Romanes a poet was called Vates, which is as much as a diviner, foreseer, or Prophet" (3:6). According to Ficino, Socrates established four degrees of madness--prophecy, the hieratic art, poetry, and love (Michael J. B. Allen 82).

Cleopolis, the alien and social dimension. His dream, moreover, anticipates the final reunion of all the knights of fairyland at Gloriana's annual feast, where all quests culminate--the public dimension. Finally, this annual feast reflects not only the culmination of individual quests, the culmination of Spenser's epic, but also, by extension, the Last Judgment when Christ's return signals the end of time--the universal dimension. Calling Arthur's dream a visio, or prophetic vision, is also appropriate because the Prince glimpses the beloved queen to whom he must return to marry. And calling his dream an oraculum, or oracular dream, is appropriate because Arthur is visited by the most revered person in fairyland, Gloriana.

But Arthur's dream has its unpleasant aspect as well. As Kruger maintains, "dreams are capable of revealing transcendent knowledge but are also susceptible to the snares of narcissism" (75). For Arthur, the dream unsnarles him from narcissism and sends him in quest of the transcendent knowledge of his destiny.⁵⁵ Still, the trajectory toward transcendent knowledge also includes frustration for the dreamer. For example, Arthur's

⁵⁵Kruger's discussion of mirrors, self-exploration, and dream is germane. "Dreams arise both from higher forces outside the individual (God or angels) and from the individual's own internal (physical and mental) process." Dream-vision, "even as it points toward a higher realm, often questions the dreamer's ability to reach that realm, to move beyond the self and its psychological and physiological confines" (75).

frustrated quest for Gloriana is manifested as nine months of fruitless searching, haunted by "an ideal he can barely imagine" (Miller 136).

Ironies

The paucity of visual detail in Arthur's scene of desire reflects its flexibility as a paradigm, as if it forms only the general outline for other, potentially more elaborate, variations. Yet, ironically, for all its brevity and concealedness, it is actually quite erotic. For example, Gloriana lays her "daintie limbes full softly down" (ix.13.8) beside Arthur. She ravishes him all night with most "goodly glee and louely blandishment" (14.1). She promises her love to him, asks for his, and disappears.

Ironically, Arthur's scene of desire is erotic partly because of what it omits. And there are other ironies. After all, Gloriana seems perilously close in demeanor to the false Una of canto i. That the paradigm sows the seed of its own parody,⁵⁶ as it were, is the narrative irony of Arthur's disclosure. But, whereas the false Una seeks immediate gratification, Gloriana insists

⁵⁶Jonathan Goldberg argues: "Against that windy fragment, Sir Thopas, [Spenser's] text offers its own story, which as we keep seeing, is no single story at all, but the possibility of beginning anew, re-figuring, re-entering, crossing normative limits in ways that keep narration going" (Endlesse Worke 19). On Chaucer and Spenser, irony and parody, Goldberg 19n cites Barthes, S/Z 44-45 and Giamatti, Play of Double Senses 47-52.

on restraint, waiting until "iust time expired should appeare" (14.4). That the truth of Gloriana's image in Arthur's "carefull mind" (15.6)⁵⁷ is affirmed by Una is yet another allegorical irony of Arthur's disclosure. Finally, the restraint exercised by Arthur and Gloriana, which ironically yields to the expression of Arthur's love, is matched by the restraint exercised by the poet in the flexible form appropriate to a paradigm.

Consequences

One consequence of the disclosure of Arthur's scene of desire is the new "visage waxed pale" (ix.16.1) that the Prince wears. This "inward bale" (16.3), essential to Arthur's virtue, anticipates the kind of damsel whom Arthur chooses in the House of Temperance. Prays-desire is dressed in "a long purple pall" and a gold "skirt" (II.ix.37.1), traditionally colors suggesting sovereignty, but also Aurora and awakening desire. At first perplexed by Prays-desire's sadness, Arthur realizes that her mood reflects the "twelue monethes" (38.9) he has searched for Gloriana, whom he still cannot find. But Arthur's magnificence channels this "prays-desire" into the public

⁵⁷John S. Harrison wonders about the portrait of Gloriana on Guyon's shield at (II.ix.3): "If a mere likeness appeals so strongly to Arthur . . . what must he think when he beholds the glorious original; and though this is fair, the beauty of her mind, if he but knew it, would arouse great wonder and pour infinite desire into his soul" (34).

expression of his "eger greedinesse" against Orgoglio (I.viii.6.9) and his "greedie great desire" (29.3) to rescue Redcross from Orgoglio's castle.

Of the final consequences in Book I of Arthur's scene of desire, perhaps most important is the effect it has on Redcross and the vows of friendship they exchange. When Arthur's narrative disclosure elicits Una's praise, this praise indirectly chastises Redcross, who thereafter rededicates himself to Una.⁵⁸ Arthur's pure liquor and Redcross's New Testament refer to individual salvation. But the vows of friendship and exchange of gifts between them are "the signes of gratefull mynd" (18.8)--the pledge of "fast friendship" (18.6) that joins the individual to the community, exemplified in Book IV.⁵⁹ That Arthur's testament of love augurs this private and social commitment is reaffirmed in the juxtaposition of the Legends of Chastity and Friendship.⁶⁰

⁵⁸When Arthur refers to the "Nine monethes" he seeks "in vaine" (ix.15.9) for the Fairy Queen after the vision, one can say that the nine months almost parallel the nine cantos since Redcross had his own dream. It seems that the imagery of gestation also works on the structural level.

⁵⁹The typological implications are covered in O'Connell, Mirror and Veil, when he discusses the lacuna in Eumnestes's manuscript in II.x (43).

⁶⁰Mark Heberle maintains that, for Spenser, friendship "is the first of the social virtues that he treats, because it establishes the fundamental relationships out of which civil society arises, marriage and love of the good" (112).

Summary

To return to the original premise with which I began chapter 1--to establish that Arthur's scene of desire is the paradigm for other scenes of desire in The Faerie Queene--I offer here a summary of the principal features that converge in it.

Whatever the infrequency of their appearances in the poem, Arthur and Gloriana are integral to it. Arthur appears at strategic moments to redeem other figures. As the central figure in fairyland, Gloriana makes only one appearance--in Arthur's scene of desire. This unique convergence, then, is bound to have significance.

In addition, Arthur's scene of desire--a model vision--has most of the ingredients usually associated with such transcendent moments. It takes place in a dream, drawing on the rich tradition of dream-vision from classical, medieval, and Renaissance literature. It recapitulates the general movement of romance narrative--pursuit of quest, interruption of quest, interlude, resumption of quest--like a moment of poetic regeneration. Further, the very means of Arthur's disclosure in canto ix is a narration told by the visionary himself, a scene of desire told in retrospect in Arthur's own romance narrative. As such, it works the commonly suspected pun on "Arthur"/"author" (for example, Kenneth Gross 124) when it very consciously thrusts Spenser the author into the

background and Arthur the narrator into the foreground.

Arthur's scene of desire also enriches one's reading of the allegory. After the dream-vision, when Arthur feels compelled to seek Gloriana, the private love of a woman is expressed as the public pursuit of glory. This example of allegorical complementarity points to the psychological and philosophical discernment of the poem.

Besides the importance of the allegorical figures involved and its ingredients, Arthur's scene of desire is a significant moment for the titular knight of Book I, for Arthur's disclosure refocuses Redcross's own quest. Arthur's partly disclosing narration is further fulfilled in the complete revelation of Redcross's origins and destiny in canto x. And, as I have noted earlier, Arthur's scene of desire sows the seeds of its own parody, Redcross's dream of the false Una. As I show in chapter 2, comparing parody to paradigm informs a new way of looking at related incidents early in The Faerie Queene.

CHAPTER 2:
FROM PARADIGM TO PARODY IN BOOK I

Context and Convergence

The parody of Arthur's scene of desire that I wish to examine, Redcross's scene of desire with the false Una, occurs in I.i between the Error episode and the knight's separation from the real Una. This narrative interval includes a descent into hell, the manufacture of a false Una, and an elaborate seduction staged by Archimago. This seduction, cast as a dream-vision, is what I call Redcross's scene of desire.

The poetic features that emerge from this context--dream-vision, Petrarchism and epithalamism, Apocalypse--characteristic of scenes of desire generally, inform Redcross's scene of desire specifically. To avoid arguing the commonplace that Arthur's dream-vision in canto ix rewrites Redcross's in canto i, I wish rather to look at both dream-visions as scenes of desire in parodic association.¹

Unlike the consequences of Redcross's scene of desire, the consequences of Arthur's are, to review, genuine discovery, both for himself and for the reader, in

¹Patricia Parker would call the relation between Redcross's and Arthur's dream-vision "one of the poem's instances of symbolic parody" (Inescapable Romance 85). Roland Barthes calls parody "irony at work" or "classic language" (S/Z 45).

the dream-vision and in the retrospective narrative. In the dream-vision, Arthur discovers that he is loved by Gloriana. After the retrospective narrative, he learns that his vision of Gloriana is real when Una affirms its truth. Significantly, it is at the moment of this discovery that Spenser allows Truth to reveal Arthur's name. This self-discovery inspires Redcross's own: Redcross rededicates himself to Una. From Arthur's scene of desire, in sum, the figure of magnificence emerges more personally to the reader in canto ix than in the magnificent physical portrait of canto vii. By contrast, Redcross's scene of desire results in self-delusion.

The parodic association I wish to discuss is accessible through several poetic metaphors for authorial inventiveness. The primary one is the poet-prophet Spenser, celebrated in the proem, "the metaphoric Virgil-Ariosto" whose "Idea the poet sets out to imitate" (A. Leigh DeNeef 95). The antithetical one, "the text he might become," is the false prophet Archimago, "both arch-image and arch-magus, both text and conceit." Mirroring each other, Spenser and Archimago "create 'figured images' by metaphoric and parodic doubling." Ironically, while Spenser's "false-speaking antagonists are bound to the truth," he is contracted "to the lie" (DeNeef 99; also see Rosemary Freeman, "Parody"). In turn, these two metaphoric authors are mirrored in the text by the third "author,"

Arthur, who "invents" a narrative of discovery in canto ix from which the parody of self-delusion of canto i emerges in retrospect. These metaphors draw Spenser, Archimago, and Arthur into parodic association.

The parodic association among metaphorical authors is figured in the narrative context of Redcross's scene of desire. The interrupting narrative that includes the descent into hell, manufacture of the false Una, and attempted seduction of Redcross separates an inset scene of desire from romance narrative.² The false Una who emerges from this framed fiction refigures the originary form of Error.³ But her "slyding softly forth" (i.54.9) prefigures the labyrinthine romance narrative into which Redcross wanders, as if, once the refigured form of Error has disappeared, she leaves "her trace in the serpentine progress of the poem itself" (Parker, Inescapable Romance 69). The false Una's form and the form of Error she refigures invest the mental, geographical, and narrative space of the poem "with varieties of 'de-viation,'" and the latter allows the romance of figure and trope that

²A. C. Spearing argues that, compared to other kinds of poems, a dream-poem "makes us more conscious that it has a beginning and an end" because it is marked by "the falling asleep and awakening" of the dreamer (4).

³Gordon Teskey suggests "the etymologically related terms copia and copy (in "Imagining Error" 12; also see Terence Cave 4). This etymological relation between copia and copy reflects the energy of Spenser's technique.

"Mallarmé identifies with the 'erreur' of poetry itself."⁴ The fictive space created is the ground from which parody can emerge.

The parodic perspective of this fictive space has unusual depth. When Redcross allows doubt to subvert his faith in Una, his scene of desire anticipates Arthur's scene of desire. Further, Redcross's scene of desire with the false Una parodies a scene absent from the poem, the corresponding version with the real Una, described only in the Letter of the 1590 edition. Though the Letter is appended to the poem, the scene described in it predates the narrative of I.i. Unlike the dream-vision, the scene of desire in the Letter results in self-discovery. Before the "clownish person" receives his "boone," Una is quite unimpressed with him. But, once he assumes "the armour of a Christian man," Redcross becomes "the goodliest man in al that company" and "well liked of the Lady." This scene of desire marks Redcross's initiation into "kighthood"; the armor he wears partially discovers his destiny. Further, the retrospective experience of reading the Letter, Spenser's sophisticated authorial gloss to Books I through III, mirrors the retrospective experience of reading the

⁴Parker 7-8. John N. King argues that "Spenser very wittily anticipates Una's ultimate revelation when Errour emerges from her den as a parodic Veritas" (146; Douglas Brooks-Davies 20). In other words, the unfolding of truth over time, or Veritas filia temporis, is refigured in the unfolding form of Error in the allegorical landscape.

poem, as images, allegorical figures, and narrative patterns are reinterpreted, from canto to canto, and from book to book, for a more expansive poetic vision.⁵ Finally, the parodic perspective of Redcross's scene of desire in I.i anticipates that the transformation from "clownish man" to Christian knight discovered in the Letter must be continually reaffirmed in the narrative of Book I.

The discussion of convergences that follows discovers in greater detail how poetic features characteristic of scenes of desire are used to parodic effect in Redcross's own.

Dream-Vision

As with Arthur's, Redcross's scene of desire discovers the origins of erotic desire in a dream-vision. When I discuss Redcross's dream-vision, I wish to use Lee W. Patterson's dialectical pattern for the "entranced gaze" as a structural model. The "entranced gaze" is divided into two components: the gaze of stupefaction followed by the discourse of explication. This dialectical pattern implies that the gazer discovers a higher level of understanding. In the process, the reader discovers the allegorical figure. For Redcross's experience, the dialectical pattern

⁵Balachandra Rajan discusses the implications of the Letter's placement and its problematic nature (46-48). On the retrospectiveness of Spenser's historical vision, see Harry Berger, Jr., "Archaism, Immortality, and the Muse in Spenser's Poetry," in Revisionary Play 37.

is evident in the dream-vision, which is both a dream and a waking vision, and in the ensuing narrative. Following Patterson's dialectic, the vision of the false Una complements the dream of the apparition Una. For Redcross, the result of the discursive complement is not self-discovery but self-delusion.

Redcross's dream-vision divides into two parts. First, the dream-sprite conjured up from Morpheus's underworld invades the knight's oneiric world. This dream-sprite causes Redcross to dream of lustful pleasures and to believe that Una--really an apparition Una, brought to him by Venus herself--now lies next to him. This part of Redcross's dream awakens him. Second, the false Una crafted by Archimago appears to the waking Redcross as a visionary Una.⁶ This "sprite" pleads for her gratification, which Redcross resists. At last unsuccessful, the false Una leaves Redcross, who contemplates his loose lady before he sinks back into a troubled sleep. As the structure of this dream-vision suggests, Redcross's scene of desire consists of a false dream and a false vision of Una (Harold Skulsky 239).

The first part of the seduction, corresponding to Patterson's stupefied gaze, when the dream-sprite makes Redcross "dreame of loues and lustfull play" (47.4), is

⁶As sources for Redcross's dream, Stephen Barney cites The Parlement of Foules as primary, but also The Hous of Fame and The Boke of the Duchesse (128 f).

called the insomnium, or nightmare (Macrobius, in William H. Stahl 88-89). The insomnium, which occurs during sleep, recapitulates vexations that have already disturbed the sleeper by day. The "Lady" (47.7) who seems to lie with Redcross is the phantasma or visum, who appears "in the moment between wakefulness and slumber."⁷ As the insomnium and visum "have no prophetic significance," Redcross's dream contrasts with Arthur's authentic somnium.⁸

The source of Redcross's "false dreame" (i.43.9), Morpheus, provides oneiric resources to which Redcross's experience responds again and again. The "prison darke" (44.2) from which Morpheus summons the dream anticipates the dungeon in Orgoglio's castle.⁹ Morpheus's sleep, "deuoide of carefull carke" (4), prefigures Redcross's deep sleep, "void of euill thought" (46.3). Finally, the stages of Morpheus's awaking in the underworld roughly prefigure

⁷Macrobius (in Stahl 89). For the medieval developments that make the dream-vision theoretically possible and the taxonomies used to describe dream-vision, see J. Stephen Russell chapter 3. Also see Spearing 9-11.

⁸Macrobius (Stahl 88). Arthur's revelation issues from good spirits, Redcross's illusion from evil spirits (Brooks-Davies 26). Walter C. Curry cites Saint Augustine and Vincent de Beauvais (213-14).

⁹Brooks-Davies notes several echoes of Morpheus's house: Sleep's cave in Metamorphoses 11.592 ff; in Chaucer, the Boke of the Duchesse 136 ff and the Hous of Fame 1.66 ff (25).

the stages of Redcross's awaking in the dream.¹⁰

Morpheus's permanently "idle" condition, in a sense, gives birth to Redcross's own evolving "idleness."¹¹ For example, Redcross's drowsiness in canto i is recapitulated in canto vii at the enervating waters of the fountain. Told in Ovid, the stories of Diana and the nymph or of Hermaphroditus and Salamacis give narrative form "to the state of mind the knight has now reached" (Freeman, Companion 99).¹² Orgoglio's appearance is also a projection of Redcross's weakness. Since Protestants believed that "spiritual fornication with the Mass culminated in a paradoxical encounter with the sin of pride" (D. Douglas Waters, Duessa 68), Redcross's "idle" dalliance with Duessa erupts in the figure of orgasm, Orgoglio, the "tumescence that is the synecdochic symbol of male sexual pride" (Kenneth Gross 118).¹³

The "idleness" generated by Redcross's dream

¹⁰In classical, medieval, and Renaissance psychology, troubled sleep is caused by a deficiency of moisture in the brain, sleep by ascending vapors from digesting food and humors (Brooks-Davies 25-26). Also see Curry 204 ff.

¹¹Thomas F. Bulger argues that Redcross "is not altogether to blame for his dereliction of Una" because his conduct "is influenced by forces he is unable to recognize and understand"--for example, the dream from Morpheus (12).

¹²According to Isabel G. MacCaffrey, Redcross's divestiture of armor deprives him of his human form (141).

¹³S. K. Heninger argues that the giant, as a form of earthquake, represents "a visitation of God's wrath to warn man to repentance" (in Essential Articles 127).

reappears as late as the Acrasia episode of Book II. Guyon spies Verdant's "sleepie head" (xii.76.9) on Acrasia's lap, with Verdant's "warlike armes" hung useless "vpon a tree" (80.1-2). Guyon's assault to redeem Verdant from the bower where idleness reigns inverts Orgoglio's sudden assault on Redcross when the knight lies enervated near the fountain. Ironically, this destructive violence becomes "aesthetically constructive."¹⁴

The second part of the attempted seduction, when the false Una manufactured by Archimago lies next to Redcross, corresponds to Patterson's discursive complement.¹⁵ The awakened Redcross finds out that the "secret ill, or hidden foe" (49.4) of which he dreams is real. Archimago's

¹⁴King (7) borrows from Stephen J. Greenblatt (Renaissance Self-Fashioning 188). Harold L. Weatherby would argue that Spenser is aesthetically constructive with his etymology. He notes (74) that Spenser's etymological play with the Pauline metaphor of Christian armor in the image of Redcross "Poured out in loosnesse" (vii.7.2) is borrowed from an anonymous English translation of St. John Chrysostom's homilies on Ephesians. The etymological play on the Greek for "dissolute" and "loose," first suggested by A. C. Hamilton in his annotated edition of The Faerie Queene, is manifested allegorically in the disarmed Redcross's posture with Duesse (74-78), in the sloth suggested by the enervating stream (78-79), in the inflatedness of Orgoglio's pride (79-81), and in the true inflatedness of Arthur's soul (81-82).

¹⁵Brooks-Davies calls the false Una a product of the imagination and the devil (26). Cf. Paradise Lost V.105. Also see Burton, Anatomy of Melancholy I.2.1.2. Poetic precedents include Aeneid X.637 ff, where Juno creates a phantom Aeneas; Gerusalemme Liberata VII.99-100, where the Phantom Clorinda is made from a cloud; Apollodorus, Epitome III.5, where the Phantom Helen, made of clouds, is taken to Troy while the real Helen, in Egypt, retains her chastity.

"wondrous witt" (46.6) parodies, in retrospect, Arthur's conception of Gloriana. Ironically, the false Una helps to discover for the reader "the 'troth-ful' Una" (DeNeef 95; also James Nohrnberg 116-19). Unlike the reader's discovery, Redcross's delusion follows when he turns internal doubt into the external form of the false Una.¹⁶

Redcross's delusion is further explored in the Fradubio episode, instructive to readers but inaccessible to Redcross, who shares Fradubio's doubt in love. Fidessa deludes Redcross with the false story of her origins, anticipating both Una's story of her origins and Arthur's narration of his own in canto ix. Unlike Arthur, who has Una to affirm the truth, Redcross has only his lapsing faith to determine the truth of Fidessa's story. Further, Redcross's doubt is manifested allegorically as a duplicitous "Una."¹⁷ Like Fradubio,¹⁸ Redcross succumbs

¹⁶Cf. Parker, Inescapable Romance 73. Virgil K. Whitaker explains that, according to the moral allegory in which Satan represents the external cause of sin, Spenser "is showing the external forces of sin cooperating with man's internal appetite to produce sin" (in Essential Articles 106). In "Spenser's Faerie Queene," Berger explains rather that "the dominant reference of the allegory is psychological" (Revisionary Play 65).

¹⁷Alastair Fowler explains that, in Pythagorean doctrine, all numbers originate in the monad, associated with God, with the mens, and with truth (Numbers of Time 5; see Macrobius, in Stahl 100-1, and Vincent F. Hopper 39, cited in Fowler 5n). This numerological symbolism is expressed in narrative form when, for example, "single evil characters . . . duplicate" good characters (Fowler 7-8).

to Duessa. As with Fradubio, one expects Redcross to have the truth about Duessa revealed.¹⁹ So, in canto viii, Arthur discloses the true shape of Duessa's hideousness.²⁰ At last, Redcross shares in the lesson of the discursive complement with the reader.

Petrarchism and Epithalamism

The transition I have just described from Redcross's dream to his vision also marks the convergence of Petrarchan and epithalamic features.²¹ In Redcross's dream, the dream-sprite complains that Cupid has filled her "chast hart" (47.9) with desire to learn Venus's pleasures, a typical Petrarchan complaint. When he awakes from this dream,

¹⁹Torn between "the apparently equal beauty of Fidessa, or false faith, and of Fraelissa, true faith weakly held" (Skulsky 240).

¹⁹Spenser's revision of the Polydorus episode taken over from Ariosto is eventually reimagined in the fully articulated parody of the Tree of Life in canto 12--the fallen Fradubio returned to Eden, classical imitation reconstituted as Christian allegory, as Shirley C. Scott argues (53) in her history of the classical topos of the man turned into a tree.

²⁰Robert M. Cummings, "Spenser's 'Twelve Private Morall Virtues'" 44. Whitaker argues that Fradubio's loss of the reason that makes him man ironically parallels Redcross's corresponding loss of the power to make a correct moral choice between the real and the false Una (Essential Articles 107).

²¹For the Petrarchan context of Spenser's Amoretti, which informs one's reading of Petrarchan features in The Faerie Queene, see Reed W. Dasenbrock, "The Petrarchan Context." For a full treatment of the context of Spenser's work within the historical development of epithalamism, see Thomas M. Greene, "Spenser and the Epithalamic Convention."

Redcross has his vision of the false Una, who cannot decide whether to blame fate or Cupid for her wretchedness. As a Petrarchan wooer, the false Una tries to persuade Redcross that only pleasure gratified can prevent the certain death of unrequited love. These are the Petrarchan features that mark both the dream and the vision. It is in the moment right before Redcross awakes from his dream and has his vision that Venus seems to usher Redcross's beloved Una in to his bedchamber as the Graces sing the Roman hymeneal chant, "Hymen io Hymen" (48.8). This epithalamic interpolation awakens Redcross to his vision.

Unlike the dream-sprite's brief Petrarchan argument, the false Una's expansive assault on Redcross uses the Petrarchan conventions of complaining, unrequited love to undermine the integrity of Redcross's quest. For example, when the false Una makes Redcross the cause of her leaving her parents' kingdom, not the dragon, the true cause--"Your owne deare sake forst me at first to leaue/ My Father's kingdome" (52.1-2)--she transforms Redcross's heroic quest for faith merely into an erotic chase.

In a parodic version of the truth that Una unfolds to Arthur in canto ix, the false Una's "doubtfull words" convince Redcross to suspect "her truth" (53.5-6) and to pledge his faith to her. When he reassures the false Una that her complaint "fell not all to ground" (54.1), Redcross acknowledges unwittingly that her Petrarchan

attack has undermined his faith in Una's love--eventually, in love itself and in God's love.²² Ironically, even as Redcross reassures "Una" that he is still "bound" (54.3) to her, he actually binds himself to Archimago's creation, who is herself bound to fulfill the magician's designs. This pledge prefigures the reaffirmed pledge the knight makes to the real Una in canto ix.

As a parody of Spenser's revisionary Petrarchism, which leads to marriage, Archimago's own revisionary Petrarchism would seek to interpolate fornication between the Amoretti and the Epithalamion to subvert the virtue of married chastity, on which Protestant ideology places particular emphasis (King 182). When Venus ushers in an apparition Una to Redcross's bedchamber, Archimago's epithalamic designs transgress by analogy the form Spenser would give to his sonnet sequence.²³ What Spenser seeks to recover in the Amoretti and Epithalamion is "Petrarch's ideal of a transcendent rest at the end of love and at the

²²According to Thomas P. Roche, this loss of faith, steadily more serious as the narrative of Book I unfolds, prefigures the theological import of Despair's argument ("Menace of Despair" 79), which misrepresents the conventional comfort of the ars moriendi (Kathrine Koller 128-39; also Vernon J. Torczon 123-28; both in Roche).

²³As Hallett Smith notes in "The Use of Conventions" 137. King calls this part of Redcross's scene of desire "an antiepithalamion" (177). The other example of epic epithalamion in Book I, of course, is in canto 12 (178).

end of a cycle of poems."²⁴ By contrast, this "volta, or turn," ignored by the Renaissance poets whose language of love came from the first part of the Canzoniere, is also what Archimago chooses to ignore.

Archimago's revisionary Petrarchism may be subtler still. For the sprite "dressed up" like a false Una is actually male (i.46), which would subvert still further the Petrarchan tradition that Spenser overgoes. If one accepts the New Historicist argument Greenblatt would make, the slippage between the surfaces of male sprite and female persona would generate a friction corresponding both to the heat of erotic verbal exchange and to the heat associated with erotic desire. As such, the play of poetic traditions would enclose the play of bodily surfaces heated through friction.²⁵

Even though the epithalamic imagery in I.i.48 is premature for Redcross's bedchamber in the dream, it

²⁴Dasenbrock argues: "From the perspective provided by the end, the entire sequence should be seen as a turn away from the restlessness of Petrarchan love and toward the peace and rest Spenser finds in the sacred world of marriage" ("The Petrarchan Context" 46). Carol V. Kaske agrees that "Spenser became the first poet to climax a sonnet sequence with an epithalamion" ("Spenser's Amoretti and Epithalamion" 271, cited in King 160 n38). Also see G. K. Hunter, in Kennedy and Reither 124.

"In line with the Protestant idealization of wedded love," Spenser's "work displaces Petrarch's veneration of the Blessed Virgin into a husband's love for his wife" (King 162).

²⁵This argument is made possible by Greenblatt's idea of fictional friction (Shakespearean Negotiations 66-93).

reappears more appropriately in the betrothal of canto xii. The apparition Una, crowned by Flora with an "yuie girlond" (i.48.9), yields to the real Una, unveiled, clothed rather in the "blazing brightnesse of her beauties beame" (xii.23.1), similar to the biblical image of the woman "clothed with the sunne" (Rev. 12:1). An exegetical tradition common in the Renaissance interprets this solar image as "the incorporating of the Church in the body of Christ," a symbolic marriage (Fowler, Numbers of Time 66). As such, this solar image reaffirms Una's relation to the Elizabethan imperial theme of Semper Una, a symbolic marriage of monarch and nation inappropriate for the unholy "marriage," in canto i, of holiness and the false image of true faith.²⁶

The Apocalypse

Commentators have long recognized how much Spenser borrows from the Revelation of Saint John the Divine both for his political and for his moral allegory in Book I.²⁷ It would

²⁶Fowler associates the complex of ideas equating Una to Elizabeth to the sun with the relation between Elizabeth and "the unique sun's imperial sway over the lesser planets" (Numbers of Time 78), developed in Yates 64-69. Cf. the illustration from John Case's Sphaera civitatis (1588), in Frances A. Yates, plate 9c.

²⁷As John E. Hankins notes (99). In chapter 9, Josephine W. Bennett suggests that the Revelation largely determines the structure of Book I. According to Hankins, her most important contribution demonstrates how English commentaries during the Renaissance consider the Revelation an allegory of the conflict between Protestantism and Roman

be commonplace to argue that Archimago, Duessa and the beast, and the dragon figure forth the forces of corrupt Catholicism glossed from the Revelation. Nor would it be novel to argue how Una, Redcross, and the pious Protestant Arthur triumph over these corrupt Catholic forces.²⁸ But it would be novel to consider the apocalyptic features specifically applicable to Redcross's scene of desire. These features have two aspects.

First, the allegorical figures involved in this scene of desire--Redcross, "Una," and Archimago--play a central role in the apocalyptic designs of Book I. As Holiness, Redcross will marry Una, True Faith, interpreted as the marriage of Christ to his Church. Though the real Una is absent from Redcross's scene of desire, she is impersonated by an apparition Una meant to undermine Redcross's faith. Finally, as the original figure of hypocrisy, Archimago shadows Satan and foreshadows such satanic forces in Book I as Duessa, the beast she rides in canto viii, and the dragon Redcross battles in canto xi.

Catholicism (99). For the broader political and sociological implications of the apocalypse, see Norman Cohn 13-36, cited in Gross 54n. Also see Florence Sandler's essay in Patrides and Wittreich.

²⁸As with Heninger, in Essential Articles 133. On the moral allegory of Book I and Revelation, see Hankins 99-119. On the context of the moral allegory and the apocalyptic theme of the arrival of God's kingdom, see Sandler, in Patrides and Wittreich 149-57. For the relation of prophecy to The Faerie Queene, see Joseph A. Wittreich, Visionary Poetics 59-69.

Second, the fictive gap between the epithalamic image of I.i.48 ("Hymen io Hymen") and the apocalyptic marriage that the betrothal anticipates in canto xii is never closed in Book I, just as the sacred history prophesied in Revelation remains unfulfilled until time ends. Within this gap, Redcross is allowed to vanquish the dragon and to fulfill his obligations to Gloriana. Kenneth Gross would agree that this fictive gap becomes "the space of illusion" created by allegory, "the irony" or "mystery in the prior text" of the Revelation that Spenser's allegory presumes to reinterpret (61).²⁹ As such, the fictive space between Redcross's scene of desire and the marriage anticipated in canto xii mirrors the historical time between Christ's First and Second Comings.³⁰

In short, the promise of apocalypse underlies the narrative after canto i, the final "unveiling" occurring beyond the poem. The idea of deferral implied here in Book I leads me to a summary account of the relation between Redcross's and Arthur's respective scenes of desire.

²⁹For a detailed commentary on the traditional relation between allegory, irony, and illusio, see Angus Fletcher, Allegory 229-33 and 340-41. In his classic essay on typology, Erich Auerbach notes that figura also refers to rhetorical circumlocutions used to conceal, transform, or evade a truth (Scenes 45-46, cited in Gross 61n).

³⁰Sandler explains that the "'dilation' of time in which Spenser's heroes move is not merely an extension between the First and Second Comings but, when they come to read it aright, a dynamic dimension in which they work towards their perfection and consummation in that Second Coming" (Patrides and Wittreich 167).

Summary

Contrary to the logic of narrative and plot, Redcross's scene of desire looks like a parody of Arthur's, but only in retrospect. As a reader of the poem for the first time, one discovers the parodic association only at the moment when one reaches Arthur's scene of desire. A summary account of the specific poetic features that make Redcross's scene of desire a parody of Arthur's refines this parodic association.

Both scenes of desire take place within a canto whose incidents apparently undermine the hero's triumph. Redcross's oneiric experience follows a pyrrhic victory over Error and precedes his loss of faith in Una. Similarly, Arthur's oneiric experience precedes Redcross's encounters with Trevisan and Despair. But the faith instilled by Arthur's authentic vision of Gloriana is meant to contrast with Redcross's doubtful faith.³¹ In other words, one realizes, in retrospect, that Redcross's first moments of doubt parody Arthur's corresponding moment of newly found faith in love.

Further, both scenes of desire are framed within a contrived structure. Redcross's oneiric experience is part of an elaborate magical fiction. Similarly, Arthur's oneiric experience is part of a narrative he himself tells.

³¹Parker discusses the dreams and the confluence of events in the Despair canto (Inescapable Romance 84-86). Also see Freeman, Companion 87-127.

Through it, he reconceives his own faith in Gloriana and in love. By contrast, Redcross's dream is meant to undermine his faith in the real Una. As such, Archimago's fictive designs will parody, in retrospect, Arthur's genuine narrative designs.

Of course, both scenes of desire partake in the oneiric. Redcross's oneiric experience is actually both oneiric and "visionary." The dream consists of the insomnium and visum, the "vision" being the appearance of the false Una. By contrast, Arthur's oneiric experience is the vision of Gloriana. Unlike Redcross, who awakes to find the false Una beside him after he has seen an image of her in the dream, Arthur sees Gloriana beside him only in the dream, but, when he awakes, just her trace on the grass remains. What Redcross lacks, and what Arthur gains from Una, is the affirmation of faith in love.

Apparently, the sketchiness of Arthur's vision makes it a flexible model for other scenes of desire. Given this general outline, scenes of desire like Redcross's can provide the expansiveness that the paradigm lacks, revealing its potential for parodic variation. From a larger perspective, "The Faerie Queene . . . establishes a literary space that is located, in its play of text against text, on the deadpan side of parody" (Jonathan Goldberg 19). If parody is considered "a symmetrical effect," then the "parodic process enters the poem as the testing of good

by evil." In Book I, this symmetrical effect balances the love and revelation associated with Arthur's vision with the seduction and delusion associated with Redcross's dream.³²

Perhaps most obvious, the paradigm has an odd relation to its parody. For, like the promise of apocalypse hinted at in Redcross's scene of desire but deferred, the parody is recognized as such only in retrospect. The fictive space that the two scenes of desire open up between them create, in schematic terms, a gap in the allegory: the first initiates Una's wandering in the poem; the second marks the end of her wandering and supplies the reason for Arthur's. Since Una's wanderings are narrated, they become the revealed counterpart to Arthur's hidden, allegorically parallel wanderings. This relation is discovered, again, only in retrospect.

These conclusions drawn, I contend that the relation between the parody and the paradigm helps to explore the figures of Redcross, Arthur, and Una in Book I. For example, Arthur's purgative experience, when he puts aside his scornful disdain and falls in love in canto ix, is further articulated in Redcross's own purgative experience in the House of Penance, where the knight is purged of

³²On the "symmetrical effect" of parody, see Fletcher, Prophetic Moment 36; also Rosemond Tuve, Allegorical Imagery 118, C. S. Lewis 314-15, Barney 128f, and Barthes S/Z 45.

pride, where his faith in love and hope for the future are renewed, and where he is prepared for the revelation of his destiny. That is, the relation between the paradigm and parody unfolds to the reader proleptically the truth of Contemplation's vision.

CHAPTER 3:

THE BRITOMARTIAN PARADIGM

Britomart in The Faerie Queene

Britomart is the only heir and daughter to Ryence, king of South Wales. Besides learning in Book III that she was taken "from nourses tender pap" (ii.6.2) to be trained "in warlike stowre" (6.3), one knows nothing else about her childhood. As a Briton princess with the heroic impulse, Britomart wishes only to delight in "deedes of armes" and "aduentures hard" (7.1, 2).¹ Later smitten with love, Britomart turns her heroic impulse to the pursuit of Artegall.²

¹The Variorum appendix on the origin of Britomart (3:330-39) offers testimony to the background of Britomart's martial virtue. Thomas Warton maintains that Spenser meant Britomartis as a "martial Britonnesse" (330). Albert S. Cook describes her as a combination of the Amazonian type (the Camilla of Aeneid XI and the queen of the Amazons) and the Deborah of Judges. Cook subscribes to the view that the literary tradition of the Amazon looks to the Northern race or races of Scythian Amazons in Aeschylus and Herodotus. These Germanic women are reflected in the pages of Tacitus and the Nebelungen Lied, Wagner's tetralogy. Another manifestation of these traits would be Ariosto's Marfisa and Bradamante: the warlike woman intermediate between feminine and masculine (330-32). Merritt Y. Hughes agrees that Britomart's figure borrows from Ariosto's Bradamante and is the true heir of Virgil's Camilla (336). Pauline Henley notes two possibilities: that Britomart may be drawn from Boadicea and classical sources or that she may reflect an Irish influence--Macha, Irish goddess of war, chaste, wooed and married by the king of Ulster (334). Finally, H. S. V. Jones translates the Amazonian type into the Renaissance heroic woman warrior, the virago, then a laudatory term; cf. Belphebe (338).

²Merritt Y. Hughes notes that Britomart's love of Artegall is patterned on Bradamante's of Ruggiero, added to Virgil's tale of Scylla and Minos (Variorum 3:334).

In The Faerie Queene, Britomart represents the virtue of married chastity.³ To fulfill the promise of her virtue, Britomart must marry Artegall. For, even if Britomart possesses "amiable grace" and "manly terrour" (III.i.46.1-2), she still lacks the fair judgment of a monarch, which her allegorical complement, Artegall, possesses. Britomart's anticipated marriage to Artegall reconciles her private version of chastity to the public expression of justice.⁴ To assume her role as a questing knight, she appropriates the armor, shield, and spear of the Saxon Queene Angela from the relics of her father's

³In the Variorum, Warton explains that Britomartis is a Cretan name for Diana, the goddess of chastity (3:330). According to Emil Koepfel, evidence for Britomart's chastity appears in a 1568 edition of Xylander of the Anthology of Metamorphoses of Antonius Liberalis. In one of his stories, Britomart's chastity is preserved against the lustful advances of Minos, and the maiden flees across the sea with a fisherman named Andromedes, who also tries to rape her. Britomart escapes. Koepfel notes that this story of Britomart Spenser turns into the story of Florimell. The fisherman becomes old to coincide with Ariosto's old hermit, who tries to rape Angelica. This assault is followed in Ariosto by a love affair of Proteus; Spenser turns this Proteus into the savior of Florimell (3:332-34). Lotspeich offers examples from the classical tradition for Britomart's virtue: Diodorus calls her a Cretan nymph, a familiar of Diana; Claudian makes her one of Diana's hunting nymphs; Boccaccio names her a wood nymph and implies a warlike side to her character--"Britona, Martis filia," from De Genealogia Deorum IX.35 (3:339).

⁴Although their betrothal in IV.vi is not fulfilled in marriage in the poem, the justice their marriage anticipates is allegorically fulfilled in Britomart's triumph over Radigund, who as Queen of the Amazons usurps the rightful rule of men, according to the Renaissance, and in Artegall's triumph over Grantorto, who usurps Irena's land from its rightful heir.

church. This disguise marks her physical transformation from chaste woman to warrior maiden.

Several signal moments substantiate that Britomart appropriates Arthur's role in the middle books of the poem.⁵ First, Spenser calls her "the famous Britomart" (i.8.6). Since Arthur is called the "famous Briton Prince" only shortly before (i.1.1), Britomart assumes the role of a female Arthur.⁶ Second, Spenser calls Britomart "the royall Infant" (ii.49.1) and the "faire Infant" (iii.56.8), reserved for only one other, Arthur. Since God's grace operates through Britomart from the very beginning when "eternall prouidence" (iii.24.4) directs her to look into the magical globe, Britomart makes an eighth-canto intercession in Book III by Arthur unnecessary. Further, when she dons the arms of "Angela, the Saxon Queene" (iii.58.8), she unites her Briton ancestry to Saxon martial prowess, the concord associated with Arthur's magnificence; the high priest of Isis Church even calls her "Magnificke Virgin" (V.vii.21.1).⁷ Finally, as Britomart is intended

⁵Greenlaw maintains that Britomart "is the counterpart of Arthur" and, as with his, her story is an ongoing, unfinished one as Spenser leaves it (Variorum 3:365).

⁶Hamilton suggests Brito-Mart (Mars), the martial Britonness, echoing Warton (Variorum 3:330). On Britomart as a Diana-Venus figure, see Wind 91 f.

⁷That Britomart partly appropriates Arthur's role is also suggested by her virtue. As the allegorical figure of married chastity, Britomart mediates between the temperance of heroic action and the chaste affection of marriage (Rose, Heroic Love 84). This mediation between the virtue

to marry Artegall, "Arthur's peer," her marriage symbolizes the return of Arthur as Elizabeth.⁸

From the perspective of the middle books of The Faerie Queene, Britomart's virtue of married chastity is refigured by variations on the chaste woman. For example, Belphoebe, who will not find completion in marriage, is meant to shadow Britomart's more complete chastity. Further, Britomart's married chastity mediates between the

of Book II and that of Book III is allegorically played out in the reconciliation, between Guyon and Britomart in III.i, affirmed by Arthur, who ties up this "accord" with "that golden chaine of concord" (i.12.7, 8). In other words, the concord of virtues infolded into Britomart's allegorical figure recapitulates the larger-scale concord of virtues infolded into Arthur's.

Kathleen Williams argues that, as Britomart is "both masculine and feminine, with the blended power of strength and love, she can act as a point of reference for all those knights and ladies who . . . fail to achieve concord" (World of Glass 93). Williams qualifies this remark by adding that Britomart's growth has its difficulties, failures, even terrors. For example, after seeing Artegall's image in the magical globe, she experiences "the exaggerated feminine terrors of an Ovidian heroine." Fortunately, Britomart is able to channel her erotic fears into heroic action, as she matures. Nelson concurs that Britomart is "at once feminine and masculine, virgin and knight" (Edmund Spenser 233-34).

⁸Artegall also shadows Arthur. Like the Prince, whose pride is curbed for the pursuit of love in I.ix, Artegall loses his pride in the earlier encounter with Britomart in Satyrane's tournament. Later, when Britomart's "angels face" (IV.vi.19.5) appears to him, Artegall is stricken by love. Having already fallen because of her might, Artegall now falls "humbly downe vpon his knee" before her because of "his wonder" (22.2-3). The wonders of this "heavenly goddess" he makes his "religion" (3-4), the obeisance of a faithful lover. This submissiveness stays "her wrathfull hand" (23.2). Ironically, Britomart's chaste love will eventually require her to submit as a dutiful wife to Artegall's rule.

actively erotic impulse of Florimell and the passively erotic fear of Amoret.⁹

From the perspective of the entire poem, Britomart's virtue is meant to represent one that Gloriana will attain only figuratively in the symbolic marriage anticipated in Arthur's narration of I.ix. For the marriage of Britomart and Artegall ultimately culminates in Elizabeth. But the union of Gloriana and Arthur is interpreted, in historical terms, as the Second Coming of Arthur as Elizabeth. As such, the Virgin Empress, mystically wedded to her nation, is heir both to the dynasty of Britomart and Artegall and, in allegorical terms, to the symbolic union of Arthur and Gloriana.¹⁰

Contexts and Convergences

To show how the figure of Britomart fits into the romance narrative surrounding her scene of desire, a summary of the opening cantos of Book III follows. From this context emerge poetic features resonant through Book V.

Britomart first appears on the plain where Arthur and Guyon travel. She fights briefly with Guyon, then all three reconcile. Entering a forest, they encounter

⁹As William Nelson explains, Britomart is "is both maid and woman, Diana and Venus, Belphebe and Amoret . . . a union of these opposed natures" (Edmund Spenser 205-6).

¹⁰According to C. B. Millican, Thomas Heywood called Elizabeth's martial virtue her "masculine magnanimity," in The Life of Merlin (Variorum 3:339).

Florimell, fleeing from a forester. Arthur and Guyon chase after her; Timias chases after the forester; Britomart moves on. Back on the plain, she encounters Redcross, fighting six knights from Castle Joyous, ruled over by Malecasta. Britomart's prowess ends the fighting, and she learns of Malecasta's hold over the six knights. After Britomart and Redcross have spent the evening in Castle Joyous and the lustful Malecasta has exposed Britomart as a woman in martial disguise, Redcross and Britomart leave together. During their travels, they talk of Artegall, whom Redcross praises. It is at this point that a retrospective narrative begins in which Spenser recounts the origin of Britomart's love, her scene of desire, an account marked by her vision and Merlin's. When the retrospective narrative ends, Redcross and Britomart part, and Redcross exits the poem. Britomart travels to the seashore, where she complains about her love to the sea. There, she encounters Marinell, whom she defeats. Britomart then exits the poem until canto ix.

The retrospective narrative reprises and anticipates themes and images from Books III to V. For example, when Arthur, Guyon, and Britomart pledge their friendship in Book III, their action anticipates the virtue of Book IV. In fact, when Britomart binds herself to Redcross in a

"friendly league of loue perpetuall" (III.iv.4.4),¹¹ she reaffirms the role of friendship. When the knights encounter the fleeing Florimell, Arthur mistakes her for Gloriana; Timias's subsequent encounter with Belpheobe provides a parodic variation. When the origin of Britomart's love for Artegall has been revealed, the metaphorically pierced heart from which she suffers anticipates the graphically real wound from which Amoret suffers. Finally, the seashore to which Britomart wanders anticipates the watery prison of Marinell's lover, Florimell, whom he will save in Book IV. In short, the retrospectiveness and infoldedness of this narrative give Britomart's erotic experience added depth and richness.

Now, there are five kinds of convergence I wish to consider in Britomart's scene of desire: the mirror, prophetic vision and chronicle, Ovidianism, Petrarchism, portraiture, and invocation. Since scenes of desire are originary moments, my inquiry will examine how the convergences above lend Britomart's experience of awakening desire historical resonance and literary breadth.

The Mirror

What makes Britomart's scene of desire unique among scenes

¹¹In Spenser's poetry, Roche notes "the emergence of order from chaos and of friendship from enmity" (Kindly Flame 17). Cf. Berger, "The Spenserian Dynamics," in Revisionary Play 20-23. Berger notes that concord must be continually reasserted, a "tempered communion" (22).

of desire is the magical globe into which she gazes. As a mirror, the magical globe of III.ii joins a long tradition of literary mirrors. Its function as a prophetic device I will discuss in the next section. Here, I wish to place the mirror in the context of recent theory on the gaze.

The tradition that informs Spenser's mirror in Book III extends from Antiquity to the Renaissance. In brief, mirrors may be considered reflections of the mind and of the world. Of antique origin, mirrors were a favorite metaphor in the Latin Middle Ages (Curtius 336). As biblical metaphors, mirrors have reflected wisdom and the human mind (Curtius 336n). By the Renaissance, mirrors were so frequent in titles and texts that they might be considered a fashion (Herbert Grabes 3). As reflective devices, mirrors could sometimes distort and deceive, or they could represent God's truth. In the courtly love tradition, mirrors could be seen as the mirror of Narcissus or as the true image of the lover's lady (Lynette McGrath 107). At their best, mirrors could signal "the faithful mimetic representation achieved by both the creator of art and literature and the Creator of the world." At their worst, they could reflect the deepest delusions of this earthly realm (McGrath 108). Finally, mirrors were considered instruments of self-reflection: "self-examination is intimately tied to the search for knowledge that transcends the self" (Steven F. Kruger 74). When we

look in mirrors, "we see not only ourselves but a broad range of phenomena beyond the self."

How does Spenser describe the magical globe? First, it is the product of Merlin's magic. Its purpose is to help Ryence protect his realm because it has the power "treasons . . . [to] bewray, and foes conuince" (ii.21.8). To a degree, the physical characteristics of the magical globe reflect the nature of its powers. Since it is actually a crystal ball, a fashionable Elizabethan device, like a "world of glas" (19.9), it mirrors in three dimensions the round and hollow earth itself. As a "glassie globe" (21.1), Merlin's crystal forms the fragile harmony of human marriage that Renaissance iconography associates with glass globes (Panofsky 162). Further, Spenser offers both poetic and historical precedents for Merlin's magical globe. Considered as "a mirrhour plaine" (17.4), even as "Venus looking glas" (i.8.9), it recalls the fountain in the Romance of the Rose (1571-602)--even more pointedly, the glass mirror in Chaucer's Squire's Tale (132-41), which has the power to reveal the adversity of its owner. The historical precedent is the glass tower Ptolemy II built in Alexandria. In Arabian legend, Ptolemy created an impregnable glass tower that allowed his love Phao to look out at all men but to prevent any men from looking in, as with Britomart, who can see Artegall though Artegall is unaware of her. It is "unclear to what extent

the vision in the mirror is a subjective transformation of the object--that whatever appears in the mirror is distorted in such a way as to pertain to the looker" (Lauren Silberman, Transforming Desire 23). From these precedents emerges the self-reflective power of Spenser's magical globe.

Besides the rich tradition from which Spenser draws, one might also place Britomart's gaze in the critical context of current cinematic and art studies. Theoretically speaking, the gaze implies a structure: the gazer, the medium through which the gaze is "staged," and the object of the gaze. As such, the gaze is not so much an idea of vision--and it is this, too--but an idea of structural relations.¹² For example, imagine in film an actor gazing at the object of his desire, a woman. The woman returns his gaze. Whose gaze is it here? Is it his or hers? Is it the director's, who stages the scene? Is it ours, the viewers who see the film? As Graig Saper argues: "We cannot merely think about the paradox of the gaze. We must think paradoxically about the gaze" (43). In this sense, the gaze "unsettles empiricism and sets in motion the (re)appearance of gaps, fadings, and flickerings

¹²In Jacques Lacan and the Philosophy of Psychoanalysis, Ellie Ragland-Sullivan argues that the "mirror" in Lacan's mirror-stage is not necessarily real: "The mirror serves as a metaphor and a structural concept at the same time that it points to a crucial experience in psychic development" (29).

in our perception and understanding" (43). Using Lacan's distinction between the eye and the gaze, Saper argues that the gaze "operates on a different hermeneutic and temporal level which only crosses through the field of the eye's operation" (43). Spatially, it would be the equivalent to stepping out of a two-dimensional plane into three-dimensional space. For Lacan, the gaze is an instance of the objet a, an aberration in our consciousness, in our picture of the world. In language, the objet a marks a void that "punctuates the veil of language and images" (43). Here, the "reader or spectator stumbles" at the point "where knowing and desiring come together in an encounter or impasse" (43). As such, the gaze "re-presents literal discontinuity or lack in a structure. The missing intention appears as a structural inconsistency" (44).¹³ For Britomart, the gaze at the magical globe might be considered a quintessentially Lacanian moment, the "mirror stage" of her sexual and subjective development.

If Britomart's scene of desire in III.ii enacts Lacan's "mirror stage," then Britomart passes through an extremely significant threshold there.¹⁴ Known as the "Infant," she becomes a subject worth speaking about only

¹³Taken from Lacan, Fundamental Concepts 174-86.

¹⁴James Nohrnberg argues that chastity, the virtue associated with Britomart, is "preeminently a virtue of self-realization, simply because it coincides, as a real virtue, with 'coming of age'" (438).

after she has crossed this threshold. According to Lacan, the transition from the Imaginary to the Symbolic in the infant marks the transition from the unity of being with the mother to the symbolic world of language associated with the father. For the Britomart that Spenser has appropriated, only her father is spoken of. The absence of her mother is recapitulated symbolically when Britomart crosses the threshold into the Symbolic in her scene of desire. Though the gap left by this absence is never filled in the poem, Britomart symbolically fills it when she bridges the gap between warrior maiden and Tudor matriarch, as if she comes to reflect Queen Elizabeth "in mirrours more then one" (III.Pr.5).¹⁵ For Britomart, as if she could anticipate Kristeva, the Symbolic is associated metaphorically, not with the phallus, but with the womb.¹⁶

Just as mirrors support a rich tradition as metaphors for images of the beloved, for reflections of the mind, and for the truth, so does the magical globe at which Britomart gazes become a metaphor for the unfolding relations among Britomart, Ryence, Artegall, Merlin, and Redcross. If Merlin's mirror evokes magic, then Britomart's gaze participates in a long tradition that weds

¹⁵On the fragmentation of the royal image and its reconstitution, see Louis A. Montrose, "'Shaping Fantasies.'"

¹⁶For a perfectly lucid explanation of Lacanian theory, see K. K. Ruthven 62-63. For a more detailed explanation, see Ragland-Sullivan, Philosophy of Psychoanalysis 16-30.

poetic inspiration to magic. If the mirror can be an image of the world, then the magical globe can reflect the allegorical landscape of the poem. If the mirror reflects the harmony of marriage, then the magical globe reflects the harmony of Britomart's eventual marriage to Artegall and the harmony of virtues their union implies. If the mirror has poetic and historical precedents, then the magical globe indicates that the gazer participates both in poetic history and the history of the world.

For Britomart, the gaze into the magical globe begins an ongoing process of self-definition that discovers her place in the unfolding relations of her allegorical associates.¹⁷ What she sees in the magical globe is Artegall. What she feels is the emergence of erotic desire. Both realizations participate in the ongoing process of self-discovery. Artegall becomes the figure by which she names her erotic desire. In turn, this desire compels her toward greater self-definition. Like the infant's gaze in the Lacanian "mirror stage," Britomart's gaze marks her "first development of an ego, or of an integrated image" (John Z. Zhang 2). Britomart learns that, to fulfill the promise of this image, she must define

¹⁷Rosalie Colie argues that Spenser's conception of ontology is manifested in his method of composition: "Getting somewhere is just what the chacters do not do: rather they discover themselves and others" (349).

herself through the mirror-image of Artegall.¹⁸ As an exegete who reflects on her self-image, Britomart also figures the interpreting reader whose growing understanding corresponds to Britomart's emotional growth.¹⁹

Britomart's self-discovery also indicates that, to achieve motherhood, she must first transgress a traditionally male realm. First, she invades her father's private chamber and usurps the power of the magical globe intended for his use alone.²⁰ Then, she appropriates armor and assumes a heroic quest traditionally associated with great men. Finally, she transgresses a third time when she slanders Artegall's good name merely to elicit praise for him from Redcross--the most ethically questionable act of all. Since God's providence has already decreed that Britomart will become the mother of the Tudor dynasty, her transgressions are necessary to fulfilling her destiny. Still, the morally ambiguous nature of the origins of Britomart's quest is redeemed by Merlin and Redcross, who

¹⁸Ian Sowton would agree that, regardless of the active role she plays, Britomart still only supports the primary historical role Artegall plays. Pamela J. Benson argues that Book III presents a traditionalist view of women.

¹⁹Cf. Susanne Lindgren Wofford 8-9. If, for Shoshana Felman, Lacanian psychoanalysis "is an invention that, in its practice, teaches people how to think beyond their means" (15), then "Freud's discovery, for Lacan, thus consists . . . of the practical discovery of a new way of reading" (23).

²⁰Using Lacan's "mirror-stage," Linda Gregerson takes (18) a different tack on the episode of Britomart's gaze at the magical globe in her father's private chamber.

can reaffirm Britomart's quest in ways that Glauce,²¹ Britomart's first advisory figure, cannot. It is this male affirmation that sanctions Britomart's invasion of a male domain to find her proper historical role, motherhood.

Merlin redeems Britomart's transgressions by affirming that erotic desire will ultimately be expressed in the dynastic line produced by chaste love. Or, as Margaret Olafson Thickstun would argue, Britomart comes to define, according to a Puritan interpretation of Pauline doctrine, "a virtue that prepares her role for marriage, in an inherently subordinate position, not one that makes her equal to Artegall" (31). The poetic truth of this dynastic affirmation is reflected in the "engraffed paine" (ii.17.5) caused by her erotic wound as it metamorphoses into the fruit of chaste love filling the "embodied braunches" (iii.22.3) of a family "tree." Merlin's dynastic affirmation compels Britomart to assume the "massy habergeon" (iii.57.8) of the Saxon Queen Angela. Unlike the erotic desire that afflicts her in canto ii, the heroic

²¹Warton notes that the figure of Britomart's nurse, Glauce, is appropriated from that of Scylla's nurse, Carme, in the pseudo-Virgilian Ciris (Variorum 3:330). Merritt Y. Hughes agrees: Spenser's greatest debt to Virgil is the story of Glauce and Britomart in III.ii. Glauce, the typical confidante of the Hellenistic epics, comes to Spenser through Virgil from the Argonautica of Apollonius Rhodius (3:334-37). W. D. Briggs notes a parallel between the story of Britomart and Glauce and that of Fiammetta and her foster-mother, in Boccaccio's Fiammetta (Variorum 3:218). H. M. Bilden observes that "Ovid has just such a nurse and nursing scene as that in the Ciris in his story of Myrrha," Met. X.298 ff (3:220).

effort inspired by Merlin fills her with "generous stout courage" (57.4). As a maturing exegete, Britomart continues to discover that her erotic desire reconstitutes the motherhood absent from her childhood.

To redeem Britomart's slander against Artegall, Redcross as Holiness gives Britomart's love the holy affirmation of the True Church when they pledge a "friendly league" (iv.4.4). As the framing figure who appears with Britomart before and after the retrospective narrative, Redcross affirms that Artegall is a worthy beloved. As a warrior, Artegall is without "paragon" (9). As a knight, he defends the cause of "Ladies" and "Orphans right" (14.6). Unlike Merlin's dynastic affirmation, Redcross's holy affirmation weds Britomart's erotic desire to the chaste love of the marriage vow (Hamilton), to the effect that "nought but death her dolour mote depart" (4.5). When Redcross wishes Artegall, Britomart, and their country "welfare" (10.8) and the "honour" for which "each of other worthy are" (9), he reaffirms the motherhood that will nurture them. Using a metaphor of conception to ally Britomart's figure with motherhood, Spenser describes how she feels when Redcross describes the "noble Arthegall" (ii.9.9): a "louing mother that nine monethes did beare" (6) and has given birth to a "tender babe" (8). This metaphor indicates that Britomart is gratified when she learns that her heroic pursuit actually affirms her

traditional, though historic, maternal role.²²

Now, reinvoking Lacan, I would argue that Britomart's gaze into the magical globe reflects the proleptic infusion of her womb, marking an alternative origin to that psychogenetic origin linking Arthur's dream and poetic creativity.²³ Though Artegall names the lack that is Britomart's desire, it is the void of her adolescent womb that locates the origin of her desire and the site of its gratification. David L. Miller would argue that this congruence reflects "the congruence of natural and cultural forms of perpetuity," coinciding with a major theme in Book III--"the importance of natural love to the perpetuity of empire" (Poem's Two Bodies 227). James W. Broaddus would refer to this impulse as self-love, by which Renaissance psychology meant the God-given quality of all things, animate or inanimate, to conserve themselves.²⁴

²²In the typical erotic chase, "the object of pursuit is the projection of male desire" (Silberman, Transforming Desire). But "Britomart's pursuit of Artegall figures her engagement with something not wholly dependent on or answerable to her own desires" (14).

²³Cf. Nohrnberg: the ideas of Book III "are realized or materialized through a mater." Significantly, her love "follows upon her submitting to the invasion of her mind by the ideas of another; and it is followed by her submitting to the acceptable pain of pregnancy and labor" (439). Elizabeth J. Bellamy weds (Translations of Power 205 ff) Britomart's womb and Merlin's globe to the psychic roots of literary imitation.

²⁴Besides preserving ourselves, self-love is expressed as "the complex of desires that moves us to perpetuate ourselves through offspring" (Broaddus 14). For Britomart, self-love is most evident in "the way her imagination gives

Sanctioned by Merlin and Redcross, Britomart discovers that, to fulfill providence, she must relinquish heroism for procreation to heal the rupture between her absent mother and her own motherhood. As the gaze originally predicts, this maternal role fills the gap left by her absent mother, and the threshold opened by Britomart's scene of desire is closed.

Prophetic Vision and Chronicle

To examine how vision and chronicle emerge from Britomart's scene of desire, I address two complementary moments in the retrospective narrative of cantos ii and iii. The first is Britomart's gaze into the magical globe, and the second is Merlin's prophetic gaze at Britomart's progeny. This complementarity recalls Patterson's idea of the "entranced gaze," in which the original gaze of stupefaction corresponding to Britomart's gaze is followed by a discourse of explication corresponding to Merlin's chronicle. Patterson argues that the gaze must be abrogated "to allow for a pedagogical discourse by which its value can be recovered at the highest level" (459). For Britomart, Merlin's discourse places her erotic desire in God's providential designs.

ethical coloration to those images that have a sexual content" (29). In Spenser's social vision, self-love properly channeled as it is in Britomart results in the energy and order necessary, ultimately, for a healthy realm (14-15).

How, then, does chronicle complement the visionary? Or how does the visionary inform chronicle? To answer these questions, I begin with a discussion of the general characteristics of the visionary--its expansiveness, its reformative value, its structure, and its politics.

The first general characteristic of what Joseph A. Wittreich calls "visionary poetics," the expansive aspect that mirrors the "plenum of vision" of John's Apocalypse (Visionary Poetics 9), is reflected in Britomart's scene of desire. Ultimately, prophetic vision is meant to give readers momentary access to the visionary's gaze. The result is the emergence of a literary form that, following Tasso's poetic theory, produces a creation to mirror God's Creation (Wittreich 10-12). When Britomart gazes into the magical globe, she gazes into "a world of glas" similar "to the world it selfe" (ii.19.9)²⁵ and sees Artegall, an image both retrospective and prospective.²⁶ First, with the words, "Achilles armes, which Arthegall did win" (25.6), Artegall's armor associates him with the greatest Trojan antagonist and with the Trojans from whom he is descended (III.ix.33-51). Second, as Artegall's shield bears "a

²⁵Kathleen Williams notes that, "[e]ven in its unfinished state, The Faerie Queene is as self-sufficient and as self-consistent as Britomart's sphere" (World of Glass xvii).

²⁶History "is useful and necessary to the prophet because it presents him with a theoretical wholeness of past, present, and future" (Fletcher, Prophetic Moment 5).

crowned litle Ermilin" (25.8), he anticipates Elizabeth, whose Ermine portrait is well known. To fulfill it, Merlin's visionary chronicle expands Britomart's vision. From her "auncient Trojan blood" (6) will issue "Renowned kings, and sacred Emperours" (23.1). These complementary visions expand the traditional epic of memory into a Christian vision of God's providence. Since Merlin compares Britomart's lineage to a tree whose roots yield "big embodied braunches" (iii.22.3), Britomart's womb prefigures the unfolding destiny to which England's "royall virgin" (49.4) provides "vniuersall peace" (23.9).

Britomart's scene of desire also recapitulates the reformatory process of prophetic vision.²⁷ In the retrospective narrative, epic blends with romance, and epic invocation calls forth chronicle. All of history as Spenser knew it, from Trojan times to Elizabethan England, becomes one vast providential design recreated in Spenser's poetry. Still, Spenser also offers forms of obscurity to make the reader participate in an ongoing discovery--not in a fully revealed plan, but in an unfolding of contexts. When Britomart first sees Artegall in the magical globe, she still does not know his character or realize her love. But the allusiveness of the scene suggests that Artegall

²⁷For Britomart, according to Williams, love "is to be a formative experience, not the destructive horror she first thought it" (World of Glass 94). On the reformatory process in prophetic vision, see Wittreich 31-33.

belongs to Trojan and English blood--is, in fact, their crucial link. Further, when Merlin finishes his chronicle with an allusion to Elizabeth, Spenser fails to name her or reveal England's destiny: "But yet the end is not" (iii.50.1). As Merlin possesses secrets that he "yet note discoure" (4), the partial obscurity of Britomart's destiny keeps the "mayd Martiall" (53.9) participating in a process of self-discovery meant to reform history, like the poet prophet.²⁸ Though prophecy is a mode of reflection, Britomart's response affirms that the reformatory value of prophecy lies in action.

As one would expect of prophecy (Wittreich 36-37), Spenser's labyrinthine narrative structure mirrors that in Revelation. First, Britomart's scene of desire is told in retrospect, and yet Merlin's chronicle, told in retrospect, is prospective. Second, at the end of the retrospective narrative, one is returned to the beginning: Britomart again rides with Redcross. Through these unfolding narratives, Britomart's figure dilates from individual through progeny to Elizabeth, whose earthly domain shadows

²⁸Kenneth Borris argues that, as allegory, The Faerie Queene "always encourages the reader to pass beyond surfaces, appearances, and conventional ways of seeing, and the poem's special relationship with Revelation defines that movement of the mind as a visionary endeavor that should finally reshape awareness of self, culture, and history" (81-82).

the heavenly Jerusalem in John's Apocalyptic vision.²⁹

Finally, considering Spenser's conservative political tack, meant to preserve "the collective ideology of the culture producing it" (Wittreich 50), Spenser reaffirms in Britomart's scene of desire that "the subversive character of prophecy" would succeed: "the Church, at least in England, had been purified, and a noble monarch was now ruling the State" (Wittreich 58; cf. Borris 77). Merlin celebrates this "royall virgin" (iii.49.6), who issues ultimately from Britomart's fecund "wombe" (22.5). In Spenser, the revolutionary aspect of prophecy conserves the virtues of England's paragon, Elizabeth.

The poetic medium of these prophetic visions is romance narrative and chronicle history. From stanzas 7 to 13 romance narrative tells the location of Merlin's secret cave, the story of the wall built around Carmarthen, the story of the Lady of the Lake who thwarts his amorous designs, the powers of his magic, and the story of his birth. To a greater or lesser extent, Spenser's sources for this digression include Virgil, Giraldus Cambrensis, Geoffrey of Monmouth, Camden, Holinshed, the Morte Arthur, Malory, and Ariosto (Variorum 3:224-26). If one considers its playful tone (Hamilton), this romance, though densely

²⁹O'Connell argues that Gloriana and Cleopolis are "here-and-now participants of what is known to be eternal and transcendent" (44). He also considers Britomart "a prophetic image of ethnic discordia concors" (88).

allusive to historical and poetic precedent, is meant to be fulfilled by Merlin's entirely serious chronicle. Chronicle history, the more important vehicle for the visionary, forms less than half of canto iii, running from stanzas 27 to 50.³⁰ As an account of Britomart's progeny, Spenser's chronicle history uses the usual sources: Geoffrey of Monmouth, Hardyng, Holinshed, and, to a lesser extent, Camden, Stow, Grafton, the Description of Cambria, and the Breviary of Britayne (Variorum 3:228-36). For the most part, Spenser sticks to Geoffrey of Monmouth's account.³¹

From this densely allusive literary and historical record, Britomart's scene of desire opens a gap that

³⁰Hamilton argues for a two-part cycle: the first cycle, stanzas 27-42, shows the eventual triumph of the Saxons against the Britons. The second cycle, stanzas 43-50, shows 1) the two hundred years of Saxon rule, 2) the coming of the Normans, and 3) the four hundred years culminating in the Tudors. In "The Structure of Merlin's Chronicle in The Faerie Queene III.iii," Berger argues for a structure of three cycles (26-34, 35-42, 43-50), the first two concluding with a return to chaos and the third with "a resolving image uneasily imposed" (in Revisionary Play 121). Neither argument about structure affects my point about the consequences of Britomart's origins, as the sequel shows.

³¹Warton notes that "Merlin discovers to Britomart her future progeny; which he does likewise to Bradamante in Ariosto, Orl. Fur. III.17-48" (Variorum 3:227). For details on the way in which Spenser's canto iii imitates Ariosto's canto, see "The Italian Romances," Variorum 3:370-71. Hughes qualifies that, though "Britomart's experience in the cave owes its setting to the Furioso and the substance of its revelation of history to British chronicle sources," it "owes its existence to Virgil" (3:227).

anticipates the fecundity of the womb of the English nation.³² From the gap in the historical record between Uther Pendragon and Artegall's lineage emerges the allegorical figure of Britomart, whose "dynastic womb," following Elizabeth J. Bellamy's argument, "is the origin of the subject for epic history--the place where mere physical reproduction cedes place to social production in the service of empire" (Translations of Power 196). Merlin specifically uses the image of Britomart's womb to describe how "the auncient Trojan blood" (22.6) will issue "Renowned kings, and sacred Emperours" (23.1), "Braue Captaines, and most mighty warriours" (3). This image of conception resonates to the earlier image with which Glauce describes the erotic torment that has afflicted "this virgin bright" (16.4), when "three Moones . . . / Thrice shined faire" (2-3). In canto ii, this erotic torment is described as Britomart's "first engrafted paine" (17.5), from which the "root and stalke" (6), though bitter at first, promise "fruit" with "more sweetnesse" (7). This fruit becomes literal offspring when Britomart's "wombes burden" (28.6) issues forth a son. In turn, the birthing image of Britomart's erotic wound, in which the "Tree" (iii.22.2) Merlin describes stretches its "big embodied braunches"

³²Writing about Spenser's version of cultural memory, O'Connell notes (69-88) that Britomart's quest for Artegall "impels her toward history" and marks "her responsibility to her nation and its history" (88).

(3), reflects a fecundity that borrows imagery from medieval and Renaissance genealogical tables.³³ Yoking erotic desire to prophecy, the emerging figure of Britomart fashions her own part in the British chronicles when the issue of her womb is prefigured.³⁴

Finally, Britomart's scene of desire connects Britomart to Elizabeth by more than a dynastic umbilical. Since Merlin's chronicle follows only the male line from Artegall to Henry VII, a gap emerges between the last mention of a woman before the chronicle, Britomart in stanza 26, and the first mention of one again, the "royall virgin" Elizabeth (49.6). In a structural, historical, and allegorical sense, Elizabeth and Britomart mirror one another. Besides mirroring her, Elizabeth is the final fruit of Britomart's womb. In sum, the fecundity of Britomart's womb closes the gap Spenser opens when he submits the literary and historical record to the fecundity of his own poetic creation.³⁵

³³As Hamilton notes. Upton notes its prophetic style borrowed from Isaiah 11:1. He also observes that "Astyages is said to have dreamt," in the first book of Herodotus, "that he saw a tree shooting from his daughter's bowels, and spreading its branches over Asia" (Variorum 3:227).

³⁴Williams argues that Britomart's love "is part of the creative purpose of a providence whose instrument she must fit herself to become" (World of Glass 96).

³⁵Spenser acknowledges historical continuity when he offers "his poetry as a symbolic womb for the reproduction of an imperial ideology" (Miller, Poem's Two Bodies 224).

Ovidianism

It is not surprising that, as an erotic experience, Britomart's scene of desire evokes Ovidian imagery. After all, Ovid's Metamorphoses is suffused with tales of desire --intense love and perverse lust--and with the transformations that that desire provokes. More important historically, Ovid's tales have come to be associated with ways of reading; the tales are not only intrinsically fascinating reading, but also the focus of intensive interpretive strategies. One of the three major interpretive dispositions, the allegorical, which flourished during the Middle Ages and was current in Spenser's time,¹⁶ particularly applies to the retrospective narrative of Britomart's erotic initiation. The Ovidian impress on Britomart's scene of desire draws attention to the study of awakening desire opened to the reader and to the individual psychological metamorphosis to which Britomart turns her own interpretive gaze.

As an adolescent virgin, what is awakening desire like for Britomart? Though its origin is unobtrusive, erotic desire gradually fills her, becoming almost unendurable. Physically, it feels like a festering wound

¹⁶Richard J. DuRocher presents (20-29) a solid discussion of three major ways of reading the Metamorphoses--the allegorical, the rhetorical, and the epical--as they evolved over time. Three standard works on the allegorical way of reading are Douglas Bush, Don Cameron Allen, and Clark Hulse, to whom DuRocher admits (21 n9) he is particularly indebted.

in her "bleeding bowels" (ii.39.2), as if she suffers from a terrible ulcer, "an huge Aetn' of deepe engulfed grieve" (32.6). Emotionally, she is melancholic, "full of fancies fraile" (27.5), and has difficulty sleeping because she dreams "dreadfull things" (29.5). Fearful, this vulnerable adolescent, "buxome" and "prone" (23.4), at first impregnated with the idea of Artegall, only an image in a mirror to her,³⁷ now unwittingly fears physical invasion, the consequence of submission.³⁸ Psychologically, she verges so closely on despair that death becomes an "end of [her] days and miserie" (39.9). Because Artegall seems unattainable, nothing can assuage Britomart's "stubborne smart" (37.2). It is true that Britomart's case is exceptional. It is also true that lovers always feel as if their experience is new and more difficult to endure than any other experience before it. All in all, more than any other figure in the poem, Britomart seems truly human.³⁹

³⁷For Nelson, love begins "with an envisagement of what the beloved should be," the ideal for which "the lover must then find its fleshly counterpart" (Edmund Spenser 232-33).

³⁸As with Amoret, Britomart must learn to control these potentially self-destructive fears. Roche explains that "Amoret is afraid of the physical surrender which her marriage to Scudamour must entail." Since Busirane's "love is not sexual but destructive," this enemy of chastity "represents a negative force of which chastity is the positive ideal" (Kindly Flame 80-81).

³⁹Emile Legouis argues that Britomart "is too substantial and too complex," as if "she were indeed a woman of flesh and blood," incongruous in an allegory (Variorum 3:214).

The Ovidian subtext of Britomart's experience in the retrospective narrative, marked by allusions to Myrha, Biblis, Pasiphae, and Narcissus, transfigures Britomart into an allegorical bridge between metamorphosis and continuity. Glauce first cites examples of "filthy lust contrarie vnto kind" (40.4) from the Metamorphoses to disclose "the tyranny of loue" (9). Both Myrha and Biblis use "wicked art" (41.4) to have sexual intercourse with "their natieue flesh against all kind" (3). Even worse, Pasiphae learns how to disguise herself as a cow to fornicate with a bull. Although Glauce is still convinced that Britomart's love is legitimate, Britomart argues that at least these perverse lovers eventually "did possesse their horrible intent" (43.7). For Britomart believes that she loves only a shadow, which makes her even "fonder" (44.9) than the Ovidian self-lover, Narcissus. From a young adolescent hardly aware of Cupid's erotic wound to a love-sick young woman whose desires overgo even those grievous examples from Ovid, Britomart assumes "the metamorphic disguises of Cupid"--"the single principle of Amor," according to Leonard Barkan (239),⁴⁰ from which a multiplicity of desires issues, from the most eccentric, perverse examples of individual passion to the cosmic

⁴⁰Barkan argues further that Spenser "is quite consciously composing a new epic of changes; and like Ovid, he concludes his epic with a poem-within-a-poem [Two Cantos of Mutabilitie] exploring the nature of change" (241).

harmony of the world."⁴¹

The Ovidian subtext from which Britomart's scene of desire draws its perverse images of erotic desire is turned to an outright accusation of rape when Britomart deviously tries to elicit praise from Redcross for Artegall. Britomart asks Redcross if he has heard "of one, that hath vnto me donne" a "foule dishonour and reprochfull spight" (8.7-8). If this accusation is not morally ambiguous enough, Britomart later exclaims that Artegall has beguiled a "simple Mayd" and done such a "haynous tort" that he is the "shame of knighthood" (12.8-9). Knowing by this time from Merlin that only through married chastity lies the destiny of the English nation, Britomart still suffers from the adolescent fear of sexual invasion. Like the ethically questionable act of invading her father's private chamber and usurping the power of his magical globe, Britomart's pretext is meant to be interpreted in the larger designs by which erotic desire among individuals in society fulfills God's providence. As the maternal figure that prophetic vision and chronicle make of her, Britomart confirms that the fickle nature of her awakening desire still

⁴¹The argument that from only one Spenserian Cupid variations emerge according to perspective might be traced from Elizabeth S. Donno through A. Leigh DeNeef to Thomas Hyde. For example, DeNeef argues that the issue of Book III "is not to find the 'true' Cupid among his dialectical doubles, but to locate a proper perspective from which to view all typological Cupids . . . The issue, in short, is how Cupid is to be read" (157).

participates in the historical continuity by which metamorphosis subsumes all kinds of love.⁴²

Petrarchism

As someone suffering from the pangs of awakening desire, Britomart plays the Petrarchan lover after her scene of desire in the retrospective narrative. She feels all the normal emotions associated with Petrarchism: fancy, desire, doubt, fear, hope, and dissemblance. But Britomart's case is different for two reasons: first, as a female, she transgresses the normal role of beloved and, in an example of gender-reversal, adopts the aggressive male role of lover; second, she has no convenient means of expressing her love to her beloved. For both these reasons, her Petrarchan persona is appropriately masked by her martial disguise, the metaphor by which her Petrarchan passion is given expressible form.⁴³

As a disguise, Britomart's armor reflects Petrarchan characteristics. In the first place, since the language of Petrarchan love often contains violent or military imagery,

⁴²Barkan argues that "metamorphosis is more than a wicked or an empty condition of false love: it is an essential condition of all love," linking "all the types of love" (239).

⁴³Discussing the tapestries in Busirane's house, Leonard Barkan notes that the "world of love is informed by the metamorphic principles of Petrarchan passion" (235), even for gods. "To the extent that the gods are themselves the victims, their metamorphoses become figures . . . for the psychic changeability of passionate love."

Britomart's heroic disguise expresses physically the subjective tumult within her. In the second place, Britomart's disguise reflects the sublimation of erotic desire channeled to heroic pursuit.⁴⁴ As the knight of chastity, Britomart is a figure of self-control, her martial disguise the tangible form of its expression.⁴⁵ Ironically, Britomart exercises control by giving vent to her erotic energy through disguised action, much as a Petrarchan lover expresses his thwarted desire through violent or military imagery.⁴⁶

But, as Spenser's version of Petrarchan love culminates in marriage, Britomart's scene of desire must lead her from the unassailable virginity of her martial disguise to the controlled desire of married chastity.⁴⁷

⁴⁴Robert L. Reid argues that "Britomart's impressive use of armor and weaponry shows that her womanly virtue is, no less than that of the men, capable of an active power" (387). And yet, as he continues, "Britomart's assumption of armor and of an active role is six times referred to as a 'disguise' of her true nature" (388). For the six instances, see III.ii.4, iii.53; IV.i.14, vi.30, 32; V.vii.21 (388 n45).

⁴⁵Britomart's restraint extends to Artegall. Ultimately, the "salvage knight" of Book IV, Artegall in disguise, is tamed by Britomart and weaned from his disdain of women. Cf. Nelson Edmund Spenser 252.

⁴⁶To similar effect, Brian Rosebury argues (13) that art (read narrative), which offers one "emotional dissatisfaction" (*italics mine*), or "the quickening of desire," is compensated "for its quickening effect by presenting paradigms of governance over desire."

⁴⁷"Allegorically, a Knight of Love is quite properly (and quite traditionally) a Knight who learns chastity, learns the nature of fidelity" (Rosemond Tuve 50). One of

As such, Britomart's "active questing love is a corrective to the Petrarchism of the loves of Belpheobe and Amoret" (O'Connell 88). For Britomart, married chastity means submitting herself to Artegall through gaining his love.⁴⁸ Chastity, according to Thomas Hyde, "does not destroy love, but controls it" (69). Challenging the conventional Petrarchan role of the beloved, Britomart's martial disguise temporarily transforms the self-restraint of chastity into the erotic aggression normally associated with the Petrarchan male lover.⁴⁹

It is allegorically appropriate that, during the retrospective account of her scene of desire, Britomart shares the disguise of armor with Redcross, her companion.⁵⁰ When Redcross puts on the armor of the

the forms of fidelity, of course, is virginity (50-51n).

⁴⁸Unlike Radigund, Britomart actively opposes the perversion of justice, Radigund's "abuse of the power of love" (Reid 389), by conquering Artegall, not to subject him, but to submit to him. J. C. Gray would agree that Radigund "is really an antitype to Britomart" (10).

⁴⁹Silberman calls Britomart, who engages actively in the erotic chase, "an anti-Petrarchan heroine," whose "warmth and vulnerability expose the essential sterility and self-absorption of Petrarchan lovesickness" (in Rewriting the Renaissance 260). Gray (11) calls Radigund, by contrast, the Petrarchan male wooer and the Petrarchan disdainful beloved combined.

⁵⁰To a degree, Britomart's experience shadows Redcross's. Like Redcross, Britomart suffers from nightmares. Like him, she gives credence to her dreams. Like his dreams, hers embody waking fears. As with him, Britomart's lack of faith in chaste love leads her to despair when, unaware of God's providential plan, Britomart interprets her wounding as a "wicked fortune" (iv.44.1).

Christian man, as told in the Letter, he is transformed from clownish man into Christian knight. Similarly, Britomart's armor becomes her as the knight of chastity. Redcross knows that Britomart is really a "Faire lady" (ii.4.8), even though she is armed like the "fairest knight alive" (9). Britomart's disguise, which "Made her dissemble her disguised kind" (7), partly defensive, really discloses a charming coyness about the young woman, extremely vulnerable, girlishly embarrassed. But, when Redcross's question about her quest reddens her complexion with flakes of fire as if lightning "bright heauen fulmined" (5.8), Spenser gives Britomart's personal quest cosmic consequences. For, like her Briton forebear, Arthur, Britomart explains that she "taken was from nourses tender pap" (6.2) to be trained as a warrior and to use "spear and shield" (4). Disguising her real quest for Artegall, she maintains that she has come from "greater Britaine" to "seeke for prayse and fame" (9). As with the clownish man turned into knight turned into Saint George, Britomart's martial disguise hides a coy young woman who hides the future mother of England. By association, Redcross's armor of holiness reaffirms that Britomart's initially Petrarchan love will culminate in holy matrimony.

Finally, like Redcross, Britomart needs faith in love to turn erotic desire into chaste love.

Artegall's Portrait

When Britomart gazes into the magical globe, Spenser offers a two-stanza portrait of Artegall, "Arthur's peer," that recapitulates in miniature Arthur's more expansive portrait in I.vii. Unsurprisingly similar, both depict a heroic knight and describe the crest of a helmet and a shield. And yet the differences of kind and of omission are more interesting than these rather obvious similarities.

The differences of kind refer to specific physical features. Arthur, armed from head to foot, has "glitterand armour" (I.vii.29.4) that shines like Phoebus. But Artegall, his visor up, revealing the "manly face" (24.4) that Britomart becomes enamored of, seems more personal than the magnificent Arthur. Further, Spenser contrasts Artegall's helmet with Arthur's dragon headdress.⁵¹ Metaphorically, Arthur's helmet suggests fertility, the apocalyptic triumph of Church over Dragon, redemption. Unlike Arthur's, Artegall's crest is "couered with a couchant Hound" (25.1), a figure from heraldry describing an animal ready to spring. As a symbol, it may suggest

⁵¹Traditionally, the dragon suggests redemptive powers. The plume of the helmet's crest, which shakes like an almond tree on top of "greene Selinis" (32.6), is associated with the miraculous. Hamilton cites the popular legend of the love-sick Phyllis, who, changed into an almond tree, issues forth fresh leaves and flowers in her lover's embrace. In Eccles. 12.5, the flourishing almond tree signifies the white hair of old age (in the Geneva gloss). Finally, the "greene Selinis" suggests the town of the victor's palm from Virgil's palmosa Selinus in Aeneid III.705 (Hamilton).

England's triumph over the "pagan hound" (V.viii.42.5) representing Philip II of Spain (Hamilton). Not surprisingly, both helmets prophesy the triumph associated with their wearers. Finally, Spenser contrasts Artegall's shield with Arthur's magical diamond one, covered to hide its blinding light, capable of surpassing even "Phoebus golden face" (I.vii.34.6). Artegall's reveals the image of "a crowned litle Ermilin" (III.ii.25.8) on a sevenfold form.⁵² As an instrument of earthly justice, Artegall's classical sevenfold shield is surpassed by the blinding light of faith contained in Arthur's diamond shield, the instrument of heavenly grace.

The differences between the two portraits because of omission cut both ways. Naturally, the description of Artegall lacks the detail of Arthur's partly because it is only two stanzas long and Arthur's nine. And, of course, one expects Arthur's entrance into The Faerie Queene to be accompanied by much fanfare. Arthur's portrait, one of the longest in the poem, describes in mostly elaborate fashion his baldric, his sword, his helmet, his steed, his squire. By contrast, Artegall's portrait says nothing of his

⁵²The ermine figure, traditionally an emblem of chastity, is also associated with the Virgin Queen. Hamilton cites the "Ermine" portrait of Queene Elizabeth in Strong. Also see Yates, Astraea Appendices 215-19. Cf. The Shepheardes Calender Apr. 57-58, suggested by Hamilton. The sevenfold form, like that of the classical shield carried by Guyon, implies the shield's strength against the seven deadly sins.

baldric, sword, steed, or squire.⁵³ Even so, Artegall's armor has something that Arthur's armor lacks. In "cyphers old" (25.5) one reads, "Achilles armes, which Arthegall did win" (6), the mark of a mighty warrior. More important, these words name Artegall, who is otherwise left anonymous, like Arthur, who remains so until Una names him in I.ix.

As it emerges from Britomart's scene of desire, Artegall's image reflects back on Britomart as a female Arthur. The similarities between Artegall's portrait and Arthur's indicate that the figurative objective of Britomart's quest--the union of chastity and justice--parallels the figurative objective of Arthur's--the apocalyptic union of God's grace and England's glory. The differences between them suggest that the English nation conceived by Britomart only approximates the ideal nation governed by Gloriana.

Invocation

Invocation marks the beginning of cantos ii, iii, and iv--the beginning, middle, and end of the retrospective narrative. In canto ii, Spenser invokes Britomart and Queen Elizabeth; in canto iii, he invokes the sacred fire of

⁵³Artegall's first portrait is more fully fleshed out in the Tournament of Satyrane (IV.iv.39) and in the beginning of Book V (i.3-13). T. K. Dunseath argues (17-85) that the progression of the narrative from Books III to V traces Artegall's virtue from the potential ideal in the magical globe to its realization at the end of his quest.

Cupid and the Muse of history, Clio; in canto iv, he invokes Elizabeth again. These invocations affirm that Britomart's scene of desire connects Britomart to her successor both historically and figuratively.

The first invocation to Britomart and Elizabeth makes these two figures aspects of one whole. Spenser makes Elizabeth the "precedent" of "all wisdom" (ii.3.3) and Britomart the "precedent" of "warlike puissance in ages spent" (1).⁵⁴ As Elizabeth's counterpart, Britomart participates in the actively heroic life necessary for Elizabeth's wise sovereignty. The context of the invocation to Britomart and Elizabeth submits the ensuing retrospective narrative to Spenser's "record of antique times" (2.1). Spenser blames men for writing too little of the "braue gestes and prowess martiall" (1.6) of "woman kind" (3) and affirms the "great exploits" (2.3) of which women are capable. Even when men once feared women's demise and decided to curb their "liberty" (6), women learned to excel "in artes and pollicy" (8). Both Britomart, heir to the martial prowess reflected "in ages spent" (3.1), and Elizabeth, heir to the ensuing cultural excellence that women have since developed, epitomize female greatness throughout history.

The invocations at the beginning of canto iii reprise the theme of newly kindled love from the scene of

⁵⁴On Gloriana as wisdom see Jeffrey P. Fruen.

desire in canto ii and anticipate the historical mode of Merlin's visionary chronicle, the former theme in Spenser's invocation to Love and the latter in his invocation to Clio. Spenser's invocation to Love traces its source and consequences. The "sacred fire" (iii.1.1) of heavenly love is the brightest love, and the source of this heavenly love is "th'eternall spheres and lamping sky" (3). Once aroused with this "sweet fit" (7) from the sacred fire of heaven, men are spurred to achieve "noble deeds and neuer dying fame" (9).⁵⁵ The erotic impulse aroused by this fire is guided through history by "diuine foresight" (2.5), the instrument of which is Cupid, from whom Britomart learns the desire to love and to procreate. To express the "famous fruits" of Britomart's "matrimoniall bowre" (3.7), Spenser invokes Clio, from whom the poet can draw his "glorious Soueraines goodly auncestrie" (4.7). Like Merlin's gaze, this invocation foresees England's "royall virgin" (49.6). Britomart's lineage is perfected in

⁵⁵Hamilton notes "the twin neoplatonic doctrines that love is the desire for beauty and that virtue manifests itself in beauty." He explains that the love of beauty informs the story of Florimell, that the love of virtue informs the story of the False Florimell. Upton speaks of Platonic love; he cites the ladder of Jacob's vision, which extends from heaven to hell; he cites examples from the Platonic Sydney; he cites from Milton (Paradise Lost VIII.588) on the Platonic scale of Love and Beauty (Variorum 3:223).

Elizabeth "by dew degrees and long protense" (4.8).⁵⁶ In turn, Elizabeth's "Excellence" (9) confirms the sacred fire originally implanted in Britomart.

In short, Britomart is the focal point in history. The invocations to Love and to Clio bridge the gap between Britomart's personal destiny and the destiny of the British nation. In Britomart's scene of desire, the love kindled by Cupid, desire for beauty, is most fully articulated in God's providential history by the beauty manifested in Elizabeth's excellence. Spenser's invocations momentarily close the gap between the earthly love that desires beauty, the heroic Britomart in pursuit of Artegall, and the heavenly love that is Beauty Incarnate, the Empress Elizabeth.⁵⁷

The fourth invocation reaffirms Britomart's lineage. Spenser relates her "pure chastitie and vertue rare" (iv.4), only first made explicit here (Hamilton), to Elizabeth's fair "blossome" (7). Reviving an earlier theme, Spenser proclaims the "braue atchieuements" (1.3) of

⁵⁶In "The Structure of Merlin's Chronicle," when he discusses "by dew degrees" and "protense," Berger argues that "Merlin's prophecy offers a synoptic view of the developmental process" that translates "the streight course of fate to the less overpowering force" of providence, with "its implied request for cooperation from man" (Revisionary Play 119).

⁵⁷Considering the central figure in Calidore's vision of VI.x, Frances A. Yates explains that Spenser interpreted one aspect of Elizabeth-Astraea as "the Renaissance vision of beauty, of the celestial Venus" (Astraea 73-74).

women, neglected by male poets, because he envies what he has read in Homer, Virgil, and the Bible. Britomart surpasses all these earlier figures both in "glory of great valiaunce" (3.3) and in her heroic chastity. And yet Britomart's virtues blossom most fully in Elizabeth.

Summary

It would be a commonplace of Spenser criticism to argue that Britomart appropriates Arthur's place in the middle books of The Faerie Queene. What I argue is that Britomart's scene of desire replaces Arthur's, as a paradigm, in these middle books. It does this, not only by recapitulating features from Arthur's scene of desire, but also through features peculiar to itself. Britomart's scene of desire complements, or fulfills, Arthur's. Whereas one learns that Merlin has kept things hidden from Arthur, Merlin reveals everything to Britomart, filling the gap, as it were, left in Arthur's account. The context and content elevate Britomart's scene of desire to the status of paradigm.

What features does the context of Britomart's scene of desire share with the context of Arthur's?

First, like Arthur's scene of desire in the narrative of I.ix, and even like Redcross's in the Letter, Britomart's scene of desire is both retrospective and prospective. Whereas the retrospective narrative of cantos

ii and iii recalls Britomart's scene of desire and Merlin's visionary chronicle, Merlin's chronicle foresees the future. Similarly, whereas Arthur's narration looks at his vision in retrospect, the vision itself foresees his union with Gloriana. This alternating perspective offers a more comprehensive insight into Britomart's complex experience.

Second, as in Arthur's, Britomart's scene of desire has an advisory figure. While Arthur has only Una, Britomart has three advisors. In the retrospective narrative, first Glauce and then Merlin offer affirmation similar to that offered by Una when she affirms the truth of Arthur's vision. In the romance narrative proper, Redcross becomes a third advisor.

Third, as with Arthur, the fullest disclosure of the impulse behind Britomart's quest occurs when her martial disguise is exposed to reveal an erotic wound. After Britomart rearms herself to leave Castle Joyous, her disguise is completely stripped away in the retrospective narrative, when readers see her only as "buxome" and "prone" (ii.23.4). Similarly, the fullest disclosure of the impulse behind Arthur's quest occurs when the retrospective narrative in I.ix strips away his magnificent armor to expose his erotic wound.

Finally, as with Arthur's, the inscape that emerges from Britomart's scene of desire is projected onto the

allegorical landscape.⁵⁴ The doubt from which Arthur suffers before Una's affirmation reappears in Despair. Similarly, the martial wrath of Britomart's turbulent feelings (Paul J. Alpers 383) is reflected ambivalently in the "mirror" of the sea. While the sea records her "tempestuous grieve" (iv.8.1), Britomart also projects her violent grief onto it and places distance between it and herself, learning to channel it.

To confirm its status as a paradigm, these general remarks about similarities of context are strengthened by the poetic features peculiar to Britomart's scene of desire, as the convergences have revealed. The mirror into which Britomart gazes becomes the figurative womb of her motherhood, the metaphor for the origin of the English nation and for the psychogenesis of the poem itself. As such, it forms an alternative origin to Arthur's oneiric one. In turn, Britomart's prophetic vision and Merlin's visionary chronicle open a gap in the historical record from which Britomart can emerge. Like the Prince, fashioned by Spenser before the chroniclers get hold of him, Britomart fashions her own part in English history through the dynastic line she bequeaths to the chroniclers. To forge her destiny, Britomart must submit her awakening desire to the exigencies of historical continuity and

⁵⁴The term inscape, from Gerard Manley Hopkins, comes to Spenser criticism in Harry Berger, "The Spenserian Dynamics," in Revisionary Play 23.

divine providence. The Ovidian metamorphoses that Britomart's scene of desire elicits indicate that Britomart's desire, as protean as the metamorphic Cupid, bridges the gap between personal growth and change and the historical continuity by which Britomart's lineage endures, fulfilling providence. Like Arthur's, Britomart's scene of desire participates in English history. And yet she is as present and vibrant as the most carefully drawn Petrarchan lover--fanciful, desirous, doubtful, fearful, hopeful. Her martial disguise turns these characteristically Petrarchan emotions into physical form--male, aggressive, powerful, harmful. As with Arthur, Britomart's armor suggests that the erotic chase is partly warfare in disguise; yet this "warfare" involves the destiny of the English nation. Finally, Artegall's portrait and the invocations to Britomart and Elizabeth confirm that Britomart's scene of desire connects her to Arthur and to Elizabeth or Gloriana. Like Arthur, resurrected through Gloriana as Elizabeth, Britomart prefigures the Tudor monarch. As the focal point in Spenser's vision of history, Britomart bridges the gap between chronicle and allegory, and her scene of desire marks the threshold between the English nation conceived by Britomart and the ideal nation governed by Gloriana.

CHAPTER 4:
THE CALIDOREAN "PARADIGM"

Calidore's Scene of Desire

The final scene of desire on which I wish to focus as a paradigm is Calidore's scene of desire with Pastorella in VI.ix. As a paradigm, Calidore's scene of desire in Book VI refigures Arthur's scene of desire in Book I. For years, Spenser critics have shown how richly patterned The Faerie Queene is within and across books. An analysis of Calidore's scene of desire will affirm in new ways the connections between Book VI and the beginning of the poem.

Book VI of The Faerie Queene contains "THE LEGEND OF S. CALIDORE OR OF COVRTESIE." The titular hero, Calidore, whose "gracious speach" can "steale mens hearts away" (Pr.2.6), combines "the active with the contemplative life" (Ray Heffner, Variorum 6:358). The perfect courtier, he is a worthy analogue to the two contemporary figures with whom he was associated, Sidney and Essex.¹ Calidore's quest is to subdue the Blatant Beast, a figure of slander that threatens all society and even the language of poetry itself. The consequences of Calidore's pursuit are his encountering Pastorella, his falling in love with her, and

¹Critical opinions about the historical analogues to the figure of Calidore have vacillated between Sidney and Essex. Upton first suggested the connection to Sidney, but many others followed him (Variorum 6:349). Percy W. Long first proposed Essex instead (6:351).

--after her capture by the Brigands--his restoring her to her rightful parents at Castle Belgard.

Calidore's scene of desire with Pastorella takes place in canto ix of Book VI. In the beginning of canto ix, Calidore has pursued the Blatant Beast through "hils, through dales, throgh forests, and throgh plaines" (2.6). Now, he comes into "open fields" (4.1) and spies "a sort of shepheard groomes" (5.2), from whom he receives food and drink. It is at this point that Calidore first sees Pastorella and desires her.

Calidore's scene of desire with Pastorella may be considered paradigmatic for reasons having to do with the nature of the allegorical figures themselves, the context of their scene of desire, and the relation of Book VI to I. First, Calidore and Pastorella are the central allegorical figures in Book VI, the final complete book of the poem as we have it. One would presume that their scene of desire is particularly significant, much as I argued that Britomart's with Artegall's is. Calidore is the finest expression of the book's titular virtue, and Pastorella, the fairest shepherdess, is the "flower" of courtesy.²

Second, the context within which Calidore's scene of desire with Pastorella occurs marks an important turn in the romance narrative. By canto ix in Book VI, other

²William Nelson argues: "It is by the unfolding rose that the real Pastorella is known" (*Poetry* 281).

allegorical figures have already disappeared from the narrative. The Savage Man disappears at viii.29.5 after Arthur restrains him from whipping Disdain, who in turn is scourging Timias. Arthur and Timias disappear in the next stanza: Arthur returns to "his first quest" (30.8) until a "great aduventure" (9) divided him from the others. Finally, at the end of canto viii, Calepine and Serena disappear as well. By contrast, canto ix marks the point at which Spenser returns to his titular hero and turns to Pastorella for the first time. Perhaps more important, canto ix marks a critical crux in the poem--Calidore's pastoral retreat from his quest.³ In short, the romance narrative from which Calidore's scene of desire with Pastorella emerges signals a new direction in the poem.

Third, as the symmetries between Books I and VI are well known,⁴ it is unsurprising that Calidore's scene of desire in VI.ix recapitulates Arthur's with Gloriana in I.ix. But this parallel points to others. Mirabella's disdain for lovers, literally played out against her in Book VI, reprises the disdain Arthur feels as a young

³The debate on Calidore's pastoral retreat has included, among other critics, in chronological order, Nelson, Poetry, Donald Cheney, Spenser's Image of Nature, David L. Miller, "Abandoning the Quest," Patricia A. Parker, Inescapable Romance, and Harry Rusche, "The Lessons of Calidore's Truancy."

⁴For a discussion of the symmetries between Books I and VI, see Thomas P. Roche, Kindly Flame 200-201, A. Bartlett Giamatti, Play of Double Senses 76-77, and James Nohrnberg, Analogy 656.

prince toward love before his encounter with Gloriana. From a larger narrative perspective, as Patricia Parker argues, Book VI "seems to be returning to its beginnings" in Book I, that the "'harrowing' of the brigands' cave" by Calidore recalls the recovery of Eden by Redcross (Inescapable Romance 107).⁵ Further, Gloriana's momentary appearance in I.ix prefigures the Graces' own momentary appearance in VI.x. Just as Arthur cannot possess Gloriana within the poem, so Calidore cannot maintain the vision of the Graces--as fleeting an image as the act of chaining up the Blatant Beast will be unsustainable. In sum, narrative and allegorical patterns that surround and invest Calidore's scene of desire reprise those that surround and invest Arthur's.

Like its paradigmatic precursor, Calidore's scene of desire marks two convergences characteristic of scenes of desire: Petrarchism and the visionary. As with Arthur's, Calidore's first sight of Pastorella uses typical Petrarchan metaphor and imagery. While gazing at her, Calidore is "vnwares surprisd in subtile bands/ Of the blynd boy" (ix.11.6-7). She is "full fayre of face" and "perfectly well shapt in euery lim" (9.1-2); she has

⁵As Michael O'Connell argues, "the central irony of the historical dimension" of the poem is that "Spenser begins by insisting upon the public discussion of the essentially private virtue of holiness, and he ends in his last book with a vision of the inwardness of the social virtue of courtesy" (193).

"modest grace" and "comely carriage" (3-4). Her beauty causes the shepherds to offer her "honour" (10.2) and to "sigh and grone" often "with sweet pleasing payne" (3-4). As a result, Calidore, esteeming her a "princes Paragone" (11.5), becomes a traditional Petrarchan lover who experiences pain and longing. Further, like Arthur's, Calidore's scene of desire is also a visionary moment. Pastorella is rendered exemplary both by her lovely looks and shapeliness and by her placement, "Vpon a litle hillocke," set above "all the rest," and surrounded as if by a "girland" of "louely lasses" (8.1-4). As the Fourth Grace surrounded by the dancing maidens in the vision on Mount Acidale reprises the figure of Pastorella surrounded by lasses, so Calidore's vision in canto ix is invested retrospectively with the fuller vision of canto x.

Even as its paradigmatic status is confirmed, however, Calidore's scene of desire also undermines what one has come to expect from Arthur's scene of desire. If Calidore violates his contract with Gloriana when he rests among the shepherds, his scene of desire also violates the poetic contract by which I have described the Arthurian paradigm in chapter 1. Unlike Arthur's, Calidore's scene of desire occurs in a public setting; it is not a private erotic moment at all. Pastorella does not even notice Calidore until later, when the knight stays at her home at Meliboe's invitation. Further, unlike Arthur, Calidore has

no dream. Even more so, Calidore experiences no prophetic vision as Arthur does, nor does he receive the kind of affirmation that Arthur receives from Una. Instead, the vision on Mount Acidale provides a later retrospective gloss on Calidore's vision. According to the model of Lee W. Patterson's "entranced gaze" I have used before, the vision on Mount Acidale would mark the discourse of explication subsequent to the stupefied gaze of Calidore's scene of desire. Still, neither in the original moment on the "litle hillock" (ix.8.1) nor in the vision on Mount Acidale does Calidore ever learn about his past or future. Unlike the great future awaiting Arthur, Calidore's future is unclear.⁶ Only Pastorella's past is revealed when she is restored to her parents in canto xii. One assumes that Pastorella will become Calidore's wife, but their issue is hidden. Of course, marriage is so important to Spenser, as Andrew Fichter has pointed out (15-16), because it links the world of the poem to Spenser's contemporary world. One has come to expect that genealogies and illustrious progeny would be revealed--partly to praise, partly to instruct readers, and partly to invest the Tudors with their appropriate historical place (Margaret Christian 61-79). In this case, however, the principal revelatory mechanism of paradigmatic scenes of desire is absent from the poem.

⁶Spenser's complete history of Britain includes the accounts, in order, from III.ix, II.x, and III.iii, in which Arthur and Britomart are pivotal figures.

To the degree that it questions the expectations of the Arthurian paradigm, Calidore's scene of desire, though more obviously parodied by the cannibals' gaze at Serena in canto viii and by the Brigands' gaze at Pastorella in canto xi, also figures its own parody.

Two of the most important aspects, then, of Arthur's scene of desire--genealogy and destiny--are absent from Calidore's scene of desire. Arthur's genealogy and destiny have been treated at some length. Calidore's genealogy and destiny, however, are a complete mystery; one encounters him full fledged and knows little more about his destiny than how ineffective his restraining of the Blatant Beast will be. But Calidore's scene of desire imagines a genealogy of another kind. Whereas Arthur's scene of desire refigures the dream-vision of Chaucer's Sir Thopas, Calidore's scene of desire reimagines Spenser's own first re-presentation of Eliza from the fourth eclogue of The Shepheardes Calender, which officially marked the beginning of his poetic career, and refracts Chaucer's tale of Melibee, a figure of the poet and a tale meditating on the poet's craft (Judith H. Anderson 35). Figuratively, Calidore's scene of desire with Pastorella recapitulates the poetic growth from pastoral to epic that Spenser actually lived out.

In this way, Calidore's scene of desire signals a poetic closure on the personal level that the narrative of

Book VI questions.⁷ Critics have disagreed, in fact, whether Book VI of The Faerie Queene achieves closure.⁸ I would tend to agree with Balachandra Rajan that The Faerie Queene began as an incomplete poem and then wound up as an unfinished one.⁹ Yet, even as it remains unfinished and ultimately achieves its own disappearance (Rajan 73 ff), it might also be considered as infinitely expandable, until the "plaine" of Book I (i.1) "eventually expands into the cosmic courtroom of Dame Nature" and, finally, "space melts into time, in the poet's desire for 'that Sabaoths sight'" (William C. Johnson 15). This expansion or disappearance

⁷Michael O'Connell notes "a sense of freedom in the narrative" of Book VI; "things happen unexpectedly, almost capriciously, in the Legend of Courtesy. The freedom is of course the projection of the poet; it comes to stand for the play of his own imagination" (170).

⁸Stanley Stewart would argue that it does not, other critics that it does. Northrop Frye, "Structure of Imagery," in Hamilton, Essential Articles 154-55; James Nohrnberg, Analogy chapter 5; Kathleen Williams, Spenser's World of Glass 223; Richard Neuse, "Book VI As Conclusion" 330; Susanne Woods 195. Paul C. Marquis has argued recently that Book VI achieves closure, on its own terms and for the entire poem, because the whole poem completes the reader's moral education.

⁹"In the second edition," The Faerie Queene "defined itself as unfinished rather than incomplete. It did so in several ways. The letter [to Raleigh] was discarded and the happy ending [at III.xii] was replaced by an inconclusive climax that looked forward to the inconclusive climax of the sixth book. The scope of acceptance was widened. In particular the brute world of the book of justice was juxtaposed with the contrived world of courtesy . . . Unfinished narratives were allowed to accumulate . . . Thus the available signals were used steadily to indicate that the poem might no longer be one which it was fitting to complete" (Form of the Unfinished 72).

suggests that closure resides outside the poem, as Arthur's dream-vision of Gloriana suggested in Book I. And yet, inside the poem, Calidore's scene of desire fulfills the prophecy of Spenser's original image of Eliza in The Shepheardes Calender, as if, in a variation of Frank Kermode's idea of pleroma--the "literary fulfillment represented by the completion of Old Testament types in the New Testament" ("Sensing Endings" 155)--Pastorella completes Eliza. Ironically, Spenser figures the most public of virtues, courtesy, at that point in The Faerie Queene when he is reshaping his private and personal poetic origins. Though the poem remains unfinished, Spenser the poet achieves a personal sense of closure when the seeds of his pastoral bear fruit in epic. Ultimately, the most conspicuous figure that emerges from Book VI is not that of Gloriana herself, but that of the poet. In short, Spenser himself becomes an epic subject.¹⁰

Spenserian Gazes

The poetic medium by which Spenser foregrounds himself as poet is the gaze, a term pervasive in contemporary criticism, Spenserian and otherwise. The gaze implies a

¹⁰Richard Rambuss argues that, by the time of Colin Clout, Spenser had fashioned "a counter to the court that has no place for him by exerting a nearly occult centripetal force to establish himself as the poem's center" (99).

On the argument that Spenser's poetic authority was meant to complement his monarch's, see Derek B. Alwes.

perspectival structure--the person looked at, the person looking, and the spatial interplay between them. A. Leigh DeNeef would place the gaze at the very core of Spenser's poetic project. In "Rethinking the Spenserian Gaze," DeNeef argues that the Spenserian gaze "is a psychic scenario in which one gender confronts the radical alterity of its other and adopts certain postures of power to negotiate that difference" (in Miller and Dunlop 163). DeNeef locates that gaze at the "imaginative center" of The Faerie Queene:

in [Spenser's] desire to look upon and to be looked at by the queen, in his intention to offer her a series of mirrors in which she may see herself, and in his hope that amidst the various shadows of Elizabeth scattered throughout the poem a reader might glimpse the awesome figure of sovereignty itself.

(163)

By contrast, I argue that Spenser, in Book VI, turns the mirror on himself, becoming gazer and gazed at, and the spatial interplay is the very Spenserian allegory that questions the conventional centripetal gaze at Gloriana.

As before, I wish to use Lee W. Patterson's model of the "entranced gaze" to look at Spenserian gazes in Book VI--in this case, identifying the gaze of stupefaction at the object of desire bracketed by two discourses of explication. Recognizing that the entranced gaze is "at once a retarding pause and a prefiguration of the goal, both impediment and encouragement" (Patterson 459), I apply this model to Calidore's scene of desire, which interrupts

his pursuit of the Blatant Beast. Calidore's "stupefied gaze" at Pastorella is refigured by two "discourses" of explication, one anticipatory and one retrospective: the cannibals' "Petrarchan" gaze at Serena in canto viii and Calidore's pastoral gaze at the Graces in canto x. The cannibals literally threaten to devour Serena. Their act of gazing on her "with lustfull fantasyes" (viii.41.8) turns "her dainty flesh" (38.8) into "a common feast" ready to be devoured "with gurmandize" (9). By contrast, the "hundred naked maidens lilly white" (x.11.8) on Mount Acidale, the three Graces at their center, and the "iolly Sheheardes lasse" (16.1) in the middle of them compel Calidore, "rapt with pleasaunce" (17.4), to intrude rather gracelessly. In different ways, these discourses parody Calidore's "stupefied" gaze. When I use the term parody, however, I wish its meaning to be the flexible one of "repetition with a difference," in which the distance between original and parodic text "is usually signaled by irony," either "internally constructive" or "destructive" (Hutcheon 32). As parodies, the Petrarchan gaze at Serena and the pastoral gaze on Mount Acidale refocus Spenser's gaze from the origins of Calidore's desire to those of the New Poet.

The cannibals' gaze at Serena in canto viii parodies Spenser's own Petrarchism--ideally, a communion of souls anticipating marriage and, presumably, the fate awaiting

Calidore and Pastorella. Spenser's Amoretti and Epithalamion, the model from which his ideas of Petrarchism may be inferred most completely, ends with a beautiful marriage poem and the celebration of the couple's issue, an innovation in sonnet sequences, as Roche has noted ("Menace of Despair" 78).¹¹ Arthur's scene of desire with Gloriana and Britomart's with Artegall follow this model, their pangs of love mitigated by the hope of marriage. But the Fair Serena's experience appropriates conventional Petrarchan imagery, taken to literal extreme. Serena's plight represents the severest kind of discourtesy: the literal threat of devouring the other. The cannibals represent a "monstrous cruelty gainst course of kynde" (viii.36.5). To satisfy their perversely religious convictions, they vow to sacrifice "her guiltlesse bloud" (38.7) to their god. But, to satisfy their hungers, they agree "a common feast" to make of "her dainty flesh" (7-8). To deepen their desires, they despoil her "of all her rich array" (41.3). Once naked, Serena becomes the completely vulnerable surface of the cannibals' "lustfull fantasyes" (8). In a parody of the traditional lover's blazon, each part of Serena--"yuorie necke," "alabaster brest," "bellie

¹¹Lisa M. Klein argues (132) that Spenser's vision of marriage, expressed in the comprehensive Amoretti and Epithalamion, transformed him from Petrarchan to Protestant lover, whose ideals of marriage include mutual love and responsibility within the traditional hierarchical relations between genders.

white and clere," "goodly thighes" (42.1-7), even her "daintie parts" (43.1)--becomes a site for "their beastly pleasure" (6). To consecrate their unholy cannibalism, the cannibals erect an altar on which to sacrifice Serena to their desires--"diuelish ceremonies" (45.7) that reduce the beloved to dismembered flesh. The Petrarchan metaphors conventionally associated with the desire to possess the beloved are perverted into the desire to devour the beloved. Using a metaphor from Christian symbolism, Jonathan Crewe would argue (97) that the cannibals' ceremony parodies Christian communion and metamorphoses the sacrificial male into the sacrificial female body. As a discourse of explication, the Petrarchan gaze at Serena suggests by its very extreme that Pastorella is spared any threat to her person because the knight of courtesy, above all others, recognizes the virtue of respect for the other. Since Calidore is later described as having a "hungry eye" (ix.26.7) fixed on Pastorella, however, one is reminded that the Petrarchan gaze at the desired object "is always at least potentially a visual gluttony" (Parker, Inescapable Romance 104). If I may borrow from Theresa M. Krier's idea of the female body "as an eloquent, vulnerable surface" over "a creative, hallowed interior space" (13), the Petrarchan gaze that seeks to dismember Serena writes an allegory that can only consider Serena as a vulnerable surface on which to do violence. By contrast, Calidore's

Petrarchan gaze at Pastorella opens up this vulnerable surface of the woman beheld until its interior space can reveal the true hallowed image, Eliza, with whom the epic subject, Spenser, will find poetic completion.

Like its Petrarchan counterpart, the pastoral gaze in canto x parodies Calidore's scene of desire in canto ix. The pastoral tradition that informs Spenser's runs from Greek pastoral, through Italian and Spanish pastoral romances, which added allegory and harked back to Virgil's eclogues, to Sidney's Arcadia.¹² The world into which Calidore travels is conventionally pastoral.¹³ The pursuit of the Blatant Beast takes Calidore into "the open fields" (4.1) where he sees "sheheardes singing to their flockes" songs "of sweete loue and youthes delightfull heat" (3-4).

¹²Traced in Variorum 6:371-81. What one may conclude, as Merrit Y. Hughes does, is "that the Greek romances were of small direct influence upon Spenser's poetry. That certain elements derive ultimately from them is true, but that these same elements had long become literary commonplaces we must concede as well" (6:679).

What is also significant is the tradition, dating back to Virgil's Dido-Aeneas episode, of the hero's forgetting his mission or quest (Greenlaw, Variorum 6:375-76). Both the Arcadia and The Faerie Queene are heroic poems with pastoral episodes in which these trauancies occur.

¹³On conventional pastoral rhythms--withdrawal, contemplation, and return--see Leo Marx, Machine in the Garden 24-32, and Renato Poggioli, Oaten Flute 1-2. Ellen Zetzel Lambert develops a similar view in Placing Sorrow. For a general work on Renaissance pastoral, see Cullen. Perhaps the most comprehensive study of pastoralism in Spenser is John D. Bernard's recent study. Seminal work specifically on pastoral in The Faerie Queene includes Paul J. Alpers, Poetry, and Donald Cheney, Spenser's Image of Nature.

The locus of the vision in canto x is Acidale, which suggests an Edenic locus; it alludes to the "second paradise" of the Temple of Venus (IV.x.23.2), with "High reared mounts" and "low looking dales" (24.5-6).¹⁴ The significance of this visionary moment in the poem has been discussed at great length. C.S. Lewis would call the vision on Mount Acidale the "allegorical core" of Book VI. Angus Fletcher might call it a "symbol of the center," a moment "of particular exuberance" (Allegory 350).¹⁵ While Northrop Frye uses the term, "houses of recognition,"¹⁶ Berger describes them as "retrospects."¹⁷ What all these views share is the idea of return, re-cognizing, reflection (Prophetic Moment 13n). If Arthur had Una to affirm his identity, the truth of his vision, and the originary loss from which desire emerges, then the vision on Mount Acidale, the prospect from which the book emanates, overgoes Calidore's pursuit to refigure the staged disappearance of the poet's inspiration--the poet

¹⁴Giamatti examines the tradition in Earthly Paradise chapter 1.

¹⁵On "symbols of the center," see Mircea Eliade, Myth of the Eternal Return 12-17 and Sacred and Profane 73-76.

¹⁶In "The Structure of Imagery," in Hamilton, Essential Articles 161.

¹⁷In "Two Spenserian Retrospects," in Revisionary Play 202 ff.

"sees himself inspired" (John Guillory 44)¹⁸--from which originary loss Spenser can reclaim the energies necessary to continue his allegory.

Drawing further attention to the poet as epic subject, the pastoral gaze on Mount Acidale self-reflexively writes an allegory about the allegory of Spenserian romance. Though the name, Acidale, appropriately honors Venus, it also etymologically suggests accidia, the sin of sloth (Nelson, Poetry 293). The connection between Acidale and accidia suggests that the symbol at the center of Book VI also figures the general movement of Spenser's romance narrative, what Parker describes as "the 'staying' or 'straying' of the poem itself," across the structural spectrum, from stanza to canto to book, "part of [the poem's] poetic vagrancy, or 'charm'" (Inescapable Romance 111-12).¹⁹ Calidore's retreat from and pursuit of the quest might be considered complementary actions, "enabling the knight to emerge from the refreshment of retreat while still drawing from its

¹⁸Also see Berger, "A Secret Discipline," in Revisionary Play. "On Mount Acidale, when the play of mind realizes its vision, the poet dissolves it and moves on" (242). But cf. Kenneth Gross 220-24.

¹⁹For an alternative emphasis on the vision on Mount Acidale as "an allegory about the power of words," see David O. Frantz 125.

'well' [VI.Pr.2.5]" (Parker 106).²⁰ The pun on accidia also implies perpetual erring and, by extension, the endlessly fecund quality of Spenser's romance narrative. In these terms, Spenser's pastoral gaze through the Fourth Grace back to Eliza suggests a poetic continuity that the endlessly fecund quality of his romance narrative will perpetuate. But, while the Tudor dynasty will end with Elizabeth, Spenser's romance narrative will continue the poetic line he has written. Whether the Fourth Grace is Colin's beloved Rosalind or Spenser's wife or Spenser's monarch, the poet of VI.x, overgoing the issuelessness of Elizabeth's chastity, assumes control over the origin and continuity of his romance narrative by reasserting the endless, unfinished quality of his own poetic imagination (Cf. Philippa Berry 161-64). In this way, the pastoral gaze on Mount Acidale is to Spenser's creative energy what the Garden of Adonis is to the generation of all life.

The Figure of the Poet

The Spenserian gazes just described reflect a retrospective imagination characteristic of Spenser's romance narrative-- as stanza builds from stanza, canto from canto, book from

²⁰Bernard thinks that Spenser "makes it clear from the outset that the whole adventure is one continuous unfolding of the hero's central virtue" (150).

book--meaning and nuance emerging by accumulating detail.²¹ As discussed in chapter 1, the unreliability of the Letter to Raleigh may be interpreted as mirroring the experience of reading Spenser's allegory, in which images and incidents, reimagined in retrospect, reinterpret Spenser's "darke conceit," which confirms the metonymic principle described by Gordon Teskey that reflects the transition in European aesthetic sensibility from the root metaphor of the broad-branching tree to that of the organism ("Milton's Choice of Subject" 64).²² It is significant that Book VI, the final complete book, is dedicated to the virtue of courtesy, which implies respect for the other, an interpretive act that mirrors Spenser's own reshaping

²¹Here one might recall Berger's description of Spenser's historical vision in "Archaism, Immortality, and the Muse in Spenser's Poetry." According to Berger, Spenser's historical vision has two aspects, evolutionary and retrospective. When Berger says evolutionary, he means that Spenser's poetry "exhibits an overall developmental pattern in which three vectors coalesce: from lower to higher, from simpler to more complex, and of course from earlier to later." Contrasted with this objective mode, the "subjective mode of Spenser's historical vision is retrospective: he looks back into the past from his own here and now" (in Revisionary Play 37). Borrowing somewhat from the spirit of Berger's designations, I wish to describe Spenser's poem as a continual process of refiguring images again and again but in new ways, a poetic gaze that continually looks back on itself and on its origins to reshape them ever more precisely.

²²Jacqueline T. Miller argues that Spenser's Calidore personifies and incarnates "the figure of allegory." Through this allegorical figure, Spenser "enacts an anatomy of his own allegory in The Faerie Queene, critiquing the rhetorical strategies that his own 'darke conceit' embodies" (53).

imagination. Whether in the form of courtesy among individuals or in the form of the poet's reshaping imagination, the interpreter engages in a creative revision (Berger, "Renaissance Imagination," in Second World 38). The same interpretive act informs the lover's emerging respect for his love. The lover's "first sight demands temperance by insight if it is to lead to that second sight which is re-spect" (Berger, "A Secret Discipline," in Revisionary Play 227). As such, scenes of desire probe the very essence of Spenserian romance narrative.

Through Calidore's scene of desire and the vision on Mount Acidale, Spenser reappropriates the poetic powers of epic and pastoral from his hero Calidore and his alter ego Colin. When Spenser restores the image of Eliza through Pastorella and Elizabeth through the Fourth Grace Rosalind, he anticipates Calidore's restoring of Pastorella to her own origins. As Calidore's scene of desire and the vision on Mount Acidale merge in a wonderful Spenserian revision, pastoral poet Colin and Calidore, Old Poet Colin and New Poet Spenser also merge. Berger argues that, in x.25-28,

two voices merge into one, Colin as he speaks, Spenser as he writes, the man momentarily transformed into the pure poetic voice, the recreative voice re-created, the poet leaping to new life in the present. It is the moment of second sight in which the poet returns to his early fragments of insight, inspiration, or mere sportive pleasure and rescues them, sees them for the first time. The past and present are juxtaposed as promise and fulfillment in a single poetic form.

(236-37)

Alternatively, John C. Ulreich has argued that Calidore plays the exegete to Colin's imaginative vision, which becomes the model for Calidore's actions--to restore Pastorella to her parents as Colin has restored Rosalind. In other words, Colin teaches Calidore "how to interpret visionary experience" (Ulreich 372).²³ Using Berger and Ulreich, I would argue that Calidore's visionary experience, as it is channeled through Colin's own poetic powers, becomes a figure for the process by which Spenser's romance narrative emerges from restored visions.

Recapitulating in Book VI his images from the fourth eclogue of The Shepheardes Calender, Spenser fulfills the promise of those earlier epic aspirations. If Arthur is the figure of the masculine impulse to the creation of the poem, as argued in chapter 1, then the Spenserian gazes in cantos viii, ix, and x of Book VI reconstitute the figure of Gloriana, absent since I.ix, through the emerging figures of Eliza and Pastorella.²⁴ As such, the appearances of these rewritten figures of Gloriana mark moments in the poem when its creative impulse is defined specifically as masculine in origin--from Spenser and not

²³Cf. Bernard's argument that "Calidore and Colin present the active and contemplative dimensions of Spenser's image of himself as a cultural exemplar" (162).

²⁴Richard Rambuss notes that "the final book of The Faerie Queene is the only one in the entire epic that lacks a suitable allegorical representative for Elizabeth in its fiction" (121).

his monarch, as the traditional image of Gloriana at court and the origin of the quests suggest.²⁵ If the image of Arthur that emerges from I.ix fills a gap in the historical record and becomes a figure for the author of the poem, once again working the common pun, then the figure of "Elizabeth" that emerges from VI.ix and x symbolically closes the gap between the Briton monuments and Merlin's chronicle. Whereas in Arthur's scene of desire Spenser reaffirms the Tudor authority behind his epic project, in Calidore's scene of desire Spenser asserts his own poetic authority by reclaiming Gloriana from the figure that marked the birth of his own carefully orchestrated poetic career--Eliza.

Summary

Though scenes of desire are moments of first encounter, Calidore's scene of desire with Pastorella is actually a first encounter re-encountered. The qualities of this re-encounter and the features that govern its paradigmatic status may be summarized and questioned as follows.

As a paradigm, Calidore's scene of desire involves the most important allegorical figures in Book VI in a critical moment of the book, canto ix. As one would expect of a paradigm, it reprises Arthur's scene of desire with

²⁵For an argument on private space as feminine and public space as masculine, see George E. Rowe.

Gloriana. And it marks convergences typical of scenes of desire: Petrarchism and the visionary.

But, even as it looks very much like a paradigm, Calidore's scene of desire lacks the attention to genealogy and the prophetic vision that mark Arthur's scene of desire. The historical consequences of Calidore's scene of desire with Pastorella are unclear. It is only assumed that they will marry, but the future is never hinted at. Unlike Arthur, or Britomart, Calidore has no specific place in the grand historical vision that Spenser has written with such detail in previous books. For this reason, Calidore's scene of desire, though parodied itself, also figures its own parody.

What I argue, however, is that Calidore's scene of desire shifts the Spenserian gaze from Gloriana to the poet himself. When Calidore first encounters Pastorella, the poet actually re-presents the Eliza of his pastoral origins, herself a figure of Spenser's monarch, achieving a kind of poetic closure to his epic designs that the romance narrative in general leaves open. If Spenser's Arthur fills a gap in the historical record, Spenser's Gloriana affirms the gap that Elizabeth marks, as she ends the dynastic line. By elevating the poet to the status of epic subject, Spenser allows Calidore's scene of desire, and the vision on Mount Acidale it prefigures, symbolically to overgo that historical gap by writing a continuous

poetic line between Eliza and Gloriana and the endless work of Spenser's romance narrative that perpetuates them. With the emphasis on the poet as epic subject, the poet's allegory of creativity comes to rewrite history.

CONCLUSION

What do scenes of desire tell one about the general nature of desire in The Faerie Queene?

As I stated in the introduction, I have tried in this study of scenes of desire to offer at least a partial answer to this question. The result, I believe, has been some further insight into the immense richness and complexity of The Faerie Queene, into the patterns with which the poem may be understood more clearly, and into the ways in which desire, a quite protean and elusive concept, manifests itself in the poem.

The focal point from which my study emerges is the central allegorical pair of the poem, Arthur and Gloriana, and their scene of desire. As they are central figures, Arthur's first encounter with Gloriana becomes the paradigmatic scene of desire, and the central image of the originary. The poetic features that converge in it include characteristic features against which other scenes of desire may be measured and interpreted. As essentially and intensively originary moments, on a literal and tropic level, the scenes of desire I have selected to study--the Arthurian paradigm and its parody for the beginning books, the Britomartian paradigm for the middle books, and the Calidorean paradigm and its parodies for the final complete book--discover in novel ways how patterns of narrative,

allegory, and poetic desire inform the whole poem.

What is most significant about Arthur's encounter with Gloriana as a scene of desire is the way in which the traditional, "historical" view of Arthur is reinterpreted into an allegory about the creation of the poem. As Arthur is only a prince at the time of The Faerie Queene, Spenser works with a very well-known poetic and historical figure before he became important to Tudor history. As such, Spenser may create his own Arthur, simultaneously figuring an author of the poem whose dream envisions the source of the quests. This view of the erotic Arthur's first feeling of desire imagines him as a figure of the masculine impulse to the creation of the poem, an alter image of the poet's creating his own poem from poetic conventions and traditions and traditional history. In this sense, rather than rewriting the Tudor ancestry, Spenser reappropriates it to imagine an Arthur who is both originary to his own private poem--Spenser's and Arthur's, as it were--and proleptic of the Tudor dynasty.

The parody of this encounter, Redcross's scene of desire with the false Una, anticipates the Arthurian paradigm, its elaborate dream-vision sequence proleptic of Arthur's dream-vision of Gloriana. The pivotal figure of Una, who at one end of the book is replaced by Archimago's forgery, affirms near the other end of the book Arthur's faith in love. The fictive space opened up by Spenser

between these two scenes of desire marks the gap between Redcross's failing faith and the apocalyptic promise of his destiny, between the authorial/Arthurian origin of the poem and the endless work it promises to become.

In the middle books, the Britomartian paradigm I have described replaces the Arthurian paradigm. To complement the masculine impulse to the creation of the poem that Arthur's dream-vision figures, Britomart's magical globe becomes the figurative womb from which she can imagine the birth of the English nation and from which the poet can write an alternative origin to his poem. Britomart's scene of desire marks the threshold at which the English nation she anticipates momentarily crosses over into the ideal nation figured by Gloriana.

The final, Calidorean paradigm, though it lacks the prophetic vision of the previous two paradigms, turns the Spenserian gaze on the poet himself. Calidore's scene of desire reprises an originary moment in Spenser's career, the vision of Eliza in The Shepheardes Calender, and the figure of Pastorella fulfills the epic promise Spenser wrote into his own poetic career. Replacing the prophetic visions of the Arthurian and Britomartian paradigms, Spenser's gaze in the latter cantos of Book VI completes instead a poetic lineage whose culmination he had prophesied at the beginning of his poetic career.

Looking at these kinds of pivotal scenes of desire

opens up important new connections among Arthur, Britomart, and Calidore. The origins of erotic desire between these allegorical figures reflects forces bridging the gap between private poetic aspirations and public participation in Tudor history. As they mark convergences of multiple poetic features publicly shared, scenes of desire also mark thresholds across which the poet ultimately writes his personal place in history.

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List of Abbreviations

CL	= <u>Comparative Literature</u>
ELH	= <u>English Literary History</u>
ELN	= <u>English Language Notes</u>
ELR	= <u>English Literary Renaissance</u>
ESC	= <u>English Studies in Criticism</u>
Expl	= <u>Explicator</u>
JEGP	= <u>Journal of English and Germanic Philology</u>
MLN	= <u>Modern Language Notes</u>
MLO	= <u>Modern Language Quarterly</u>
MLR	= <u>Modern Language Review</u>
MP	= <u>Modern Philology</u>
PMLA	= <u>Publications of the Modern Language Association</u>
SEL	= <u>Studies in English Literature</u>
SP	= <u>Studies in Philology</u>
SpN	= <u>Spenser Newsletter</u>
SSt	= <u>Spenser Studies</u>
TSLI	= <u>Texas Studies in Literature and Language</u>
YES	= <u>Yearbook in English Studies</u>

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