

IMPERIALISTIC MYTH AND ICONOGRAPHY IN THE FAERIE QUEENE

IMPERIALISTIC MYTH AND ICONOGRAPHY  
IN BOOKS I AND II OF THE FAERIE QUEENE

By

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#### ABSTRACT

The dissertation describes Tudor imperialism as a central theme in The Faerie Queene. In the poem, Spenser conceives of empire as having a two-fold purpose: the sacred goal of the restoration of the church; and the political goal of the establishment of the universal empire of which the medieval imperialists dreamed. The first is envisaged as an earthly type of the Heavenly Jerusalem perceived by Redcrosse under the guidance of Contemplation, while, politically, England's struggle with Rome provides the basis for that hero's adventures. The second goal is foreshadowed in a prophetic vision at the end of Book IV. Its achievement is equated with the restoration of the ancient heroic civilization of Troy and with England's rule over the American territories supposedly conquered by Arthur. The restoration of this two-fold ideal is attributed to Elizabeth as type of the imperial virgin of the Virgilian prophecy whose advent will bring England peace and plenty. This political goal is adumbrated in the poem by images of the queen's "fruitful virginity", a paradox reflecting the double roles of Astraea as virgin and figure of plenty combined with the analogous roles of Diana and Venus. In order to characterize England's two great political enemies



of the time, Rome and Spain, as obstacles to the queen's providential role, Spenser has turned them into figures of monstrous theological and moral evil who appear as the reverse or antitypes of the sacred empire and the sacred imperial virgin.

To discover the imperialistic meaning of Spenser's allegory, I have compared its mythological and iconographical details to contemporary symbolic expressions of imperialistic propaganda. These in turn derive from a traditional stock of symbolic expressions of imperial concepts. My starting point in Chapter I is the connection between the allegory of Book I and the development of medieval papal-imperial relations which culminated in England in the struggle for supremacy. The description of Lucifera and her palace, the house built on sand, appears as Spenser's main image of papal imperialism from an English point of view. Chapters II-IV expand this reading of the Lucifera episode by a consideration of various iconographic and mythological resources that complicate its satiric effect.

In the second half of the dissertation, I describe those details of the allegory in Books II-IV which reflect a complementary aspect of the concept of the sacred empire, namely the idea of England's potential rule over the seas and of colonial expansion. In Chapter V, I argue that Dee's propaganda for an English navy and for the establishment of

colonies is the impulse underlying Spenser's treatment of chronicle history in Books II-III. In Chapters VI and VII, I discuss details in the episode of Acrasia, the description of Florimell, and the visit to the Cave of Mammon in connection with the projects of the Tudor venturers, particularly Drake's West Indian raid and Raleigh's plans for the Virginia colony and the "Empire" of Guiana.

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# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- Il canzoniere - F. Petrarca, Il canzoniere, a cura di M. Marazzan e N. Vianello (Milano, 1966).
- Cicero, de nat. deor. - M. Tulli Ciceronis de natura deorum, ed. A. S. Pease (Darmstadt, 1968).
- ELH - Journal of English Literary History
- Essential Articles - Essential Articles for the Study of Edmund Spenser, ed. A. C. Hamilton (Hamden, Conn., 1972).
- Isidore, Etym. - Isidori hispalensis episcopi etymologiarum sive originum libri XX (Oxford, 1911).
- Inferno and Purg. - Dante Alighieri, La divina commedia, a cura di S. Barbi (Firenze, n.d.), I. and II.
- JWCI - Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institute
- MLN - Modern Language Notes
- Pauly-Wissowa - Paulys Real-encyclopaedie der classischen Altertumswissenschaften, neue Bearb., Hg. G. Wissowa (Stuttgart, 1894-1963).
- P.L. - J. P. Migne, ed., Patrologiae cursus completus, series latina prior, (Paris, 1857-1903).
- PMLA - Publications of the Modern Language Association of America

Roscher

- W. H. Roscher, Ausführliches Lexikon der griechischen und römischen Mythologie (Leipzig, 1884-90).

Variorum F.Q.

- Edmund Spenser, The Faerie Queene, in The Works of Edmund Spenser: A Variorum Edition, ed. E. Greenlaw, C. G. Osgood, and F. M. Padelford (Baltimore, 1932-45).



## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

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## Chapter One.

### INTRODUCTION: THE SACRED EMPIRE AND THE TUDOR VIRGIN

#### 1. Spenser's Two Concepts of Empire

Spenser announces The Faerie Queene as a song about "Knights and Ladies gentle deeds" (Proem to Book I,1) and not as a poem about the empire, but we can recognize a few hints given at its beginning which suggest such an intention and put the "gentle deeds" in perspective as signs of a superior moral order within a political framework. We note that the poem is dedicated to Elizabeth as "Empress", a title she herself never adopted or claimed. We can therefore assume that Spenser uses the title to draw our attention to his purpose which is to sing the praises of an imperial figure. Two details in the title Spenser gives the queen in his dedication are additional indicators of such a purpose. First, the mentioning of Virginia among the many dominions over which Elizabeth's rule extends refers to the transformation of England into a colonial power. Second, the title "Defender of the Faith" epitomizes the restoration of England's imperial authority in the struggle with Rome over the question of supremacy. These two terms are representative of the fact that two separate concepts of empire have been brought together in Spenser's allegory to

characterize England's victory over the imperialist claims and aspirations of Rome and Spain: the theological and moral concept of the medieval imperialists which he attributes to England while Rome appears as its antithesis, and the more modern concept of colonial expansion. It also influences Spenser's characterization of political ideas put forward by Dee and Raleigh. Dee can be considered the father of the idea of English dominion over the seas and over the shores of North America, while Raleigh initiated two particular colonizing schemes and an imperialistic policy of foreign expansion.

The first concept, namely of England as a "sacred empire", is pervasive throughout the poem, and it also colours Spenser's concept of the colonial policy to be followed by England. It acquires a special lustre by being made part of the providential pattern of sacred history in which England, its ruler, and its heroes appear as the instruments of divine grace and of civilization in general.

Spenser's moral allegory in which England's queen and champions fight on the side of God and virtue is a reflection of the antithesis between the sacred empire and its unholy and ignoble foes. In other words, virtue has for Spenser a political connotation, for its existence is made dependent on that of an ideal political order and vice versa. In order to flourish, it needs the support of God's grace, but, significantly, as transmitted through the

medium of an exemplary and, in fact, sacred ruler whom Spenser identifies moreover with the type of the sacred imperial virgin Astraea and her multiple roles as holy virgin, sacred muse, goddess of the moon (Isis-Diana), and celestial and fruitful Venus.

—In creating his allegory, Spenser has drawn on a traditional stock of symbolic conventions, both English and continental, applicable both to political encomium and satire. On one hand, the images and myths he uses are meant to express England's actual and potential victories in the restoration of an ancient imperial status; on the other, they appear in a reverse sense and as antithetical characteristics of the enemies of England and the sacred imperial virgin. In the introductory chapter, I am going to outline the philosophical tradition on which Spenser's concept of the sacred empire and its antagonist is based. It will form the background to the study of imperialistic myth and iconography, which is the main concern of this thesis, in Chapters II-VII.

Chapters II-IV are devoted to a study of Book I, especially of the unduly neglected *Lucifera* episode, and I shall focus on Spenser's use of significant images and mythological allusions for a portrait of the political perversion of papal imperialism which is conceived as reverse or antitype of England's virgin queen. By organizing the analysis of this episode according to three themes, beginning

with allusions to the dragon and whore of the Apocalypse (Ch. II), we can see how Spenser's images are part of a "polysemous" allegory in Dante's sense. The apocalyptic allusions appear to have provided the basis for a second theme (Ch. III), namely a battle of the heavenly bodies (sun and stars) which is suggested by means of recurring antithetical astronomical images in Book I and, further, in a similar sense in Book VII. The third theme, dealt with in Chapter IV, concerns the national theme of Troy restored through God's providential plan, which also explains why Lucifera is associated with the evil forces of Fortune.

From Chapter V on, the focus will be on Books II-IV and the colonial myth. It appears to have been strongly influenced by the views of Dee and Raleigh. We see this in Chapter V where Spenser's historical or chronicle passages are studied in the light of Dee's antiquarian interests and their imperialistic meaning. This will also involve an attempt to define Arthur's role, for, except as imperial figure and victor over Rome, he seems to be completely divorced from his historical counterpart, a fact not always duly appreciated by Spenser scholars. The chronicle parts will be presented as the thematic complement to the allegories of Guyon, Acrasia, Florimell and Marinell, and the marriage of the rivers. In Chapter VI, I shall provide contemporary analogies for Spenser's episodes of Acrasia's Bower and the Florimell-Marinell story and establish their

imperialistic character in the sense that they reflect England's developing interest in voyages and colonies. The last chapter will be concerned with Guyon's and Belphoebe's adventures and the significance of Spenser's virtue of Temperance within the framework of the colonial myth.

My approach to Spenser is derived in essence from the brilliant and thorough studies of the symbolic expression of political ideas by E. H. Kantorowicz and F. A. Yates.<sup>1</sup> They contributed the basis for my outline of the history of imperialism and imperialist iconography, the explanation of the double aspects of Elizabethan imperialism, and of the imperial virgin role attributed to Queen Elizabeth which I have taken as the sources of inspiration for Spenser's poem. As we shall see, Spenser treats England's political fate typologically, and this makes it unnecessary, in most cases, to seek equivalents to his figures and episodes in particular persons or events of the Elizabethan age. In fact, as we know from the history of Spenser criticism, such identifications are often problematical and usually do not contribute anything to the appreciation of Spenser's allegory. This has been the

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<sup>1</sup>E. H. Kantorowicz, The King's Two Bodies. A Study in Medieval Political Theology (Princeton, N.J., 1957); "Oriens Augusti-Lever du Roi", Dumbarton Oaks Papers, 17 (1963), 119-177; "Dante's 'Two Suns' ", in his Selected Studies (Locust Valley, N.Y., 1965), pp. 325-338. -- F. A. Yates, "Queen Elizabeth as Astraea", JWCI, 10 (1947), 27-82.

reason why in recent years studies of Spenser's political allegory have had a dubious reputation. A new leaf in this respect has been turned by Jane Aptekar in her study of Book V, Icons of Justice, in which she considers Justice in terms of concepts and their iconographic representation,<sup>2</sup> i.e. in its general rather than particular application. I have tried to follow this admirable principle with a few exceptions, which I hope to have justified. My emphasis and starting point has been provided by the Lucifera episode, and I had hoped to conclude with a study of Book II. However, in the course of my investigation, it seemed inevitable also to make a few remarks on features of the other books which, I hope, will appear of sufficient importance to warrant their inclusion in my argument.

2. The Origin of Tudor Imperialism:  
the Question of Supremacy

The emergence of an imperial ideal in England resulted from developments in Henry VIII's reign which led to his break with Rome and eventually to the English Reformation. In order to understand Spenser's allusions to and symbolic expressions of the imperial theme, we must take these origins of English imperialism into account. First of all, I shall describe certain features in the developments

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<sup>2</sup>(New York, 1969).

of the earlier sixteenth century and their influence on Elizabeth's imperial status. Later in this chapter, I shall outline its connection with the medieval history of papal-imperial relations and discuss some details of Spenser's poem which can be considered reflections of the metaphors and formulae which express imperial concepts of sovereignty.

Unlike on the continent, the beginnings of the Reformation in England coincided with a struggle for English political independence from foreign, i.e. papal domination. The controversy was largely expressed by arguments drawn from political philosophy which were confirmed with the additional help of biblical texts. It is in connection with this feature of the English Reformation that the term "empire" began first to appear at about 1530, in pamphlets as well as in acts of state. It made its official appearance in the "Act in Restraint of Appeals" of 1533, where the fact that England had, according to the most ancient authorities, always been an empire, "governed by one supreme head and king, and having the dignity and royal estate of the imperial crown of the same, unto whom a body politic,<sup>3</sup> compact of all sorts and degrees of people, divided in terms and by names of Spirituality and temporalty, be bounden," was made the basis for the rejection of any foreign, i.e. Roman jurisdiction. The imperial status was significantly

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<sup>3</sup>E. H. Kantorowicz, The King's Two Bodies, p.228.



always associated with the crown, not with the individual monarch.<sup>4</sup> Neither Henry VIII nor Elizabeth ever adopted the imperial title. The elevation of the realm to an imperial status did not reflect any political aspirations of the Tudor monarchs for domination outside the realm, but served to define the nature of the English monarchy in opposition to the caesaro-papism of Rome.<sup>5</sup> Neither did the adoption of an imperial status express any absolutistic aspirations, for, although the English kings dealt often rather roughly with their parliaments, they were only too well aware of the importance of a favourably inclined parliament and public opinion for the maintenance of their political power.

In Elizabeth's reign, the words "empire" and "imperial" had essentially the same function and appear in

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<sup>4</sup>"In the phrase 'head and crown' the word Crown served to add something to the purely physical body of the king and to emphasize that more than the king's 'body natural' was meant." The King's Two Bodies, p.341.

<sup>5</sup>Franklin L. Baumer states that "the term 'empire' had a much different connotation in the early sixteenth century than it has today . . . in 1533 'empire' signified simply 'a country of which the sovereign owes no allegiance to any foreign superior', i.e. pope or emperor (N.E.D.)." The Early Tudor Theory of Kingship (New Haven, 1940), p.28, note. An interesting example of this meaning of the term is Dante's definition of monarchy in his De monarchia where he stresses the independence of secular sovereignty from papal supremacy: "Et ergo temporalis monarchia, quam dicunt Imperium, unicus principatus et super omnes in tempore vel in hiis et super hiis que tempore mensurantur." Tutte le opere, a cura di F. Chiappelli (Milano, 1965), pp.729-730.

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important documents which define the allegiance of the ecclesiastic and civic authorities to the crown.<sup>6</sup> In the oath of supremacy in 1559 every clergyman and magistrate was required to swear as follows:

I AB do utterly testify and declare in my conscience that the Queen's Highness is the only supreme Governor of this realm . . . as well in all spiritual and ecclesiastic things or Causes as Temporal, and that no foreign Prince, Person, Prelate, State, or Potentate hath or ought to have any Jurisdiction, Power, Superiority, Preheminence of Authority, Ecclesiastical or Spiritual within this Realm, and therefore do I utterly renounce and forsake all foreign Jurisdictions . . . and do promise that from henceforth I shall bear Faith and True Allegiance to the Queen's Highness . . . and to my power shall assist and defend all jurisdictions . . . granted or belonging to the Queen's Highness, her Heirs and Successors, or united or annexed to the Imperial Crown of this Realm.

The formulation of the concept of supremacy was, in other words, synonymous with that of the empire. Both were political tools to reject the pope's imperialism by means of a status which could equal his.

(a) Constantine and England

The justification for the assumption of the supremacy was also accompanied by a revival of the imperial ideal

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<sup>6</sup>1 Eliz. Cap.I, "Act of Supremacy" (1559) and 1 Eliz. Cap. III, "Act of recognition of the Queen's Highness' title" in which she inherits, among other things, "the imperial and royal estate". G. W. Prothero, ed., Select Statutes (Oxford, 1965), pp.5-6 and 21.

<sup>7</sup>R. E. Head, Royal Supremacy and the Trials of Bishops 1558-1725 (London, 1962), pp.11-12.

represented by the ancient Christian emperors, especially Constantine, who had ruled both church and realm and possessed the power of jurisdiction in ecclesiastical and secular matters.<sup>8</sup> Since the assumption of a quasi-imperial status by the popes was of much younger origin, derived from the false Donation of Constantine at about the ninth century and fully established by the twelfth, anti-papalists defended with great vigour the imperial supremacy by stressing its "antiquity" as against the comparative modernity of papal rule.<sup>9</sup> They never ceased to deny especially the jurisdictional authority assumed by the popes in matters concerning the emperor's government, and they denounced it as a perversion of his spiritual office. They stressed that the imperial or monarchical authority was given directly by God, and that he had endowed it in particular with the jurisdiction in both secular and ecclesiastical matters. This

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<sup>8</sup>For a comparison of Elizabeth and Constantine as patrons of the church see John Foxe's "First Dedication to Queen Elizabeth" in Acts and Monuments, ed. Jos. Pratt (London, 1853-1870), I, 1, vi-ix. In The True Difference betweene christian subiection and unchristian rebellion (1585), Thomas Bilson states that the "Christian Monarks in the primative church guided ecclesiastical matters and persons by their imperial lawes" (p.134) and stresses that this "ministry of law" is given by God only to the prince (p.131). See also E. C. S. Gibson's note in The Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England Explained (London, 1908), p.770, and W. Haller, Foxe's Book of Martyrs and the Elect Nation (London, 1963), p.143.

<sup>9</sup>John Jewel, An Apology of the Church of England, ed. J. E. Booty (Ithaca, N.Y., 1963), pp.17,91,93,114-117.

claim is exemplified by the contents of the "admonition to the simple men deceived by the malicious". It had been appended to the Injunctions of 1559, when the clergy had shown signs of reluctance to take the oath of supremacy. The paper declares the crown's right to spiritual jurisdiction and authority as "of ancient time due to the Imperial crown of this realm, that is, under God, to have sovereignty and rule . . . either ecclesiastical or temporal . . . so as no foreign power shall or ought to have superiority over them" (i.e. the people of England).<sup>10</sup>

(b) Spenser's "Emperor on Tiber's banks"

The allegory of Book I is a reflection of several of these aspects of the development of Tudor imperialism, first of all, of the parallels between the Constantinian empire and England and their opposition to the imperialist aspirations of Rome. The quest of the hero is caused by a

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<sup>10</sup>Gibson, p.765; see also Art. 37 of the Thirty-Nine Articles, "Of Civil Magistrates", which defines supremacy as a monarchical and judicial power in contrast to the authority of the bishop of Rome; further, the contemporary views of this matter in Thomas Rogers, The Catholic Doctrine of the Church of England. An Exposition of the Thirty-Nine Articles (first pt. published 1579, the second 1585), ed. I. I. S. Perowne (Cambridge, 1854), esp. Proposition I, "The King's majesty hath the chief power in this realm of England, and other his dominions" (pp.335-338), Proposition II, "The king's majesty hath the chief government of all estates ecclesiastical and civil" (pp.338-339), Proposition V, "The bishop of Rome hath no jurisdiction in this realm" (pp.346-343). Rogers supports his arguments with quotations from the Scriptures.

conflict between an "ancient" kingdom and the "Emperor" of the West who rules on Tiber's banks. It is obviously against Roman imperialism that Redcrosse is sent under the patronage of Gloriana to restore the rights of Una who is born

Of ancient Kings and Queenes, that had of yore  
Their scepters stretcht from East to Western shore,  
And all the world in their subiection held;  
Till that infernall feend with foule uprore  
Forwasted all their land, and them expeld  
Whom to auenge, she had this Knight compeld.

(I.i.5)

The "infernall feend" is another term for the imperialistic ambitions of the papacy ( the "Emperor of the West") which have given birth to theological perversion, namely Duessa, a type of the Whore of Babylon:

A goodly Lady clad in scarlot red  
Purfled with gold and pearle of rich assay  
And like a Persian mitre on her head  
She wore, with crowns and ouches garnished.

(I.ii.13)

Borne the sole daughter of an Emperour,  
He that the wide West under his rule has,  
And high hath set his throne, where Tiberis doth pas.

(I.ii.22)

Gloriana's support for Una -- both names applied to the queen -- symbolizes the Tudor claim of having restored the ancient imperial authority over the primitive church with the help of their political power which derived from God. The sacredness and theological foundation of Elizabeth's sovereignty are symbolized by the fact that Una's realm is a type of Eden, bathed by the waters of the rivers of paradise (I.viii.

(43), and a type of the Heavenly Jerusalem (at the end of Redcrosse's quest).

Spenser's description of Roman imperialism as rule over the West is an allusion to the fact that Constantine's empire had encompassed also the Roman empire, i.e. Rome as well as England. Spenser mentions this historical commonplace in his chronicle of Arthur (II.x.66). The "forewasting" of the shores of Una's kingdom by the infernal "feend" is on one hand a reference to the usurpation of an imperial title by the medieval popes who usurped thereby Constantine's imperial rights in the West and, on the other hand, a reference to the papal claims concerning Elizabeth's sovereignty and to the Spanish invasions of Ireland in her time which were influenced by papal imperialism.<sup>11</sup>

Spenser's stress on the antiquity of Una's line reflects the arguments of the imperialist party that Rome's claim to an imperial status had no foundation in tradition as did the imperial authority. By attributing just such an antiquity to the House of Holinesse (I.x.3), Spenser

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<sup>11</sup>The term "wide West" over which the Emperor of Tiber banks rules may also allude to the rivalry between England and Spain for the colonies of the New World. As we shall see in the second half of this thesis, this theme forms another aspect of Spenser's treatment of Tudor imperialism. We may note that in Book V Britomart looks to the "West" where her lover Arthegall has been enslaved by the Amazon Radigund (vi.7) who may be a personification of the workings of Spanish imperialism against England's colonies in Ireland as well as in America.

alludes to the belief of the Reformation party that the ancient empire was also the image of the primitive church under its proper authority. Spenser mentions this theme later by reference to the Elizabethan commonplace that the English church did not derive from the corrupt church of Rome but directly from the primitive faith of Joseph of Arimathea (II.x.53). By contrast to the House of Holinesse, Spenser has given the House of Pride a very short-lived appearance. Its brittle foundations inspire little faith in its durability -- although looking "old", the building is "ruinous" -- in contrast to the long duration of Una's royal house and the solid strength of the House of Holinesse which seem to be impervious to the ravages of time. Lucifera's palace is subject to.

### 3. The Administration of Justice: rex imago dei

The second aspect of the Tudor concept of supremacy relevant for The Faerie Queene is the derivation of the imperial authority from God, i.e. from a theological foundation, and its definition as a judicial power or sacred "ministry of law". Since these political ideas are the direct result of the medieval conflict of papal and imperial claims to a judiciary authority, we will briefly survey the main ingredients which went into the making of the so-called divine right of kings before discussing how Spenser incorporates them in his allegory.

By about the twelfth century, the adoption of an imperial status by the popes had become condensed in the formulas in scrinio pectoris and plenitudo potestatis, the first an expression of the judicial power they claimed, the second an expression of their political supremacy which they derived from their title of vicarius Christi. When the adoption of such imperial titles and insignia by the popes had become an established fact,<sup>12</sup> the concept of secular kingship which originally also centered on Christ changed and made room for a new concept of temporal sovereignty which was at first parallel and finally in opposition to the power claimed by the popes. Since the papal title vicarius Christi had come to mean that secular rulers should be dependent on the pope in the manner of vassals of an emperor, they began to develop a theory of kingship which could be used to diminish the papal influence in secular matters. They emphasized therefore that the royal authority derived directly from God rather than from Christ. At the same time, terms like deus in terris, which the pagan Roman emperors had used to define their role, became incorporated into the Christian idea of the sacredness and divine origin of kingship. In the course of this develop-

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<sup>12</sup>E. H. Kantorowicz, Laudes Regiae. A Study in Liturgical Acclamations and Medieval Ruler Worship (Berkeley-Los Angeles, 1958).



ment the borders between the spiritual and political realms became indistinguishable and both church and empire became defined by a combination of political and theological attributes. At about 1150, the terms corpus mysticum (for the church) and sacrum imperium (for the empire) emerged simultaneously, as Kantorowicz has shown.<sup>13</sup>

It is also significant that, directly or indirectly, the Scriptures formed the major basis for the description of the secular authority which gave it a divine and sacred character. Although medieval political philosophers drew on a variety of sources, especially on Roman law and Aristotelian philosophy which exerted their influence by the twelfth century, the most important ones remained until the English Reformation, the speculum regale or history of Old Testament kings,<sup>14</sup> and the Moralia of Gregory the Great.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup>The King's Two Bodies, pp.90-93.

<sup>14</sup>A medieval example appears in Langland's Piers Plowman, "Ac reddestow neuere Regum þow recrayed Mede, Whi þe veniaunce fel on Saul and on his children?" (B-text, Passus III, 257-258). For the Elizabethan age one can find plentiful evidence in the controversial literature on the question of supremacy, e.g. John Bridges, The supremacie of christian princes (London, 1573), p.53, or Thomas Bilson, The True difference, pp.129-131, on the divinely appointed kings of the Old Testament.

<sup>15</sup>Wilhelm Berges, Die Fuerstenspiegel des hohen und spaeten Mittelalters (Monumenta Germaniae Historica, vol. II; Stuttgart, 1938), p.24. For examples from English royal pageants see Sidney Anglo, Spectacle, Pageantry, and Early Tudor Policy (Oxford, 1969).

The most influential work of medieval political philosophy was John of Salisbury's Policraticus. His theory of kingship is put in terms which are practically identical with those later used by sixteenth century propagandists for the supremacy of the English king, including John of Salisbury's formulation of the doctrine of obedience.<sup>16</sup> In addition to the idea of a divinely sanctioned vicariate, he developed the organic metaphor for the state as a "body politic" which became such an influential image for the relationship between kings and their subjects. It lies, for example, behind Henry VIII's designation as "head" of church and realm and Spenser's castle of Alma in Book II. By comparing the king's government to the operations of the physical body, John of Salisbury, paraphrasing the Institutio Traiani, furthered the independence of sovereignty from papal influence by equating it with the operations of

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<sup>16</sup>"For all the power is from the Lord God, and has been with him always, and is forever lasting. The power which the prince has is therefore from God, . . . 'Who therefore resists the ruling power, resists the ordinance of God' [Rom. xiii.2] in whose hands is the authority of conferring power, and when he so desires, of withdrawing it again and diminishing it. For it is not the ruler's own act when his will is turned to cruelty against his subjects, but it is rather the dispensation of God . . . to punish or chasten them." Policraticus, Bk. IV.1; see also Bk. IV.4 for the relationship of the king to divine law. Rom. xiii. 2 appears again in the defenses of the English supremacy in the sixteenth century, e.g. Bilson, pp.502 and 506. See also R. W. and A. J. Carlyle, A History of Medieval Political Theory in the West (Edinburgh-London, 1930), I, 153.

natural law.

The writers after John of Salisbury expanded his equation between law and government and defined sovereignty according to Roman Law which, from the twelfth century on, began to replace the influence of Canon Law in the political sphere. Ancient Roman Law described the function of the emperor as a quasi-religious "ministry of law". Thereby the execution of justice by the prince became comparable to a priestly function,<sup>17</sup> a trend further strengthened by the influence of the Politics of Aristotle for whom justice is the supreme political virtue. In the sixteenth century, definitions of sovereignty as rule of and by law are clearly influenced by late medieval political thought. Its influence extends from St. Thomas Aquinas to Calvin and Hooker among the theological writers, and from Marsilius of Padua to Jean Bodin among political philosophers.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>The King's Two Bodies, pp.91-97. Thomas Bilson defends likewise Elizabeth's supremacy on the basis that the ministry of law is given to the prince by God (p.131).

<sup>18</sup>Bodin defines his concept of the sovereign like his medieval predecessors: "For if justice be the end of law, and the law is the work of the prince, and the prince is the liuely image of almightie God; it must needs follow, that the law of the prince should be framed unto the modell of the law of God." (p.113) -- "Wherefore let this be the first and chiefe marke of a soueraigne prince, to bee of power to give laws." (p.159) The Six Bookes of a Commonweale (1606 translation by R. Knolles), ed. K. D. McRae (Cambridge, Mass., 1962). These ideas are similarly expressed by Bilson, see esp. ch. II, p.131.

(a) Lucifera as Antithesis of Sacred Kingship

On the basis of this background we can see the meaning of Spenser's emphasis on the lack of a divine foundation for sovereignty and a lack of rule by law in his description of Lucifera. She is a portrait of the papacy as the absolute negative of all attributes which constitute true imperial status:

And proud Lucifera men did her call,  
That made her selfe a Queene, and crowned to be,  
Yet rightfull kingdome had she none at all,  
Ne heritage of native soueraintie,  
But did usurpe with wrong and tyrannie  
Upon the scepter which she now did hold:  
Ne ruld her Realmes with lawes, but pollicie.

(I.iv.12)

Whatever authority Lucifera possesses, it is clearly not given by God, but merely usurped, and her tyranny and lawlessness symbolize total corruption which stands in contrast to the sacred ministry of law attributed to her antitype, Queen Elizabeth herself, praised by Spenser as the personification of divine justice on earth in Book V:

Most sacred vertue she of all the rest,  
Resembling God in his imperiall might;  
Whose soueraine power is herein most exprest,  
That both to good and bad he dealeth right,  
And all his workes with Justice hath bedight.  
That powre he also doth to Princes lend,  
And makes them like himself in glorious sight,  
To sit in his owne seate, his cause to end,  
And rule the people right, as he doth recommend.

Dread Souerayne Goddess, that doest highest sit  
 In seate of iudgement, in th'Almighties stead,  
 And with magnificke might and wondrous wit  
 Doest to thy people righteous doome aread,  
 That furthest Nations filles with awfull dread,  
 Pardon the baseness of thy basest thrall,  
 That dare discourse of so diuine a read,  
 As thy great iustice prayed ouer all.

(V, Proem, 10-11)

When Spenser says that Elizabeth's ministry of divine justice has the purpose God's "cause to end", he alludes to the importance of this ideal of sovereignty in the Reformation, where it became the instrument for the defeat of the false authority of Rome. The phrase "furthest nations" implies also the medieval notion of the universal empire whereby the queen appears as the restorer of the peace and moral excellence which papal imperialism had undermined.

Mercilla, as icon of a just ruler, is designed in direct contrast to Lucifera. We see this, for example, in the similarities between their two palaces which have antithetical connotations. When Spenser compares both to the brightness of the sky, he alludes to the conflicting claims of emperors and popes to a heavenly derivation of their respective sovereignties. Mercilla's palace is a "stately" building of "pompous show",

With many towres, and arras mounted hye,  
 And all their tops bright glistering with gold,  
 That seemed to outshine the dimmed skye

(V.ix.21)

-- a description which recalls the fairness of Cleopolis and

its shining tower which is also superior to all earthly cities and only inferior to the Heavenly Jerusalem (I.x.58). As the word "outshine" suggests, the brightness of Mercilla's palace is a more than earthly light, superior to the brightness of the sky. Like the gold on its tops, the radiance of Mercilla's palace suggests genuine values, by contrast to the false glitter of Lucifera's palace:

A stately pallace built of squared bricke,  
Which cunningly was without mortar laid,  
Whose wals were high, but nothing strong, nor thick,  
And golden foile all ouer them displaid,  
That purest skye with brightnesse they dismaid:  
High lifted up were many loftie towres,  
And goodly galleries farre ouer laid,  
Full of faire windowes and delightfull bowres;  
And on the top the Diall told the timely howres.

(I.iv.4)

In this passage the competition of the building with the sky is clearly set in negative terms. The lack of strength in the high-rising walls indicates a lacking foundation for the claims to superior heights, and "dismaid" has a stronger sense than "outshine". It suggests destructiveness and impurity or moral turpitude, by comparison to the purity of the sky against which it is directed.

The description of the two queens on their thrones also reflects the conflicting claims of pope and emperor, as to the divine sanction for their sovereignty. In both passages, Spenser mentions the cloth of state and uses sun and gold images to express the contrast between the two queens. Lucifera appears thereby as a figure of blasphem-

ous pride:

High aboue all a cloth of State was spred,  
 And a rich throne, as bright as sunny day,  
 On which there sat most braue embellished  
 With royall robes and gorgeous array,  
 A mayden Queene that shone as Titans ray,  
 In glistering gold, and peerelesse-pretious stone;  
 Yet her bright blazing beautie did assay  
 To dim the brightnesse of her glorious throne  
 As enuying her selfe, that too exceeding shone.

(I.iv.8)

The reference to Titan immediately produces the impression of blasphemy, for he is analogous to Lucifera's ancient counterpart Lucifer whose fall is the thematic equivalent to the fall of Titan and the titans, all figures of rebellion against the highest divinity. Spenser's reference to Titan prophetically announces the fate the poet expects for papal claims to supreme rule. Their falsity and lack of a foundation is further suggested by the fact that Lucifera lacks significant symbols of a royal icon like scepter, crown or sword, nor is there any indication that she is upheld by divine power as in the description of Mercilla who is the image of true imperial majesty and justice:

Seemed those little Angels did uphold  
 The cloth of state, and on their purpled wings  
 Did beare the pendants, through their nimblesse bold:  
 Besides a thousand more of such, as sings  
 Hymnes to high God, and carols heauenly things,  
 Encompassed the throne, on which she sate:  
 She Angel-like, the heyre of ancient kings  
 And mightie Conquerors, in royall state,  
 Whylest kings and kesars at her feet did them prostrate.

Thus did she sit in souerayne Maiestie,  
 Holding a Scepter in her royall hand,  
 The sacred pledge of peace and clemencie,  
 With which high God had blest her happie land,  
 Maugre so much foes, which did withstand.  
 But at her feet her sword was likewise layde,  
 Whose long rest rusted the bright steely brand;  
 Yet when as foes enforst, or friends sought ayde,  
 She could it sternly draw, that all the world dismayde.

(V.ix.29-30)

The terms "foes" and "Conquerors" refer to the battles which must precede the peace of the universal empire, and "heyre of ancient kings" implies the theme of the restoration of the rightful imperial sovereignty of antiquity. Mercilla, surrounded by angels, reminds us of a medieval painting of the Virgin Mary and appears so as a sacred figure, another personification of the "holy Virgin" invoked in the Proem to Book I, and a sacred image of the just virgin as well, for she is the bringer of divine justice and of peace (the rusted sword). The prostrate kings and "kesars" at her feet suggest a transfer of the homage commonly paid to the pope to Queen Elizabeth. This indicates that we have to see her imperial status as superior to all other earthly authority and as the highest under God. Lucifera appears by contrast as a pitiful figure of presumption and as anti-type of the just virgin, for she rules by "pollicie" and not by law.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>19</sup>Napoleone Orsini, " 'Policy' or the Language of Elizabethan Machiavellism", JWCI, 9 (1946), 122-134.



Spenser's strongest comment on the contrast between Gloriana and Lucifera is that Gloriana is "heauenly borne, and heauen may iustly vaunt" (I.x.59), while Lucifera, as her name says, is born in hell:

Of griesly Pluto she the daughter was  
 And sad Proserpina the Queene of hell;  
 Yet did she thinke her pearelesse worth to pas  
 That parentage, with pride so did she swell,  
 And thundering Ioue, that high in heauen doth dwell,  
 And wield the world, she claymed for her syre,  
 Or if that any else did Ioue excell:  
 For to the highest did she still aspyre,  
 Or if ought higher were then that, did it desyre.

(I.iv.11)

The description of the giant Orgoglio and his fall is an ironic comment on the fate which Lucifera's ambition can expect: "Puft up with emptie wind, and fild with sinfull crime" (I.vii.9), he is transformed into an emptie bladder after his defeat by Arthur (I.viii.24).

(b) Christ's Testimony: the Rock of the Church

Next to the divine right of kings, Christ's testimony regarding the relationship of spiritual and secular rulers was a very effective weapon which the medieval imperialists had wielded against the popes. An example for its continued use in Spenser's time is John Jewel who, like other spokesmen for the defense of Queen Elizabeth's supremacy, was able to avail himself of these arguments developed by his medieval predecessors, notably Dante and Marsilius of Padua. The Apology of the Church of England (1561) is a

strong-worded attack on papal imperialism. In it he uses the argument of the imperial jurisdiction as well as of Christ's own words.<sup>20</sup> He points out that authors like Marsilius had noted that Christ's words suggested the opposite of the pope's interpretation of his vicariate. As Marsilius says, Christ did not allow his apostles any "secular rulership or coercive judicial power".<sup>21</sup>

As in these works, the precedent set by Christ was also quoted in the "Sermon against Wilful Rebellion":

Our Saviour Christ likewise teaching by his doctrine that his kingdom was not of this world, did by his example in fleeing from those that could have made him King, confirm the same, expressly forbidding his Apostles . . . all princely dominion over people and nations; and he and his holy Apostles likewise, namely Peter and Paul, did forbid unto all Ecclesiastical Ministers, dominion over the church of Christ.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup>Ed. J. E. Booty, pp. 75 and 114-120.

<sup>21</sup>The Defender of Peace, tr. Alan Gewirth, published as vol. II of Gewirth's Marsilius of Padua. The Defender of Peace (New York, 1951), 124.

<sup>22</sup>Certain Sermons or Homilies appointed to be read in churches in the time of Queen Elizabeth (Oxford, 1683), p.378. Lucas Cranach's "Passional Christi und Antichristi" treats the same theme in a series of contrasting pictures of the greed and worldly ambition of the pope on one side and of the humility and poverty of Christ and his disciples on the other, see 1472-1553 Lucas Cranach d. Ae. Das gesamte graphische Werk (Muenchen, 1972), pp.555-583. Cranach's series is also interesting because of its influence on English artists. It seems to have provided the model for the image of the pope's fall on a medal made for Queen Elizabeth in 1585, see Roy C. Strong, Portraits of Queen Elizabeth (Oxford, 1963), p.138.

It was very appropriate that the reformers took Christ's words as the basis for their refutation of the papal claims, for the popes justified the adoption of their secular power by means of their title vicarius Christi.

Significant for Spenser's description of Lucifera is that the controversy over the supremacy of the English monarch focused in particular on the metaphor of the rock on which the church was said to have been built. In the Acts and Monuments of John Foxe we find several documents which testify to its importance. In these the pope is accused of having twisted the text of the Bible in order to justify the corruption of his spiritual office. One such example is a letter by the bishops Cuthbert Tunstall and John Stokesley to Cardinal Pole. They summarize the opposing interpretations of this metaphor in regard to the title "supreme head" as follows:

The bishop of Rome hath heretofore many years usurped that name [i.e. supreme head], universally over all the church, under pretense of the gospel of St. Mathew, saying, 'Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church': surely that text many of the most holy and ancient expositors wholly do take to be meant of the faith, then first confessed by the mouth of Peter: upon which faith, confessing Christ to be the son of God, the church is builded.<sup>23</sup>

Another example is Thomas Benet who, in 1533, had been burnt, because he openly scorned the papal bull against Henry VIII.

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<sup>23</sup>Acts and Monuments, V, 1, 90.

As Foxe reports, Benet had also used the metaphor of the rock in his defense. Affirming that "Christ only is the head, and under him the prince of the realm", he rejected the "supremacy of the bishop of Rome" and compared the pope's supporters to those who had built "upon the sands, not upon the rock".<sup>24</sup> In the writings during Elizabeth's reign the rock metaphor appears again and again in connection with the contrasting image of the house built on sand in the defenses of the rival supremacies of pope and queen.<sup>25</sup>

Spenser clearly refers to this political struggle when he describes Lucifera's palace as built on "shifting sand", shaken by "euery breath of heauen" (I.iv.5). The contrast between the worldly and courtly architecture of the building and the biblical metaphor seems to reflect the arguments quoted above that the pope had abandoned his spiritual office and had become a worldly potentate. Thereby he had also ruined the foundations of his authority, as Spenser suggests, when he describes the unstable basis on

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<sup>24</sup> Acts and Monuments, V, 1, 24.

<sup>25</sup> Nicholas Sanders, The rocke of the Church (Louvain, 1567), a Catholic view, and John Bridges, The supremacie of christian princes, for the opposition; see also John Jewel, "Of the Supremacy" in Works, ed. John Ayre (Cambridge, 1845), I, 338, and John Bale, The Pageant of Popes, tr. I. S. ([London], 1574).

which Lucifera's palace stands. The meaning of such details in Spenser's stanza as the high-rising towers, the weak and brittle walls, and the shifting foundations of the palace can be seen as analogous to a passage in John Bale's Pageant of Popes in which Bale rejects the Catholic charge that the English church is built on sand. He assures his Catholic opponents that instead "theyr Babilonical building must . . . come to decaye, being founded on the sande of Tiber banckes which is daylye washed and eaten awaye. How can that foundation stand which is made of earth and claye".<sup>26</sup> Another close analogy to Spenser's stanza is a passage in John Bridges' The supremacie of christian princes. It was directed against the arguments of Stapleton and Sanders, leaders of the exiled English Catholics on the Continent. Bridges alleges that their predictions about the "foolish builder Luc. 14", i.e. the English bishops, are going to be "laughed to scorne" since all the world has begun to see "the ouerthrowe that God hath made of their Nymrods Babilon-icall Toure, and howe the more they labour to repayre the decay thereof, because they buylde not on Jesus Christ the Rocke, but on the sandes of their Fathers traditions . . . their groundworke is rotten, their stuffe is naught, and . . . all their Bulwarks are ouerthrowne spiritu oris eius .

with the spirite of his mouth, that is, with the worde of God."<sup>27</sup> Spenser adopts a similar tone of mockery in the description of the "goodly heape" which "spake the praises of the workmans wit", exemplified by the "weake foundation . . . on a sandie hill, that still did flit, And fall away", shaken by "euery breath of heauen", and by the ruinous "hinder parts" (I.iv.5). Spenser's detail of the sandy hill may further be seen as ironic inversion of Nicholas Sanders' assertion that the Catholic church "never ceased to be a city built upon a hil which can not be hidden" while, in his opinion, there was no visible proof for the existence of the church which Protestants believed in.<sup>28</sup> Spenser seems to echo the theme of the visibility of the Roman church by his use of images which appeal to the reader's sight, but obviously with a contrary purpose.

When Spenser describes the bricks from which Lucifera's palace is built as "squared", they appear to have been meant as ironic contrast to the papal rock, as can be illustrated by comparison to such pictorial representations of the biblical phrase "et super hanc petram" as found in a contemporary emblembook dedicated to the praises

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<sup>27</sup>Bridges, fol. gij<sup>r-v</sup>.

<sup>28</sup>The rocke of the Churche, fol. Hij<sup>v</sup>, cf. this also to the argument of the "July"-Eclogue in The Shepheards Calender.

of Pope Gregory XIII. In Principio Fabrici's Delle allusioni, imprese, et emblemi, the pope's imperialistic and jurisdictional powers are illustrated by showing Gregory's impresa, the dragon, on a square stone, as in the following example:



Fig. 1

There is a marginal comment printed beside this emblem which says that according to Plato the square stone signifies the earth,<sup>29</sup> a statement which justifies the view of the antipapalists that Rome had exchanged a spiritual office for mere temporal and earthly power. Spenser seems to allude to such a meaning when he places a "dial", symbol of the mutability of earthly goods, on the top of the

<sup>29</sup>Delle allusioni. (Roma, 1588), p.98, see also p.97.

structure of "squared bricke" (I.iv.4).

Spenser has extended the allegory of the sandy hill to several of the antagonists whom Redcrosse overcomes. They are thereby linked to the prophecies of the overthrow of papal pride by Bale and Bridges, quoted earlier, which they envisaged as the fall of the Babylonian Tower upon the sands of Tiber or false traditions. Sansfoy, defeated by Redcrosse, falls "like the old ruines of a broken towre" (I.ii.20), and Orgoglio's fall is compared to the collapse of a ruinous castle.<sup>30</sup>

as a Castle reared high and round  
By subtile engins and malitious slight—  
Is undermined from the lowest ground,  
And her foundation forst, and feeble quight,  
At last downe falles, and with her heaped hight  
Her hastie ruine does more heauie make,  
And yields it selfe unto the victours might;  
Such was this Gyaunts fall, that seemd to shake  
The stedfast globe of earth, as it for feare did  
quake.

(I.viii.23)

The fall of the dragon in canto xi is also clothed in the imagery of the rock of St. Peter:

So downe he fell, as an huge rockie clift,  
Whose false foundations waues haue washt away,

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<sup>30</sup>The capitalization of "castle" indicates a special emphasis. It is probably an allusion to Castile as in *F. Q.*, III.iii.49 so that the defeat of Spain becomes linked with the defeat of Rome. The passage possibly alludes to the death of Mary and to Philip II's departure from England which meant, in effect, the defeat of Catholicism in England.



"With dreadfull poyse is from the mayneland rift,  
 "And rolling downe, great Neptune doth dismay;  
 So downe he fell, and like an heaped mountain lay.

(I.xi.54)

The term "heaped mountain" suggests that it is a parallel to the "sandie hill" under Lucifera's castle which Spenser calls also a "goodly heape" similar to the "heaped mountain" in this stanza. The passage is further similar to the description of Babylon's fall in Rev. 18.21, "And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall the great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all."

The phrase that Lucifera's castle is "without mortar laid" (I.iv.4) indicates that lack of faith is the cause of the brittleness of the structure, namely faith in Christ as the rock on which the church is founded. We can find a comparable interpretation in a sermon preached in 1538 before Henry VIII by the Bishop of Lincoln on Christ:

which is, as Peter saith, 'the lively stone which men did reprove, which God did elect for the approved stone, for a corner stone', for the chief stone in the building of his church, for the stone that joineth the walls of the church together, for the stone whereupon the faith of Christ and his church is builded . . . .<sup>31</sup>

In this sermon, the image of the rock is used to describe the

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<sup>31</sup>Acts and Monuments, V, 1, 171.

real foundation and the "mortar" which hold the church together. Spenser's description of Lucifera's castle suggests a direct contrast to this: the rock has disintegrated to sand, and the "mortar", namely Christ or faith, has been replaced by "cunning" (I.iv.12), a parallel to Lucifera's replacement of laws by "policy" (I.iv.12).

#### 4. Aristotle's Influence on the Purpose of Secular Rule

By contrast to the perversion of moral values in Lucifera's court, Spenser attributes their restoration to Gloriana's influence, namely through her patronage over Una's kingdom (the sacred empire) and over Redcrosse. Spenser implies hereby that the empire has taken the place of the church and possesses a moral end independent of the influence of Rome. His allegory reflects the definition of Elizabeth's imperial authority in the documents quoted earlier. The connection of political government with such a moral purpose must be seen as connected with the medieval conflict of the secular ambitions of pope and emperor.

By equating the pope's vicariate of Christ with the rule of the higher part of human nature over the lower, the medieval papalists had challenged the political and judicial authority of the emperor and had tried to subject him to the jurisdiction of the pope. For the imperialists this represented an abuse of the concept of the church as Christ's

mystic body and of the equation between the soul and the spiritual authority which had been developed from Aristotle's notion of the dual nature of man (body and soul) in the De anima, a notion of far-reaching consequences for the history of medieval political thought. It was still current in the Renaissance, as we see, for example, in Ripa's emblem "AUTTORITA o POTESTA" which represents the spiritual authority of the pope, symbolized by the keys of St. Peter, as superior to all other, "perchè la potestà spirituale è la principale . . . quanto è più nobile l'animo del corpo."<sup>32</sup> The same argument also played a key role in the polemic exchanges between Catholic exiles and the English Protestants in Spenser's time.<sup>33</sup> By contrast to such views as Ripa's, the imperialists charged that the popes had only demonstrated that they were unable to wield authority properly and to provide for the well-being of the mystic body of the church.

The moral corruption which had accompanied the popes' assumption of imperial rights, exemplified by such figures as Boniface VIII or the Borgias, had given rise to

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<sup>32</sup> Cesare Ripa, Iconologia (1603), facs. (Hildesheim, 1970), p.36.

<sup>33</sup> Walter Ullmann, Medieval Papalism. The Political Theories of the Medieval Canonists (London, 1949), pp.110-111. Bridges, p.116 and William Allen, An apologie and true declaration (Mounts, 1581), p.43.

a general desire for moral regeneration and for the restoration of the mystic body of the church. This desire found expression also in a political philosophy which, on the basis of Aristotle's Ethics, transferred the care of the mystic body of mankind from the pope to the emperor by defining political government as a means to moral perfection, a goal which was not dependent on any authority of the church. As a consequence, "the term 'mystical body' became applicable to any corpus morale et politicum", as Kantorowicz says.<sup>34</sup>

This development informs, for example, Dante's political thought. In revulsion against the corruption of the papal court, he used the fact that the state had acquired a moral and semi-religious character of its own to develop his theory of the "due soli" and "due strade" (Purg. xvi, 107) which gives the empire independence from papal domination.<sup>35</sup> Dante's idea of the prince as source of

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<sup>34</sup>The King's Two Bodies, p.210.

<sup>35</sup>Dante elaborates the idea in the De monarchia: "Et cum omnis natura ad ultimum quendam finem ordinetur, consequitur ut hominis duplex finis existat: ut, sicut inter omnia entia solus incorruptibilitatem et corruptibilitatem participat, sic solus inter omnia entia in duo ultima ordinetur, quorum alterum sit finis eius, prout corruptibilis, alterum vero, prout incorruptibilis." The former is to be achieved through the "imperator", the latter through the "summus pontifex" (III.xvi.6, Tutte le opere, p.785).

social and moral order became in the sequence prevalent in political philosophy. Men no longer looked to the church for spiritual leadership or moral regeneration but to the political rulers instead. E. H. Kantorowicz has summarized this as the result of Aristotle's influence:

A new halo descended from the works of Aristotle upon the corporate organization of human society, a halo of morals and ethics different from that of the ecclesiological corpus mysticum, yet by no means incompatible with it; in fact, corpus mysticum and corpus morale et politicum became almost interchangeable notions.<sup>36</sup>

This philosophy of the state played a significant part in the development which led to England's break with Rome, formulated as a controversy over the question who held the supremacy on earth. As we see from the earlier quoted example of Thomas Becket's definition of the king's rule as a government under Christ, the adoption of an imperial status and of the supremacy by Henry VIII through the title "head" of the church proceeded from the assumption that England was equivalent to Christ's corpus mysticum. The title, "supreme head in earth of the church of England, called 'Anglicana Ecclesia'", set down in the Act of Supremacy, represents in fact a transfer of the spiritual role of the pope as vicarius Christi to the English king who,

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<sup>36</sup>The King's Two Bodies, p.211.

in his imperial function, was also imago dei.<sup>37</sup> Henry's inclusion of the Catholic church in the quasi-mystical body of the English state implied further that the church of Rome had lost its spiritual character and represented merely a body politic. As we see from a letter written to Henry VIII by Cardinal Pole, the papal party was clearly aware of these implications of Henry's actions.<sup>38</sup> They were, however, sanctioned by English tradition, for John Fortescue, in his influential fifteenth century treatise, De laudibus

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<sup>37</sup>One can see this quite well from the title page of the 1538 Cranmer Bible which shows Henry VIII in the upper margin, enthroned directly under God, handing a Bible to Cromwell (right) and Cranmer (left) who pass the book to nobility and clergy respectively. At the bottom of the page a preacher is preaching a sermon on 1 Tim. 2.1-2, surrounded by people shouting Vivat Rex (Kantorowicz, Laudes Regiae, p.253). The title page of the Miles Coverdale Bible was more modest. It shows only the sun with the Tetragrammaton in the upper margin, while the king is seated at the bottom of the page, holding the Bible and sword of justice -- an image of the divinely supported kingship which expresses itself in a ministry of justice in the secular and ecclesiastic realms. (H. J. Hillerbrand, The Reformation in Its Own Words (London, 1964), pp.336-337). Queen Elizabeth, more diplomatic than her father, had herself represented on a throne in the centre of the title page of the 1569 Bishop's Bible, with no deity overhead, but she is surrounded by the four Cardinal Virtues, two of which are holding a crown over her head -- suggestive of an image of the queen as "holy imperial virgin". The congregation of the faithful under her throne indicates that she is supported by the church rather than that she dominates it (Strong, Portraits, pp.120 and 122).

<sup>38</sup>Quoted in The King's Two Bodies, p.229.

legum Angliae, already defined the kingdom as a "body mystical" ruled by "one man's head" as well as by "laws"; a definition he based on the authority of both St. Augustine and Aristotle.<sup>39</sup>

Because of the quasi-theological character of the ruler's authority, obedience to the prince became the same as obedience to God and consequently any attempt to persuade subjects to disloyalty or rebellion turned disobedience into sin. The papal policies and polemics against the English monarchs could therefore be painted in the blackest colours. They were not only represented as attempts to undermine the moral end of the body politic, but as the attempt to divert men from their proper relationship to God. By such dealings, the Protestants charged, the popes showed that instead of furthering the common good they were only intent on furthering their own ends and were thus the opposite of true sovereigns, namely tyrants.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>39</sup>Ed. S. B. Grimes (Cambridge, 1949), ch. XIII, p.31. For the medieval origins of the idea see The King's Two Bodies, p.208; further, Berges, pp.154-156; for an example from the Elizabethan age, Bilson, passim.

<sup>40</sup>See, for example, the Act of 1536 which declares the authority of the bishop of Rome invalid on these grounds (Hillerbrand, pp.333-334), or Jewel who enumerates the perversions in the political realms of Europe caused by the popes (Apology, pt. IV); further, Bale's denunciation of the popes' usurpation of power (The Pageant of Popes, passim).

the worst name for political corruption which the Renaissance could bestow. The English queen was by contrast depicted as the embodiment of all political and moral virtue and as patron of right religion, visibly supported by divine providence:

Englande euer since that, through the Queenes most excellent maiestie, it hath enioyed the libertie of Gods most holy worde, hath mauger all your spites, reioyced withall, both tranquillitie, wealth, peace, freedome, and aboue all things, the fauour of God in Christ euen for that it hath escaped the spiritual bondage of your pope.<sup>41</sup>

These notions account for Spenser's framework of chivalry, for the loyalty of Gloriana's champions is a reflection of the philosophy of political obedience, while Duessa's attempt to destroy the hero's loyalty to his lady is an allusion to the subversive papal propaganda. We see this in the fact that Duessa is tried as traitor and rebel before Mercilla, a figure of sacred imperial and divine justice. One associates Duessa, of course, commonly with Mary Stuart, but the trial is set in such general terms that she can be seen as well in more general terms. Her plots, as described in the following stanza, can be compared to the above quoted passage on the outcome of the pope's wicked policies:

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<sup>41</sup>Bridges, p.20; see also F. A. Yates, "Astraea", esp. pp.57 and 74; E. C. Wilson, p.223, note, for bibliographical references; William Cecil, The Execution of Justice in England, ed. R. M. Kingdon (Ithaca, N.Y., 1965), pp.7 and 25.



But through high heauens grace, which fauour not  
 The wicked driftes of trayterous desynes,  
 Gainst loiall Princes, all this cursed plot,  
 Ere prooffe it tooke, discouered was betymes,  
 And th'actours won the meede meet for their crymes.

(V.ix.42)

In stanza 48 of the same canto we hear allusions to the popish plots during Elizabeth's reign which resulted in the rebellions in the North and Ireland, in the Jesuit infiltration, and in the plots to murder the queen, among which Mary Stuart's was only the most serious one:

Then brought he forth, with griesly grim aspect,  
 Abhorred Murder, who with bloudie knyfe  
 Yet dropping fresh in hand did her detect,  
 And there with guiltie bloudshed charged ryfe:  
 Then brought he forth Sedition, breeding stryfe  
 In troublous wits, and mutinous uprore:  
 Then brought he forth Incontinence of lyfe,  
 Euen foule Adulterie her face before,  
 And lewd Impietie, that her accused sore.

Since Duessa's incontinence is, in Book I, the allegorical expression of the perverted Catholic religion, it seems too limited to restrict Spenser's passage in Book V to one historical figure. If he alludes to Mary Stuart, he takes her rather as a general type than as the equivalent to the historical figure. She seems to represent the sum of all the tools which the papacy used to undermine Elizabeth's sovereignty. Duessa's accusers are, therefore, personifications of the constituting elements of imperial authority: Authority, Law of Nations, Religion, and Justice (V.ix.44).

(a) Redcrosse's Moral Quest: renovatio  
of the Sacred Empire

Since the purpose of imperial rule was moral perfection, Spenser represents the personifications of papal power as its enemies, while Gloriana's champions, as restorers of virtues, exemplify the medieval notion of the renovatio of the spiritual and moral order identified with the empire. This is, for example, the ideological basis for the fate of Redcrosse in Book I: the ascendancy of Duessa, a figure of corrupt religion, and of Lucifera, a figure of political corruption, over Redcrosse's soul and body symbolizes the fate of the individual as well as of the mystic corporation or the empire as a whole. Spenser places Redcrosse's dilemma in terms of the Choice of Hercules so that his choice of false religion appears as an unheroic act:

Young knight, what euer that dost armes professe,  
And through long labours hunttest after fame,  
Beware of fraud, beware of ficklenesse,  
In choice, and change of thy deare loued Dame,  
Least thou of her beleue too lightly blame,  
And rash misweening doe thy hart remoue:  
For unto knight there is no greater shame,  
Then lightnesse and inconstancie in loue;  
That doth this Redcrosse knights ensample plainly  
proue.

Who after that he had faire Una lorne,  
Through light misdeeming of her loialtie,  
And false Duessa in her sted had borne,  
Called Fidess', and so supposd to bee;  
Long with her traueild.

(I.iv.1-2)

Redcrosse's disloyalty to Una implies that he has given up

his allegiance to England as well as to right religion, for Una represents both the church and the sacred imperial virgin ( as we shall see in the following chapter), and loyalty to her is equated with a chivalric context in which love is the spur to virtue and fame. In Redcrosse's quest, the psychomachia, the battle against sin by the miles Christi, endowed with the proverbial Pauline armour, is therefore not separated from heroic or political warfare, for the ideal which he temporarily abandons is the active life in the service of Gloriana and Una which is moreover equated with life under the guidance of grace.

An example for the renovatio of virtue and of the moral power of the empire is Arthur's support of the individual heroes in the poem. He represents both the queen's magnanimity and God's grace which come to the aid of the individual, for example, Redcrosse in Book I. By freeing him from the oppression by Orgoglio, made of "earthly slime" and sinful corruption (I.vii.9), Arthur frees Redcrosse's soul both from its subjection to the passions and to papal religion which had separated him from Una and Gloriana. As St. George or georgos (geos -- earth or flesh) , Redcrosse is not only representative of human nature but of the earthly part of the empire which, by Orgoglio's oppression, becomes severed from its soul so that Redcrosse, after his return, looks like a corpse (I.viii.41) until he is restored to Una and to grace (in the House of Holinesse).

(b) Caelia and the House of Holinesse as Complements  
to Gloriana and Cleopolis

The peculiar mixture of theological and political qualities in the English concept of the state prevented a development exemplified by Dante's thought, in which the goals of empire and church could become separated, and this is reflected in Spenser's combination of the House of Holinesse with Cleopolis. As the hermit points out, the path to perfection does not lead from the House of Holinesse to the Heavenly Jerusalem, but through Gloriana's court to the Heavenly City (I.x.59-60). The heroic life which Cleopolis inspires and "eternizes" in its "book of fame" is a component of the way to salvation, and the immortality of its rewards a part of the immortality which awaits Redcrosse at the end of his earthly labours. By placing the description of Cleopolis and its "soueraigne" in the context of the House of Holinesse, Spenser represents the English empire in its character as a spiritual and political body combined in a mystic union with its ruler who is the image of God and the source of grace. The mystic concept of the empire, in which the ruler represents the soul, may also be the reason for Gloriana's invisibility in the poem. Spenser indicates the influence of the "soul" of the empire on individual perfection by the fact that each quest for the restoration of virtue begins in Gloriana's court and ends in it.

The theme of renovatio is also exemplified by Redcrosse's stay in the House of Holinesse. Caelia and her daughters are the theological equivalent to the queen's imperial status personified by Gloriana in its worldly aspect. Caelia's name suggests that she is of the same origin as Gloriana who is "heavenly borne" (I.x.59). Together they symbolize the sacredness and divine origin of the queen's authority. By making Caelia a mother figure, Spenser alludes to the common view of Elizabeth as "mother" of the church. His description hints as well at the fact that Elizabeth did not directly interfere in the administration of religious matters, just as Caelia leaves the instruction of Redcrosse to her daughters. They in turn can also be considered personifications of Elizabeth's attributes. The nursing roles of Fidelia and Speranza are a complement to the mother role, and Charissa's fruitful virginity to the role of virgin and mother attributed to Elizabeth:

The 'mother' concept of Elizabeth was early encouraged by Isaiah 49:23 -- 'For kynges shalbe thy nursyng fathers, and queenes shalbe thy nursyng mothers.' Dozens of times this scriptural figure was turned to glorify Elizabeth. It fused prettily with her conceit that she was the virgin mother of her<sup>42</sup> people joined in holy wedlock to their state.

One could say that Spenser has divided these roles between

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<sup>42</sup>Wilson, pp.217-218.

Caelia and her daughters, as means of expressing the richness and fruitfulness of the effect of the queen's virtue on the moral condition of the individual and the body politic.

(c) Mercilla and Charissa: Justice and Mercy

Since justice, combined with mercy, was the attribute of the emperor as imago dei and vicarius Christi, Spenser seems to show its effects both with regard to Elizabeth's church government and to the government of the political realm. In Book I, Charissa, traditionally Charity, one of the three theological virtues, is by Spenser identified with mercy, both through the seven beadmen and through her handmaid Mercie (I.x.34). In Book V, Mercilla symbolizes the political effects of Elizabeth's justice, while her name itself alludes to its theological basis. If seen in relation to the moral end attributed to the empire, Charissa seems to be concerned with the effects of divine justice on the members of Christ's mystic body, while Mercilla shows its effects on the enemies of the sacred empire.<sup>43</sup> Such an interpretation is borne out by Spenser's own comment on Mercilla's role: "Those Nations farre thy iustice doe adore, But thine owne people doe thy mercy prayse much more"(V.x.3).

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<sup>43</sup>Wilson, p.216, on Elizabeth as merciful queen.

Charissa and Mercilla can be further seen as reflections of the double aspects of the queen's authority represented by the House of Holinesse and Cleopolis and, in addition, of the two specific attributes Piety and Virtue which Spenser gives Elizabeth in his dedication. They derive from pietas and virtu, two of the four imperial virtues attributed to the Roman emperors, as F. A. Yates has noted.<sup>44</sup> Further, John E. Hankins mentions in his discussion of the influence of Piccolomini on Spenser that Piccolomini introduced piety as a theological parallel to justice in the sense of "virtue" into the Aristotelian scheme.<sup>45</sup> This may be reflected in Spenser's choice of Piety and Virtue for his characterization of Elizabeth's imperial status with its peculiar mixture of theological and judicial authority and for his emphasis on mercy in his description of the House of Holinesse and on the sacredness of Mercilla's justice in Book V.

(d) Duessa and Lucifera as Antitypes of the Imperial Virgin

Since the mystic concept of the state was often expressed in the metaphor of a marriage between body and

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<sup>44</sup>"Astraea", p.62.

<sup>45</sup>Source and Meaning in Spenser's Allegory (Oxford, 1971), p.4; also Isidore, Etym., IX.3, "Regiae virtutes praecipue duae, iustitia et pietas."

soul, it could be regarded as an analogy to the marriage of Christ and his bride.<sup>46</sup> Redcrosse, in his role as destined bridegroom of Una, and Arthur in search of Gloriana symbolize the idea of the renovatio as England's search for such a marriage to its political and heavenly bride, the empress and true religion. Duessa's attempts to woo Redcrosse from his loyalty to Una and to offer herself as bride-substitute symbolize the attempts of perverse doctrine to woo Elizabeth's subjects from their proper allegiance. Spenser expresses this by associating Duessa and Lucifera with perverse images of the imperial virgin and bride of Christ and the empire. Lucifera is a sterile virgin and antithesis to the fruitful virginity of Astraea. Her

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<sup>46</sup>Kantorowicz, The King's Two Bodies, ch. V.2, "Corpus Reipublicam mysticum", pp.207-232. Two authors from whose works he quotes are particularly relevant here. In both cases the quotations are from their commentaries on Justinian's Code. The first is Cynus of Pistoia: "Et bona est comparatio illius corporalis matrimonii ad istud intellectuale: quia sicut maritus defensor uxoris dicitur . . . , ita et Imperator Reipublicae"(p.213, note 56); the other is the famous medieval jurist Lucas de Penna: "Inter principem et rempublicam matrimonium morale contrahitur et politicum. Item, sicut inter ecclesiam et praelatum matrimonium spirituale contrahitur et divinum . . . , ita inter principem et rempublicam matrimonium temporale contrahitur et terrenum"(p.214, note 60), and, by the same author, "item, sicut vir est caput uxoris, uxor vero corpus viri . . . , ita princeps caput reipublicae, et res publica eius corpus" (p.216, note 66), and similarly, "sicut membra spirituali corpori spiritualiter coniunguntur, cui corpori Christus est caput . . . , sic moraliter et politice homines coniunguntur reipublicae quae corpus est: cuius caput est princeps"(p.216, note 67).



sterility reflects her egotistic isolation, her pride, tyranny, and lawlessness. Duessa claims to be a virgin and poses as bride-manqué, "a virgin widow" (I.ii.24). She is both sterile in the sense that she lacks the fruits of spiritual perfection, and therefore lacks a proper bridegroom, and fruitful in the sense that she has perverted the marriage of church and Christ into whoredom, the effects of which appear in the "fruitfull-headed beast" given her by Orgoglio (I.viii.20). In addition, the she-monster of canto 1, who breeds a thousand young ones (st.15), can be interpreted as a parody of the Queen's theological role as mother and fruitful virgin represented by Caelia and Charissa.

To express his imperialistic convictions, Spenser has created images which give a moral and idealized character to the political history of his time with the purpose of persuading his readers -- notably the queen and her courtiers -- to identify themselves with the virtues and actions of the ideal types by which they are represented. His double strategy of praise for the ideal types and of the opposite for their antitypes is typical of the belief of Renaissance poets that the power of rhetoric could influence social and political conditions and become, ideally, an instrument for the creation of civilization. His emphasis on images and symbolic means of expression is part of this strategy. It reflects the importance

attributed to the visual symbol by neoplatonic philosophers who considered it superior to the word as a means to the perception of truth or knowledge.<sup>47</sup> This must be borne in mind when, in the following, I shall discuss examples of the wealth of symbolic expressions which Spenser uses for the description of the types and antitypes of the sacred empire. Images are, so to speak, the poet's instruments by which he himself participates in the renovatio imperii.

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<sup>47</sup>E. H. Gombrich, "Icones Symbolicae. The Visual Image in Neoplatonic Thought", JWCI, 11 (1948), 163-192.

## Chapter Two

### THE DRAGON AND THE WHORE

#### 1. The Book of Revelation and Antipapal Satire

The judicial and moral arguments for the assumption of the supremacy by the English monarch had been combined with an application of the prophecies of the Book of Revelation to contemporary history. The various beasts usurping and dominating the earth together with the Whore of Babylon offered a theological foundation for the charge that the imperial title and privileges adopted by the pope had not only perverted the spiritual authority of Christ's vicar but also the moral authority expected from him as a type of a secular prince.

This use of the Book of Revelation had apparently a long history, for Calvin points out that already St. Gregory had equated the attempt of the bishop of Byzantium to assert supremacy over his fellow bishops with the usurpation of the church by Antichrist.<sup>1</sup> In the late Middle Ages, authors frequently compared the increasing

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<sup>1</sup>Institution de la religion chrétienne, 5.7.4, in Ioanni Calvini opera, ed. W. Baum, E. Kunitz, E. Reuss (Braunschweig, 1866), IV. See also Emile Mâle, L'art religieux de la fin du moyen âge en France (Paris, 1925), ch. IV, pp.439-456.

secularization of the church and the corruption of secular rulers to the themes of the Book of Revelation. Langland's Piers Plowman ends with the coming of Antichrist as the crowning touch to his anticlerical and social satire. Dante shows in the Divine Comedy the usurpation of the church by the seven-headed beast and the Whore of Babylon as the transformation of Christ's triumphal chariot,<sup>2</sup> a motif which is similar to Spenser's treatment of the corrupt papacy as a pageant of sins (I.iv.16-36) and as the giant Orgoglio's placing Duessa on a type of the apocalyptic dragon (I.vii.16-18). They are parallels to Dante's dragon, hag, and lustful giant -- the usurpers of Christ's chariot.

## 2. Contemporary Sources for Spenser

J. W. Bennett has surveyed the late sixteenth century examples of the motif of the coming of Antichrist, and she selects in particular the four apocalyptic emblems in Jan Van der Noodt's Theatre (1569) as possible source for Spenser.<sup>3</sup> The topical application of the Book of Revelation had, however, acquired the quality of a commonplace in Spenser's time, for it appeared everywhere in the

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<sup>2</sup>Purg., xxxii.

<sup>3</sup>The Evolution of The Faerie Queene (New York, 1960), ch. IX, pp.111-112.

writings of the Reformation, on the continent, for example, in Luther's forewords to the prophecies of Daniel and John, and in England in Bale's two works, The Image of Both Churches<sup>4</sup> and The Pageant of Popes,<sup>5</sup> in Bullinger's A Hundred Sermons upon the Apocalips,<sup>6</sup> in Foxe's Acts and Monuments,<sup>7</sup> and in Jewel's Apology.<sup>8</sup> These works show that the sixteenth century possessed a rich tradition of the use of images of the Apocalypse, combined with the figures of Antichrist and Lucifer, in order to attack the pope. This general tradition rather than one single

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<sup>4</sup>In Selected Works, ed. H. Christmas (Cambridge, 1849). In it Bale goes so far as to suggest that all a Christian needs to know is contained in the Book of Revelation.

<sup>5</sup>Tr. I. S. (London, 1574).

<sup>6</sup>References are to the edition of 1561.

<sup>7</sup>See I, 1, "To The True and Faithful Congregation of Christ's Universal Church" (p.XIX) and "The Third Question Propounded": "The description of this second beast being well viewed, it cannot be avoided, but needs must be applied to the bishop of Rome . . . Who speaketh with the voice of the dragon so proudly as he? . . . And doth not this false-horned lamb, speaking in the same voice as the dragon, say by the mouth of pope Gregory VII, 'That all kingdoms of the earth were his, and that he had power in earth to loose, and take away empires, kingdoms . . . etc.?' (p.XXXI).

<sup>8</sup>Jewel lists a number of writers who had predicted the coming of Antichrist, Apology, pp.71-74.

source must be considered in connection with Spenser's treatment of the antagonists of England in Book I,<sup>9</sup> and in the following I shall illustrate Spenser's treatment of Una, Duessa, Lucifera, and the dragon-like monsters by analogies from contemporary texts.

### 3. Foxe's Letter "C"

One of the most significant contemporary representations of the queen which shows a combination of imperialistic and apocalyptic aspects analogous to those of her types and antitypes in Spenser's Book I is her woodcut portrait in the initial letter "C". It appeared in a prominent place in Foxe's Acts and Monuments, in Dee's Arte of Navigation, and in Gabriel Harvey's Gratulationem Valdinensium.<sup>10</sup>

The portrait shows the queen, sitting in state with crown, orb, and sword of justice (the insignia of her royal power), while above her the letter "C", borne up by

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<sup>9</sup>The frequent comparisons between the pope and Antichrist in the sixteenth century are discussed by Pontien Polman, L'élément historique dans la controverse religieuse du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle (Gembloux, 1932), pp.174-177. See further, J. W. Bennett, in ch. IX of The Evolution of The Faerie Queene, Frank Kermode in chs. I and II of his Shakespeare, Spenser, and Donne (London, 1971), and John Hankins, "Spenser and the Revelation of St. John" (1945), repr. in Essential Articles, pp.40-57.

<sup>10</sup>Strong, pp.119 and 121.

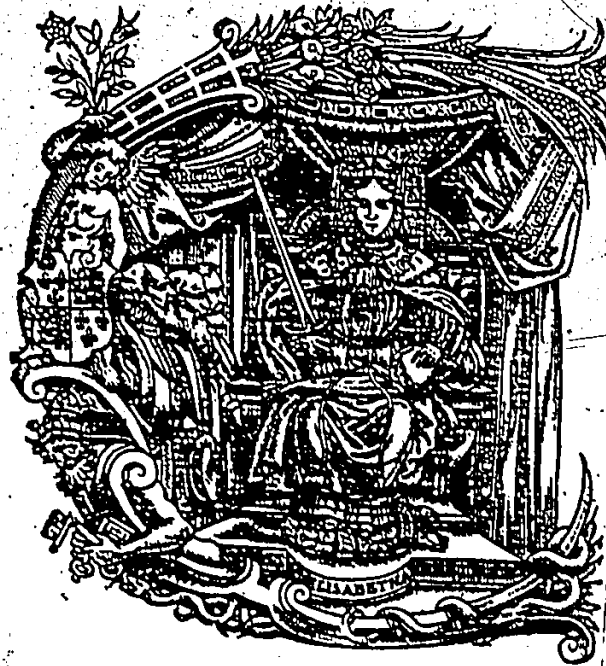


Fig. 2

a cherub, forms a cornucopia. It grows out of the heraldic roses of the Tudors and their coat of arms which seem to be supported by the three estates on the left of the throne. This upper part of the portrait symbolizes the peace and plenty which resulted from the union of the houses of Lancaster and York, a common theme in the praises of Elizabeth and her house. We see this in contemporary portraits,<sup>11</sup> pageantry (e.g. her reception at Kenilworth in 1575), and plays like Histrion-Mastix in which Peace, Bacchus, Ceres, and Plenty enter at one door bearing a

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<sup>11</sup>Strong, p.81; a painting showing the allegory of the Protestant succession.

cornucopia, and, while Poverty sneaks out at the other, Peace praises Astraea (Elizabeth) for her virginity and justice.<sup>12</sup> Foxe's cornucopia is, by analogy, another symbol for the queen's role as Ceres-Astraea or imperial virgin and for the restoration of a golden age of right religion.

The combination of the roles of Ceres and Astraea for the just virgin was commonly expressed by the paradox of the queen's "fruitful virginity", a term of great significance for her types in The Faerie Queene. The origin of such a role is the zodiacal sign virgo associated with August. By her connection with the harvest month, she was sometimes depicted with an ear of corn or a cornucopia, i.e. as Ceres, and, by her proximity to the sign libra, she became associated with the just virgin Astraea, as F. A. Yates has noted. Yates has further described her various affiliations with Venus, Fortune, and the moon goddess, and these will be considered in the following chapters as they appear also in Spenser's allegory. Yates sums up the description of Astraea: "The just virgin is thus a complex character, fertile and barren at the same time; orderly and righteous, yet tinged with oriental moon extasies."<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>Yates, "Astraea", p.57; the article also provided the details for what follows.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p.30.



Another important development during the Middle Ages was that the messianic prophecy of Virgil's fourth eclogue, "Iam redit et virgo", became associated not only with the virgin Astraea, "returning to earth in the new golden age of empire, but the Virgin Mary, Mother of God and Queen of Heaven, whose appearance with her divine Son ushers in the Christian era."<sup>14</sup> These virgin-figures became symbols for the renovatio imperii of which Dante and Cola di Rienzo dreamed, and in the sixteenth century they were identified with Queen Elizabeth. She was celebrated as Ceres-Astraea, as we saw above, and as type of Virgin Mary who had given birth to the church and to the gospel.<sup>15</sup>

The lower half of Foxe's portrait symbolizes this theological aspect of the queen's imperial role and its connection with the Apocalypse as well. The letter "C" runs out in a crescent under the queen's throne, a reflection of the connection of Astraea with the moon goddess, and under the queen's feet we see a prostrate figure of the pope whose lower parts dissolve into coiled serpents. They recall on one hand the prophecy of Genesis 3.14 that the virgin shall bruise the serpent's head and, on the

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<sup>14</sup>Yates, p.57.

<sup>15</sup>Strong, p.85, and Wilkins, p.218.

other, the enmity between the dragon of the Apocalypse and the woman clothed with sun, stars, and the moon (Rev. 12.1-3). The importance of the moon as personal symbol of the Tudor virgin is probably the reason that Foxe does not show the sun and stars of the apocalyptic woman who, according to Hankins, could be variously identified with "the Virgin Mary, the mother of Christ, and as the church, the bride of Christ" or as "the bride of Canticles".<sup>16</sup> Bale, for example, identifies her specifically with the church declaring "the glory of Christ's kingdom".<sup>17</sup> These meanings can also be applied to Foxe's portrait of the queen as holy virgin and empress. Its political and theological implications can be further illustrated by the fact that the initial was used both for "Constantine" (in the 1563 edition of the Acts and Monuments) and for "Christ" (in all editions from 1570 on).<sup>18</sup> Foxe's letter reflects thus the identity of church and empire and their restoration by Elizabeth.

#### 4. Una as Sacred Imperial Virgin

In his characterization of Una, Spenser combines,

<sup>16</sup>Spenser and the Revelation of St. John", p.46.

<sup>17</sup>The Image of Both Churches, p.426.

<sup>18</sup>See I, 1, "The Prefaces", pp.vi\* and vi.

like Foxe, apocalyptic allusions with references to the restoration of church and empire. Una's descent from ancient kings and her claim to the possession of an ancient kingdom, stretching from East to West (I.i.5), a type of Eden (I.vii.43), suggest an analogy to the ancient empire of Constantine which embodied in it the church or mystical body of Christ, as I mentioned in the previous chapter. In addition, Spenser has made Una's fate analogous to that of the apocalyptic woman threatened by the dragon. The fact, that Una is, like her, driven into the wilderness and is defended by martial heroes can be compared to the common identification of the apocalyptic woman with the "spouse of Christ . . . who was understood to represent the church militant on earth."<sup>19</sup> Una is the destined bride of Redcrosse and is described by sun-imagery (I.i.4 and I. xii.23), like the apocalyptic woman; furthermore, her major opponent seems to be the huge dragon of canto xi. Her defender, Redcrosse, combines the roles of St. George and the Archangel Michael of the Apocalypse. Bennett comments on this that "if Spenser did not find St. George already identified with the dragon slayer of Revelation, he was certainly familiar with interpretations which pointed

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<sup>19</sup>The Evolution of The Faerie Queene, p.109.

in that direction."<sup>20</sup> Hankins, who has discussed Una's typological role as bride of Christ, sums up very aptly the topical significance of this figure as type of the church:

This coincides with the usual interpretation of Una as the Church of England, as opposed to the false Church of Rome; more particularly, Una represents Elizabeth in her capacity as head of the church. Furthermore, the bride is identified with the Virgin Mary, who also represents the church, a fact which accounts for the stress laid on Una's virginity and which fits in well with England's love for the Virgin Queen.<sup>21</sup>

We should, however, not overlook that Spenser has linked Una's virginity also to that of Astraea. In two passages in canto xii, Una is first compared to Diana (st.7) and second to a Maylady (st.22). Since Astraea could be identified with the moon goddess, Spenser's reference to Diana establishes an analogy between Una and the imperial virgin.<sup>22</sup> Astraea symbolized moreover the Spring of the

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<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p.110. Donald C. Baker, discussing the "Angel" coin, remarks on the image of St. Michael, slaying a dragon on its obverse side, "St. Michael, of course, is traditionally only second to St. George in significance to the English, and, both being dragon slayers, the two were often confused in popular tradition. As a matter of fact, St. George did later take St. Michael's place as England's dragon-slaying emblem on the coinage, e.g. Henry VIII's 'St. George Noble'." ("The 'Angel' of English Renaissance Literature", Studies in the Renaissance, 6 (1959), 87).

<sup>21</sup>"Spenser and the Revelation of St. John", p.47.

<sup>22</sup>Cf. Barnfield's Cynthia, as quoted by Yates, p.60.

golden age, as Yates has pointed out. She mentions the example of John Davies' Hymnes of Astraea where she is called "May of Maiestie" and Flora, "Empresse of Flowers",<sup>23</sup> which is similar to Spenser's description of Una, "So faire and fresh, as freshest flowre in May"(st.22). The combination of apocalyptic and imperial themes in the description of Una is characteristic for the political thought of Spenser's time, as Kermode has said:

The myth of the queen as Astraeon empress is inseparable from the use of apocalyptic figures with historical significations, and itself involves a strong sense that the whole history of the Empire from Aeneas to Constantine, from Charlemagne<sup>24</sup> to Elizabeth, culminated in the present moment.

The antagonists of the apocalyptic woman, whore and dragon, are alluded to in Spenser's description of Lucifera, Duesse, and the various monsters. Their characteristics can be taken as reflections of contemporary views of the papacy and of papal religion.

#### - 5. Rome's Worldly Vanity

Spenser's description of Lucifera's court with its excess of brightness -- "Her glorious glitterand light does all mens eyes amaze"(I.iv.16) and "So proud she shyned in

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., p.64.

<sup>24</sup>Shakespeare, Spenser, Donne, p.19.

her Princely state"(iv.10) -- can be compared to a passage by Bale. He identifies the pope and Roman clergy with the beast coming out of the sea, for the names of blasphemy written on its forehead "are none other than the proud glittering titles, where with they garnish their usurped authority to make them more glorious to the world."<sup>25</sup>

Taking the name of Lucifera as Spenser's figure of the worldly vanity of the papal court as a clue, we see that it reflects the popular argument that Rome's pomp and pride were the distinct signs of Lucifer and Antichrist:

And therefore, sithence the Bishop of Rome will nowadays so be called [i.e. highest bishop] and challengeth unto himself an authority that is none of his, besides that he does give unto himself, as it is written by his own companion Gregory, a presumptuous, a profane, a sacrilegious, and an Antichristian name; that he is also the king of pride; that he is Lucifer, which preferreth himself before his brethren; that he hath forsaken the faith, and is the forerunner of Antichrist.<sup>26</sup>

This passage is similar to Spenser's description of Lucifera with its emphasis on her pride or self-love, on her sacrilegious ambition to "aspyre" even higher than heaven, and on her usurped title (I.iv.10-12).

Spenser further describes the profanation of the church through images of "endlesse riches" and sumptuous

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<sup>25</sup>The Image of Both Churches, p.422.

<sup>26</sup>Jewel, Apology, p.26.

show which surpass that of "Persia selfe"(I.iv.7) in the Lucifera episode, and through the description of Duessa, apparelled with "gold and pearle of rich assay" and a "Persian mitre" garnished with "crowns and ouches", who rides on a horse decked with "tinsel trappings" and "golden bells and bosses braue"(I.ii.13). These are terms very similar to Jewels' who said of the Roman clergy, "What be they else at this present in the Pope's kingdom but worldly princes, but dukes and earls, gorgeously accompanied with bands of men . . . oftentimes also gaily arrayed with chains and collars of gold?"<sup>27</sup> That Spenser's images have an application to Rome's imperialist presumption can also be seen from this passage of Jewels' where similar images appear:

He calleth himself by the name of the head of the Church, the highest bishop, . . . alone most holy; . . . by usurping he took upon himself the right and authority over other folk's churches; . . . exempted from the power of civil government . . . maintained wars, set princes together at variance; . . . sitting in his chair, with his triple crown full of labels with sumptuous and Persian-like gorgeousness, with his royal scepter, with his diadem of gold and glittering stones, . . . carried about not upon a palfrey, but upon the shoulders of noblemen.<sup>28</sup>

These images are influenced by the imagery used for the

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<sup>27</sup>Ibid., p.114.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., p.219.

description of the Whore of Babylon in the Apocalypse. Decked gorgeously with pearls and precious stones, and dressed in scarlet, she is the "great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth" (Rev. 17.4 and 18). As such she could easily be identified with Rome, as Spenser seems to do when he describes Duessa as lady dressed in "scarlot red", gold, and pearls (I.ii.13) and as Orgoglio's lover, dressed in "gold and purple pall" (I.vii.16), an allusion to the papal pallium.

The references to Persia in Spenser's and Jewel's texts reflect the contemporary identification of Rome with the "luxury, gorgeousness, and voluptuousness" of that country,<sup>29</sup> and therefore with a pagan court. Similar allegations were made by others. Bale, e.g. compares both Mahomet and the pope to the beast of Revelation,<sup>30</sup> and the Babylonian whore to the "hypocritical church, seated on popes, prelates" etc.<sup>31</sup> In extension of these references to Rome's paganism, Spenser makes the enemies of Gloriana's champions Sarazens. It reflects the common equation between the pope and the infidels in Reformation literature, whereby

<sup>29</sup>S. Chew, The Crescent and the Rose (New York, 1965), pp.234-236.

<sup>30</sup>The Image of Both Churches, p.426.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., p.497.



England's struggle with Rome could be glorified as another crusade.<sup>32</sup>

#### 6. Rome's Perversion of Doctrine

The perversion of the faith which Rome was charged with was frequently represented by images of sexual perversion and drunkenness, i.e. of the Whore of Babylon as type of Circe and luxuria. This role is especially represented by Duessa, but, by extension also by the many other lecherous or unchaste figures in the poem. Duessa rides against Arthur armed with a golden cup "replete with magicke arts" which is the cause of spiritual decay:

Death and despayre did many thereof sup,  
And secret poyson through their inner parts,  
Th'eternall bale of heaule wounded harts.

(I.viii.14)

In Bullinger's Hundred Sermons similar images are applied to Rome. Commenting on Rome's "outward deckyng . . . with worldly furniture", he adds, "This whore moreover drynketh to all nations of the cup of Circes, whiche the Lorde

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<sup>32</sup>Hankins, Source and Meaning, p.211, discusses this element in Spenser's allegory and suggests that Elizabethan politics offered a parallel to the crusades and to a struggle for the liberation of Jerusalem from the pagans. Spenser's paynims and "Sarazens", which are the enemies of Gloriana's champions, are a reflection of this theme. At some points, he seems specifically to allude to the struggle with Spain, as in Book I (xi.7) and Book V (viii.18-44), where the "Souldan" represents the Spanish king.

calleth Golde. And it signifieth doctrine."<sup>33</sup> Bullinger further compares the Catholic religion to the "abominations and filthie lust" of Babylon who "hath with her evill and venemouse doctrine seduced and infected all nations."<sup>34</sup>

Duessa's Circe-role can be illustrated by the episode of Fradubio's encounter with Redcrosse. We learn that Fradubio has been seduced by her magic arts and false charms and, after recognizing her beastliness, he has been transformed into a tree (I.ii.35-43), a story which foreshadows also Redcrosse's similar fate. Duessa is like the Whore of Babylon who comes to "commit fornication" with the kings of the earth (Revel. 17.2), for she has many "lovers" (I.ii.13) whom she has seduced in the same manner as in the case of Fradubio, while her real paramours are Sansfoy, i.e. corrupt doctrine, a giant and Sarazen (I.ii.12 and 17), and Orgoglio, a personification of pride, who makes Duessa his "Leman" and "his deare" (I.vii.15-16).

If we take Dante's episode of the hag and lustful giant in the Purgatorio as a parallel to Orgoglio's love-affair, we may regard him as a personification of the Spanish and French monarchies which helped the corrupt papacy acquire its imperial status, exemplified by his

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<sup>33</sup>Bullinger, pp.510-511.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., p.512. See also Douglas D. Waters, Duessa as Theological Satire (Columbia, Miss., 1970).

giving Duessa "purple pall" and "triple crown" (I.vii.16). The monstrous beast and its seven heads (I.vii.18) can be compared to the apocalyptic dragon and to the seven mountains on which the Whore of Babylon sits. The latter could, moreover, be equated with the seven hills on which Rome was built. Spenser's description of Orgoglio's palace as a pagan temple where daily Christians are sacrificed (I.viii.36) establishes an analogy between the effects of papal religion and the Whore of Babylon, "drunken mad with the blood of saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus" (Rev. 17.6), a passage which is also reflected in the description of Duessa's beast: "bloudie mouthed with late cruell feast" (I.viii.6). The lines which speak of the traces of Orgoglio's activities as "late cruell feast" and "ashes . . . strewed new" (I.viii.35) may in particular hint at Foxe's major theme, the Protestant martyrs under Mary Tudor's reign. They may further allude to the martyrs of the Spanish Inquisition and of the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre, and, finally, they may be compared to Bale's general charge that Rome was daily creating new martyrs from among those who had returned to the ancient doctrine.<sup>35</sup> Spenser also suggests a connection between the spiritual and political character of the papacy when he says that

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<sup>35</sup>Pageant of Popes, fol. Biiii<sup>r</sup>; see also Jewel, Apology, pp.49 and 54; Cecil, Execution of Justice, p.21.

the martyrs in Orgoglio's castle are the victims of "cruell malice and strong tyranny" (I.viii.36) which can be illustrated by a similar statement in the "Sermon Against Wilful Rebellion":

after his ambition entered, and this challenge once made by the bishop of Rome, he became at once the spoiler and destroyer both of the Church, which is the Kingdom of our Saviour Christ, and of the Christian Empire, and all Christian kingdoms, as an universal tyrant over all.<sup>36</sup>

By making Duessa the companion of two figures of pride and ambition (Lucifera and Orgoglio), Spenser indicates that for him the origin of the corruption of Catholic doctrine lies in Rome's usurped worldly power, and the allusions to the Apocalypse create the impression that it represents an attack on the entire moral and natural order established by God.

#### 7. Rome's Hypocrisy

Apart from describing Rome's spiritual whoredom by allusions to the scarlet woman of Babylon, Spenser also associates it with images of beastliness and fraud which seem to be connected with the apocalyptic beasts, but whose iconographical character seems to have been influenced by more contemporary sources. The first of these animals is the female monster of canto 1, half

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<sup>36</sup>In Certain Sermons, p.378.

woman, half serpent (st.14), which shares only the huge tail with the apocalyptic dragon. Its double character, a parallel to Duessa's, is obviously a symbol of the duplicity and hypocrisy of the Catholic church. An analogy to her may be Dante's monster Geryon,<sup>37</sup> which is probably the source for Ariosto's description of Fraud in the Orlando Furioso (canto xiv,87), and which Cartari mentions in his description of an emblem of Fraud. Interestingly, Cartari also offers an explanation for the connection between female-head and serpent body, for which there is no basis in Dante's passage. According to Cartari, it derives from a picture by Apelles which signifies,

che la natura de gli huomini ingannatori & fraudulenti è dimostrarsi nell'aspetto, & in parole benigni, piaceuoli, e modesti, ma di essere altrimenti in fatti, sì che tutte le loro opere alla fine si mostrano piene di mortifero veleno.<sup>38</sup>

This interpretation also applies to Fradubio's experience

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<sup>37</sup> «Ecco la fiera con la coda aguzza,  
che passa i monti, e rompe i muri e l'armi;  
ecco colei che tutto 'l mondo appuzza!»  
Si cominciò lo mio duca a parlarmi;  
e accennolle che venisse a proda  
vicino al fin de' passeggiati marmi.  
E quella sozza imagine di froda  
sen venne, e arrivò la testa e 'l busto,  
ma 'n su la riva non trasse la coda.  
La faccia sua era faccia d'uom giusto,  
tanto benigna avea di fuor la pelle,  
e d'un serpente tutto l'altro fusto.  
(Inferno, xvii,1-2)

<sup>38</sup> Imagini delli dei de gl'antichi (1647), facs.  
(Graz, Austria, 1963), p.246.

with Duessa, for the "faire" lady he enjoys at first turns into a foul witch with "neather parts misshapen monstrous" (I.ii.41), and Arthur finally strips her of her purple robe and reveals her as a "loathly hag" whose body ends in animal parts, a fox-tail, an eagle's claw, and a bear's paw (I.viii.46-47). The three may be a parody on the Machiavellian character of the papacy which combined fraud with force.

#### 8. The Tudor Dragon

J. E. Hankins and J. W. Bennett have noted that the dragons in Book I, especially the one in canto xi, have -- with the exception of their huge tail -- no resemblance to either the apocalyptic dragon or, as Bennett says, to the dragon of the St. George legend.<sup>39</sup> Instead they may have been designed as antitypes to the emblematic Tudor dragon. It derived from the two dragons mentioned by Geoffrey of Monmouth and reflected the motif of Arthur's return, which was an important aspect of Tudor imperialism.

Geoffrey introduces the first dragon in Merlin's prophecy which announces that the Red Dragon (the people of Britain) will be overrun by the White Dragon (the Saxons).

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<sup>39</sup>Hankins, Source and Meaning, p.110; Bennett, Evolution, pp.108-109.

The second dragon was the one which appeared at Aurelius' death as a fiery ball and "spread out in the shape of a dragon."<sup>40</sup> It was identified with Uther who, from then on, always carried a golden dragon with him into his battles. It became the occasion for Uther's new name, Pendragon or dragon's head, which, according to Geoffrey, signified that Uther and his offspring were destined to hold the kingship over Britain. Spenser seems to associate Redcrosse's saviour Arthur with these mythical dragons so that his appearance in the poem suggests both the victory of the British people over the pagans and the victory of Elizabeth's dynastic line over its foreign enemies. Spenser's description of Arthur -- the dragon covering his helmet as well as his body -- suggests that Arthur himself represents the qualities of the mythical dragons:

His haughtie helmet, horrid all with gold,  
 Both glorious brightnesse, and great terrour bred;  
 For all the crest a Dragon did enfold  
 With greedie pawes, and ouer all did spread  
 His golden wings; his dreadfull hideous hed  
 Close couched on the beuer, seem'd to throw  
 From flaming mouth bright sparkles fierie red  
 That suddaine horror to faint harts did show;  
 And scaly tayle was stretcht adowne his backe full  
 low.

(I.vii.31)

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<sup>40</sup>The History of the Kings of Britain, tr. L. Thorpe  
 (London, 1971), p.177.

We note the emphasis on the long tail and the threatening aspect of Arthur's dragon, two characteristics which we also see attributed to the monsters in cantos i, vii, and xi. This seems to be a reflection of Spenser's general strategy to depict the enemies of right religion and of virtue also as antithesis to England's ruling house. By association with Apollo (Christ as sol iustitiae), the images of shining brightness and of fire become in Arthur's case representative of divine grace and the light of true faith combined with the royal power of the Tudors. By contrast, the fire and light imagery applied to the monstrous dragons in cantos vii and xi is given negative connotations by Spenser's allusions to the apocalyptic dragon.

The defeat of Duessa's dragon by Arthur can be related to the historical fact that the Tudor dragon, after having been eclipsed during Mary Tudor's reign by the Spanish eagle, had been restored to the Tudor coat of arms by Elizabeth. The negative types of the dragons in Book I seem thus to represent an adaptation of the dragons of the Apocalypse and of St. George to the purposes of the imperial myth. On one hand, they form a contrast to Arthur's dragon, and on the other, they represent the image of a particular pope, as we shall see next.



### 9. The Dragon Emblem of Pope Gregory XIII

Gregory XIII (1572-1585), although a much better representative of his office than some of his predecessors, was an energetic promoter of the Counter-Reformation and had particularly attracted the hatred of the English for his acquiescence in the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre and for his support of the Irish rebels and Jesuit missionaries.<sup>41</sup> Since Foxe had charged that the dragon of the Apocalypse had been brought into the church by Pope Gregory VII in the eleventh century, and similar allegations had been made by others, the adoption of a dragon emblem by a contemporary pope who called himself Gregory must have added fuel to the flames of imperialistic propaganda and cannot have failed to have influenced Spenser's dragon portraits.

Particularly illuminating for several pictorial details of Spenser's dragons or serpentine monsters in Book I is a comparison to several emblems of the papal dragon in Principio Fabrici's emblembook, Delle allusioni, imprese, et emblemi, which was devoted to the praises of Pope Gregory XIII. The comparison creates the impression that Spenser's imagery represents satiric or ironic versions

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<sup>41</sup>See Cecil, Execution of Justice, pp. 6-7, on the dangers of the Jesuit infiltration.

of specific formulae or concepts which describe the papal authority.

(a) In scrinio pectoris and F. Q., I.i.20

The first analogy concerns Fabrioi's illustration of the formula in scrinio pectoris and Spenser's description of the female monster in canto i. Spenser may have



Fig. 3

given this emblem a satiric treatment when he describes the effects of Redcrosse's attempt to strangle her:

Therewith she spewd out of her filthie maw  
 A floud of poyson horrible and blacke,  
 Full of great lumps of flesh and gobbets raw,  
 Which stunk so vildly, that it forst him slacke  
 His grasping hold, and from her turning backe:  
 Her vomit full of bookees and papers was,  
 With loathly frogs and toades, which eyes did  
 lacke,

And creeping sought a way in the weedy grass:  
Her filthy parbreake all the place defiled has.

(I.i.20)

Fabrizi's emblem is among those praising the pope for his sapientia and for the fact that he holds all wisdom in moral and dogmatic matters in the shrine of his chest, "Con cui de' vitij gli' aspri error correggi", which, as Fabrizio indicates by a note in the margin, is the equivalent to the judicial authority of a prince.<sup>42</sup> By associating this idea with filth and vomit, Spenser reflects the view commonly held of this formula by his countrymen, e.g. Jewel: "All men see now well and well again what good stuff is in that chest of the bishop of Rome's bosom."<sup>43</sup> He refers to the fact that the pope had made the formula the basis for the exertion of quasi-imperial rights, and this went clearly beyond the right to admonish and teach, as far as the antipapalists were concerned:

pastors may teach, exhort, reprove, not force,  
command, or reuenge: only princes be gouernors that  
is publick magistrates to prescribe by their lawes  
and punish with the sword such as resist them  
within their dominions, which Bishops may not  
do . . . .

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<sup>42</sup>Delle allusioni, p.176.

<sup>43</sup>Apology, p.81.

<sup>44</sup>Bilson, p.127.

The papers which Spenser's monster is vomiting forth may also be a reference to the fraudulent Donation of Constantine, for this was the document on which the popes based their imperial title and the authority to send bulls against the emperor and other princes. If Fabrici equates the papal actions with sapientia, Spenser names them Error and associates them with "toads and frogs which eyes did lacke", namely with blindness and ignorance. The poisonous flood of books may also be an allusion to the activities of the Jesuits which Cecil, for instance, describes in comparable terms:

but in diuers corners of Her Majesty's dominions  
these seminaries . . . and Jesuits . . . have as  
tillage men labored secretly to persuade the  
people to allow of the Pope's . . . bulls and  
warrants . . . whereby in process of small time,  
if this wicked and dangerous . . . course had  
not been by God's goodness espyed and stayed,  
there had followed imminent danger of horrible  
uproars in the realms . . . they might have  
presumed . . . by open<sup>45</sup> civil war to have come to  
their wicked purposes.

Redcrosse's strangling of the monster may be an expression of what Cecil calls the "staying" of the influence of the pope's bulls and warrants in England.

This reading of the monster may also cast some light on the two epic similes in stanzas 21 and 23 which are

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<sup>45</sup>See note 41.

linked to Rederosse's encounter with the monster. By comparing its vomit to "ugly monstrous shapes" bred from Nilus' mud, Spenser identifies Rome with the monsters of heresy like "Mahomet" which were associated with that part of the world and to whom the pope was frequently compared in the Reformation.<sup>46</sup> The comparison of the vomit to a "cloud of cumbrous gnattes" molesting a shepherd (st.23) alludes to the difficulties which papal influence had caused the English church and its head or shepherd. By describing the activities of the "gnattes" as "feeble stings", Spenser suggests the ease with which England's shepherd apparently disposed of the papal threats.

(b) Papal Prudence and F. Q., I.iv.10

Spenser's description of Lucifera also possibly contains an ironic allusion to the false wisdom of the pope:

So proud she shyned in her Princely state,  
Looking to heauen; for earth she did disdayne,  
And sitting high; for lowly she did hate:  
Lo underneath her scornfull feete was layne  
A dreadfull Dragon with an hideous trayne,  
And in her hand she held a mirrhour bright,

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<sup>46</sup>"Long time we haue bene seruants and in bondage,  
seruing the pope in Egypt . . .", The lamentacion of  
England (n.p., [1558]), p.5; also Haller, pp.170-171.

Wherein her face she often vewed fayne,  
 And in her selfe-lou'd semblance tooke delight;  
 For she was wondrous faire, as any liuing wight.

(I.iv.10)

In this description (the woman seated on a dragon, holding a mirror) we recognize iconographical details which have obviously negative connotations, but they could also be used in a contrasting sense, as we see from Fabrici's emblem of papal prudence. Fabrici has used the serpent as symbol of Prudence, as we find it, for instance, in



Fig. 4

Ripa's Iconology,<sup>47</sup> and transformed it into the emblematic papal dragon. The mirror was commonly a symbol of self-

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<sup>47</sup>Iconologia, p.416.

knowledge as basis of prudence and also, by contrast, the symbol of self-love attributed to Venus or luxuria.<sup>48</sup> Prudence was also often a female figure, because of her association with Minerva, goddess of sapience, e.g. in Ripa's two emblems, "Governo della Republica" and "Ragione", which show that this virtue applied in particular to the prince.<sup>49</sup> Spenser clearly uses the serpent and the mirror in the opposite sense of Fabrioi in order to show a parallel between the perversions of reason and government in Lucifera's court. Her character is that of a "bad" Venus with a mirror of self-love, and as such she has affinities with the Whore of Babylon and is the opposite of a figure of prudence. The monstrous dragon seems like a type of that in the Book of Revelation and shows thus what the papal dragon emblem really signifies.

The passage has, however, an even more likely basis in the topical application of Psalm 91.13, "Thou shalt go upon the adder and the cockatrice, and shalt tread the lion and dragon under thy feet." Jewel quotes this verse and mentions that the popes had used it to

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<sup>48</sup>S. Chew, The Virtues Reconciled (Toronto, 1947), p.14; Ripa, pp.416-417.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid., pp.194 and 425.

justify the deposition of princes, e.g. that of the Emperor Frederic II. He adds that "such an example of scorning and condemning a prince's majesty" was "never before that time . . . heard of."<sup>50</sup> The same identification between the dragon and the emperor seems to be the point of Spenser's portrait of Lucifera, but at the same time he evokes its antithesis, namely Foxe's portrait of Elizabeth as imperial virgin in which the dragon underfoot is the pope. Through such contrasting analogies, Lucifera must appear specifically as the antitype of the English queen.

(c) The Dragon of Canto xi and Pope Gregory XIII

The defeat of the dragon in canto xi can be read as a symbolic defeat of Pope Gregory XIII, namely a defeat of his emblem. This appears from several allusions which point to a topical significance of Redcrosse's victory. One of these is Redcrosse's first view of the dragon, stretched out in the sun on a great hill (st.4). This may be a reference to the pope's favourite summer resort in Frascati which he had named Mondragone (mons draconis). The seemingly good-natured welcome the dragon offers Redcrosse may be derived from the popular pun on the pope's family name Boncompagni or "buon compagno",

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<sup>50</sup> Apology, p.62; W. Haller, p.155.



which the pope himself apparently was very fond of.<sup>51</sup> Spenser, however, has given it a grotesque character, for it is combined with the dragon's approaching Redcrosse for battle, "often bounding on the brused gras, As for great loyance of his newcome guest"(st.15). The alliteration may allude to the pope's name, while the last phrase can be taken as ironic paraphrase of the pope's proverbial hospitality and enjoyment of company, his being a "buon compagno" to his guests.

By means of negative imperialistic symbols, Spenser hints at the pope's support of military ventures against England. The dragon, armed "all with brassen scales . . . Like plated coat of Steele" (I.xi.9), is characterized by the similes of the eagle and the ship:

His flaggy wings when forth he did display,  
Were like two sayles, in which the hollow wynd  
Is gathered full, and worketh speedy way:  
And eke the pennons, that did his pineons bynd,  
Were like mayne-yards, with flying canuas lynd,  
With which whenas him list the ayre to beat,  
And there by force unwonted passage find,  
The cloudes before him fled for terroure great,  
And all the heauens stood still amazed with his  
threat.

(I.xi.10)

The eagle, the heraldic image of the Habsburgs, symbolizes

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<sup>51</sup>Ludwig von Pastor, The History of the Popes, tr. from German, ed. R. F. Kerr (London, 1952), XIX, 15 and 570.

the usurpation of the imperial authority by the pope, and the "brassen scales" of this monster, half ship, half eagle, allude to the idea of the Church Militant; however, in the same critical sense as Guicciardini's remarks that the popes used it as basis for attacks on other Christians rather than on the infidels.<sup>52</sup> The ship image represents the well-known metaphor of the ship of the church or state. Fabrioi, for example, presents such an emblem as emblem of the universal church.



Fig. 5

According to Fabrioi, this is an adaptation of the parable of Mark 6.47-51, Christ's calming the waves which threatened the ship of the apostles. He interprets the

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<sup>52</sup>A suitable translation of Guicciardini's work appeared in England in Spenser's own time, a sure sign for its popularity: *The Historie of Guicciardin*, tr. out of French by Geffray Fenton (London, 1579).

storm as the schismatics and heretics who are being put down by the papal dragon as representative of Christ.<sup>53</sup> Spenser's description of the dragon-like ship of the Catholic church which bears down on Redcrosse is clearly intended to destroy the impression that the papal dragon has anything to do with Christ. By his introduction of this negative image, he may well have invoked the contrasting identification of Queen Elizabeth with the ship of Christendom, as it is prominently displayed on the front-page of Dee's Arte of Navigation, where Elizabeth sits at its helm, supported by divine power (Fig. 6). The Archangel Michael in this picture, attacking what is presumably a fleet of enemy ships, can be compared to Redcrosse who, like the archangel, bears a red cross in his shield and wields a "burning blade" (I.xi.35) against the ship of the pope. The ironic point of Spenser's passage can be illustrated by Bullinger's remarks on Rome's persecution of the Protestants:

Whereupon the Romish haue a trew saying that Peters ship may with billowes and waues of tempestuous stormes be overwhelmed but can neuer be drowned, which saying is doubtlesse most true, although

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<sup>53</sup>Delle allusioni, p.96.

thei themselves sayle not therein. . . .<sup>54</sup>

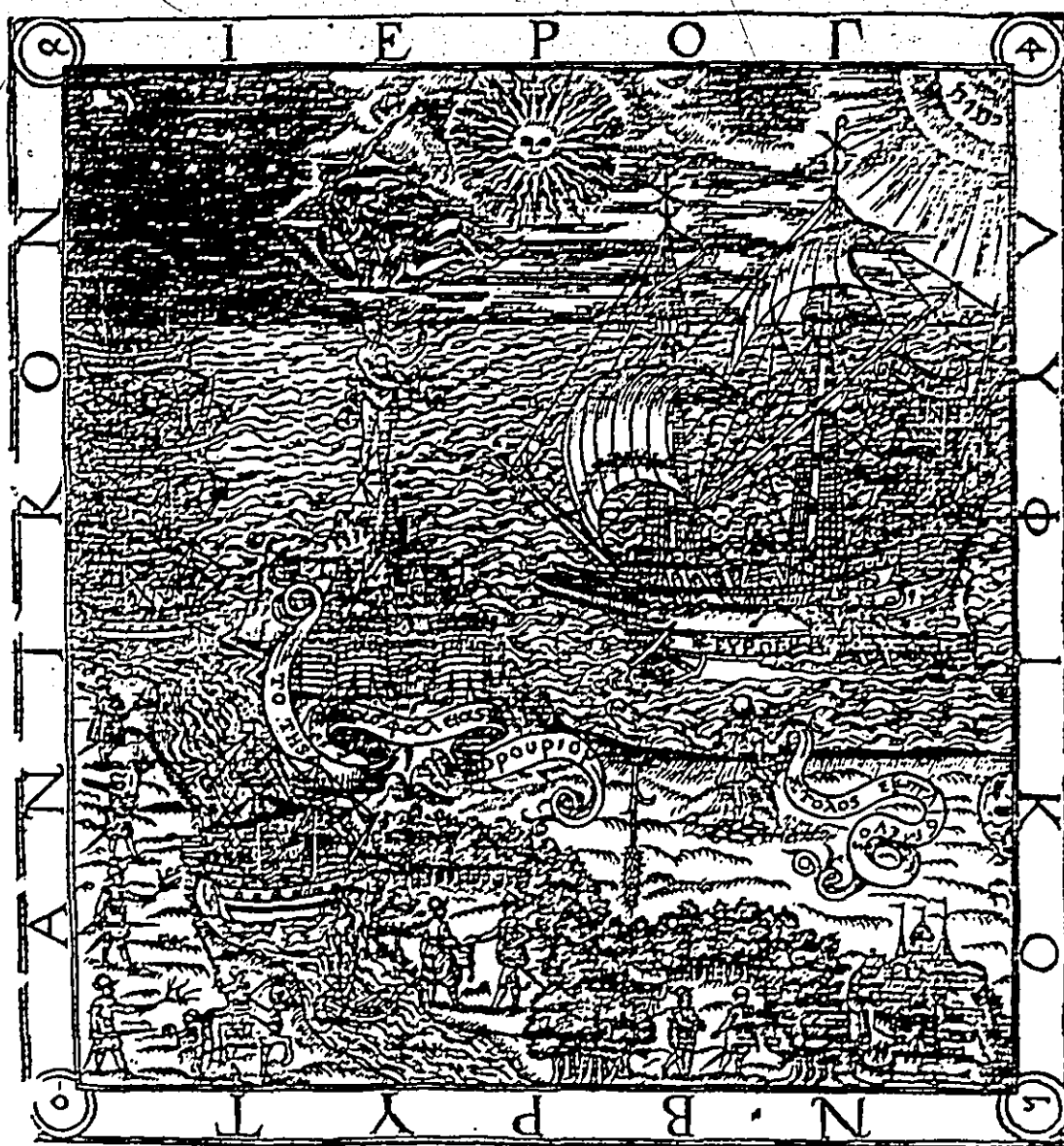


Fig. 6

Spenser seems to imply likewise that the papal claim to sail in St. Peter's ship signifies quite the opposite from

<sup>54</sup> A Hundred Sermons, fol. Aii<sup>r</sup>.

the meaning given to it by the Catholics when he concludes that its threatening display "amazes" the "heavens".

The dragon's two stings (I.xi.38) have been interpreted by Carol V. Kaske as symbols of concupiscence, analogous to such common descriptions of the effects of concupiscence as the sting of a scorpion (Peter Martyr) or St. Paul's "thorn in the flesh".<sup>55</sup> She reads canto xi typologically and sees Redcrosse both as Everyman and Christ acting out the stages of "Heilsgeschichte". To this one must add that for Spenser types of Everyman and Christ are equally types of England, while the papal manoeuvres are treated as the equivalent to sin in the sense that they are directed against a ruler who claimed to be the image of God on earth and the head of Christ's mystic body. This particular detail of the stings can, therefore, also be read as an allusion to the pope's superbia and political ambition.

Considering that Spenser often uses images which apply both negatively and positively to a moral sense, there is a passage in Waleys' Ovide moralisé which would seem particularly suited to his satire on the Catholic church. In the passage, the two horns of Cippus as symbols

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<sup>55</sup>"The Dragon's Spark and Sting and the Structure of Red Cross's Dragon Fight: The Faerie Queene, I.xi-xii", (1969), repr. in Essential Articles, pp.425-446.

of superbia or the desire to rule are contrasted to the two horns of Moses which signify "fortitudo et virtutem ad hostes mentis et corporis impugnandi." To this Waleys adds, "Illi igitur qui talibus cornibus muniti, digni sunt ad regnum, id est ad prelaturam ecclesie et ad culmen eterne glorie sublimari. Ps. Omnia cornua peccatorum confringam et exultabunt cornua iusti."<sup>56</sup> While the Catholic church would have associated its efforts to bring back England into its power in the positive sense attributed to Moses, Spenser implies that it would rather have to be associated with the meaning attributed to the horns of Cippus. Spenser's dragon, being a composite figure of the apocalyptic dragon (long tail), of hell (the gaping mouth), and of the Whore of Babylon, drunk from the blood of the saints (the iron teeth from which blood is trickling), can also be seen as a composite as far as the two deadly stings are concerned (I.xi.11-13). Spenser may here have blended the symbol of sin, the sting of the serpent or scorpion, with the symbol of the pope's superbia, namely the two horns of Cippus. We may remember in this context that (a) the pope was often compared to the two-horned beast of the Apocalypse, and (b) that a parallel to a combination of its horns

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<sup>56</sup> Metamorphosis ouidiana moraliter a magistro thomas waleys anglico . . . explanata ([Paris, 1515], fol. ci<sup>r</sup>).

with the sting of the scorpion's tail may have been the description of the locusts in Rev. 9.19, "For their tails were like unto serpents and had heads, and with them they do hurt." Spenser's passage would thus reflect the irony of the situation in which Rome, in the view of the English, used the pretense of "*hostes mentis et corporis impugnandi*" in order to inflict the sting of reprimand or conscience,<sup>57</sup> which was in fact, however, the sting of sin and the desire to rule.

Kaske's reading of Redcrosse's cutting off the dragon's tail as a Christian's way of controlling concupiscence is certainly correct,<sup>58</sup> but it is again a reflection of the sinful uses the pope was said to have put his religious authority to. The description of Redcrosse, unable to loosen the sting from his shoulder and striking off the tail of the monster so that only a "stump" is left (I.xi.39), can be put in contrast to an emblem of the pope to whom the defeat of the infidels is attributed (Fig. 7). Fabrici explains that the cut-off tail symbolizes

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<sup>57</sup>Ripa, p.383, "*Peccato*" with a serpent which represents sin and conscience, the latter a worm gnawing at the heart. It can be taken as a parallel to Redcrosse's being stung in the shoulder by the dragon (I.xi.38). It would represent the appeals from Catholic exiles and the pope as appeals to the conscience but represented by Spenser as stings of sin. See also Ripa, pp.422-423, 515, 443.

<sup>58</sup>"The Dragon's Spark and Sting", pp.428-429.



Fig. 7

the Hebrews, cut off from the "corpo santo" of the church, and cut off by God for "sua scioccia vanitate Dal Capo, e membra de l'Humanitate".<sup>59</sup> In Spenser's passage, this meaning seems to be reversed so that the role of the rebellious enemy of God as dragon and serpent of sin is applied to the papal dragon emblem and so is, in addition, the negative meaning of the tail.

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<sup>59</sup>Delle allusioni, p.79.



### Chapter Three

#### SOL IUSTITIAE, ARCTURUS, AND STELLA VENERIS AS IMPERIAL METAPHORS IN BOOK I

True to his strategy of representing the political fate of England in the frame of general moral concepts, Spenser has elaborated the struggle against Roman influence in an adaptation of that part of the battle between the apocalyptic dragon and virgin in which he attacked the stars. He turns these on one hand into specific symbols of the Tudors and of England and, on the other, into their antitypes. His choice of astronomical images seems to have been influenced by a situation already given on the sky map, where the sign draco is next to and, for Spenser, in opposition to the North-Star, namely Arcturus or Arthur, as dynastic symbol of the Tudors. Their opposition seems to be a reflection of that of two adjacent signs, namely Hercules and serpens. Traditionally this represents an allegory of Christ's slaying of Satan, as does Arthur's slaying of the dragon in Book I. In addition, Spenser treats the enmity between England and Rome as an antithesis between the sun of the sacred empire and the papal sun which is modelled upon the enmity between Christ as sol iustitiae and Lucifer as fallen morning-star.

Spenser exploits the fact that classical deities existed often in several related personifications which,

both in theological and moral allegory, could be interpreted in positive as well as in negative senses. The kingdom of Una as symbol of empire and church is associated with the sun-rise and with the stella Veneris, both as morning-star (lucifera and Phosphorus) and evening-star (Hesperus). Arthur is introduced as symbolic defender of the church, as a figure of highest virtue, and of the power of divine providence which sends him (i.e. the Tudors) as an instrument of the grace which supports England. Spenser derives this symbolic role from an allegory used for the 1501 pageant for Prince Arthur and Katherine of Aragon in which the North-Star, the sol iustitiae, and Hesperus play a similar role to that in the first book of The Faerie Queene.

The Lucifera-episode can be considered as the focus for most of these astronomical images. Lucifera's name implies that she represents the antitype of the imperial virgin, for in classical sources, "lucifera", i.e. the feminine form of the adjective, was the attribute of both Venus and Diana. Lucifera's character is, however, put in a negative perspective, for she derives from the infernal counterpart of Diana, Proserpina, and -- as her name indicates -- from the fallen morning-star of Isaiah 14.12: "How art thou fallen from heaven, o Lucifer, son of morning." Parallel to this, Spenser makes her the antitype of the imperial and divine suns as sol oriens and sol iustitiae by characterizing her as type of the fallen sun, Titan,

and of the fallen sons of Apollo, Phaeton and Aesculapius. Before proceeding to an analysis of these details, I shall briefly survey the history of their significance in the papal-imperial conflict in order to establish their political and topical meaning in Spenser's allegory.

1. The History of the Imperial Sunrise  
and the Papal Luminaria magna

The central position of the sun in the Ptolemaic system provided from ancient times on a significant analogy for the interpretation of the human order, both in political and in moral philosophy. The analogy elevated the ruler to a super-human and sacred position and was an important factor in the development of the divine right of kings. The roots of the concept of the ruler as another sun lie in the ancient solar religions of the Near East. As Kantorowicz has shown, they led especially in Persia to the development of an imperial iconography which represented the emperor as sol invictus and as oriens or imperial sunrise.<sup>1</sup> From Byzantium these ideas were transmitted to the West and influenced the development of European imperial symbols. The image of the emperor as "ever-rising" like

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<sup>1</sup>The exposition of the historical background is based on two essays by Kantorowicz, "Oriens Augusti-Lever du Roi", Dumbarton Oaks Papers, 17 (1963), 119-177; "Dante's Two Suns", in his Selected Papers (Locust Valley, N.Y., 1965), pp.327-338.

Apollo in the chariot of the sun represented him as conqueror "in permanence" both over the enemies of the political realm and over the enemies of virtue. This oriens image became dissociated from its geographical meaning and turned into a concept of rulership as such, as we see, for example, from the fact that the Emperor Constantine, in his capacity as ruler over Britain, had been addressed with this attribute in several ancient panegyrics.

A second line of development of ancient solar imagery led to the identification of Christ or the Messiah with the "sun of righteousness", i.e. sol iustitiae, and with the oriens image.<sup>2</sup> These images go back to residues of pagan solar myths in the Scriptures and appeared with great frequency in the liturgies of the East and West, in sermons, and in other writings of the church fathers. One of the O-Antiphones of the Advent Office begins, for example, with this invocation of the Messiah: "O Oriens,/ splendor lucis eternae,/ et sol iustitiae."<sup>3</sup> The result of these developments was that the Christian image of the sol iustitiae influenced the formulation of a new concept by which the Christian emperors sought to distinguish themselves from

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<sup>2</sup>The relevant passages are Malachi 4:6, Luke 1:78 for sol iustitiae, and Zach. 3:8 and 6:12 for oriens.

<sup>3</sup>"Dante's Two Suns", p.335.

their pagan predecessors without suffering a loss in prestige. Consequently, "we find in the Byzantine Empire, beside the deflated solar imagery of the paganizing poets and rhetors, a well-rounded tradition of 'Sun Rulership', since the imperial 'heliomimetes' became a christomimetes, and therewith again the living twin image of a sun, of the 'Sun of Justice' in heaven."<sup>4</sup>

Although the sol iustitiae was essentially a theological concept which referred to Christ, its association with the early Christian emperors represented a potential for conflict, since both pope and emperor defined their roles in the sense of a vicariate of Christ. This led to open conflict when, in the course of the imperialization of the papacy from the tenth century on, the popes declared that the title vicarius Christi belonged exclusively to them and underlined it with the further claim that they represented the role of the sun in the hierarchy of earthly powers. This development culminated in a new cosmic metaphor of two lights in heaven, the sun and the moon, the sun representing the pope and the moon the emperor (Fig. 8). Kantorowicz has described the political significance of this move from the side of the pope: "The Roman Pontiff, who as Vicar of Christ became ipso facto also the antitype of the

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p.336.

Sol Iustitiae, has entered as Helios-Pope on the full legacy of the Roman emperors."<sup>5</sup> The metaphor which reflected the aspirations of papal imperialism was put into writing about 1201 by Innocent III, in a letter addressed to the emperor of Constantinople. It was incorporated into Canon Law together with the Decretals of Gregory IX. The relevant passage is as follows:

Ad firmamentum igitur coeli, hoc est universalis ecclesiae, fecit Deus duo magna luminaria, id est, duas magnas instituit dignitates, quae sunt pontificalis auctoritas, et regalis potestas. Sed illa, quae praeest diebus, id est, spiritualibus, maior est; quae vero noctibus, id est, carnalibus, minor, ut, quanta est inter solem et lunam, tanta<sup>6</sup> inter pontifices et reges differentia cognoscatur.

From this point on, any use of imperial solar symbolism had a potentially antipapal tendency, and it is significant that although the solar imperial images had never completely died out in the West, they had been relatively dormant until the development of the papal imperialism and the subsequent revival of solar imagery in a messianic and apocalyptic atmosphere at the court of the Emperor Frederick II at about the same time that the papal solar image had practically acquired the character of law.

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p.337.

<sup>6</sup>Decretal. Gregor. IX, X.1.33.6 "De maiori et obedientia. Solitae.", in Corpus iuris canonici, ed. A. L. Richter, A. Friedberg (Leipzig, 1879-1881), II, 198.

As a consequence, we see, beginning with Dante, examples of counteractions by which, directly or indirectly, the papal claim was rejected. Obviously influenced by the atmosphere of the imperial court of Frederic II, Dante, about fifty years after the emperor had died in 1250, spoke of his saviour-emperor Henry VII of Luxemburg as Sol noster, Titan exoriens, and Titan pacificus.<sup>7</sup> Condemning the still living Pope Boniface VIII to hell (Inferno, xix, 53), who, in absence of a strong imperial ruler in Italy, behaved himself like a secular prince, Dante developed his political concept of the due strade, i.e. of the separate and equal powers of church and empire, symbolized further by the due soli (Purg., xvi, 107), which was designed to return the church to the functions neglected by the present pope. Dante's two suns can be traced back to earlier sources of imperialistic imagery, namely Byzantium, as Kantorowicz has shown.<sup>8</sup>

Antipapal authors in the sixteenth century did not directly take up Dante's metaphor, but indirectly supported a similar position when they focused on the papal metaphor as symbol of the hubris and political ambition of the pope.

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<sup>7</sup>"Dante's Two Suns", p. 338.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 328.

Gardiner scoffingly refers to it as "the olde Hum trum distinccion . . . after whiche . . . the Prince as the moone whiche is called the lesse light, should haue charge of suche maters as are of the night . . . Forsothe a blynde distinccion and full of darkness."<sup>9</sup> Jewel cites the image in his Apology as an example for the pope's shameless desire to rule.<sup>10</sup> In a tone similar to theirs, Bullinger describes the "palace of Antichrist" and says, "There sitteth the king of kinges, and high Bisshop, whiche so far excelleth in brightnes and Maiestie the Emperour and other kinges as the sunne doth the Moone and other starres."<sup>11</sup> In the realm of political philosophy this metaphor also had to suffer defeat. We see, for example, that Jean Bodin, the father of a modern theory of sovereignty, develops his theory in direct contrast to the concept embodied in the papal metaphor to which he refers when he discusses the question of sovereignty against the background of papal-imperial relations.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>Pierre Janelle, ed., Obedience in Church and State. Three Political Tracts by Stephen Gardiner (Cambridge, 1930), pp.103-105.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p.60.

<sup>11</sup>A Hundred Sermons, p.618, see also p.417.

<sup>12</sup>The Six Bookes of a Common-Weale, p.114.



Independent of the Reformation, the humanist revival of Roman imperial customs and symbols at the courts of Renaissance princes also formed an effective counterforce to papal imperialist images. The studies of ancient coins and statues as well as the influx of Byzantine manuscripts unknown to the Middle Ages led on one hand to recreations of ancient "triumphs", on the other to a new ~~solar~~ cult which accompanied the emergence of absolute kings and culminated in the seventeenth century at the court of the roi soleil.<sup>13</sup> In the sixteenth century, we find the example of the solar image of the Habsburg emperors which originated obviously from humanist influence. The most remarkable of its representations is the triumphal chariot designed for the Emperor Maximilian by Duerer under the influence of his friend, the humanist Willibald Pirckheimer. It shows the emperor in classical garb, crowned with laurel by various political virtues, seated under a canopy with a sun and the inscription Quod in Celis Sol Hoc in Terra Caesar est. Maximilian's successor, Charles V, used the same motto again when he had a medallion struck for himself in Augsburg in 1541.<sup>14</sup> Henry VIII apparently was also

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<sup>13</sup>"Oriens Augusti", pp.165-167; A. Fowler, Triumphal Forms (Cambridge, 1970), p.27.

<sup>14</sup>"Oriens Augusti", p.165.

influenced by such developments on the continent, for, as Baumer mentions, there are frequent references to sun images in texts concerning Henry VIII.<sup>15</sup>

## 2. Queen Elizabeth as Imperial Moon

Among other things, Elizabeth's political tact expressed itself also in the fact that there are only a few instances of her association with sun images.<sup>16</sup> Instead she wisely chose the lesser planet, which also coincided with her cultivation of a virgin image based on the moon goddess. An analogy to this is her preference for the term "God's handmaid" rather than the more presumptuous terms in which her father was wont to express his imperial status. As we saw earlier, the image of the moon goddess could equally be used to represent the role of Astraea, namely as Diana and Isis, and this could further be combined with the well-known allegorization of Luna as church in relation to Christ as Sol.<sup>17</sup> An interesting example for such a use of solar imagery in relation to Elizabeth is Dee's title page in the Arte of Navigation (Fig. 6), a significant

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<sup>15</sup>The Early Tudor Theory of Kingship, p.121.

<sup>16</sup>Wilkins, passim.

<sup>17</sup>G. P. Valeriano, Hieroglyphica (Basileae, 1575), fol.328<sup>r</sup>.

document of Tudor imperialism. On it we see Elizabeth as ruler over the sea -- reminding us that Raleigh addresses her as "Cynthia, Lady of the Sea" -- and "governor" of the ship of Christendom named Europa. Over her head stands the divine sun, inscribed with the Tetragrammaton, which shines on moon, stars, and a second sun in the sky from which the Archangel Michael descends upon a fleet below, equipped -- similar to Spenser's Redcrosse -- with a flaming sword and a shield bearing a large cross. The second sun in the sky is obviously a symbol of imperial authority as sol mundi and sol iustitiae.<sup>18</sup> It is significantly not associated with the queen but with the heavenly sun and the Archangel above who support her and her realm. This reflects the same meaning as the queen's moon image, for it suggests that, by contrast to Rome and Spain, England stood in a proper relationship to the heavenly hierarchies, namely subordinate to God and Christ, the true suns of grace and divine justice.

A few lines from Chapman's "Hymnus in Cynthiam" will serve as further illustration of the implications of Dee's image. Chapman addresses the queen as moon goddess

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<sup>18</sup>Kantorowicz describes the tradition of "two suns" which referred at times to the king as natural sun, at other times to the king and deity, see "Oriens Augusti", p. 154.

and puts her both in relation to the heavenly sun and in contrast to the imperial sun of her political enemies:

And as thy changes happen by the site  
Neare; or farre distance, of thy fathers light,  
Who (set in absolute remotion) reauers  
Thy face of light, and thee all darkned leaues:  
So far thy absence, to the shade of death  
Our soules fly morning, wingd with our breath.

Then set thy Chrystall, and Imperiall throne,  
(Girt in thy chast, and neuer-loosing zone)  
Gainst Europs Sunne directly opposite,  
And give him darknesse, that doth threat thy light.<sup>19</sup>

In the same poem, Chapman uses the name "Cynthia" or "Lucifera" to celebrate Elizabeth as imperial virgin. He underlines the theme moreover by his praise of Cynthia as the "Architect" of her "blissful court" which is named "Pax Imperij". The hunting scenes in the poem contain allusions to the fight of the Netherlands against the Catholic forces. The neoplatonic symbolism is here obviously not an end in itself but the means for the expression of a political content, a feature we shall also recognize as significant for The Faerie Queene. F. A. Yates, discussing the theme of the "Imperial Moon" in relation to the School of Night of which Chapman's poem is an example, summarizes its character very aptly:

Our studies have reminded us that the moon is the symbol of empire, and the sun of papacy. The

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<sup>19</sup>The Poems of George Chapman, ed. P. B. Bartlett (New York, 1962), p.33.

virgin of imperial reform who withstood the claims of the papacy might therefore well become a chaste moon-goddess shedding the beams of pure religion from her royal throne. Moreover, the imperial cult has constantly drawn to itself a philosophical justification; the ideal ruler is always the Philosopher King. The so-called Elizabethan "School of Night" with its worship of Cynthia and its devotion to intellectual contemplation, might have been drawing on the "imperialist" tradition, not only in the political, but also in the religious, philosophical, and poetic sense.<sup>20</sup>

### 3. The Imperial Moon in The Faerie Queene

Yates' remarks about the imperialistic character of images of the moon goddess apply equally to Spenser's poem. Among such types is Belphoebe in Book II who appears as a figure of the queen's triumph over Spanish vainglory, as I shall show in the last chapter. In Book V, Isis, crowned with a mitre "shaped like the Moone" (V.vii.4 and 13) personifies the monarch's sacred "ministry" of law and forms a contrast to Duessa who, in Book I, appears with a Persian mitre (I.ii.13) and, in Book V, is subjected to the judgment of Mercilla, a figure who combines the characteristics of Isis and Osiris, or divine and human law. Britomart is also compared to Cynthia (III.i.43). It may foreshadow her identification with Isis in Book V and her role as vanquisher of Radigund who appears as a rather feeble imitation of the moon-goddess (V.v.3 and 12).

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<sup>20</sup>"Astraea", p.72.

Finally, there are the double icons of the queen as Cynthia and Diana in Book VII, one an image of her government, symbolically represented by the throne and chariot which she holds by order of Jupiter, the other an allusion to her martial role, specifically in Ireland, in a manner that is comparable to Chapman's treatment of the wars in the Netherlands in the "Hymnus in Cynthiam".

#### 4. Spenser's Satire on Spanish Imperialism

Similar to Chapman, Spenser also makes reference to Spain's imperialistic images. The sun-like attributes of Arthur, Arthegall, and Britomart in the later books of the poem seem to represent a contrast to the sun image of the Spanish king, notably one of his imprese inscribed with the motto Iam Illustrabit Omnia.<sup>21</sup> It shows Apollo rising in his chariot in imitation of classical models of the sol oriens or invictus. In Book V, as Graziani has shown, Spenser parodies the claim contained in this image when Arthur destroys the "Souldan's" fiery chariot with his sun-bright shield. It is further put in an ironic perspective by comparison to Phaeton's fall (V.viii.40). Florimell, a personification of England's developing

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<sup>21</sup>R. I. C. Graziani, "Philip II's Impresa and Spenser's Souldan", JWCI, 27 (1964), 322-324.

colonial empire, is set in contrast to the false Florimell, a symbol of those forces which try to prevent such a goal, namely especially Spanish power. Spenser describes their encounter as a cosmic monstrosity. They look as if "two sunnes" appeared together in "Phoebus chariot" (V.iii.19). The melting of the false Florimell through the heat of the sun implies, as does Arthur's victory over the Souldan and his chariot, that the imperial sun-rise is the proper attribute of England and not of Spain.

##### 5. Book I as Satire on the Papal Sun

In Book I the rhetorical strategy of the poet is designed to deflate the papal metaphor by characterizing it as antithesis to God or the sol iustitiae to which the sun of Rome appears in a clearly inferior and compromised position, underlined by the added myths of Phaeton's and Aesculapius' falls. Images of England's imperial moon do not feature as contrast to Lucifera, for this would have defeated Spenser's satiric purpose. Instead he has introduced another astronomical image of the night, the North-Star, as contrasting image to Lucifera. Spenser alludes to the moon as symbol of the church only to show how Rome's proud flaunting of a solar image represents a violation of order and degree. We see this from the fact that Lucifera is described as Proserpina's daughter and as type of Titan. This is a reference to the fact that Titan,

the older brother of Saturn, had been deposed by Jupiter from his role as sun and had lost his place to Phoebus Apollo who, in Spenser's allegory, is the symbol of the victorious empire. The antithesis between Titan and Phoebus is alluded to in strategic places in Spenser's allegory and is also reflected in the contrasting imagery of light and darkness throughout Book I. It can be seen in relation to the contemporary view expressed, for instance, by Jewel that the English Reformation represented a victory for the light of truth over the darkness of Antichrist's realm.<sup>22</sup> England's champions are, therefore, associated with the day and their enemies with the night. They operate by means of magic and deceptive appearances which enable them to divert the loyalty of Redcrosse to sun-like substitutes and thus to procure his fall into darkness.

An illustration of this is the seeming brightness of Lucifera's court which one must see in contrast to the description of Redcrosse's entry into it, for it occurs in an ominous darkness, when "nigh consumed is the lingering day" (I.iv.3). "Consumed" adds an undertone of death and decay, enforced by the images of disease in the same stanza, which suggest more than just an ordinary nightfall. This effect is repeated when we view Lucifera's pageant.

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<sup>22</sup>Apology, pp.43 and 81.



Beginning in blazing light (I.iv.16) it turns into images of disease and evil, and ends in a thick fog (I.iv.36). Duessa's strategies are similarly exposed by the poet. When visiting Sansjoy under cover of "darksome night" (I.iv.44) to seek support against Redcrosse, she addresses Sansjoy as "faire Sunne" under whose beams she hopes to "shroud" herself (I.iv.48). The last term subtly undermines the connotations of the first, for it recalls the earlier image of the "coleblack curtein" of night which is her real "shroud" (I.iv.44). Duessa's remarks to her ancestor Night reveal the purpose of her schemes: "Let be seene, That dreaded Night in brightest day hath place, And can the children of faire light deface" (I.v.24). Night herself, the real progenitor of Lucifera and Duessa, is characterized as an enemy of God (I.v.46; III.iv.55) and of the sol iustitiae, Phoebus, (I.v.20), as well as a type of fallen angel (III.iv.55), whereby Spenser also indicates her connection with Lucifera. Duessa, their companion, becomes the exemplum for the defeat of God's and Christ's enemies, predicted by Night herself (I.v.25), for her "gilt garment" of golden sunlight (I.v.26) is at last stripped off by Arthur, a type of Christ, who causes her to fly "from heauens hated face" (I.viii.50) in order to hide her "shame". The terms "gilt" and "shame" allude to the myth of her descent from "Deceipt" and "Shame", for by stripping off her

"gilt" garment, Arthur exposes her "guilt". Her sunlike appearance is also undermined earlier in the encounter with Fradubio, a symbol of her "guilt" under whom she seeks to hide herself from Phoebus' "beame so scorching cruell hot" (I.ii.29). Fowler, in his discussion of the scorching sun in Book I, has shown that it symbolizes the sun of righteousness and of judgment.<sup>23</sup> The same meaning applies also to the episode in canto vii, where Una and Redcrosse flee again from the heat of the sun prior to Redcrosse's fall. In both episodes the hiding in the shade suggests sin and guilt which is uncovered and punished by the sol iustitiae. Duessa's flight from Phoebus in these instances foreshadows, by extension, also the defeat of the false sun-likeness of Lucifera's court.

Spenser's method of using contrasting sun images for England and Rome can be illustrated by the analogous allegorical method of such books as the Ovide moralisé. In Thomas Waleys' version, Apollo signifies on one hand the sol iustitiae, the just man, and the pope; his lack of a beard is a sign that he lacks the false wisdom of the world; and his bow and arrow, used against Python, signify the

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<sup>23</sup>Spenser and the Numbers of Time (New York, 1964), pp.71-72.

correcting power of the church against the sinner. On the other hand, Apollo, being actually a pagan deity, could also signify the contrary. As such he would be an idol of vice and of the devil, and an image of the bad prince or prelate. In this case, Python would signify the exploited and oppressed poor.<sup>24</sup>

As if to prove the views of the Protestants that the papal sun represented a perversion of the true hierarchy, Fabrici, in his emblembook on Gregory XIII, offered an adaptation of the myth of Apollo and Python which unwittingly appears like an ironic confirmation of the negative aspects of the allegory described above. The emblem of the



Fig. 8

papal supremacy, Luminaria magna, shows the symbols of

<sup>24</sup> Metamorphosis ouidiana, fols. vi<sup>v</sup>-vii<sup>r</sup>.

earthly power, sun and moon, the sun identified with the papal dragon and the moon with the imperial eagle. Fabrici explains that the emblem is adapted from the myth of Apollo and Python.<sup>25</sup> He identifies Python with the papal dragon and the sun with Apollo, both forming the emblem of papal superiority over the emperor. He seems to have been oblivious to the fact that this emblem actually proves the reverse of Apollo's victory over Python, for in his emblem Python seems to triumph over Apollo. It appears therefore like a confirmation of Protestant allegations that in Rome the apocalyptic dragon had usurped the place of Christ. To use Waleys' terms, the emblem appears rather like a "pagan idol". Spenser sees the papal sun in the same light, for he shows us an image of Lucifera which is adapted from the myth of Apollo and Python in I.iv.10. She is standing on a huge dragon, but she is the opposite of Apollo, namely Titan. She is, therefore, comparable to the Whore of Babylon and the dragon and also a symbol for the pope's oppression of princes.<sup>26</sup>

The contrast between the papal sun and the sun of empire is a climactic part of Spenser's description of

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<sup>25</sup>Delle allusioni, p.23. See also Boccaccio, Genealogie deorum gentilium libri, a cura di Vincenzo Romano (Bari, 1951), 1.7 and 5.3.

<sup>26</sup>Cf. fig. 4 above.

## Lucifera:

High aboue all a cloth of State was spred,  
 And a rich throne, as bright as sunny day,  
 On which there sate most braue embellished  
 With royall robes and gorgeous array,  
 A mayden Queene, that shone as Titans ray,  
 In glistering gold, and peereless pretious stone:  
 Yet her bright blazing beautie did assay  
 To dim the brightnesse of her glorious throne,  
 As enuying her selfe, that too exceeding shone.

Exceeding shone, like Phoebus fairest childe,  
 That did presume his fathers firie wayne,  
 And flaming mouthes of steedes unwonted wilde  
 Through highest heauen with weaker hand to rayne;  
 Proud of such glory and aduancement vaine,  
 While flashing beames do daze his feeble eyen,  
 He leaues the welkin way most beaten plaine,  
 And rapt with whirling wheelles, inflames the skyen,  
 With fire not made to burne, but fairely for to shyne.

(I.iv.8-9)

The term "mayden Queene", as antithesis to the imperial virgin, and the references to Venus and Fortuna in this passage will be discussed later in this chapter and in the following chapter on Fortune and Providence. What must interest us here is the emphasis on light and sun imagery. We notice, first of all, the contrast between the sun imagery which describes the throne and the image of "blazing light" applied to Lucifera. The first is symbolic for sovereignty as such (the throne), while the second is a symbol of Lucifera's pride and ambition, set further in perspective by reference to Titan. He was generally allegorized as a type of earthly pride and

ambition in rebellion against God.<sup>27</sup> Spenser stresses this point by repetition of the phrase "too exceeding shone", for Lucifera has, like Titan, overstepped the boundaries set for her by a higher power (Apollo), and her exceeding ambition, symbolized by the blazing light, seems to cancel out the foundation on which she thinks to stand, namely a seat of sovereignty.

The allusion to Titan is further put in an ironic perspective by the introduction of Phoebus, the true sun, and by the comparison between Lucifera and Phaeton so that the theme of papal pride is connected with a prophecy of the fall of papal authority. We can see the reference to Phoebus and to a fall as reflection of such statements as that of Jewel that the sun of Christ will "overthrow" Antichrist.<sup>28</sup> Spenser's topical allegory can be related to the allegorization of Phaeton's fall in the Ovide moralisé as that of the falls of Lucifer and Antichrist.<sup>29</sup> Although treated as an allegory of government, it is in particular applied to the perversion of church government. According

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<sup>27</sup>Ovide moralisé, in verse, ed. C. deBoer (Wiesbaden, 1966), I.1101-1202; Geneal. deor., 4.1.

<sup>28</sup>Apology, p.81.

<sup>29</sup>Ovide moralisé, ed. C. deBoer, I.4245-4260; II. 689-730; 914-1012.

to Waleys, Apollo signifies Christ, while Phaeton signifies prelates who have been given offices and dignities (Apollo's chariot) in order to govern their own desires and those of others through proper discipline and to keep the middle path of equity, justice, truth, and temperance. Phaeton's inability to govern the chariot is a symbol of the bad prince or prelate whose vices have destroyed those over whom they had been set, as signified by the flames consuming Phaeton's chariot.<sup>30</sup>

Spenser's comparison of Lucifera to the falling Phaeton suggests also the moral corruption of the papacy through an image of light which has been turned to destructive purposes. The chariot "inflames the skyen, With fire not made to burne, but fairely for to shyne." The transformation of fairness to burning fire is a parallel to Lucifera's own fairness which has turned into "blazing" light and seems to destroy the basis of her power, for it "dim[s] the brightnesse of her glorious throne". By the comparisons to Titan and Phaeton, Spenser connects Rome's assumption of a solar image twice with stories of figures who fell through pride and moral corruption. The applicat-

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<sup>30</sup> *Metamorphosis ouidiana*, fol.xxvi<sup>r-v</sup>; see also Andrea Alciati, *Emblematum libellum* (1542), No.LXIIII, facs. (Darmstadt, 1967); Fabrici, *Delle allusioni*, p.217.

ion of these myths to Rome can be further confirmed if we recall that Dante also uses Phaeton's fall as a simile for the usurpation of the church by the apocalyptic dragon.<sup>31</sup>

The significance of Lucifera's association with Titan seems specifically to show Rome's enmity towards England and Christ, for the image appears at strategic points of Redcrosse's quest and as contrast to Phoebus who is associated with Una and Arthur. One example occurs right at the beginning. As Phoebus is about to rise after Redcrosse spent the night with the "hermit", Archimago intervenes with a false dream brought up from hell and succeeds in blinding Redcrosse's "eye of reason" (I.ii.5). This image is derived from the common analogy between the sol iustitiae and the sun of virtue in the soul. Ripa, for instance, shows an emblem of "Virtu", a female figure with a sun painted on her chest, and relates it to Christ:

Il sole dimonstra, che come dal cielo illumina esso la terra, cosi del cuore la virtù defende le sue potenze regolate à dar il moto, & il vigore à tutto il corpo nostro, che è mondo piccolo . . . & perche Christo N. S. si dimanda nelle sacre lettere sole di giustitia, intendendo quella giustitia universalissima, che abbraccia tutte le virtù, però si può dire, che chi porta esso nel cuore, hà il principal' ornamento della vera, & perfetta virtù.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>31</sup>Purg., xxix, 118.

<sup>32</sup>Iconologia, p.512; see also his emblem of "Verita", associated with truth, God, and Christ (p.400).



By extinguishing the light of reason in Redcrosse, Archimago also extinguishes the light of truth or right religion, and this is the reason that he does not "see" the significance of the false show presented by Duessa and Lucifera. The image of blinding is, therefore, the metaphoric analogy to his desertion of Una, for she is characterized as sun of truth and is therefore the antitype of Duessa and Lucifera. Described as looking like "the great eye of heauen" (I.iii.4) and as "brightest skye" (I.vi.4), Una can be related to images of Phoebus in the way that truth and Christ were traditionally associated in allegories and emblems of the sun.<sup>33</sup> Spenser establishes such an association in Book III, where Arthur speaks of "Day" as the "father" of "Truth", a "most sacred virgin, without spot of sin" (III.iv.59), which adequately describes Una's role in Book I. Redcrosse's blindness and subsequent desertion of Una in canto ii is thus equivalent to an expression of papal influence in England, and his quest illustrates the fate of England before its being rescued by the imperial strength and grace of Gloriana.

Having deserted Una and the sun of Christ, Redcrosse's departure from Archimago takes place under the

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<sup>33</sup>Rabanus Maurus, Allegoriae in sacram scripturam, in P. L., CXII, 1057-1058; Valeriano, Hieroglyphica, fols. 326<sup>r</sup>-327<sup>r</sup>.

rise of Titan and, as consequence, he becomes unable to bear the scorching ray of Phoebus (I.ii.29). Instead he arrives at Lucifera's court to pay homage to the papal sun of pride and political corruption. Spenser indicates that the desertion of right religion is to be identified with the desertion of the right kind of political government when he says that Lucifera's blazing light dims the light of her "glorious" throne, i.e. a throne which properly belongs to Gloriana.

Arthur, Gloriana's champion, who represents the intervention of the sacred empress on behalf of the individual who has been oppressed by Rome, is set in contrast to Titan, for he is compared to Phoebus (I.vii.29), and his shield, surpassing "Phoebus golden face" (I.vii.34), indicates that Arthur is endowed with more than natural strength. The connection with the sun of empire is indicated in the Proem to Book I, where Spenser compares Elizabeth to "Phoebus lampe" (st.4). Later, when he ascribes the awakening of "fresh desire" to pursue their quests in Arthur and Redcrosse to the appearance of the "glorious Sunne" (I.ix.18), the adjective seems to allude to Gloriana.

The victory of this, "sun" is allegorically represented as the return of the light of truth in Redcrosse's eyes. When he first emerges from Orgoglio's prison, he cannot "endure th'unwonted sunne to view" (I.viii.41). He

is therefore brought to the House of Holinesse where his spiritual blindness is cured by the sun of Faith, i.e. Fidelia, for her "Christall face" radiates "sunny beames" and "heauens light" (I.x.12) and has the effect of opening Redcrosse's "dull" eyes that light mote in them shine" (I.x.18). In other words, she reverses the effect of Archimago's blinding dream which had caused the rise of Titan and the temporal decline of Phoebus. Fidelia's cure of Redcrosse is, therefore, also a preparation for Redcrosse's victory over the sun of papal pride which is combined with the defeat of the papal dragon.

The dragon fight in canto xi represents a symbolic defeat of the papacy, specifically a defeat of Gregory XIII's dragon emblem and of the imperialistic claim contained in the emblem of the Luminaria magna. The two aspects are represented in the description of the first encounter between Redcrosse and the dragon which lies on the "sunny side" of a hill (I.xi.4). To this reference to the papal images of dragon and sun Spenser has added the metaphors of the eagle of empire and the ship of the church (I.xi.9-10). Describing further the eyes of the dragon as "two broad Beacons", he may allude to the papal Luminaria magna and to the political claims against England based on it, when he says that they "send forth their flames farre off to euery shyre, And warning giue, that enemies conspyre, With

fire and sword the region to invade" (I.xi.14). This sounds like the descriptions of the influence of papal propaganda by the English. They usually represented it as political threat and incitement to rebellious uprisings. Spenser, however, suggests rather its ineffectiveness than its seriousness when he compares the "beacons" to two "glaring lamps" which produce nothing more than a "dreadfull shade" (I.xi.14).

In order to stress the contrast between Rome and the English empire, Spenser has also attributed the images of the sun and eagle to Redcrosse so that his defeats and victories have both a theological and political meaning. His fall into the Well of Life at the end of the first day of battle is paralleled with a temporary decline of Phoebus, the sol iustitiae or Christ, whom we do not see again until the dragon is dead. While Phoebus and Redcrosse have sunk into the waves, the papal dragon seems to rise victoriously:

Now gan the golden Phoebus for to steepe  
 His fiery face in billowes of the west,  
 And his faint steedes watred in Ocean deepe,  
 Whiles from their iournall labours they did rest,  
 When that infernall Monster, hauing kest  
 His wearie foe into that liuing well,  
 Can high aduance his broad discoloured brest,  
 Aboue his wonted pitch, with countenance fell,  
 And clapt his iron wings, as victor he did dwell.

(I.xi.31)

This apparent victory of the dragon is further contrasted

to Phoebus by the fact that it is followed by the rise of Titan instead of Phoebus. Redcrosse represents the power of Christ and empire combined, for he rises like an "Eagle fresh out of the Ocean waue" (I.xi.33-34). The combination of the eagle with a rise from the ocean represents a blending of the image of imperial power (the eagle) with the image of the sol oriens or sol iustitiae rising, like Phoebus, from the ocean. The sacred and political aspects of the power which Redcrosse represents are further expressed by the description of his sword as "deaw-burning blade" (I.xi.35). The sword, symbol of justice, is here combined with an image of burning sun-light, a symbol of Christ as sol iustitiae.

The dragon's attack on Redcrosse's "sun-bright" shield (I.xi.40) can be seen as a counterattack on the true sun for which Redcrosse fights, for when he has cut off the dragon's claw from his shield, the dragon retaliates with "huge flames, that dimmed all the heauens light" (I.xi.44) -- "flames" suggests a parody on the scorching light of Phoebus -- and thereby he causes a second fall for Redcrosse. The next mention of Phoebus occurs in connection with the description of the dragon's defeat. This suggests that the rise of Titan and the sun-rise on the last day of battle were deceptive images of the papal sun and its seeming triumph over Redcrosse, for the dragon's death, although

seemingly occurring in broad day-light (I.xi.51), is actually the equivalent to the end of the night of sin. We see this from the fact that Phoebus rises while the dragon's breath is still expiring, together with the night, in "smoke and cloudes swift" (I.xii.2):

Scarsely had Phoebus in the glooming East  
Yet harnessed his fierie-footed teeme,  
Ne reard about the earth his flaming creast,  
When the last deadly smoke aloft did steeme,  
That signe of last outbreathed life did seeme  
Unto the watchman on the castle wall;  
Who thereby dead the balefull Beast did deeme,  
And to his Lord and Ladie lowd gan call,  
To tell, how he had seene the Dragons fatal  
fall.

England's victory over Rome becomes thus the equivalent to Christ's victory over Satan. Phoebus' sinking in the West on the first day reflects the common allegorization of the sunset as image of Christ's death, while his victory over Satan, represented by the oriens image, forms the climax to Redcrosse's victory over the dragon.

## 6. Spenser's Satire on the Pope's Spiritual Vicariate

In extension of the allegorical treatment of the papal sun by reference to allegorizations of Ovidian myths of the sun-god, Spenser also treats the theological aspect of the papal vicariate by reference to the fall of another of Phoebus' sons, namely Aesculapius. It must be seen as contrast to that part of the myth of Aesculapius which had been treated as an allegory of Christ's incarnation and

restoration of mankind,<sup>34</sup> namely Aesculapius' being brought to Rome on Apollo's advice in the shape of a serpent to cure the Romans of the plague.<sup>35</sup> The papal vicariate of Christ, seen in the light of this allegory, represents a means for the restoration of men's souls from sin. Fabrici interprets, for example, the papal vicariate in such a



Fig. 9

sense by identifying the dragon emblem with the serpent Aesculapius. Alluding to the similar typological meaning of the serpent of Moses, Fabrici explains that the Aesculapius emblem of the pope represents him as medicus animorum.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>34</sup>Metamorphosis ouidiana, fol. ci<sup>r-v</sup>.

<sup>35</sup>Boccaccio, Gen. deor., V.xix; Cicero, De nat. deor., 3.57; Isidore, Etym., IV.iii, "De inventoribus medicinae".

<sup>36</sup>Delle allusioni, pp.51 and 102.

In the emblem Omnes Gentes Servient (Fig. 9), however, Fabrici shows unintentionally what the popes had made of this role, for before an emblem of the papal dragon one sees kings paying homage on their knees.

Spenser's version of the Aesculapius myth reads like a stinging comment on such a perversion of spiritual authority, when he relates that Aesculapius had been thrown into hell by Jupiter for his presumption (I.v.39-40). By describing Aesculapius' fall in terms comparable to the fall of Lucifer, Spenser makes it also a parallel to the fall of Phaeton in the earlier description of Lucifera. The episode is thus an allegory of the transformation of the pope's spiritual vicariate to a vicariate of the devil. This appears clearly from the conversation between Aesculapius and Night, his new patron:

An Dame (quoth he) thou temptest me in vaine,  
To dare the thing, which daily yet I rewe,  
And the old cause of my continued paine  
With like attempt to like end to renew.  
Is not enough, that thrust from heauen dew  
Here endlesse penance for one fault I pay,  
But that redoubled crime with vengeance new  
Thou biddest me to eeke? Can Night defray  
The wrath of thundering Ioue, that rules both  
night and day?

Not so (quoth she) but sith that heauens king  
From hope of heauen thee hath excluded quight,  
Why fearest thou, that canst not hope for thing,  
And fearest not, that more thee hurten might,  
Now in the powre of euerlasting Night?



Goe to then, O thou farre renowned sonne  
 Of great Apollo, shew thy famous might  
 In medicine, that else hath to thee wonne  
 Great paines, and greater praise, both neuer to  
 be done.

Her words preuaild: And then the learned leach  
 His cunning hands gan to his wounds to lay,  
 And all things else, the which his art did teach.

(I.v.42-44)

By analogy, the phrase "Now in the powre of euerlasting Night" indicates where Rome's vicariate is derived from, and the role of the medicus animorum is put in an ironic light by the fact that Aesculapius cannot even cure himself. Since his fall, he has been striving "Himselſe with ſalues to health for to reſtore" (I.v.40), apparently with no ſuſſeſſ. His "cure" of Sansjoy effects therefore alſo the oppoſite to the reſtoration of ſpiritual life and muſt be conſidered as a parody of Fidelia's cure of Redcroſſe.

To underſtand more clearly the meaning of Sansjoy, we muſt conſider the implications of his name. It can be tranſlated as joyleſſneſſ, theologically ſpeaking the ſtate of the ſoul which has loſt the ſtate of grace. He can therefore be regarded as a type of tristitia which, according to Waleys, is the eſſential quality of the ſtate we deſcribe as hell. As ſuch, Sansjoy can be taken as a type ſimilar to Deſpair who "takes away all hope of due reliefe" (I.ix.29) and aſſails Redcroſſe's heart with "hellish anguiſh" (I.ix.49). Waleys' allegory of Pluto gives us a ſuggeſtion

for the connection between the two. According to him, Pluto's realm is characterized by various forms of tristitia, namely the four rivers of hell which the soul passes on its way to Pluto's throne. The passage from Acheron to Styx represents the passage from a state of joylessness (sine gaudio) to tristitia. Waleys comments on it with, "qui caret in gaudio facile in tristitiam cadit."<sup>37</sup> Redcrosse's encounter with Sansjoy and Despair may represent a similar journey through hell which begins in Lucifera's court and ends in Orgoglio's dungeon, of which Despair's cave seems to be the last manifestation. The vanity of Lucifera's court could be considered an analogy to Waleys' "gaudium", for, although little taken with her show, Redcrosse pays homage to her and, in a sense, lays himself open to her influence which appears personified as Sansjoy and attacks him (I.iv.38). Lucifera's court is also comparable to hell since Lucifera herself is the daughter of Pluto and her palace the "sad" House of Pride (I.iv.53).

By restoring Sansjoy, i.e. by exertion of the papal vicariate, Aesculapius also restores the condition for the fall of England, i.e. of Redcrosse, under the power of Orgoglio whom one could equate with the influence of

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<sup>37</sup> Metamorphosis ouidiana, fol. xv<sup>v</sup>; see also Cartari, Imagini delli dei, p.155; W. Nelson, The Poetry of Edmund Spenser (New York, 1965), p.155.

Spain and Catholic religion during Mary Tudor's reign. Orgoglio and Duessa must be seen as another version of Spenser's treatment of the spiritual vicariate of the pope, namely a parody of the mother-role of the church which is represented in Caelia in its ideal form. This role was commonly allegorized by the myth of the rape of Proserpina by Pluto in which Ceres, Proserpina's mother, is the church who goes in search of the lost soul and restores it with the help of God (Jupiter).<sup>38</sup> In Spenser's allegory, it appears that Rome has exchanged the role of Ceres with that of Pluto, i.e. instead of being an instrument of human salvation it has become an instrument of man's fall from grace. Lucifera, a daughter of Proserpina and Pluto, is an instrument of Pluto, for her court is the equivalent to the flowery fields or 'vanity of the world in the moralized myth and the "hidden cause" for the captivity of "caytiue wretched thrals" in the dungeon underneath her palace (I.iv. 45).

An extension of the vanity of Lucifera's court which brings Redcrosse's decay is the pleasant place where Duessa finds him and delivers him into the power of Orgoglio. The description of Redcrosse as "disarmed, disgrast, and inwardly dismayde" is an allusion to the rape of Proserpina (I.vii.

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<sup>38</sup> Metamorphosis ouidiana, fols. li<sup>v</sup>-liiii<sup>r</sup>; also Ovide moralisé, ed. deBoer, V.2300-3448.

11). The emphasis on the prefix dis- draws our attention to the fact that Pluto is often designated as Dis so that we can ascribe Redcrosse's decay to his influence.<sup>39</sup> The first of the three terms alludes to Redcrosse's loss of the proverbial Pauline armour, and the second to his fall from grace in allusion to the biblical phrase, "All flesh is grass" (Isaiah 40.6). This detail represents an ironic allusion to Redcrosse's role as St. George. He is destined to become St. George or georgos, because as child he had been hidden in a "heaped furrow" by the "Plowman" (I.x.66), but at this point he is in the unpleasant position of having been hidden underground by Pluto instead so that he appears rather like a bad seed or Proserpina. The irony of his situation can be further illustrated through the etymology of his name, as found in the Golden Legend. It is composed of geos (earth) and orge (tilling), "so george is to saye as tilyenge the erthe/ that is his flesshe."<sup>40</sup> Instead of having subdued his flesh, however, Redcrosse, being "disgrast", has decayed to a less than human state and is, in fact, a vegetable in the moral sense. As such, he becomes a ripe victim for Pluto or Dis, as the last term indicates: being "dismayde", Redcrosse is a maid

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<sup>39</sup>Dr. Cain's suggestion.

<sup>40</sup>As quoted by Nelson, p.151.

or Proserpina unmade by Pluto.

Spenser also establishes a parallel between Redcrosse's and Proserpina's fate by comparing his rescue from underground to the return of Diana (I.viii.38). This is an allusion to the fact that the moon goddess existed in three different types, namely as Diana above ground and as Hecate and Proserpina underground.<sup>41</sup> The reference to Diana establishes further a parallel between Redcrosse and Una, for she is likewise described as Diana (I.xii.7), an allusion to her role as imperial virgin and church. His rescue by Arthur applies thus not only to the fate of the individual but of England as a whole. It is further represented as a rebirth both in the physical and in the spiritual sense. The latter occurs, however, only in the House of Holinesse. When Arthur brings him back to earth, Redcrosse is only being reborn in his physical state. Spenser uses here the fact that the moon's stay underground was also described in terms of a vegetation myth, namely the planting of the seed (Pluto's rape of Proserpina) and the emergence of the plant (Proserpina's return to Ceres), usually in a cycle of six months.<sup>42</sup> By using the number

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<sup>41</sup>Boccaccio, Gen. deor., Iv.xvi.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., VIII.iv; De nat. deor., 2.67.

nine instead, Spenser has combined the nine cycles commonly ascribed to the moon, e.g. by Cicero<sup>43</sup> and Isidore,<sup>44</sup> with the gestation period of the human embryo. By combining the vegetation myth with the number nine, Spenser indicates that Redcrosse's restoration by Arthur is only a partial rebirth of Proserpina or the soul. When he emerges from Orgoglio's prison, he looks therefore still like a withered plant:<sup>45</sup>

His sad dull eyes deepe sunck in hollow pits,  
 Could not endure 'th'unwonted sunne to view;  
 His bare thin cheekes for want of better bits,  
 And empty sides deceiued of their dew,  
 Could make a stony hart his hap to rew;  
 His rawbone armes, whose mighty brawned bowrs  
 Were wont to riue steele plates, and helmets hew,  
 Were cleane consum'd, and all his vitall powres  
 Decayd, and all his flesh shronk up like withered  
 flowres.

(I.viii.41)

Since Caelia represents the role of Ceres, it is only when Redcrosse enters her house that his spiritual life is restored which, as I mentioned earlier, is set in terms of the return of "light" in his eyes.

<sup>43</sup>De nat. deor., 2.69.

<sup>44</sup>Etym., XXX.liv.

<sup>45</sup>The vegetable imagery in this passage is a parallel to the imagery of the good and bad trees in Book I. We note that Redcrosse is here compared to a decayed tree. For a discussion of this theme, see Nelson, pp.158-164.

### 7. Arcturus -- Bootes -- Stella Veneris

To characterize the ecclesia Anglicana and its head, the sacred virgin of Arthur's and Henry Tudor's line, Spenser chose two sets of star images which can be regarded as representative of her theological and dynastic position, namely Arcturus and the stella Veneris. They replace the moon as traditional image of the church and empire of England, which is determined by the necessity of creating an image for England which could form an effective antithesis to the solar image of the pope and an encomium of the ruling house as well. Spenser's choice of the North-Star for such a purpose appears to reflect the traditional association of this image with England. Petrarch, for example, speaks of England as lying between "l Carro e le Colonne",<sup>46</sup> i.e. between Ursa Major (with the North-Star) and the pillars of Hercules. The image had further obviously associations with the Tudors. In a poem by Fulke Greville, quoted by Yates, Queen Elizabeth is described as Tudor virgin and as North-Star:<sup>47</sup>

Under a throne I saw a virgin sit  
The white and red rose quartered in her face,  
Star of the North . . .

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<sup>46</sup>Il canzoniere, canzone II, pp.37-38.

<sup>47</sup>As quoted by Yates, "Astraea", p.49.

The idea of the virgin as North-Star is probably influenced by Petrarch's adaptation of the hymn "Ave maris stella" in the last canzone of the Canzoniere which is also echoed by Spenser in I, Proem, 2 and II.vii.1.<sup>48</sup> These Petrarchan connotations add to the complexity of the image; however, in the following, I shall concentrate on its connection with the Tudor myth, especially with regard to Arthur's role in the poem. Another example for its political significance in this respect is one of Sylvester's interpolations in his translation of DuBartas' Divine Weeks, where he hails James I as "new North-Star".<sup>49</sup>

The theological and dynastic connotations of this image and its application to the English monarch go back to Henry Tudor's reign during which it became associated with Arthur and the Tudor myth. Francis Bacon describes the event when this took place, namely the marriage pageant for Prince Arthur and Katherine of Arragon in 1501:

In all the devices and conceits of the triumphs of this marriage, there was a great deal of astronomy: the lady being resembled to Hesperus and Prince Arthur to Arcturus . . . and whosoever had those toys in compiling, they were not altogether pedantical: but you may be sure, that king Arthur

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<sup>48</sup>Dr. Cain's suggestion.

<sup>49</sup>"Third Day, First Week", line 1172, in The Complete Works of Joshua Sylvester, ed. A. B. Grosart (New York, 1967), I, 50.



the Britain and the descent of the lady Katherine from the house of Lancaster was in no wise forgotten.<sup>50</sup>

For the details of this pageant we are obliged to Sidney Anglo's exposition and analysis in his book on Tudor pageantry.<sup>51</sup> It will appear as a valuable source of information for Spenser's use of astronomical images at the beginning of canto ii and for the description of Arthur in canto vii.

The beginning of canto ii is a highly significant passage for the allegory of Book I, for it sets up a symbolic configuration of images of the ecclesia Anglicana and its role in the allegorical episodes to follow:

By this the Northerne wagoner had set  
His seuenfold teme behind the stedfast starre,  
That was in Ocean waues yet neuer wet,  
But firme is fixt, and sendeth light from farre  
To all that in the wide deepe wandring arre:  
And chearefull Chaunticlere with his note shrill  
Had warned once, that Phoebus fiery carre  
In hast was climbing up the Easterne hill,  
Full enuious that night so long his roome did fill.

(I.ii.1)

There are four details which we shall have to discuss: first, the significance of the "wagoner", second, the "stedfast starre", third, "Chaunticlere", and fourth, Phoebus. The first two can be recognized as the two adjacent

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<sup>50</sup>The History of Henry VII. in The Works of Francis Bacon (London, 1730), III, 489.

<sup>51</sup>Spectacle, Pageantry, and Early Tudor Policy (Oxford, 1969).

constellations Bootes and Ursa Major, as they are, e.g., described by Isidore:

Signum primus Arcton, qui in axe fixus septem stellis in se revolutis rotatur. Nomen est Graecum, quod Latine dicitur ursa; quae quia in modum plaustrum vertitur, nostri eam Septentrionem dixerunt. Triones enim proprie sunt boves aratorii, dicti eo quod terram terant, quasi teriones. Septentriones autem non occidere axis vicinitas facit, quia in eo sunt. Arctophylax dictus, quod Arcton, id est Helicem Ursam, sequitur. Eundem et Bootem dixerunt, eo quod plastro haeret: signum multis spectabile stellis, inter quas Arcturus est, Arcturus sidus est, post caudam maioris ursae posita in signo Bootae.<sup>52</sup>

In other words, Arcton or Ursa Major, a constellation of seven stars, shaped like a chariot or wagon, is next to Arctophylax or Bootes, a constellation which contains Arcturus, a very bright star. Spenser's description seems to correspond to Isidore's. The "waggoner" would be Bootes, the "sevenfold teme" the seven stars or the wagon of Ursa Major, while the "stedfast star" would be "Arcton . . . in axe fixus". The waggoner in Spenser's first line seems moreover to be a parallel to Phoebus, for both drive a chariot. Considering the references to Phoebus and Phaeton in the *Lucifera* episode, we can assume that the chariots here have a contrasting function as symbols of England.

As Isidore's passage shows, Bootes is a plowman, and Spenser refers to him in the same sense, as the phrase

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<sup>52</sup> Etym., III.lxxi.6-9.



This identification of Arthur and the North-Star and the allegory connected with it derive from Gregory's allegorization of two passages in the Book of Job, as Anglo has discovered, namely Job 9.9 and 38.31-32. For Gregory, Arcturus stands in the same relationship to the seven stars of the Wain (Ursa Major) as the universal church to its members and as highest virtue or truth to the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit:

Arcturus significat ecclesiam. -- Quid namque Arcturi nomine, qui, in coeli axe constitutus, septem stellarum radiis fulget, nisi Ecclesia universalis exprimitur, quae in Joannis Apocalypsi per septem Ecclesias septemque candelabra figuratur . . . ? Quae dum dona in se septiformis gratiae Spiritus continet, claritate summae virtutis irradians, quasi ab axe veritatis lucet . . . Pensandum quoque est quod Arcturus semper versatur, et nunquam mergitur, quia et sancta Ecclesia persecutiones iniquorum sine cessatione tolerat, sed tamen<sup>54</sup> usque ad mundi terminum sine defectu perdurat.

In the same sense, Arthur in The Faerie Queene can be understood as representative of the universal church and as figure who contains the sevenfold grace of the Holy Spirit. The above description corresponds with Spenser's stanza in canto ii, namely that the steadfast star "was in Ocean waues yet neuer wet" and, firmly "fixt", sends his light to illumine the path of those erring in the darkness -- a function represented by Arthur's supporting role in

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<sup>54</sup>Moralia, IX.xi.13, in P. L., LXXV, 866.

the individual quests. Allegorically, Spenser's stanza gives an image of the English church under the guidance of grace and its monarch, Queen Elizabeth as Arthurus redivivus.

A comparable use of the septentriones for the image of the church is Dante's description of the chariot of the church in the Purgatorio. It must likewise have been derived from Gregory's text, for Dante's pageant is preceded by the seven candlesticks, and he alludes to the theological meaning of the seven stars in the opening lines of canto xxx:

Quando il settentrion del primo cielo,  
che né occaso mai seppe né orto  
né d'altra nebbia che di colpa velo,  
e che faceva lí chiascuno accorto  
di suo dover, come 'l piú basso face  
qual temon gira per venire a porto,  
fermo s'affise;

(Purg., xxx, 1-7)

The "settentrion del primo cielo" alludes to the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit of which the constellation "piú basso" is a symbol.

The role of "Chaunticlere" in connection with the North-Star is to announce the arrival of Christ, the bridegroom of the church. Chaunticlere's role can be seen in the light of the following passage from Gregory's Moralia:

Qui hoc loco galli nomine designatur, nisi modo  
alio repetiti iidem praedicatores sancti, qui

inter tenebras vitae praesentis student venturam  
 lucem praedicando, quasi cantando nuntiare?  
Dicunt enim: Nox praecessit, dies autem  
appropinquavit (Rom. XIII.12)<sup>55</sup>

Gregory's passage seems to be reflected in Spenser's passage where "Chaunticlere with his note shrill" is "warning" men of the imminent arrival of Phoebus. "Shrill" is perhaps a not very flattering reference to the tone in which the propagandists for England's supremacy hailed the restoration of true religion at Elizabeth's accession to the throne and after. The steadfast star, as predecessor of "Chaunticlere" and Phoebus, seems also to identify Arcturus with Arthur as ancestor of Queen Elizabeth, and as such he appears as the forerunner of the sacred empire of the Tudor virgin. His role can be compared to Gregory's discussion of Job 38.31-32. He interprets Arcturus as forerunner of the Pleiades which, in turn, announce the arrival of Phoebus. While Arcturus signifies the church as a whole, according to Gregory, the Pleiades are saints and types of Christ who have illuminated the world with the sevenfold grace of God.<sup>56</sup> This progression from Arcturus to the Pleiades and Phoebus can be compared to Spenser's progression from Bootes/Arcturus to Chaunticlere

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<sup>55</sup> Moralia, XXX.iii.9, in P. L., LXXVI, 527-528.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., XXIX.xxxi.67-76, P. L., LXXVI, 515-520.

and the sunrise. It is symbolically the history of the sacred empire from Arthur to Elizabeth as a progression toward towards truth and Christ, which is heralded by Chaunticlere, perhaps a personification of the saints and martyrs of the Reformation during Mary Tudor's reign who foresaw the end of the reign of darkness.

Since the Pleiades are connected with Arcturus as heralds of Christ, Spenser's reference to Aldebaran in I.iii.16 seems to be an image of the pope as herald of Antichrist. The Pleiades are a constituent star cluster of Taurus, while Aldebaran is a reddish giant star in the same constellation. Taurus is normally low on the horizon, and Cassiopeia high above him close to the North-Star. Spenser's line that "Aldeboran was mounted hie Aboue the shynie Cassiopeias chaire" indicates a violation of order; Aldebaran seems, in fact, to have taken up the position of the North-Star which is normally "above" Cassiopeia. The topical significance of Spenser's image derives from the fact that in addition to the "New Star" discovered in Cassiopeia in 1572, there appeared a new star on England's political horizon, namely Ugo Boncompagni, who became Pope Gregory XIII in the same year. His position towards England could therefore be seen in analogy to the position of the sign draco to the North-Star on the sky map. The dragon plays, however, also a part in the myth of Cassiop-

eia and her daughter Andromeda. Neptune had sent a sea-monster against them which was killed by Perseus, the slayer of the Gorgon Medusa and original model for St. George as dragon slayer. We can take Una's situation at this point as analogous to Cassiopeia's: the star can be compared to the monster from the sea which threatened Cassiopeia as well as to the analogous monster in the Apocalypse, which are together represented by the papal dragon. If we see the position of Aldeboran in relation to Cassiopeia as analogous to the sign draco, we can interpret Spenser's passage further as parallel to Titan's usurpation of Phoebus' place at the beginning of canto ii. Arthur, who bears an image of a lady's head on his shield, is clearly designated as Una's predestined rescuer in analogy to Perseus who killed the monster, like Arthur the dragon, by showing him the image on his shield.

The passage which contains Spenser's description of Arthur's role in this respect occurs in canto vii. It is particularly interesting for its combination of the images of Phoebus, Hesperus, and "twinkling stars", which give us a clue for our reading of the roles of Arthur, Gloriana, and Una, and it can be illustrated by reference to the pageant of 1501:

His glitterand armour shined farre away,  
Like glauncing light of Phoebus brightest ray;  
From top to toe no place appeared bare,  
That deadly stint of steele endanger may:



Athwart his brest a bauldrick braue he ware,  
That shynd, like twinkling stars, with stons most  
precious rare.

And in the midst thereof one pretious stone  
Of wondrous worth, and eke of wondrous might,  
Shapt like a Ladies head, exceeding shone,  
Like Hesperus amongst the lesser lights,  
And stroue for to amaze the weaker sights

(I.vii.29-30)

It appears that Arthur combines the roles of Phoebus and Arcturus in his person. The association of the armour with Phoebus is an expression for his allegorization as sol iustitiae, i.e. divine and imperial justice, which give Arthur the strength to withstand "deadly stint of steele", i.e. the weapons of Antichrist. The "twinkling stars" on the baldrick recall the allegorization of Arcturus and the septentriones. One could say that they show Arthur further as type of the church armed with the gifts of grace and of truth.

The combination of Phoebus and Hesperus derives from an interesting modification of the common allegorization of Hesperus as sign of Antichrist by the author of the 1501 pageant. It had been motivated by the fact that the bride came from Spain or Hesperia. While Gregory, for example, treats Lucifer, the morning star, as parallel image of Christ as sun, the pageant author made Hesperus the image of Christ as well as of Arthur as king, together with the image of the sol iustitiae:

It is the Sun of Justice, the erth enlumynyng,  
 That Is the verray hesperus, that shone so bryght  
 In the west, to ouir comfort, by his deth ffallyng.  
 This is the lyon of Judah, that vanquysshid in ffygth  
 Rysyng from deth to lyfe by his òwn mygth.  
 This ys Arthurus, enlumynyng ecch coost  
 Wyth sevyn brygth sterres, vij gyfftyes of the holy  
 Goost.<sup>57</sup>

Anglo quotes this passage as part of the description of Arthur's representation as sun-king under God. It represents thus the imperial role of the king as imago dei and vicarius Christi. Analogous to Spenser's Arthur, he is armed with the justice of Christ, and the armour may also be the spiritual armour of a Christian<sup>58</sup>

Apart from being an image of Christ, Hesperus is also the image of Venus, namely as stella Veneris. It represents the "faire lady" on Arthur's shield in analogy to both Prince Arthur and the bride from Hesperia. She combines the Christological and imperialistic image of Arthur as Hesperus and the image of the bride with the beauty of a celestial Venus. By her central position on the baldrick, "in the midst" of "twinkling stars", Gloriana seems further to be a type of Arcturus as sign of highest virtue. Arthur and Gloriana are thus a combination of the imperial qualities of the queen in regard to the church. They can be described as a coniunctio Arthuri et Veneris, to use a

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<sup>57</sup>Quoted by Anglo, p.79.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid., pp.81-85.

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title which had been given a treatise written for the marriage of Prince Arthur and Katherine of Arragon.<sup>59</sup>

The theme of the coniunctio can, moreover, be extended to describe the purpose of Arthur's search for Gloriana. It is an allegory of Christ's search for his bride, England's empress,<sup>60</sup> and of a search of imperial justice (Arthur as sol iustitiae) in aid of heavenly grace (Gloriana as type of grace in the sense attributed to Arcturus) against the enemies of the universal church which is, of course, the English church. Arthur's quest is an allegory of the restoration of the sacred empire which becomes a reality through the mystic marriage of the Tudor virgin to her realm, which is the marriage of Arthur's line to England as well. Spenser's poem represents the stages of this development, not the achievement itself, and therefore Arthur's quest remains unfinished. This is further necessitated by the typological character of the relationship between Arthur and Gloriana which foreshadows Christ's marriage to his bride, the Heavenly Jerusalem. Its consummation lies beyond the limits of the temporal world in which England conducts its struggle with its enemy. Arthur's unfulfilled quest points therefore towards the end

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<sup>59</sup>Anglo, pp.92-93.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid., pp.87-88, for an analogy from the pageant.

of time, while the combination of the qualities of Arcturus and Hesperus in Gloriana has a typological function.

Gloriana, being represented on Arthur's shield in the image of a lady's "head", may represent the queen's role as "head" of the church and empire, while Una would be the ecclesia Anglicana, shielded by Gloriana's sacred power (Arthur). Una's attributes parallel those of Arthur as type of Christ and the church. In canto iii, she is compared to the sun and accompanied by a lion, and can be compared to Prince Arthur who, in the pageant, was also described by the images of sol iustitiae and Lion of Judah. The fight between Una's lion and Sansloy seems to foreshadow the victories of Arthur and Redcrosse which are victories for the sol iustitiae. Since the Lion of Judah represents the Old Law, Una's fate mirrors the fate of the church during its struggle with Rome, while her search for Redcrosse, her bridegroom, and their betrothal represent England's victory in allusion to the mystic marriage between the imperial virgin of right religion and her realm.

Una represents thus both the church and the empress as its bride, and therefore she is not only given the same attributes as Arthur, but also those of Gloriana, namely as Hesperus. Spenser has used the fact that Venus appears in the double roles of morning-star and evening-star in order to attribute the former image to Una and the latter to

Gloriana. As Gloriana's image suggests an analogy to Christ as Saviour (Hesperus), Una's suggests Christ's victory in analogy to the oriens image, for in canto xii Una's appearance as the morning star, which accompanies the rise of Phoebus, heralds the defeat of her antitype Lucifera:

As bright as doth the morning starre appeare  
 Out of the East, with flaming locks bedight,  
 To tell that dawning day is drawing neare,  
 And to the world does bring long wished-light;  
 So faire and fresh that Lady shewd herself in  
 sight.

(I.xii.21)

To this description, Spenser has added details which allude to Una's role as imperial virgin and bride of Christ. In the next two stanzas she is compared to Diana, i.e. to Astraea; her white dress, together with the reference to her "sunshyny face" and "blazing brightness of her beauties beame" symbolize her role as bride of Christ. "Sunshyny" is an allusion to the sol iustitiae, while the blazing light is another term for her attribute lucifera (light-bearer) as stella Veneris, and so is the phrase "beauties beame". The combination of all these images at the end of Book I represents symbolically the victories of both empire and imperial virgin over their antitypes, the false sun of Rome and the false Lucifera.

In addition, the images of Hesperus and Arcturus attributed to Arthur and Gloriana also reflect an ideal of

Christian heroism. Arthur's search for Gloriana is an allegory of the heroic life, a search for glory in the form of an amorous desire for beauty. This feature of his quest can also be compared to the analogous treatment of the heroic ideal by the pageant author. He represented the marriage of Arthur and the bride from Hesperia as a means to achieve Honour and Virtue. In the treatise entitled Coniunctio Arthuri et Veneris, Arthur was interpreted as symbol of moral perfection to which Katherine as amoris stella was joined in marriage (in other words a neoplatonic allegory of the marriage of beauty and virtue). In the 1501 pageant, the marriage had been similarly allegorized. A throne, representing Honour, had been prepared for the royal pair to which seven steps were leading, namely the three Theological and four Cardinal Virtues.<sup>61</sup> In Spenser's poem, Gloriana represents the goal of a life of virtue and heroic actions. Arthur's love for her is the equivalent to the heroic desire and to the workings of grace in the soul which combined lead to earthly and heavenly glory. Arthur's aid to the individual heroes would signify the influence of grace and heroic desire on the success of heroic action. As instrument for the moral perfection of the individual, Arthur is moreover an aspect of Queen Elizabeth's government.

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<sup>61</sup>Anglo, p.90.

Since the empire possessed a moral and sacred purpose, Arthur's intervention in the individual quests is also a representation of the renovatio imperii. If Arthur is its instrument, Gloriana is its guiding light and its goal, for all quests are initiated by her command and lead back to her court. Arthur's role reflects Spenser's remark in the Letter to Raleigh that Arthur is "the perfection of all the rest", namely a personification of the grace and virtue of Elizabeth which guide men to "glory".

8. Lucifera as Antitype of Stella Veneris and Arcturus

Spenser uses negative and contrasting images for the enemies of Arthur and Gloriana as Arcturus and Hesperus. As Lucifera's name suggests, she forms a contrast to Gloriana's Venus role. Through the images of excess and vanity in her court, Lucifera, holding Venus' mirror (I.iv. 10), appears as a bad type of Venus whose claim to the attribute lucifera is badly damaged by the surroundings in which we see her. She is comparable to Boccaccio's Venus magna who represents "vanam rem".<sup>62</sup> Additional allusions to her Venus role are the similes of Flora, Circe, and Aurora, for they represent similarly types of luxuria. By comparing her to Flora (I.iv.17), Spenser undermines

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<sup>62</sup>Gen. deor., 3.22.

her image of "mayden Queene" (I.iv.8) so that in addition to being the opposite of Gloriana she is also the opposite of Una as type of Diana. This double antithesis is also implied by her name, for "lucifera" is the attribute of both Diana and Venus.<sup>63</sup>

Comparable figures to Venus as luxuria attributed to Lucifera are Circe and Aurora. The role of Circe is mainly played by Duessa, but we can also see Lucifera in this role, for, according to Conti, she is the daughter of Sol and signifies mundus prosperitas, diabolus, and libido.<sup>64</sup> The first seems to be a fitting description of Lucifera who uses the false glitter of the world to entrap those who come to her court. Duessa can be equated with libido by which ratio or virtue is overthrown. Both together are representatives of diabolus and of the pope.

If we take into account Lucifera's association with Titan, the sun-god, we can see a connection between her and Aurora who, in various parts of the poem, accompanies Titan's rise. According to the mythographers, Aurora is the daughter of Titan and Terra, and the application of

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<sup>63</sup>Cicero, De nat. deor., 2.68; Conti, Mythologiae sive explicationis fabularum libri decem (Patavii, 1616), pp.124-127.

<sup>64</sup>Mythol., p.308; also Waleys, fols. xciv<sup>v</sup>; xcv<sup>r</sup>.



her role to *Lucifera* fits in well with *Lucifera*'s association with giants and figures of pride, for the titans who rebelled against God were also the sons of Titan and Terra.<sup>65</sup> In canto iv, *Lucifera* is compared to Aurora and appears like a parody on the imperial sun-rise:

As faire Aurora in her purple pall,  
 Out of the East the dawning day doth call:  
 So forth she comes: her brightnesse brode doth  
 blaze

(I.iv.16)

The "purple pall" here reminds us of the similar garment worn by *Duessa* as type of the Whore of Babylon (I.vii.16), and the images of blushing and "purple" in the other two instances where this image appears must be seen in the same negative sense. One of these occurs at the beginning of canto ii, when the rise of *Phoebus* is prevented by *Archimago* and "faire *Hesperus*", *Gloriana*'s image, is "spent" (I. ii.6). Instead one sees the power of *Lucifera* in the ascendancy, represented by the rise of Titan and Aurora. That they precede *Una* is a reflection of the fact that Aurora is generally said to precede the stella Veneris.<sup>66</sup> The impression of startling beauty in the descriptions of Aurora seems to suggest excess, as in the passage quoted

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<sup>65</sup>Conti, p.300; Gen. deor., 4.27.

<sup>66</sup>Conti, loc. cit.

above, and it seems to have the purpose of diminishing the light of Una, the true Lucifera or light-bearer:

Now when the rosy-fingered Morning faire  
 Weary of aged Tithones saffron bed,  
 Had spred her purple robe through deawy aire,  
 And the high hills Titan discovered,  
 The royall virgin shooke off drowsy-hed,  
 And rising forth out of her baser bowre,  
 Lookt for her knight, who farre away was fled.

(I.ii.7)

The final appearance of Aurora also occurs at a crucial point, namely shortly before the dragon's defeat in canto xi:

The ioyous day gan early to appeare,  
 And faire Aurora from the deawy bed  
 Of aged Tithone gan herselfe to reare,  
 With rosie cheekes, for shame as blushing red:  
 Her golden locks for haste were loosely shed  
 About her eares, when Una did her marke  
 Clymbe to her charet, all with flowers spred,  
 From heauen high to chase the cheareless darke;  
 With merry note her loud salutes the mounting  
 larke.

(I.xi.51)

The terms "loosely shed About her eares", "shame", and the reference to an aged lover add an ironic undertone to the deceptive cheerfulness of the scene, underlined by allusion to Flora ("flowers"). The aged Tithonus, twice mentioned by Spenser in relation to Aurora, reminds us of the relationship between Duessa and Archimago who -- although not lovers -- collaborate for the defeat of the children of light. In the earlier stanza, the juxtaposition of Titan and Tithon seems also to hint at a connection between

Archimago, Lucifera, and Duessa. The stanza in canto xi suggests that we see something like a last dazzling effort of England's enemy, before he has to give way before the rising morning star and Phoebus which represent England.

In addition to characterizing Lucifera as antitype of the stella Veneris, Spenser has introduced a simile which marks her as the opponent of Arcturus or Arthur:

So forth she comes, and to her coche does clyme,  
Adorned all with gold and girlonds gay,  
That seemed as fresh as Flora in her prime,  
And stroue to match, in royall rich array,  
Great Iunoes golden chaire, the which they say  
The Gods stand gazing on, when she does ride  
To Ioues high house through heauens bras-paued way  
drawne of faire Pecoocks, that excel in pride,  
And full of Argus eyes their tailes dispredden wide.

(I.iv.17)

The image of Aurora in the preceding stanza 16, quoted above, combined with this description of Juno and her peacocks can be compared to a similar image in Petrarch's sonnet XXVI, which gives us also the key to the meaning of Juno's excursion mentioned by Spenser:

Già fiammeggiava l'amorosa stella  
per l'oriente, e l'altra, che Giunone  
suol far gelosa, nel settentrione  
rotava i raggi suoi lucente e bella.<sup>67</sup>

By contrast to the morning-star, i.e. the "amorosa stella", Lucifera is a figure of lechery, suggested by reference to

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<sup>67</sup>Il canzoniere, p.84.

Aurora and Flora; and by contrast to the septentriones Lucifera is in the role of their enemy Juno as described by Petrarch. The comparison to Petrarch sheds a further ironic light on Lucifera, for in Petrarch's sonnet these lines are the introduction to the apparition of the ill and nearly decayed Laura whom he greets with the exclamation, "Quanto cangiata, oimè, da quel di pria!". This applies equally to Spenser's passage, for it is the introduction to the anticlimactic pageant of sins.

Both Spenser and Petrarch refer to a passage in Book II of Ovid's Metamorphoses which is concerned with the ill-will Juno bears to Callisto, for she had been transformed into the constellation Ursa Major and elevated to a position in the sky. Calling on Neptune to vent her anger, Juno concludes her visit as follows:<sup>68</sup>

But if that you do make

Accompt of me your foster childe, then graunt that for my  
sake,  
The Oxen and the wicked Waine of starres in number seven,  
For whoredom sake but late ago receyved into heaven,  
May never dive within your waves. Ne let that strumpet vyle  
By bathing of hir filthie limmes your waters pure defile.  
The Gods did grant hir hir request: and straight to heaven  
she flue,  
In hāsome Chariot through the Ayre, which painted peacocks  
drue  
As well beset with blasing eyes late tane from Argus hed

(II.658-666)

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<sup>68</sup> Shakespeare's Ovid Being Arthur Golding's Translation of the Metamorphoses, ed. W. H. D. Rouse (London, 1961), p.54.

The connection between Ovid's myth and Spenser's description of Lucifera appears also established if we consider the verbal echos from Golding's translation in Spenser's lines. Spenser's meaning is, however, the reverse of Golding's. For him, Lucifera-Juno is the "wicked" figure, and Spenser's "waine" and "sevenfold teme" (I.ii.1) are the symbols of perfection and grace. The association between Neptune and Juno in Ovid's myth is reflected in Spenser's treatment of the ocean as symbol of sin when he says that the seven stars were "yet neuer wet" in "Ocean waues". In addition, the enmity of Juno and the ocean towards Britain's hero Arthur is an analogy to the fate of the Trojan hero Aeneas. The fate of the Tudor empire and of the restoration of Troy are thereby linked to the fate of the universal church.

#### 9. Excursus on Book VII

The treatment of England's fate through astronomical images in Book I also helps to shed a light on those of Book VII. The types of Elizabeth as Imperial Moon in Book VII, Cynthia and Diana, seem to be a contrast to Lucifera as the antitype to their role as lucifera. This appears also from the myth of Lucifera's birth which seems to be deliberately vague and makes her seemingly both Diana's infernal antitype Proserpina and Proserpina's daughter: "Of griesly Pluto she the daughter was, And sad Proserpina the Queene of hell" (I.iv.11). This seems to

be comparable to Boccaccio's version of the myth of Ceres and Proserpina in which Ceres is both the mother of Proserpina and Proserpina herself who is moreover identical with Diana.<sup>69</sup> Proserpina as mother of Lucifera could be a parody on the allegorical role of Ceres as mother of the church who gives birth to Lucifer or Antichrist, by contrast to Caelia who gives birth to the Theological Virtues. Proserpina as Lucifera or infernal antitype to Diana represents in addition a parody on the role of the imperial virgin. This parallels the ironic contrast between Una as sun and Lucifera as Phaeton. Since Una is, however, not associated with the political government of the imperial virgin, while Cynthia and Diana are, one can take Book VII thematically as complement to the antithetical connotations in Lucifera's description.

Mutability, as Cynthia's opponent, resembles Lucifera, for she is also associated with Titan and the rebellion of the giants against Jupiter:

She was, to weest, a daughter by descent  
Of those old Titans, that did whylome striue  
With Saturnes sonne for heauens regiment.  
Whom though high Ioue of kingdome did depriue,  
Yet many of their stemme long after did suruiue.

(VII.vi.2)

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<sup>69</sup>Gen. deor., 8.4; Conti, p.125.

So likewise did this Titanesse aspire,  
 Rule and dominion to herselfe to gaine;  
 That as a Goddesse, men might her admire,  
 And heauenly honours yield, as to them twaine.  
 At first, on earth she sought it to obtaine;

(VII.vi.4)

Like Mutability, who desires dominion on earth and a God-like status, Lucifera is the usurper of sovereignty on earth and is "Looking to heauen; for earth she did disdayne" (I.iv.11). She claims Jupiter for her "syre" and aspires to a place equal to his or even higher and is so similar to Mutability who attacks Jupiter directly. Swollen by the desire to rebel "Gainst all the Gods", Mutability begins to execute her plan "th'empire . . . from them to beare" (VII.vi.1) with an attack on Cynthia. Cynthia's palace, guarded by Time with his hourglass, reminds us that Queen Elizabeth was often compared to Truth, the daughter of Time, an allegory which had been a prominent part in her coronation pageant, for example.

Spenser's introduction of the moon goddess as personification of Elizabeth's sovereignty creates a contrast to the humiliating connotations of the lunar image for the emperor in the papal Decretal. By basing Cynthia's authority on "highest Ioue" (VII.vi.12), Spenser has eliminated the papal sun as a valid cosmic metaphor for earthly power and replaced it with God himself (Jupiter), while deriding the papal sun as symbol of Satan and of pride. Mutabil-

ity's pride which does not let her be "pleasd in mortall things beneath the moon to raigne" (Argument to Book VII) parallels that of the popes who had usurped the supremacy of the emperor. Her claim to the "Title of Old Titans right" (VII.vi.33) is, like the similar claim of Lucifera, the expression of presumption equal to that of the fallen angels. Like Lucifera, who is associated with the fallen son of Phoebus, Mutability is linked with other figures of rebellious pride punished by the gods: the titans (VII.vi.2), Chaos (vi.14), Typhon (vi.15), and Prometheus (vi.29). They represent variations on the theme of the apocalyptic dragon and his usurpation of the earth which was to be accompanied by an attack on the stars -- an analogy to Mutability's attack on Cynthia and the gods.

Cynthia, as icon of the imperial moon, is described by imagery which links her with Gloriana and Arthur. Her office to "beare Nights burning lamp" is supported by her page, Vesper, who "still twinkling like twilight, Her lightened all the way where she should wend, and ioy to weary wandring trauailers did lend" (VII.vi.9). This line recalls the description of Arcturus (I.ii.1) as symbol of grace and of the church, and of Gloriana as Hesperus among "twinkling stars" (I.vii.29-30). The two symbols of her rule, the soueraigne seat and the "chariot" (VII.vi.12-13), represent her secular and theological authority which she



holds directly from God. Thereby she is justified to guide the chariot of the church, while she herself is assisted by the church and by grace (Jupiter and Vesper).

The manoeuvres of Faunus which expose Diana's chastity to ridicule are a modified version of Mutability's attack on Cynthia. The Irish setting and the reference to the devastation of Arlo Hill link the episode with the Irish rebellions which had been hatched in Rome. A reading of the Faunus episode as part of Spenser's antipapal satire can be supported by the contemporary example of a similar use of Ovidian myth in a satiric print made in the Netherlands. It is an adaptation of Titian's "Diana and Callisto" and shows Queen Elizabeth as Diana, surrounded by her nymphs (the provinces of the Netherlands). Before her eyes Time and Truth uncover the unchastity of Callisto who is none other than Pope Gregory XIII, wearing a triple crown and hatching a number of eggs from which emerge his dragon emblem as well as various "popish plots" associated with him.<sup>70</sup>

The destruction of Arlo Hill and the stoning of Molanna as consequence of Faunus' foolishness can be seen as representation of one of these plots and its deplorable consequences, namely the invasion of Ireland by Dr. Sanders

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<sup>70</sup>Strong, Portraits, p.112.

in 1579. Sanders was a prominent leader of the Catholic exiles on the continent and managed to convince Pope Gregory XIII that such a venture would easily succeed. Like Faunus, Sanders was hunted in the wild woods of Ireland but escaped capture. Since the suppression of the rebellion in Munster which resulted from Sanders' plot was the major task of Lord Grey in the two years following his arrival in Ireland in 1580, Spenser must have been familiar with the setting of his future property, Kilkolman, at a very early date. Molanna's shallowness, which allows her to abandon her loyalty for "secret hire" and flattering words represents a comment on the inconstancy of Elizabeth's Irish subjects in general and the wavering loyalty of the Earl of Desmond in particular. Arlo Hill is part of Kilkolman, the seat of the Geraldines, which was destroyed during the Munster rebellion as punishment for the disloyalty of its owners. Diana's leniency towards Faunus and her excessive severity towards Arlo Hill seems to echo Lord Grey's view that Elizabeth's indifference and lenience toward the earlier rebellion was the cause of the destruction and long drawn out misery in the province of Munster in the following years.

It is conceivable that the Diana and Cynthia episodes are contemporaneous with the Lucifera episode and that they were later reworked in a framework which puts

Cynthia's reign in a different perspective.<sup>71</sup> The Ovidian woodcut of the papal policies is of the same time as the Sanders invasion in Ireland, and this was also the time of greatest infiltration of Catholic missionaries in England.<sup>72</sup> Pope Gregory, the archvillain in these enterprises, died in 1585, and from that point on the conflict with Spain became the predominant political problem for England, as it does in Spenser's poem from Book II on. It seems likely that Spenser's Faunus episode refers to the Sanders invasion, and not to the rebellion of the Earl of Tyrone in 1598, because in the earlier uprising Kilkolman was destroyed by the troops of the queen, while in 1598, when it was Spenser's property, it was destroyed by the rebels.

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<sup>71</sup>For a summary of the views on the date of composition see Appendix II, "The Date of the Cantos and their Relationship to the Faerie Queene", by Brents Stirling, Variorum F. Q., VI-VII, 433-451.

<sup>72</sup>A. C. Judson, The Life of Edmund Spenser (Baltimore, 1966), p.828.

## Chapter Four, Part I

### THE PROVIDENTIAL SCHEME AND THE RESTORATION OF TROY

Since the fate of the Tudor dynasty and of England is representative for the sacred history of Christ's church, it is inevitable that Spenser should also have introduced allusions to the Elizabethan commonplace of a providential pattern of history. This aspect of the poem will be investigated in its negative form, namely as treatment of *Lucifera*<sup>1</sup> who is characterized as enemy of divine providence or type of mala Fortuna. Since the imperial virgin *Astraea* could also represent Fortuna in a positive sense (bona Fortuna), *Lucifera*'s characteristics are again to be seen in contrast to those of the Tudor virgin. The antithesis, expressed in multiple images with negative connotations in the description of *Lucifera* and her court, amounts to a prophecy of the inevitability of Rome's fall.

#### 1. Bona Fortuna in Contrast to Lucifera

Cartari's discussion of the contrasting concepts of the goddess Fortuna can be used to illustrate Spenser's strategy.<sup>1</sup> According to him, there existed two types. The

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<sup>1</sup>Imagini delli dei, pp.237-256, on which the following summary is based.

good type, an extension of Destiny or Providence, was apparently derived from the characteristics of Isis and Ceres, which are also those of the virgin Astraea, a fact Cartari does not mention.<sup>2</sup> He shows images of bona Fortuna which contain the cornucopia of Ceres and Isis and the scales, symbols of their justice. The origin of the confusion of these various deities lies in antiquity and is based on the fact that ancient images of the Egyptian goddess Isis, no longer recognized as such, were attributed to Ceres who had a similar iconography.<sup>2</sup> This composite figure, the bringer of good things and of justice, became apparently on one hand the imperial virgin Astraea and, on the other, as we see from Cartari, bona Fortuna. Interesting for Spenser's imagery is further Cartari's identification of her with Nemesis, the daughter of the sol iustitiae, whose role is to punish superbia by a power derived from the sun. The images of the sol iustitiae in Book I which accompany Arthur and Redcrosse, the instruments of divine justice, can also reflect the influence of the imperial virgin as Nemesis and agent of providence.

Spenser's characterization of Lucifera as enemy of England appears as a combination of the myths of mala

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<sup>2</sup>See Roscher, "Fortuna".

Fortuna and Troy. He establishes parallels between Satan and mala Fortuna, and between mala Fortuna and Juno, the enemy of Troy. To this he adds parallels between Lucifera and Rome by allusions to the fall of Rome and the instability of earthly power. In the following, the discussion of the connections between Fortune and the devil will lead us to Lucifera's connection with Juno and Troy.

## 2. Mala Fortuna and the Devil

Lucifera's association with the devil, implied by her name, reflects the commonplace accusation against Rome that it had been taken over by Antichrist who had let loose the forces of hell upon mankind. To add the mythological context of the mala Fortuna to such a portrait of the Roman Antichrist was specifically appropriate since there existed a rich tradition in which Fortuna, the pagan deity deposed by St. Augustine, had in the Middle Ages become a type of evil, sin, and Satan, and this tradition carried over into the Renaissance. Boccaccio, in his De casibus illustrium virorum, considers her as part of the fall: caused by "blind desire of temporal things" and "disobedience to God", it opened the door to all the miseries we describe as the "instability of fortune".<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>The Fates of Illustrious Men, tr. and abbr. L. B. Hall (New York, 1965), p.4.

Poliziano, too, makes Fortune the instrument of the fall, i.e. identical with Satan.<sup>4</sup> This appears also in Lydgate's Assembly of Gods, where Fortune and Pluto are seated side by side,<sup>5</sup> which reminds us that on the basis of the frequent identification of Pluto with Plutus, both Fortune and the devil could figure as gods of the world. Such an association is, e.g. reflected in Palingenius' description of Fortune as the equivalent to the devil, for, like him, she is "prince of the world" and favours the "foule and wicked".<sup>6</sup>

Spenser's description of Lucifera's court with its excess of worldliness, combined with her name and a pageant of sins spurred on by Satan, clearly fits into this tradition. Redcrosse's arrival at her court resembles Will's encounter with the goddess Fortune in Piers Plowman. She is accompanied by Concupiscentia-carnis, Coueytise-of-eyes, and Pryde-of-parfyte-lyuyng and persuades him to neglect

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<sup>4</sup>"Stanze per la giostra", st. 21, in Stanze per la giostra -- Orfeo -- Rime (Novara, 1968), p.39.

<sup>5</sup>John Lydgate, The Assembly of Gods, or the Accord of Reason and Sensuality in the Fear of Death, ed. Oscar L. Triggs (Chicago, 1895), st. 45.

<sup>6</sup>The Zodiake of Life, tr. Barnabe Googe, facs., with an introd. by Rosemond Tuve (New York, 1947), Bk. VIII, 138. See also Spenser's pair Mammon and Philotime in Book II of The Faerie Queene.

"clergye".<sup>7</sup> Lucifera's instruments, by which she brings men to fall and destroys their loyalty to the right kind of religion, are likewise "Couetise . . . wasteful Pride, and wanton Riotise" (I.iv.46), or, as they are more familiarly known, the World, the Flesh, and the Devil.<sup>8</sup> This infernal trinity is personified by Lucifera (the World), Duessa (the Flesh), and Satan who rides on the wagon beam of Lucifera's chariot. Their triple perversion may be represented by the three stanzas devoted to the description of each individual sin in the pageant. Its being led by a "monk" can be compared to Langland's episode, for Fortune advises Will, "whiles Fortune is thi frend freres wil the louye".<sup>9</sup>

### 3. Lucifera as Enemy of Troynovant

Lucifera's connection with the devil and evil Fortune is further extended to a connection with Juno and her enmity towards Troy. Spenser introduces the theme by reference to Juno's pride. This is an allusion to her rising against Jupiter whom she tried in vain to pull from

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<sup>7</sup>Piers Plowman, ed. W. W. Skeat (Oxford, 1886), B-text, Passus XI.11-15.

<sup>8</sup>The origin of this idea is 1 John 2.15-16.

<sup>9</sup>Piers Plowman, XI.54.



his throne by means of the golden chain.<sup>10</sup> Spenser alludes to this event by comparing Lucifera to Juno, riding in a chariot "to Ioues high house" with peacocks "that excell in pride" (I.iv.17). In ancient literature, the myth had been identified with the rising of the giants against Jupiter,<sup>11</sup> which medieval allegorists had treated as an allegory of Satanic pride. Like Juno, Lucifera aspires to the place of Jupiter (I.iv.11), and, through her association with Titan and Lucifer, she is also linked with the rebellious giants. Through her association with the rebellious giants, Juno had moreover become identified with the goddess Fortuna as an evil figure or "malus demon", as we see from Conti's Mythology. He says that Fortuna was born "e sanguine", i.e. from earth like the giants, and he attributes to her the rebellion against Jupiter's golden chain described by Homer.<sup>12</sup> Lucifera's pride and ambition, equal to Juno's and Lucifer's, characterize her therefore also as evil Fortune, and the comparison establishes a link between the ancient enemy of Troy and the enemy of Gloriana's Troynovant.

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<sup>10</sup>Conti, Mythol., 2.4.

<sup>11</sup>Pauly-Wissowa, "Hera".

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., 4.9.

It is, by contrast, characterized as being under the protection of divine providence, symbolized by Jupiter's golden chain. This is implied in a revealing passage in which Night complains to Duessa that her "famous children" have vainly tried to break the "chain of strong necessity" tied to Jupiter's throne (I.v.25). The term "famous" is heavily ironic, for it actually refers to the opposite of the heroic ideal represented by Gloriana and her city Cleopolis ("city of fame"). The "fame" of Night's children derives from their having been defeated by Jupiter. They are therefore "infamous" examples of foolish Pride which causes its own downfall, like Juno and the giants. Night's recollection of these falls is, by implication, a forecast of the fate awaiting Lucifera. The analogy between Jupiter's chain as symbol of providence and England's providential history is established through the image of the "golden chain of virtues" which describes Gloriana's champions:

O goodly golden chaine,<sup>s</sup> wherewith yfere  
 The vertues linked are in louely wize!  
 And noble minds of yore allyed were,  
 In braue poursuit of cheualrous emprise,  
 That none did others safety despize,  
 Nor aid enuy to him, in need that stands,  
 But friendly each did others prayse deuize  
 How to aduance with fauourable hands,  
 As this good Prince redeemd the Redcrosse  
 knight from bands.

(I.ix.1)

Arthur's support for the individual champions of virtue represents the equivalent to the golden chain as symbol

of the support of divine providence for England. It is furthermore clothed in the image of heroic and chivalric virtue which is being restored by Arthur's actions. Ancient virtue becomes thus identical with ancient Troy, and their restoration becomes part of the restoration of grace and right religion in England.

(a) Lucifera's Pageant and the Sequence of the Quests

In Lucifera's pageant, the vices are arranged in a sequence which suggests that it is the antithesis to the golden chain of virtues in the poem. Each vice can be paired with a contrasting virtue or champion of Gloriana. One could thus say that the poem itself represents a golden chain or an instrument of providence.

Lucifera's chain:

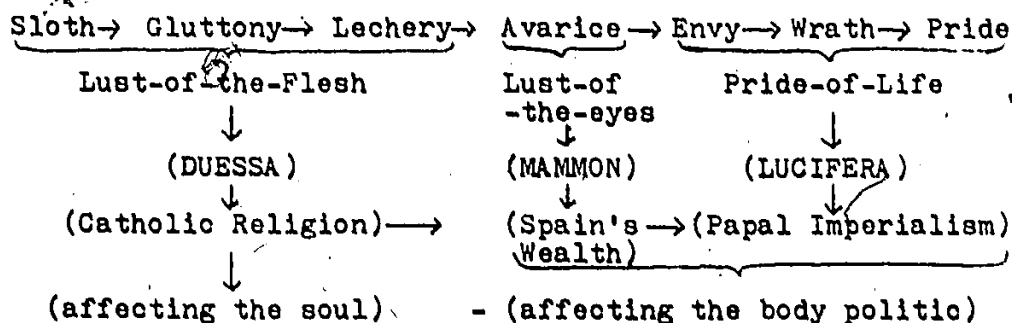
Sloth	Gluttony	Lechery	Avarice	Envy	Wrath
↑	↑				
<u>Gloriana's chain:</u>					
↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
Holin- ess	Temper- ance	Chastity	Friend- ship	Just- ice	Courtesy
(Bk. I)	(Bk. II)	(Bk. III)	(Bk. IV)	(Bk. V)	(Bk. VI)

The opposition between Sloth and Holiness appears from the fact that Sloth, depicted as a monk, seems to mean spiritual sloth, the opposite to the active and heroic virtue of Holiness which is equated with spiritual warfare. Temperance and Gluttony are a typical contrast, for Temperance has generally to do with the bridling of the appetite,

especially with regard to food and drink which is suggested by the imagery of food and drink in Book II. Lechery and Chastity are also obvious opposites, and notably Britomart's defeat of Busirane represents the defeat of this vice. The last three pairs are less obvious opposites. Since Avarice, or the hunger for gold, is equated with Ate's golden apple in Book II, the introduction of Ate as figure of discord in Book IV can be seen as an extension of the allegory of Temperance of Book II. As such, she is a personification of avarice as enemy of concord with which the virtue of Friendship seems to be identical, for Book IV culminates in two great symbols of concord, the Temple of Venus and the marriage of the rivers. The opposition between Justice and Envy, most obvious in the encounter between Arthegall and the Blatant Beast at the end of Book V, can be seen in the light of Elyot's view in The Governor that Envy is the greatest enemy of the just governor or prince. Since Courtesy in Book VI has to do with civil harmony and civility, Wrath, whom we see mainly as a figure of civil discord, can be taken as the fitting contrast to the virtue of Book VI. Pride, the queen and root of all vices, is represented by Lucifera, and, by implication, her opposite Gloriana is the root of all virtue and grace as queen of the champions of England.

(b) Lucifera's "Chain of Vices" as Image of the Infernal Trinity

In addition to these antithetical relationships of vices and virtues one could, of course, discover others, but I shall here merely focus on the chain as symbol of evil Fortune and the devil which is an image of England's political opponents. In this respect, one can also see a progressive pattern in Lucifera's chain, represented as the effect of the Infernal Trinity on the body politic, namely a progression from spiritual to political corruption which shows that Rome's political power is based on corrupt religion and Spanish gold:



Gluttony and Lechery represent the overthrow of the government of reason in the soul, and their power seems to be caused by spiritual sloth, i.e. corrupt religion. The corruption caused by the hunger for gold has been treated in the allegory of Temperance in Book II, where Spenser represents Spain's power as an allegory of Pluto and Fort-

una as gods of wealth and worldly station (Mammon and Philotime). This part of Spenser's allegory will be discussed in the last two chapters. As Duessa corrupts religion and the soul, Mammon corrupts the will or heroic virtue, as we shall see. Since holiness and heroic virtue are for Spenser the two virtues on which the sacred empire is to be based, Duessa and Mammon represent by contrast the basis on which the corrupt papacy is founded.

#### 4. Ironic Images of Lucifera's Instability

If the corrupt form of the golden chain represents Lucifera's political power and her enmity towards Troynovant as type of Juno or evil Fortune who attacks Gloriana's golden chain, we find on the other hand images of two-faced Fortune and the antithesis between virtue and Fortune which undermine the glittering images of Lucifera's pomp. Their alluring power which draws great numbers of people to her court and the fact that she appears as a queen suggest a connection between her and Lady World, a figure whose name originated from the translation of mundus into German as "die Welt". Like her, Lucifera could be described as a mixture of the Whore of Babylon, Luxuria, Superbia, and Fortuna.<sup>13</sup> Lady World is usually depicted as a figure of

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<sup>13</sup>W. Stammer, Frau Welt: Eine mittelalterliche Allegorie (Freiburger Universitätsreden, N.F. 23; Freiburg i. Ue., 1959), my source for the above-mentioned details.

vainglory, symbolized by her peacock-feathers, or by a triumphal chariot around which courtiers are crowding. Lucifera's chariot, compared to Juno's and her "Peocks pride" (I.iv.17), seems also to represent this role. The mirror, symbol of Lady World's vainglory and self-love, is also an attribute of Lucifera (I.iv.10). Redorosse's appearance before her can be compared to an etching of Mandus before whom appear "worldly man" accompanied by Ambitio and Avaritia. Lucifera is herself the personification of these vices, since she is surrounded by worldly self and aspires to Jupiter's throne. Redorosse, as "worldly man", is ushered in by "Vanity" and guided by Luxury.

The ironic point of Lucifera's association with Lady World is that she was commonly represented as two-faced. On one hand, she appeared pleasing and attractive, on the other full of sickness and decay, a characteristic she took over from Fortune.<sup>14</sup> In canto iv, Spenser's reader views therefore first a splendid façade and a court that seems to promise wealth and glory, but which is also full of foolish vanity and pride, i.e. the courtiers who "pranoke" their "ruffes" while looking disdainfully upon each other (I.iv. 14-15). At the same time, the reader is guided step by step

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<sup>14</sup>For two-faced Fortune see, e.g. Cartari, p.238.

to a recognition of the second side of this court by the images of the instability of worldly appearances and riches, e.g. the shifting "sandie hill" under her castle which can be compared to her dungeon where her victims can contemplate the sudden "shifts" of Fortune., To this can be added the image of the ruinous "hinder parts" of her castle and the moral decay represented by her pageant which we see only after the seeming splendour of her court.

The irony of these images is doubled, if we recognize that they also indicate the instability of Lucifera's own power which is opposed by virtue and providence. She must be seen both as a figure of the fall from Fortune, a type of political tyrant and fallen Lucifer, and an instrument for the fall of others, i.e. a kind of evil Fortune or devil. In the sequence, I shall discuss several images and iconographical details in canto iv which reveal this characteristic of her court. One example for the ambiguity of her power is the "squared bricke" (I.iv.4) of which her palace is built. The square stone was commonly used as symbol of the steadfastness of virtue by which man could oppose the treachery and instability of Fortune. The term "brick" instead of "stone" undermines the possibly positive connotations of the castle, for it implies a pun on "break".<sup>15</sup> The square stone could further be interpreted

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<sup>15</sup>Dr. Cairns suggestion.



as symbol of Truth<sup>16</sup> and religion,<sup>17</sup> and in this respect Lucifera's castle can be seen as contrast to the "strong castle" of Una's parents (I.vii.44). It seems to be a building like Hawes' Tower of Doctrine, built on "craggy rocks, which quadrant dyde appere", "quadrant" being an expression for its strength.<sup>18</sup> The image of the "sandie hill", i.e. of the corrupt rock of the church, furthers this contrast, for it is a parallel to the meaning of the "broken" cube or "squared bricke". Speaking of medieval depictions of Fortune's seat as a rock or hill, S. Chew notes that the parable of the House built on Sand and the House built on Rock (Matth. 7.24-27) was frequently used to express the contrast between the steadfastness of virtue and the instability of fortune. He quotes from a poem by Spenser's contemporary Francis Kinwelmarsh who advises man:

Upon the settled Rooke, thy building surest standes,  
 Away it quickly weares, that resteth on the sandes.  
 Dame Virtue is the Rooke, that yeeldes assured stay,  
 Dame Fortune is the Sand, that scowreth soon away.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>S. Chew, The Pilgrimage of Life (Princeton, 1962), p.67.

<sup>17</sup>Fabrizi, Delle allusioni, pp.98 and 251.

<sup>18</sup>The Pastime of Pleasure, ed. W. E. Mead, EETS, O. S., No. 173 (London, 1929), line 360. The origin of Una's tower seems to be the image of the "city that lieth four-square" on a mighty mountain (Rev. 21.16).

<sup>19</sup>As quoted by Chew, Pilgrimage, p.66.

As I showed in an earlier chapter, the metaphor of the rock had a significant topical application in Spenser's time, and by combining it with the traditional contrast between Fortune and virtue, Spenser alludes to the outcome of the struggle between the contestants.

A second ironic contrast to the cube is established by introduction of another symbol of Fortune, namely the wheel which is the most common representation of what is known as the de casibus theme, i.e. of the falls from Fortune's favour and of her enmity to virtue. An example for this contrast is the title page of Petrarch's De remedii utriusque fortunae in the Paris edition of 1523. On it the Sedes Fortunae Rotunda is opposite the Sedes Virtutis Quadrata.<sup>20</sup> Spenser also introduces two such images of the wheel which can be seen as related to the ambiguous phrase of the "squared" brick. One of these is Ixion on his wheel whom Dueessa and Night pass on their way to hell (I,v.35), a fitting reminder of their own eventual fate, for in Sebastian Brant's Narrenschiff he is quoted as exemplum for those who do not recognize the power of Fortune's wheel and are punished with everlasting pain, a myth which therefore also foreshadows the description of Aesculapius, the

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<sup>20</sup> Mentioned by Wittkower in "Chance, Time, and Virtue", JWCI, 1 (1937-38), 318.

incurable medicus animorum, a few stanzas later.<sup>21</sup> Spenser also uses the image to cast an ironic light on Lucifera, for he translates her usurpation of sovereignty into the image of Phaeton falling "rapt with whirling wheelles" (I.iv.9).

A third image which parallels the ironic meaning of the wheel is the hourglass or dial. It indicates the subjection of Fortune's realm to Time and Death. Spenser caps the description of Lucifera's palace with the addition of a dial to its top (I.iv.4). His emphasis on this word by means of capitalization and spelling ("Diall") suggests a pun in the sense of "die-all" so that Time governing Lucifera's castle is really Time the devourer, often identical with Death. E. Panofsky, in his discussion of the type, has pointed out that:

Time, having appropriated the deadly cannibalistic scythe-brandishing Saturn, became more and more intimately related to Death, and it was from the image of Time that . . . representations of Death began to borrow the hourglass . . . Time in turn could be shown as precursor of Death whom he provides with his victims.<sup>22</sup>

Panofsky also notes that "the symbolical value of the hour-

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<sup>21</sup>A. Doren, "Fortuna im Mittelalter und in der Renaissance", in Vorträge der Bibliothek Warburg, II, Vorträge 1922-23, 1. Teil, ed. F. Saxl (Nendeln, Liechtenstein, 1924), 105, note.

<sup>22</sup>Studies in Iconology (New York, 1970), p.83.

glass or clock is somewhat similar to that of the mirror which during the Middle Ages had been used as attribute of both Luxury and Death."<sup>23</sup> The dial suggests therefore on one hand that Lucifera's own power is limited by Time and Death, and on the other that she wields a power equal to these two, a meaning which is enforced by the mirror in her hand (I.iv.10), by the "dead souls and bones of men" under the feet of the animals drawing her chariot (I.iv.36) in a type of Petrarchan triumph of Fortune, and by the many "corse . . . of mured men" behind her castle (I.v.53), whereby the word "mured" recalls the association between mors and mordere and Time as edax rerum.

As image which suggests Lucifera's own fate, the dial can further be taken as symbol for the instability of the papal authority, as we can see from a comparable illustration on the title page of Sigismond Fanti's Triumpho di Fortuna, written in 1526 under the threat of the impending sack of Rome and fall of the papacy. R. Eisler has described the relevant details for us.<sup>24</sup> He mentions that the woodcut shows the pope seated on a revolving sphere between Virtus and Voluptas -- an allusion to the Choice of Hercules

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<sup>23</sup>Panofsky, loc. cit.

<sup>24</sup>"The Frontispiece to Sigismond Fanti's Triumpho di Fortuna", JWCI, 10 (1947), 155-159.

to which Spenser also refers at the beginning of the Lucifera episode. The papal sphere is turned by Bona Fortuna and Malus Genius, while one sees the city of Rome with a clocktower on which a dial indicates the cycle of hours, reminding us that on Lucifera's castle the dial also tells "the timely hours". The line is perhaps likewise an indication that Rome is the civitas terrena which is liable to fall through the same means which she employs against others.

The parallels between Lucifera and Rome are made even more obvious by the introduction of two specific allusions to the fall of Rome in cantos iv and v. The "sandie hill, that still did flit" (I.iv.5) seems to be a verbal echo from Spenser's translation of Du Bellay's Songe and Antiquitez de Rome, the latter significantly rendered as Ruines of Rome:

behold the ruin'd pride  
Of these old Romane works built with your hands,  
Now to become nought else but heaped sands.

(sonnet 15)

O worlds inconstancie  
That which is firme doth flit and fall away,  
And that is flitting, doth abide and stay

(sonnet 3)

Similarly in the Visions of Bellay:

But that on sand was built the goodly frame:  
It seem'd her top the firmament did rayse.

(sonnet 14)

These correspondences give the impression that although Lucifera has skilfully disguised the shaky foundations of her power (the "golden foile" spread over the castle walls), she will, like ancient Rome, become herself the victim of a higher Fortune, i.e. of providence.

The second allusion to Rome's fall occurs in the description of Lucifera's victims in the dungeon below her castle. The catalogue of examples of the de casibus tradition seems to rise to a climax with the description of "Romaines" falls. After mentioning only six men from pre-Roman antiquity like Ninus, Nimrod, and Alexander, Spenser names no less than ten examples for falls of men related to Rome, whereby the inclusion of Hannibal seems to indicate an emphasis on the fate of the empire as a whole rather than on the individual:

And in another corner wide were strowne  
the antique ruines of the Romaines fall:  
Great Romulus, the Grandsyre of them all,  
Proud Tarquain, and too lordly Lentulus,  
Stout Scipio, and stubborne Hannibal,  
Ambitious Sylla and sterne Marius,  
High Caesar, great Pompey, and fierce Antonius.

(I.v.49)

The phrase "antique ruines" is an ironic parallel to Lucifera's own house which is "ruinous and old" (I.iv.5), and so this passage subtly turns the pretensions of her power over others into a prophetic analogy between her future and Rome's past. We note also the references to

Pride and Ambition, which equally enforce the parallel between these fallen heroes and Lucifera herself.

Other parallels between Lucifera's and Rome's pride can also be found in other passages from the Ruines of Rome where Rome is "she, whose high top above the starres did sore" (sonnet 4).<sup>25</sup> This can be compared to Lucifera, "For to the highest she did still aspyre, Or if ought higher were then that, did it desyre" (I.iv.11). The line from sonnet 6, describing Rome as a city "that did match the whole earths puissance, and did her courage to the heauens aduance", parallels Lucifera's soaring ambition which is reflected in the appearance of her castle, "That purest skye with brightnesse . . . dismaid" (I.iv.4). Like Lucifera's, Rome's pride is linked with the rebellious giants and with Jupiter's punishment of them (sonnet 12). Contrary to Du Bellay, who suggests that the pope as successor to the Roman empire has been sent to free the world from the pride of ancient Rome (sonnet 18), Spenser, in his treatment of Lucifera, expresses rather the opposite view, namely that the papacy is the reincarnation of the ancient Roman demon (similar to sonnet 27). By associating her with mala Fortuna, with Juno's rebellion, and with the devil, and through

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<sup>25</sup>This is a comic pun which implies the consequences of soaring pride, namely a "sore" fall.

the ironic and ambiguous symbols of her power, Spenser intimates the fall of Rome.

### 5. Lucifera and the Hero's Quest .

The association of Lucifera with Fortune as opponent to the providential plan of England's history forms the basis for a prominent structural feature of the entire poem, namely the fact that (a) a hero's quest seems always to be introduced by a fortune-word, and (b) that it is often not clear whether such fortune is the work of God or his enemy. That both friends and foes of Gloriana do not seem to be able to distinguish between providence and fortune is a measure of the darkness of their understanding of God's plan. It is a reflection of the problem treated by Boethius, namely how a Christian can reconcile the idea of providence with the seeming disorder of human life and history, and like Boethius, Gloriana's champions learn by experience and error what their true goal is. The frequency of "chaunce" events in the poem can be seen as result of the tireless efforts by the evil forces centred in Lucifera's court to befog the mind and lead it astray. The end of their manoeuvres is death: Despair counsels suicide, because "ever fickle fortune rageth rife" (I.ix.44), i.e. because there seems to be no hope and no divine power to which one can appeal.



Golding, in the Epistle Dedicatory to his translation of Ovid, states clearly the situation which Spenser exemplifies through the individual quests. Although they begin with the assertion of fortune, they end with the defeat of her forces and so confirm the providential plan, for, as Golding says,

God alone is he that rules all things  
And worketh all in all, as lord of lords and king of kings,  
With whom there are non other Gods that any sway may beare,  
No fatall law too bynd him by, no fortune for too feare.  
For Gods, and fate, and fortune are the termes of heathenesse,  
If men usurp them in the sense that Paynims doo expresse.  
But if we will reduce their sence too ryght of Christian law,  
Too signify three other things theis termes wee well may draw.  
By Gods we understand all such as God hath plaast in cheef  
Estate to punish sin, and for the godly folkes releef.  
By fate the order which is set and stablished in things  
By Gods eternall will and word, which in due season brings  
All matters to their falling out, which falling out or end  
(Bicause our curious reason is too weake too comprehend  
The cause and order of the same, and dooth behold it fall  
Unwares too us) by name of chaunce or fortune wee it call.<sup>26</sup>

In the same sense one could say that each victory of Gloriana's champions implicitly asserts that she has been "plaast in cheef" by God, and that her enemies abroad are "paynims" and usurpers of the order of fate.

Their ponnection with evil fortune is made clear throughout the first book. However, the references to evil fortune made by Una's and Redcrosse's enemies are to be taken in an ironic sense, for they signify in fact providence which has thwarted their designs. When Redcrosse defeats

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<sup>26</sup> Shakespeare's Ovid, p.7.

Sansfoy, a giant and Sarazen and lover of Duessa, she complains bitterly that "fortune false betraide me to thy powre" (I.ii.22). Before Redcrosse's battle with the other Sans-brother, she expresses her fear that Redcrosse might win the fight as a fear of "fickle freaks . . . of fortune false" (I.iv.50). The greatest number of references to evil fortune imply, however, that she is to be associated with the evil concentrated in Lucifera's person, and so Rome appears as the source of all misfortunes which befall the English church and Gloriana's champions. After Redcrosse's defeat by Orgoglio, for example, Una complains that "Tempestuous fortune hath spent all her spight" (I.vii.25), and at the end of his quest, Redcrosse can look back on a journey during which he was the victim of "fortunes oruell freakes" (I.xii.16). In her encounter with Arthur, Una appears in a role similar to Boethius' when he meets Lady Philosophy. She represents here the English church consoled and strengthened by divine grace through the agency of the Tudor virgin. While Una ascribes her sufferings to fortune, Arthur uses "goodly reason" and "well guided speech" to cure "the breach which loue and fortune in her heart had wrought" (I.vii.42). When finally, in canto xii, the poet rests his "feeble barke" on the shores of Una's kingdom, he acknowledges Elizabeth as agent of divine providence and grace who restores his human nature as well as his poetic

strength by using the image of the ship tossed in ocean waves as emblem both of man's sufferings in the temporal world and of the poetic process.<sup>27</sup>

#### 6. Excursus on Mutability

Mutability's rebellion against Cynthia and Jupiter is a parallel to Juno's rising against Jupiter and belongs thematically to Spenser's treatment of the providential history of England. Since Mutability refuses "in mortall things beneath the moon to raigne" (Argument to Book VII), she represents the antithesis to the queen as imperial moon and bona Fortuna, for, as Cartari notes, bona Fortuna was also represented by Isis and Luna.<sup>28</sup> The political aspect of Mutability's rebellion is that it also reflects Rome's enmity towards Troynovant, as does Lucifera's role as Juno and mala Fortuna in Book I.

By allusion to Jupiter's chain and the rebellion of the giants or Titans, Spenser characterizes Mutability as equal to Satan and Juno. He expressed this by comparing her attack on Cynthia to an attempt by Chaos to break his "chain" (VII.vi.14). Alluding to the myth of Troy, Spenser seems here to treat Jupiter's punishment of Juno, namely

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<sup>27</sup>Cartari, p.238; E. R. Curtius, European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages, tr. W. Trask (New York, 1963), p. 128.

<sup>28</sup>Cf. the icon of Isis in Book V, a type of Nemesis.

his binding her with the golden chain, as a metaphor for God's punishment of Lucifer. This is also implied by the fact that Mutability's attack is inspired by the rebellious spirit inherited from "those old Titans" (VII.vi.2). She is a composite figure who threatens not only human and natural laws, but especially the sacred empire, for the reason for her rebellion is that she is consumed by a desire for "dominion" and "the empire of the heavens high" (VII.vi.4 and 7), i.e. for absolute rule which does not acknowledge the laws of God or man (VII.vi.6), in fact, destroys them. The political nature of her rebellion is underlined by her comparison to a Machiavellian villain who trusts in "what fortune time and place would lend" (VII.vi.23). In other words, she is the typical Elizabethan tyrant who is not only the "ungracious pattern of Lucifer and Satan", but especially the total "antithesis of the godly prince".<sup>29</sup>

Her attack on the planetary deities represents allegorically the consequence of the papal analogy between the heavenly luminaries and earthly dominion, namely a denial of the divine right of kings (Cynthia's right to a "soveraigne seat By highest Ioue assign'd" (VII.vi.12) and of its heavenly origin (Jupiter's sovereignty over the

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<sup>29</sup>W. A. Armstrong, "The Elizabethan Conception of the Tyrant", The Review of English Studies, 22 (1946), 178 and 168.

planets). Spenser's reference to Chaos' chain is indirectly an affirmation of the power of God's providence and of the vanity of Mutability's challenge. Since the providential plan operates to counteract the disorder and decay caused by the fall, Mutability demonstrates only her folly when she argues that the decay and injustice which are her work reflect the law of nature. She is therefore treated with appropriate derision by both Jupiter and the poet who indicates thereby that the pope's political ambitions are the effects of his ignorance in spiritual matters.

An illuminating parallel for Spenser's treatment of Mutability in this respect is Robert Recorde's Castle of Knowledge, as S. Chew has noted. On the title page of Recorde's work, we see Fortune on a sphere turning her wheel, which signifies ignorance, opposite to Urania on a cube who holds the Sphere of Destiny "whose Governor is Knowledge". Spenser alludes perhaps to these two contrary spheres when he adds the word "ever" to the description of Mutability's "euer-whirling wheele" (VII.vi.1). It evokes the deceptive impression of being equal to providence or eternity, that is, above time and change, while, in fact, Mutability is subject to them. Chew has described this as a manoeuvre by Mutability which is directed against the "wheel" of heavenly destiny and similar to the wheel of Recorde's Fortune:

In some unexplained way Fortune seeks by turning her wheel to bring to a stop the revolutions of the celestial sphere, that is, seeks to extend her authority beyond this nether world . . . But the Uranian sphere resists these villainies and machinations of Fortune. Though the earth pays homage to Fortune's fickleness, . . . the heavens are not subject to her but surmount all her changes and chances. Even so, Spenser's Mutability, whom most scholars do not equate with Fortune, storms the celestial spheres, seeking to enlarge her domain. At the close of Spenser's narrative Nature decrees, precisely as it is asserted in Recorde's lines, that Mutability's power is limited to the sublunary world.<sup>30</sup>

Spenser implies the association between Fortuna's and Mutability's ignorance when he has Jupiter address her as "foolish girle" (VII.vi.34). The theme is also alluded to in the confrontation between Mutability and Mercury who meets her with "bold stedfastnesse" (VII.vi.17). It reflects the commonplace that Learning and Eloquence, i.e. Mercury, are, like Virtue, the means to overcome the influence of evil Fortune. Cartari, for example, illustrates this by images which show the type of bona Fortuna with Mercury's caduceus.<sup>31</sup>

The treatment of the queen as moon goddess, if taken together with Mercury's "stedfastnesse", seems to represent a flattering allusion to her motto semper eadem which was to

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<sup>30</sup>The Pilgrimage of Life, p.57. Meanwhile Joan L. Klein has written a very interesting article, "The Anatomy of Fortune in Spenser's Faerie Queene", which the editor of Annuaire Medievale kindly sent me before its publication.

<sup>31</sup>Imagini delli dei, pp.249 and 255.

contrast her image as moon goddess favourably to the proverbial mutability of the moon. The motto reflected not only the steadfastness of her virtue but even more so of her government in the face of the constant fears surrounding the rule of a childless queen opposed by two of the mightiest political powers in Europe. By calling the personification of their political opposition to Elizabeth Mutability, Spenser ironically ascribes to them the role of the mutable moon goddess and makes them the antitype to the queen's image as imperial moon and bona Fortuna. To Spenser's ironic strategy belongs also the contrasting image of Father Time who guards Cynthia's palace. This implies that she is above time and change, a favourite topos in Elizabethan literature.

While in Cynthia Spenser creates a flattering portrait of the queen in order to represent her victory over her foreign enemies as a victory achieved with the help of providence (Nature), in Diana he treats the queen's misguided Irish policies as a failure of her role as just virgin. Andrew von Hendy, discussing the thematic similarities between Peele's Arraignment of Paris and the Mutability Cantos, has suggested that both represent treatments of one of the commonplaces of Elizabethan literature, namely the representation of political unrest as "an anti-Olympian principle of evil." In both works, "the threat of disorder

above the moon is to be handled by the goddess of Nature."<sup>32</sup> However, while in Peele's masque Nature and Diana are identical and represent divine justice, and contrast with Paris' deplorable lack of judgment, Spenser has given the queen a role as Diana which puts her in sharp contrast to Nature. Nature is compared to the transfigured Christ and, by her comparison to the lion and the sun, she becomes a personification of God's justice as type of Fortuna or Nemesis who punishes the superbia of the sublunary powers.<sup>33</sup>

Like Peele, Spenser has treated the queen's role by recourse to the myth of Troy; however, by contrast to Diana's judgment in Peele's masque, that of Spenser's Diana causes discord and broken happiness and appears rather like an analogy to the fatal judgment of Paris and its consequences. Thus it is also an analogy to Adam's fall, for the judgment of Paris is the "political analogue to the Fall" within the framework of the Tudor myth, as von Hendy notes.<sup>34</sup> If seen in relation to Spenser's earlier visions of a golden age of concord and right religion to be estab-

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<sup>32</sup>"The Triumph of Chastity: Form and Meaning in The Arraignment of Paris", Renaissance Drama, n.s. 1 (1968), 89 and 97.

<sup>33</sup>Cartari, Imagini, p.242.

<sup>34</sup>"Triumph of Chastity", p.101.



lished by the queen, namely the analogies to the wedding feast and feast of the gods on Haemus at the end of Books I and IV, Book VII is a decided anticlimax to the celebration of the queen as imperial virgin, for by contrast to Diana's effect on Arlo Hill, he equates the golden world of Haemus only with the brief appearance of Nature on Arlo:

Was neuer so great ioyance since the day  
That all the gods whylome assembled were,  
On Haemus hill in their diuine array,  
To celebrate the solemne bridall cheare,  
Twixt Peleus and dame Thetis pointed there;  
Where Phoebus self, that God of Poets hight,  
They say did sing the spousall hymn full cleere,  
That all the gods were rauisht with delight  
Of his celestiall song, and Musicks wondrous might.

(VII.vii.12)

As the term "whylome" suggests, Nature is not part of the past but of the present and so a positive but illusory alternative to Diana, and Nature's disappearance at the end a ré-enactment of the flight of the just virgin which occurred once before in ancient times. The poet thus leaves us to the contemplation of the opportunity for a golden age lost for ever. Diana's miscarriage of justice in Ireland seems to have forever tarnished the bright ideal envisaged in the earlier books of the poem.

## Chapter Four, Part II

### THE TRIUMPH OF VAINGLORY AND LUCIFERA'S SIX COUNSELLORS

Apart from the ironic inversions of the common attributes of Fortune's power in the Lucifera episode, we can discover the inversion of another Renaissance idea, namely that the glory of the ideal prince is based on the triumph of his virtues over the forces of fortune and discord. Lucifera is, by contrast, a type who represents vain-glory and the triumph of vice, in other words, she is the antitype of the ideal prince, a tyrant, and as such herself fortune's fool. This is a reflection of the common association between fortune and tyranny in the Elizabethan age. W. A. Armstrong has described its appearance in drama, but it applies equally well to Lucifera:

Since orthodox Elizabethans believed that the natural order invariably defeated tyrants who assailed it, they postulated a doctrine of Fortune which stands in signal contrast to the blind, fickle, and irrational goddess who presides over the sublunary world of medieval tragedy. 'Whom the Poets call Fortune we know to be God', averred Raleigh. It is part of the usurping tyrant's fate that Fortune who seems to favour him for a time, is ultimately revealed as the agent of Nemesis, as the terrestrial fulfillment of divine justice.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>"The Influence of Seneca and Machiavelli on the Elizabethan Tyrant", The Review of English Studies, 24 (1946), 20.

The description of Lucifera as evil tyrant expresses the same irony, and the pageant, as an "anatomy" of Lucifera's political government symbolized by the chariot and by the riders as counsellors and vices, is thus a complement to Spenser's satiric treatment of Rome's political role. It can be seen as a version of the medieval convention of depicting the world under the influence of Fortune and the devil as "upside-down", i.e. as the reverse of the proper moral and political values. In the following, I shall deal with two aspects of the pageant, first, the significance of the chariot with regard to true and false fame; and second, the metaphor of horse and rider in relation to the purpose of government, especially the purpose of counsel.

### 1. Gloriana and the Ideal of Fame

Lucifera's triumph of vainglory is obviously designed as contrast to Gloriana and her eventual triumph which, however, is not part of the poem as it is. But the quests of the champions of the Faery Queen are meant to be quests for glory, for every one of them is to lead back to Gloriana's court and, as Spenser says in the Letter to Raleigh, "In that Faery Queene, I meane glory." Redcrosse, for instance, is exhorted to seek her court in order to be "immortalized" in her book of fame (I.x.59). The fame meant here is a synthesis of Christian and pagan elements, for Spenser identifies the glory of earthly warfare with that of

spiritual warfare against God's enemies. I would therefore disagree with Isabel E. Rathborne's otherwise illuminating analysis of glory in The Faerie Queene, when she interprets Cleopolis as a version of the Earthly City of St. Augustine, although a more positive version of Rome than Lucifera's House of Pride.<sup>2</sup> As I suggested in my first chapter, Cleopolis must be seen in the framework of the sacred empire, a context which Rathborne does not consider, and consequently she reads too much of an Augustinian view into Spenser, which can hardly account for such complementary images of Cleopolis as the House of Holinesse and the New Jerusalem in Book I.<sup>3</sup>

Panthea, the temple of fame in Gloriana's city of fame, Cleopolis, can be regarded as a mirror image of the heavenly city. The fact that it is a tower of glass does not support Rathborne's contention that it symbolizes the

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<sup>2</sup>The Meaning of Spenser's Faeryland (New York, 1965), pp.24 and 33.

<sup>3</sup>Thomas Roche has already dealt convincingly with the limitations of Rathborne's view, and I quite agree with his suggestion that Faeryland is "midway to the heavenly city", The Kindly Flame (Princeton, 1964), p.43. Boccaccio describes Hercules in a manner which is revealing for Spenser's synthesis of classical and Christian heroism, for he calls Hercules "idem quod gloriosus in terra", i.e. era is "earth" and cleos "fame", and, similar to Redcrosse as plowman, he makes Hercules agricola, Gen. deor., 13.1. Thus Redcrosse, as plowman, is advised by the hermit to seek out Cleopolis, and Arthur, as Christ-Hercules, is spurred on by love for Gloriana.

brittleness<sup>4</sup> of earthly glory; the image rather stresses the affinities of Cleopolis with the Heavenly Jerusalem, for the glass Spenser speaks of in one line is in another described as crystal, namely "that bright towre all built of christall cleene" (I.xi.58). The spelling of the word implies an allusion to Christ, namely "Christ-all", which indicates the connection to heaven. As Rathborne herself mentions, the medieval towers of glass and the depiction of Rome as urbis aurea with its Holovitreum which she regards as analogues to Spenser's temple appear to have been influenced by the imagery of the Heavenly Jerusalem with its walls of crystal and its precious stones.<sup>5</sup> As such it appears also to Redcrosse, namely a city with "wals and towres . . . builded high and strong Of pearle and precious stone" (I.x.55). They symbolize both strength and beauty or brightness, characteristics which we also recognize in the related types of Cleopolis, Medina's and Alma's castles, Mercilla's palace, and the strong tower inhabited by Una's parents. One could say that the beauty of Panthea derives from the strength of doctrine restored by Gloriana with the help of grace (the House of Holinesse), and this is the reason why Redcrosse is directed to Cleopolis in his quest

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p.34.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., pp.25 and 194.

for the Heavenly Jerusalem.

## 2. Lucifera and Vainglory

When Spenser shows us the contrary image of false and merely earthly glory, i.e. vana gloria, by means of a type of the triumphal chariot, he is obviously alluding to two contrasting conventions well known to his contemporaries. On one hand, the triumphal chariot of antiquity had become incorporated into the royal pageantry of the Renaissance as symbol of "glory" and "virtu", the two predominant ideals of the age,<sup>6</sup> and in this respect it could further be taken as an allusion to the papacy, for the fashion of triumphs was mainly confined to the courts of Catholic princes, i.e. Italy and France. In 1434, for instance, Pope Eugene IV had celebrated his victory over the Colonna with a triumph in the classical manner, and Cesare Borgia, Machiavelli's model for The Prince, and son of a pope, had had a triumph of Julius Caesar enacted before him in 1500. To see the ironic point of Spenser's pageant, we must remember that secondly the convention of the triumphs had also been

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<sup>6</sup>I am here indebted to Mme. Josèphe Chartrou's excellent exposition in Les entrées solennelles et triomphales à la Renaissance (Paris, 1928); see also Renée Schneider, "Le thème des triomphes dans les entrées solennelles en France à la Renaissance", Gazette des Beaux-Arts, 9 (1913), 85-106.

used by Petrarch in the Trionfi to show the successive vanities of love and fame and the triumph of Eternity, a work which reflects the Augustinian and medieval contemptus mundi. The influence of the Trionfi on the Renaissance is well known, but although Spenser's Masque of Cupid and Mutability's pageant of the seasons have been recognized as part of this convention,<sup>7</sup> Lucifera's pageant has never been regarded as anything but one more medieval procession of the vices. D. D. Carnicelli has been the first, and to my knowledge the only one, to suggest that Lucifera's pageant belongs in the Petrarchan tradition, but his suggestion has so far not been applied to the analysis of Spenser's passage.<sup>8</sup> In this context it is noteworthy that among the most spectacular representations of the motifs of Petrarch's Trionfi were the six tapestries acquired by Cardinal Wolsey for Hampton Court Palace.<sup>9</sup> That the great Cardinal who became even during his lifetime the incarnation of the worldly pride and ambition of prelates in the eyes of his contemporary Skelton, and whose biography became the ex-

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<sup>7</sup>Cf. Fowler, Triumphal Forms.

<sup>8</sup>See the introduction to his edition of Lord Morley's Tryumphes of Fraunces Petrarke (Cambridge, Mass., 1971), p. 64.

<sup>9</sup>H. C. Marillier, The Tapestries at Hampton Court Palace (London, 1962); also Carnicelli, loc. cit.

emplum for the fall of pride, should have surrounded himself with these images of the mutability of earthly things seems even more ironic if we add the fact that he also acquired another set of tapestries depicting the seven deadly sins.<sup>10</sup> This seems almost like a historical analogy to Spenser's description of Lucifera. Since the tapestries were soon dispersed after Wolsey's death, we do not know if Spenser could have known all of them, but he may have seen one or the other which may have contributed such features to his pageant as the "huge routs of people" and "dead skulls of people underneath" (I.iv.36). They are similar to the crowds around the chariots on the tapestries. It is important to note that Petrarch mentions only one chariot with few details, and that it only acquired a prominent role when the Trionfi became a fashionable motif for pictorial art. The most striking parallel between Spenser's pageant and the tapestries is the arrangement of the riders and their beasts in front of the chariot. Spenser links them by the words "next" and "by his side". This corresponds with the tapestries where we often see several animals side by side in front of the chariots. The idea of a procession of sins was probably influenced by literary sources as well, e.g.

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<sup>10</sup>D. T. B. Wood, "Tapestries of the Seven Deadly Sins", The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs, 20 (1911-1912), 210-222; 277-289.



Gower's Mirour de l'Omme and others, which J. L. Lowes has described;<sup>11</sup> however, none of these corresponds to the specific sequence of the sins in Spenser's pageant which, as I suggested earlier, is based on his treatment of papal imperialism as antithesis to the golden chain of virtues, and these seem to reflect the virtues of Gloriana herself. By contrast to her, Lucifera's pageant shows that she lacks all the dignity and virtue of a prince which could be a cause for admiration or fame. Spenser expresses this by referring to her chariot as a mere "coche" and by describing her courtiers as a disorderly rabble with no sense of decorum: "All hurtlen forth" and "The heapes of people thronging in the hall, Do ride each other" (I.iv.16), the last an image of human nature ridden by vices, analogous to the riders in front of the chariot. This undermines the seemingly positive connotations of Lucifera's coming forth as "royall Dame" and "with Princely pace". In addition, her "infamy" is hinted at by the allusions to Flora and Aurora (Lust) and Juno (Pride), and by the phrase, "Suddein upriseth . . . The royall Dame" which describes the beginning of her chariot ride (I.iv.16-17). It seems to be an allusion to the sudden revolutions of Fortune's wheel

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<sup>11</sup>"Spenser and the Mirour de l'Omme", PMLA, 29 (1914), 388-452.

on which princes, especially of the type described by Machiavelli who trust in fortune, rise and fall. The chariot Lucifera ascends so suddenly appears thus as an ironic parallel to Phaeton's and symbolizes her vainglory as well as her lack of the virtues of government.

If we look for illustrations of the contrast between Lucifera's pageant and conventional royal triumphs in which virtues appeared as symbols of imperial and monarchical rule, we find a good example in Duerer's drawing of the Triumphal Chariot for the Emperor Maximilian.<sup>12</sup> On a splendid chariot one sees Maximilian in Roman garb with sword, orb, and scepter, surrounded by the four Cardinal Virtues and related personifications of Clemency, Liberality, etc. which are linked by an interlocking chain of laurel wreaths, symbols of his glory, which they hold over the emperor's head. The chariot driver is Reason, an allusion to the organic metaphor of the state in which the act of governing and dispensing of justice is equated with the control of reason over the passions. Lucifera is, by contrast, surrounded by vice and folly, while her chariot driver is Satan himself, who is, moreover singularly in-

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<sup>12</sup>E. Panofsky, Albrecht Duerer (Princeton, 1948), I, 181.

competent, for he gets the chariot bogged down in a mire (I.iv.36). In contrast to Duerer's glorification of imperial majesty, one must describe Lucifera's pageant as the apotheosis of infamy and Antichrist.

In this last respect, we may compare her chariot also to Dante's description of the successive triumphs of Christ and the dragon of the Apocalypse in the Purgatorio. The chariot of the church is suddenly usurped by the enemies of Christ. It is transformed into the dragon with seven heads and ascended by the Whore of Babylon (Boniface VIII and Clement V), accompanied by a lustful giant (the French monarchy), as we see in canto xxxii. Lucifera is likewise accompanied by a figure of Lust. Even closer to Dante's allegory is the episode in which Duessa becomes Orgoglio's "leman" and is set on the monstrous dragon (I.vii). Spenser suggests here probably the support given by Spain to the corrupt church of Rome and, specifically, the return of Catholicism in England under Philip II and Mary Tudor.<sup>13</sup> By contrast to the seven stars or virtues which, as Dante says (Purg., xxx,3), are never hidden by the fog of sin,

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<sup>13</sup>S. K. Henninger, "The Orgoglio-episode in The Faerie Queene", ELH, 26 (1959), 171-187. W. Fueger, in a recent article which analyzes the iconographical details of the episode, suggests also a parallel between Ignaro and Bishop Bonner, see "Ungenutzte Perspektiven der Spenser Deutung, dargelegt an The Faerie Queene, I.viii.30-34", Deutsche Vierteljahrschrift, 45 (1971), 252-301.

Lucifera's sevenfold team causes just such a fog, for at the end of the parade, "a foggy mist had couered all the land" (I.iv.36). This forms an ironic contrast to the dazzling light imagery at the beginning of the pageant which seems in retrospect like a parody or caricature of the brightness of fame (Panthea) and of grace (the Heavenly Jerusalem). A further example of her vainglory is the place where her chariot passès, namely "flowery fields" full of "pleasaunce" (I.iv.37-38), clearly an image of the vanity of earthly delights which can be compared to the place where Dante's chariot is transformed, namely the earthly paradise on top of Mount Purgatory, and also to Langland's field full of folk in Piers Plowman. In analogy to Langland, we can see the field where Lucifera's court indulges in vain "solace" (I.iv.36) as contrast to the tower of fame (Panthea) and to the tower of Una's parents.

### 3. The Tyrant as Machiavell and Lucifer

The combination of tyrant and Antichrist in Lucifera's character reflects the convention of representing the corrupt ruler in terms of Machiavelli's Prince: a ruler who could be equated with the devil and who trusts in fortuna and virtu, i.e. in reckless ambition and cunning. Lucifera's cunning is suggested by the Argus-like eyes on the peacocks' tails, a simile related to Lucifera's guiding of

her chariot (I.iv.17). They may be seen as analogy to the many eyes of Ripa's emblem Ragione di Stato, the euphemism for acts of tyranny by absolutistic rulers. They signify "gelosia, che tiene del suo dominio, che per tutto vuol haver occhi, & orecchie di spie, per poter meglio guidare i suoi disegni, & gl'altrui troncicare."<sup>14</sup> Spenser alludes to Lucifera's being a type of Machiavellian prince, when he says that she rules by "wrong" and "pollicie" (I.iv.12), i.e. force and fraud, as they are more familiarly called. Since this type of prince represented for Englishmen of Spenser's time especially the political corruption of Italy and of the pope, the terms suggest clearly how Spenser wishes us to understand Lucifera's tyranny.

Comparable accusations occur frequently in English tracts and sermons directed against Rome, and they, too, stress the Machiavellian characteristics of force and fraud. Two passages from the "Sermon Against Wilfull Rebellion" may serve as analogy to Spenser's description of Lucifera:

1. an example of the pope's force:

after his ambition entred, and this challenge [to be head of all the church] once made by the Bishop of Rome he became at once the spoiler and destroyer both of the Church, which is the Kingdom of our Saviour Christ, and of the Christian Empire, and

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<sup>14</sup>Iconologia, p.427.

all Christian Kingdoms, as an universal Tyrant over all.

2. an example of his "fraud":

The ambitious intents and most subtil drifts of the Bishops of Rome in these practices appeared evidently . . . by these ambitious and indeed traitorous means and spoiling of their Sovereign Lords, the Bishops of Rome . . . are by false usurpation become great Lords of many Dominions.<sup>15</sup>

The full force of calling a ruler a tyrant appears from the fact that he was not only the antithesis of the good prince but also of God. Erasmus, for instance, stresses that a prince is the image of God and concludes that therefore "God is the very opposite of the tyrant . . . there is nothing more loathsome to Him than a baneful king."<sup>16</sup> On this basis the tyrant could become identified with Satan, and this development is well documented in Elizabethan literature. As Armstrong says, the tyrant's most distinguishing characteristic was, like Satan's, pride, and "By thus representing the tyrant as the antithesis of the godly prince, English and French writers came to regard him as an embodiment of most of the deadly sins. He is pre-eminently proud, wrathful, lecherous, and avaricious."<sup>17</sup> The vices in front of

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<sup>15</sup>Certain Sermons, p.378.

<sup>16</sup>The Education of a Christian Prince, tr. Lester K. Born (New York, 1968), p.158.

<sup>17</sup>"The Elizabethan Conception of the Tyrant", pp.168-169.

Lucifera's chariot which are organized in the image of the infernal Trinity, i.e. of Satan, represent thus also Lucifera's own character which, devoid of grace and reason, has become subject to Satan's power. As such, the beasts also represent her brutishness, comparable to such descriptions of the tyrant as St. Thomas Aquinas' paraphrase of Solomon: "As a roaring lion and hungry bear, so is a wicked prince over the poor people . . . , it seems that to be subject to a tyrant is the same as to lie prostrate beneath a raging beast."<sup>18</sup> We may here remember the skulls and bones scattered under Lucifera's chariot which belong obviously to the victims of her beastly appetite for power.

#### 4. Lucifera and Vice: The Riders and the Beasts

The riders on their various beasts reveal by what means and to what effect a tyrant governs. Spenser has ironically reversed the emblematic significance of the rider on his horse which, like the chariot, was part of the convention of showing the effects of government by means of a triumph or pageant. Both chariot and rider derive their political meaning from the analogy between the moral hierarchy in the soul (reason governing the passions) and the hierarchy of powers in the body politic (the prince govern-

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<sup>18</sup>The Political Ideas of St. Thomas Aquinas, ed. D. Bigongiari (New York, 1963), p.184.

ing his people).

Instead of representing the government of reason over the passions, the riders in Lucifera's pageant are not only subhuman creatures in various stages of degradation but also unfit for their role of political counsellors to a prince:

But this was drawne of six unequall beasts,  
On which her six sage Counsellors did ryde,  
Taught to obay their bestiall beheasts.

(I.iv.18)

Through the ambiguous character of the pronoun Spenser states clearly the moral confusion of Lucifera's court. It appears that the passions are the "teachers" or counsellors in this court which follows beastly instead of rational "beheasts". The term "unequall" suggests the decay of balance or temperance as well as of order and degree. One could see the pageant as the image of a decayed commonwealth. It can well compare with Dante's description of "wretched Italy" in the Convivio, where he uses also the image of horse and rider:

Whereof we may in some sort say of the emperor, if we wish to figure his office by an image, that he is the rider of the human will. And how that horse courses over the plain without rider is manifest enough, and especially in the wretched Italy which, without mediator<sup>19</sup> at all, has been abandoned to her own directions.

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<sup>19</sup>The Convivio of Dante Alighieri, tr. Wicksteed (London, 1940), p.423.



The last line of Dante's text reads like a description of Spenser's chariot. It is "very euill led" by a guide who, overwhelmed by Sloth, can hardly control himself and "knew not whether right he went, or else astray" (I.iv.19).

The addition of the riders to his image of a chariot reflects the importance of the counsellor in traditional political theory. By analogy to the rational faculty in the soul, he was held responsible for preventing a king from giving in to the temptations of pride and ambition.<sup>20</sup> In Lucifera's chariot, on the other hand, the role of the prince is given to a personification of just these vices, and her counsellors are the guides on a progress of corruption, as I pointed out previously. Like the figure of Ease in Spenser's Masque of Cupid, Sloth, the first of the counsellors, represents the corruption of the rational power. He is a parallel to Archimago in canto i,<sup>21</sup> for in both cases the decay of religion is equated with a decay of reason, and this is expressed by images of drowning and of slumber. We see the connection between reason and religion also from the fact that the counterpart to Sloth is

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<sup>20</sup>Arthur B. Ferguson, "The Problem of Counsel in *Mum and the Soothsegger*", *Studies in the Renaissance*, 2 (1955), 67-83.

<sup>21</sup>Cf. Judith H. Anderson, "Redcrosse and the Descent into Hell", *ELH*, 36 (1969), 470-492.

Una as type of right reason and religion. The contrast is suggested by the fact that both ride on an ass and wear a black robe, but while in Una's case it represents the mourning of the church suffering in the wilderness, in the case of Sloth it represents the decay of religion in the Roman church. Since the state of the soul also forms the analogy to the state of the body politic, Sloth is further also a figure which represents the decay of justice, namely a figure of "lawlesse riotise" (I.iv.20). Consequently he appears as the instrument by which the mean of virtue and political sapience is destroyed, and so he is followed by types of lawless appetite, Gluttony and Lechery, the contrary of reason and of law. The visible signs for reason's overthrow in the soul are the multiple diseases of the riders. They also indicate their unfitness for "worldly thing", namely for their role as counsellors of a king. Spenser thus establishes an analogy between private and political virtue which reflects the idea that a counsellor should himself be exemplary if he is to persuade others to virtue. Richard Barkley's warning to princes of what a counsellor "ought not to be" reads like a description of Lucifera's counsellors:

In the courts of Princes there ought no greedy or covetous men to be familiar with him nor of his counsell: . . . In the courtes of Princes there ought no fleshly men to be their favorites; for the vice of the flesh hath in it so little profite, that he which is wholly overcome therewith,

ought alwayes to be of the Prince suspected. In the  
 pallace of a king, there ought not to be drunkards  
 or gluttons; for they that be overcome with the ex-  
 cesse of eating or drinking, are unfit to give their  
 Prince good counsaile.<sup>22</sup>

Spenser describes Sloth similarly as a man who neglects his  
 proper business: "From worldly cares himself he did ensloyne,  
 And greatly shunned manly exercise . . . His life he led in  
 lawlesse riotise" (I.iv.20), and of Gluttony he says:

Unfit he was for any worldly thing,  
 And eke unable once to stirre or go  
 Not meet to be of counsell to a king,  
 Whose mind in meat and drinke was drowned so.

(I.iv.23)

With his usual sardonic wit, Spenser comments therefore on  
 the competence of Lucifera's counsellors: "May seeme the  
 wayne was very euill led, When such an one [i.e. Sloth] had  
 guiding of the way" (I.iv.19). This amounts to an identif-  
 ication of corrupt political counsel and Catholic propaganda.

From his description of their origin in the spirit-  
 ual sloth of Rome and its gluttony, Spenser progresses to  
 its Lechery and Avarice which represent the effect of law-  
 less appetite on others. Lechery, for example, is an "In-  
 constant man, that loued all he saw, And lusted after all,  
 that he did loue, Ne would his looser life be tide to law"

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<sup>22</sup>A Discourse of the Felicitie of Man or his Summum  
Bonum (London, 1598), p.301.

(I.iv.26). By "law" is meant here natural law which regulates the bonds between the sexes and within the family, and the same applies to Avarice. If Lechery destroys the natural order with regard to sexual love, Avarice destroys it with regard to the love which binds families together; therefore, he has neither "chylde nor kinsman" (I.iv.28) and, isolated from the family of man as well, he respects neither divine nor earthly authority: "For of his wicked pelfe his God he made . . . And right and wrong ylike in equall balauce waide" (I.iv.27).

From the corruption within the individual soul (Sloth and Gluttony) Spenser shows us a progress to its effects on the social order (Lechery and Avarice) and, finally, on the political order as well. The last three vices, Envy, Wrath, and Pride seem to have to do with the decay of the whole order of the body politic, i.e. with the destruction of positive law or justice. Envy is a character who cannot tolerate perfection or goodness of any kind and goes about destroying the relationship between individuals (by begrudging neighbours their wealth), between princes and their subjects, and between poets and their patrons (I.iv.30-32). What Envy destroys by the abuse of the rational faculty -- his poisonous eloquence -- Wrath destroys by the abuse of physical strength, "for of his hands he had no government" (I.iv.34). Envy represents

the corruption of the counselling role into slander, and Wrath its corruption in the form of physical abuse, namely "tumultuous strife" and "unmanly murder" (I.iv.35). In other words, a state of "lawlesse riotise" in the body politic which corresponds to that in the soul, caused by Sloth. Since Sloth is moreover connected with corrupt religion, the parallels between him and Wrath seem to be the equivalent to the connection between the corruption of the church and the civil disorders in "wretched Italy", which Spenser's contemporaries were well informed of, as we know, for example, from the popularity of Guicciardini's History of Florence.

In contrast to this image of the decay of individual and political sapience, where beastliness and sickness rule supreme, the government of Queen Elizabeth is represented as image of the temperate body and body politic. In it, the counsellors occupy the top chamber (the Castle of Alma in Book II), and the appetites are kept under the control of reason.

The treatment of corrupt counsel through images of disease reflects the commonplace idea that political government, and especially counsel as the exercise of political sapience, were instituted by God to remedy the disorders of the body politic caused by the raging of the passions. Elyot, for instance, defines "consultation" as

the means "wherby . . . is provided the remedies moste necessary for the healinge of the sayd grefes or reparation of decayes".<sup>23</sup> It is further described as "the last part of morall Sapience, and the begynnyng of sapience politike".<sup>24</sup> The diseases of Lucifera's counsellors, which reveal their lack of this moral and politic sapience, can be taken as complement to the incurable sufferings of Aesculapius. Both as medicus animorum and restorer of the body politic the imperial papacy appears as deficient by a demonstrated lack of spiritual and political wisdom.

#### 5. Vice and Policy

Finally, there seems to be a connection between the abuse of the counselling role represented by the six riders in the pageant and several other figures in Book I who abuse the rational faculty and the power of eloquence in order to procure the fall of England's heroes, namely especially Archimago and Duessa. They use verbal guile and false seeming and can therefore be associated with the characterization of Lucifera's counsellors as "wisards" who uphold her kingdom with "counsels bad" (I.iv.12). The implications of guile

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<sup>23</sup>The Governor (Everyman, 1970), p.236.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p.241.

and cunning in the pun on "wisards" characterize the counsellors in effect as extensions of Lucifera's "pollicie", i. e. they seem to personify Fraud and form the complement to Force, the other Machiavellian characteristic of Lucifera which is personified by the Sarazens and paynims who engage the heroes in physical combat. The topical significance of such a combination of evil counsel, guile, and policy can be illustrated if we view it in the context from which it originated.

Bernard Spivack describes the sixteenth century range of meaning of the word "policy" from "ruthless cunning unhampered by moral scruple or religious conscience" to at best "foresight, indirection, and concealed intention of worldly prudence", a reflection of the transition from the moral standards of the Middle Ages to the secular ones of more modern times.<sup>25</sup> With the emergence of the Machiavellian prince, this term became soon identified with Italy and especially with the Jesuits:

Apart from the different denomination, their aim coincided with the aim for which Machiavelli stood -- the achievement of the supremacy on earth. Theirs was a defense of medieval theocracy with the very methods which had been devised to fight against it. In the same way as the Machiavellian conceived all manifestations of spiritual life,

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<sup>25</sup>Shakespeare and the Allegory of Evil (New York, 1964), p.374.

first of all religion, as so many instruments of policy, so the Jesuits adopted art, literature, in short all the appealing side of Humanism, as instrumental to their aim of controlling men and states.<sup>26</sup>

However, in the moralities and moral interludes which preceded the influence of Italy and of "Machiavellism" in England, there existed already a type who counselled by guile and dissimulation. This type was the Vice. Spivack ascribes his emergence to the conditions of the medieval stage which limited the possibilities of presenting the psychomachia as warfare and transformed it into intrigue. The Vice became the intriguer "par excellence", and Spivack describes his strategy as follows:

After he succeeds in breaking down the pales and forts of virtue and insinuating himself into the bosom of mankind as servant, counselor, or crony, he brings his subordinates through the breach.<sup>27</sup>

In other words, he operates by verbal guile and dissimulation and is, in fact, a virtuoso in false appearances. Often he appears disguised as Virtue and can produce tears or laughter at will in order to play on the emotions of his victims. When the moralities became influenced by the new

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<sup>26</sup>Mario Praz, "The Politic Brain: Machiavelli and the Elizabethans", in The Flaming Heart (Gloucester, Mass., 1966), p.132. He discusses Donne's Ignatius and his Conclave as example. See also Napoleone Orsini, "'Policy' or the Language of Elizabethan Machiavellism", JWCI, 9 (1946), 122-134.

<sup>27</sup>Shakespeare and the Allegory of Evil, p.141.



issues of the sixteenth century, e.g. the Reformation, humanist ethics, etc., the Vice became adapted to the new purposes of these plays and became now an intriguer in the political realm under the name of Policy. This character, who combined the earlier roles of the Vice as type of the Infernal Trinity (the Flesh, the World, and the Devil) with that of the political intriguer and evil counsellor, is an illuminating analogy to Spenser's characterization of Archimago, Duessa, and Despair in Book I -- very likely as allusion to the activities of the Jesuit missionaries in England and among the Catholic exiles on the continent.

Archimago is a master of dissimulation, his most outstanding characteristic. In true Vice fashion, he appears in the habit of virtue, disguised as a holy man and as the pattern of Christian humility:

His feete all bare, his beard all hoarie gray,  
And by his belt his booke he hanging had;  
Sober he seemde, and very sagely sad,  
And to the ground his eyes he lowly bent,  
Simple in shew, and voyde of malice bad

(I.i.29)

The nature of his "seeming" and of his outward appearance is revealed by the ironic conclusion which, by implication, suggests his real character under all these trappings. He is also a master of verbal cunning, for "that old man of pleasing wordes had store, And well could file his tongue as smooth as glas". He is clearly identified with Cathol-

icism and thus an antagonist of Una. His telling of "Saints and Popes" with the "Aue-Mary" strewn in "after and before" (I.i.35) sounds like magic enchantment designed to put the rational faculty, i.e. right religion as well, to slumber. He also performs a travesty of good counsel when he imitates Una's role as good counsellor and twists her purpose to his own: "Right well Sir knight ye haue aduised bin, (Quoth then the aged man;) the way to win Is wisely to aduise" (I.i.33). "Wisely" here corresponds to Spenser's other term "wisards" for Lucifera's counsellors. We get the impression of true sapience being abused to fit the guileful designs of its enemy. Archimago can thus be regarded as the archetype of the policies attributed to the Jesuits, and Duessa is his helpmate, the religion of the "bishop" of Rome.

She manages likewise the will through skillful stratagems like her fainting fit when Redcrosse encounters Fradubio, one of her former victims whose revelations threaten to undo her designs upon Redcrosse. On another occasion, she sheds copious "crocodiles tears" (I.v.18), and her "tinsel trappings" and fair seeming beguile not only Redcrosse but even her own relative, Night:

In that faire face  
The false resemblance of Deceit, I wist  
Did closely lurke; yet so true-seeming grace  
It carried, that I scarce in darksome place  
Could it discerne, though I mother bee  
Of falsehood, and root of Duessas race.

(I.v.27)

The term "falsehood" suggests that her guile and cunning are synonymous with perverted doctrine. This is also suggested by her assumed name, Fidessa, i.e. Faith, connected with her real name, Duessa, i.e. duplicity, and a lover who is called Sansfoy.

A third figure of the persuasive power of the Vice is Despair in canto ix whose skill in insinuating himself into the mind is described as follows:

So creeping close, as Snake in hidden weedes,  
Inquireth of our states, and of our knightly deedes

(I.ix.28)

Which when he knew, and felt our feeble harts  
Emboist with bale, and bitter byting griefe,  
.....  
Then hopelesse hartlesse, gan the cunning thiefe  
Perswade us die, to stint all further strife:  
To me he lent his rope, to him a rustie knife.

(I.ix.29)

The snake hidden in the weeds suggests both his Satanic character and his corruption ("weed" rather than grass). Despair's approach to Redcrosse's heart shows clearly the character of the Vice who dislodges "reason" or "conscience" in a manner which recalls the allegorical castles of the medieval psychomachia:

The knight was much enmored with his speach,  
That as a sword's point through his hart did perse,  
And in his conscience made a secret breach,  
Well knowing true all, that he did reherse  
And to his fresh remembrance did reverse  
The ugly view of his deformed crimes,  
That all his manly powers it did disperse,

As he was charmed with enchaunted rimes,  
That oftentimes he quakt, and fainted oftentimes.

(I.ix.48)

Despair is, as we see from these lines, an extension of Archimago, namely a magician and evil counsellor who advises Redcrosse badly in contrast to Una, their antitype who counsels Redcrosse to have faith (I.i.19) and to trust in grace (I.ix.53). By comparison to hers, their bad counsels seem to be directed towards the destruction of Faith, Hope, and, if we consider that Archimago's counsels also lead to the separation of Una and Redcrosse as lovers, Charity. Since the proper function of counsel is to uphold the image of God in the soul, and to preserve the prince as imago dei, Spenser has thus caricatured the papal court as an upside-down world in which the Infernal Trinity has usurped the place of the three Theological Virtues whom we see instead as central figures in the House of Holinesse which is the antithesis to Lucifera's court.

One may regard the many figures of guile, evil counsel, and slander in The Faerie Queene as extensions of the Vice-like characters in Book I. Like them, they indirectly assist in upholding Lucifera's power and are types of Fraud which complement the types of Force, the other Machiavellian characteristic. Jane Aptekar has discussed the relevance of this pair, Force and Fraud, in

relation to Justice in Book V, but she has not considered their demonic and theological dimension.<sup>28</sup> I would like to suggest that the influence of the Vice of the moralities and its connection with Policy may help to shed further light on the guileful enchanter and evil counsellors in the poem.

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<sup>28</sup>Icons of Justice (New York, 1969).

## Chapter Five

### THE ARTHURIAN EMPIRE: DEE'S AND SPENSER'S VIEWS OF ARTHUR

While Book I is a reflection of Spenser's concept of the restoration of England's sacred imperial status and victory over Rome, Books II-IV, as we shall see in the following chapters, reflect the complementary concept of England's role as colonial empire. It must be seen as part of the sacred ideal implied by Book I, for the policy of foreign expansion supported by the allegories of the following books represents a variation on the medieval concept of the universal empire which was to extend the benefits of an exemplary imperial ruler to the entire world. Spenser treats the Tudor venturers as instruments for the renovatio imperii in this sense, and he envisages this empire in terms of the empires of Arthur and Troy. The chronicles which I shall investigate next will appear as a significant part of Spenser's colonial myth.

The factual background to the shift of emphasis from the predominantly sacred to the expansionist aspects of the empire in Spenser's poem is the shift of interest in the 1580s from a preoccupation with papal policies to the increasing rivalry with Spain in connection with a sudden rise of interest in voyages of exploration. The two

dominating motives of the voyagers and their backers seem to have been greed as well as noble zeal to strengthen England's power and glory. Spenser refers to both in his allegory but stresses the ignoble character of the former by attributing it to the unheroic enemies of his champions and associates the latter with the heroic virtue of England's heroes.

Spenser's allegory also reflects the conflicting attitudes of queen and courtiers. While many of the sea-dogs and chauvinists hoped for a confrontation with Spain to demonstrate England's superior strength, the queen tried to steer a moderate course, celebrated in Book II as her virtue of Temperance, in order to avoid giving Spain any cause for hostilities. Yet, at the same time, she indirectly encouraged just such a course by secret support of the pirating raids and voyages of her more enterprising subjects and, while publicly feigning ignorance of these, she privately enriched her coffers considerably. We shall see that although Spenser praises the queen's moderation, he actually encourages her to follow a more active course.

The father of the imperial idea, as it is reflected in Spenser's poem, is John Dee, geographer, mathematician, antiquarian, and student of the occult sciences (hence suspected of being a magician), who coined the term British Empire in the modern sense. His ideas formed the inspirat-

ion for many of the ventures of piracy and exploration and pointed a goal for the new nationalistic fervour.<sup>1</sup> His ideas can be seen as a significant influence on the central three books of The Faerie Queene. However, as in Book I, Spenser translates these political views into myth and moral allegory so that they appear as a means for moral perfection and for the achievement of England's glory.<sup>2</sup> It is, therefore, immaterial that the empire Spenser speaks of did not actually exist and is thus called "faeryland". What is important is that he places it before his readers as an appealing possibility which is to incite them to believe in it and act accordingly. The roles of Drake and Raleigh

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<sup>1</sup>The two best treatments of Dee's contribution in this respect are E. G. R. Taylor, Tudor Geography 1485-1583 (London, 1930), pp.114-116, and F. A. Yates, "Astraea", pp.46-56. The best comprehensive study of Dee is P.J. French, John Dee. The World of an Elizabethan Magus (London, 1972). See also Bruce W. Henry, "John Dee, Humphrey Llwyd, and the Name 'British Empire'", Huntington Library Quarterly, 35 (1972), 189-190.

<sup>2</sup>The following works have been consulted for factual, mythological, and iconographical details concerning the voyages: William Camden, Annales, tr. A. Darcie (London, 1625), I; Robert C. Cawley, Unpathed Waters. Studies in the Influence of the Voyagers on Elizabethan Literature (New York, 1967); Sir Julian Corbett, Drake and the Tudor Navy (1899), repr. (New York, n.d.), 2 vols.; William S. Maltby, The Black Legend in England. The Development of anti-Spanish Sentiment 1558-1660 (Durham, N. C., 1971); Franklin T. McCann, English Discovery of America to 1585 (New York, 1969); David B. Quinn, Raleigh and the British Empire (New York, 1962); A. L. Rowse, The Elizabethans and America (London, 1959); Taylor, Tudor Geography 1485-1583 (see previous note).



that Spenser presents to us are thus not to be mistaken for descriptions determined by an interest in historical accuracy. They appear instead in idealized and potential roles which can be imitated by others. Spenser's portraits of Elizabeth's imperial virgin role also amount to a plea to the queen to identify herself with the policy of foreign conquests which his friend Raleigh had been vainly propagating for many years and with little visible results.

### 1. John Dee's Imperialistic Ideology

The importance of John Dee for the rising interest in the voyages in search of a Northwest passage and of new colonies lay in his great learning in mathematics and geography on one side -- the five greatest geographers of the century were either his teachers or his friends<sup>3</sup> -- and on the other in his considerable knowledge of history. His interest in the latter was undisturbed by the skepticism of the more scholarly historians of the time who scoffed at the old tales of Geoffrey,<sup>4</sup> or at least made it quite

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<sup>3</sup>Taylor, p.76.

<sup>4</sup>Among these we can count Spenser himself, considering his remarks in the View of the Present State of Ireland, see C. B. Millican, Spenser and the Table Round (Cambridge, 1932), pp.49; 92-93, and E. K.'s Glosse on the "April" eclogue, where he speaks of historians like Geoffrey as tellers of fables and lies. See also Millican's bibliography concerning the Arthurian legend in Renaissance England, pp.147-148.

clear that they merely valued them for their sentimental or poetic value. Dee seems to have been obsessed with the desire to discover in history the prognosis of coming greatness for his country. Since the Elizabethan Society of Antiquarians, founded in 1572 by Archbishop Parker, consisted almost entirely of Dee's friends (although he himself was not a member<sup>5</sup>), we can assume that there was a connection between the rise in antiquarian interests and the parallel increase in the interest in maritime expansion, both of which are inextricably linked in Dee's thinking.

F. A. Yates has shown that it was Dee who created the new concept of an English empire which complemented the theological meaning attributed to it by Foxe and Jewel.<sup>6</sup> Dee's main work, The General and Rare Memorials pertayning to the Perfect Arte of Navigation (1577), already suggests in its title the combination of historical memories with the ability to rule or navigate the ship of the new maritime empire. The work combined a strong appeal for the strengthening of England's navy with historical evidence for the antiquity of the queen's imperial title and for the maintenance of her sovereignty over those seas "whose principall Royallty, (undoubtedly) is to the Imperiall Crown

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<sup>5</sup>Taylor, p.106.

<sup>6</sup>"Astraea", p.48.

of these Brytish Ilandes, appropriate."<sup>7</sup> In the same work he summarizes the content of another as "a generall Suruey . . . of all the whole world, (and chiefly the rare Euidences for all the partes thereof, most Septentrionall [i.e. related to the lands adjoining the Northwest Passage] . . . and also, the lawfull and very honorable Entitling of our most gracious and Soueraigne Lady, Queene Elizabeth . . . to very large and Forrein Dominions."<sup>8</sup> In other words, Dee identified the imperial title of the Queen with sovereignty over the seas and especially over the northern part of the American continent. E. G. R. Taylor has summarized the purpose of Dee's diverse interests and activities:

By laying claim for England to the shores and islands (including the Orkneys) conquered by the British kings Arthur and Malgo, and hence to a stretch of sea for a hundred miles around each of these, Dee was able to establish fairly well a rightful jurisdiction across the North Atlantic and Arctic Oceans.<sup>9</sup>

The historical importance of Dee's researches is also attested through the entries in his Diary which give us a good idea of his close relationship with important men at Elizabeth's court as well as with the queen herself.

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<sup>7</sup>Quoted from facs. (Amsterdam, 1968), p.9.

<sup>8</sup>Arte of Navigation, fol. iiij<sup>v</sup>; concerning Dee's Famous and Rich Discoveries here referred to see Taylor, p.114, and J. W. Bennett, pp.69-71.

<sup>9</sup>Tudor Geography, p.122.

Especially interesting are two notes in his Diary. On November 28, 1577, he "declared to the Queen her title to Greenland Estetiland and Friseland", and on October 3, 1580, he personally delivered "two rolls of the Queen's Majesties title unto herself."<sup>10</sup> Taylor notes that one of these rolls with Elizabeth's Title to Foreign Lands still survives.<sup>11</sup> (Friseland was not the stretch along the North-German shore, commonly known under that name, but an island assumed to be close to Iceland, as we can see from contemporary maps).

Since Spain and Portugal possessed a papal decree which gave them alone the right to the New World, Dee's antiquarian studies must not be seen as sentimental pastimes but as related to extremely sensitive and practical concerns of Elizabeth's government. The queen was certainly well aware of the value of Dee's opinions, for she showed considerable interest in them. The relevance of Dee's research is illustrated by the fact that he was frequently consulted on matters of English sovereignty abroad by those who were planning voyages or settlements in the New World. Sir George Peckham, a leading figure in Sir Humphrey Gilbert's colonizing project, visited Dee in July of 1582, "to know

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<sup>10</sup>The Private Diary of Dr. John Dee, ed. J. O. Halliwell, Camden Society (1842), repr. (New York, 1968), pp.4 and 9.

<sup>11</sup>Tudor Geography, pp.134-135.

the tytle of Norombega [i.e. the land north of Florida] in respect of Spayn and Portugall.<sup>12</sup> The same title had apparently also been the subject of a discussion between Dee and some friends on June 30, 1578, when he told "Mr. Daniel Rogers, Mr. Hakluyt of the Middle Temple being by, that King Arthur and King Maty [=Malgo], both of them did conquer Gelindia, lately called Friseland, which he so noted presently in his written copy of Monumethensis", i.e. in his copy of Geoffrey of Monmouth's History of the Kings of Britain.<sup>13</sup>

The discussions of the elder Hakluyt with Dee fell, as we know, on no barren soil, for shortly after we see the result in the form of two publications by Hakluyt's nephew who first became interested in the subject of voyages through visits to his uncle. The younger Hakluyt arranged his materials to prove a chronological sequence of British discoveries prior to those of Spain and Portugal, both in the Divers Voyages Touching the Discovery of America (1582) and in The Principal Navigations, Voyages, and Discoveries

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<sup>12</sup>Diary, p.16.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p.4. Regarding Daniel Rogers, Millican has noted that Harvey refers to his "good friend M. Daniel Rogers" in a letter to Spenser. Harvey also mentions Dee in a supposed letter to Spenser; however, his reference is to Dee's occult studies not to his political ideas, see Millican, pp.45-46.

of the English Nation, made by sea or over land, to the most remote and farthest quarters of the earth at any time within the compasse of these 1500 years (1589). The ending of the last title clearly indicates the polemic intent of the author, as appears further from the fact that in the next edition (1598) it was altered to read "1600 years".

The second part of the Principal Navigations of 1589 begins with "Certaine testimonies concerning king Arthur and his Conquests of the North Regions, taken out of the historie of the Kings of England, written by Galfridus Monumethensis."<sup>14</sup> Hakluyt states here that Arthur "valiantly subdued all Scantia, which is now called Norway, and all the Islands beyond Norway, to wit Island and Greenland, which are appertaining to Norway . . . and all the other lands and islands of the East sea even unto Russia."<sup>15</sup> The sources for Dee's and Hakluyt's claims can be found in earlier sixteenth century treatments of British chronicle materials rather than in Geoffrey. Millican has reviewed this background and mentions especially William Lambard's APXAIONOMIA sive de priscis anglorum legibus libri (1568), to which Dee refers in a marginal note and from whom Hakluyt apparently

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<sup>14</sup>As quoted by Millican, p.46.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p.47.

translated the above quoted passage.<sup>16</sup> It has close parallels to John Coke's The Debate betwene the Heraldes of Englande and Fraunce (1550), which is characterized by "its blind patriotism and its exaggeration of England's greatness at the expense of France."<sup>17</sup> The reflection of these themes can be found again in contemporary literature of the voyagers who used these to justify a policy of expansion, e.g. in a report of Sir Humphrey Gilbert's ill-fated voyage of 1583. After a review of the unsuccessful attempts by France and Spain to settle the shores north of Florida, the author concludes:

Then seeing the English nation onely hath a right unto these countreys of America from the cape of Florida northward by the privilege of first discovery, unto which Cabot was authorized by regall authority . . . of our late famous king Henry the seventh . . . it may rightly encourage us upon so just ground, as is our right, . . . to prosecute effectually the full possession of those so ample and pleasant countreys appertayning unto the crowne of England.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Millican, pp.43 and 47.

<sup>17</sup> Millican quotes the appropriate lines from Coke's work: "Arthur kyng of Englande, conquered Irland, Goteland, Denmarke, Fryselande, Norway, Iselande, Grenelande, Orkeney, Lecto, Fraunce, Almayne, Nauerne, Espayne, Portygaile, Aragon, Prouence, Sauoy, . . . [etc.], he kylled Lucius the consul in battayle, and with glory and victory at the Capitole in the sea Imperial in Rome was crowned Emperuore . . .", Spenser and the Table Round, p.34.

<sup>18</sup> Quoted from Early English and French Voyages, ed. H. S. Burrage (1906), repr. (New York, 1967), pp.152-153.

Spenser seems to have been well acquainted with Dee's historical perspective, for he uses it for his own purposes in The Faerie Queene and, as we might suspect of Spenser, with a different emphasis and different forms of expression. Arthur himself is omitted as a historical figure, as we know from Spenser's chronicles, but the theme of the maritime empire and the historical proof of England's imperial status are given perhaps an even more extravagant expression than in Dee's works. We see this in his appeal to the incredulous in the Proem to Book II, where Spenser praises England's past greatness and alludes to that of the future through references to Virginia and Guiana. We see the theme further elaborated in the form of myths: the search of Florimell for Marinell, which parallels that of Britomart for Arthegall; the symbolic images of the "fruitful virginity" of the queen, who also symbolically creates a new earthly paradise of peace and plenty, of which the overseas colony of Virginia is a symbol, and the marriage of Thames and Medway. Finally, Spenser introduces allusions to Drake and Raleigh whose roles become idealized to form a new heroic ideal to be emulated by Spenser's contemporaries.

## 2. Veiled Compliments to Dee in The Faerie Queene

The complimentary allusions to Dee in the poem can be regarded as Spenser's acknowledgment of Dee's importance for the creation of an imperial idea and a vision of



England's coming greatness. Arthur's "Tutour" -- with a pun on Tudor -- Timon who lives "Under foot of Rauran mossy hore, From whence the riuer Dee . . . His tombling billowes rolls" (I.ix.4), is perhaps Dee as "tutor" of the Tudor queen concerning Arthur's historical significance. The reference to Wales also points to Dee, for he was a Welshman and proud of his ancestry, as we may see from the fact that he christened his own son Arthur. Dee also had a reputation of being a magician, because of his scientific and occult studies which the unlettered hinds of his days regarded with suspicion. Spenser has instead transformed this reputation to a compliment. In the figures of the prophet and magician Merlin in Book III and in the man "of infinite remembrance" in Alma's head we may recognize Dee as Britain's prophet of empire. They represent his role as preserver of the historical lore of the past and as propagator of the future greatness of the "royal virgin".

Just as Dee had kindled the nationalism of his contemporaries (Gloriana's champions), Eumnestes makes Arthur and Guyon burn "with fervent fire, Their countries auncestry to understand" (II.ix.60). The political meaning of the two knights' reading of the two books becomes apparent if we consider that they do so in the head of Alma, whose name implies "virgin" as well as "Venus", i.e. the mythological roles of Elizabeth as Venus and Diana or

Astraea.<sup>19</sup> Alma's castle is both the image of the well-governed body and of the well-governed body politic which we can infer from the fact that the middle chamber in her head is a council chamber where political judgment concerning matters of state is exercised. Right next to this chamber is the chamber of Eumnestes. The importance of the lessons of history for the prince was a Renaissance commonplace, and Dee's particular contribution to the government of the virgin queen may be reflected in the fact that Eumnestes has a place in her head where he keeps the records of Tudor history.

The "immortal scrine" of Eumnestes recalls Spenser's invocation at the beginning of The Faerie Queene where he invokes, instead of a Muse, the "holy Virgin chiefe of Nine" to provide the poet with "The antique rolles of Faerie knights" which she keeps in her "euerlasting scryne" (Proem to Book I, 2). The virgin here is both Calliope as "muse of heroic praise" and the Virgin Muse Elizabeth.<sup>20</sup> Since the cult of Elizabeth had adopted the aspects of the prev-

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<sup>19</sup>Nelson discusses the queen's name Alma as "soul"; "virgin", and alma Venus, pp.199-200.

<sup>20</sup>Thomas H. Cain, "Spenser and the Renaissance Orpheus", University of Toronto Quarterly, 41 (1971), 33, and "The Strategy of Praise in Spenser's 'Aprill'", Studies in English Literature, 8 (1968), 49-51.

ious cult of the Virgin Mary,<sup>21</sup> we see how Spenser here pays her an extraordinary compliment by invoking her who is also the object of his poem as the source of its poetic inspiration and as a divine and quasi-sacred figure.<sup>22</sup> The concept of rex imago dei associated the ruler with the source of grace in the theological sense, but Spenser extends it here to a concept which includes also the grace or inspiration commonly granted by the Muses. The queen becomes thereby the source of grace in the religious sense and in regard to civility in general.

This role of the queen envisaged at the beginning of Book I is complemented by that of Alma in Book II. It represents the influence of the sacred virgin on the political realm, for it is under Alma's guidance that Arthur and Guyon find Eumnestes' "scrine" and a vision of national destiny which encourages them in their pursuit of their quests and prepares them for their major battles against enemies of England and of the virgin queen. The proliferation of genealogies of England's ruling queen in the poem is a gigantic hyperbole by which Spenser exalts the greatness

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<sup>21</sup>Wilson, pp.200-208.

<sup>22</sup>See also Tasso's invocation to the Muse in the Gerusalemme liberata, i.2. She is likewise the Virgin Mary, as is the virgin in Petrarch's last canzone.

and genuine claims to an imperial status of Elizabeth in crushing contrast to her adversary, Lucifera, who possesses no "heritage of native soueraintie" (I.iv.12). The comic and revolting description of the female monster vomiting books (I.i.20) is related to this aspect of the imperial theme, because it may among others allude to the worthless paper on which the popes based their imperial status, namely the Donation of Constantine. Spenser probably intended a caricature of the formula in scrinio pectoris,<sup>23</sup> which expressed the papal usurpation of the emperor's prerogative as dispenser of justice, as I suggested in Chapter II. In contrast to this false "scrine", Spenser offers us "scrines" which contain the praise and historical proof of the magnificent lineage of the Faery Queen, a genuine empress. The act of unveiling them becomes identified with the workings of divine grace, for it is attributed to the queen herself and equated with the descent of grace to man, as Spenser indicates:

O Goddess heauenly bright,  
 Mirrour of grace and Maiestie diuine,  
 Great Lady of the greatest Isle, whose light  
 Like Phoebus lampe throughout the world doth shine,  
 Shed thy faire beames into my feeble eyne.

(I, Proem, 4)

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<sup>23</sup>M. J. Wilks, The Problem of Sovereignty in the Later Middle Ages (Cambridge, 1963), p.174, note. Dr. Cain suggested the possible connection between scrinium and "scrine".

The activities of poet (Spenser) and historian (Dee), alluded to in the parallel references to the "scrine" of history in the Proem to Book I and in canto ix (st.56) of Book II, acquire a quasi-religious function and become part of England's battle against Antichrist.

This interpretation of Dee's role appears also in the fact that it is Merlin, i.e. the prophet of England's victory over its foes, who is credited with having made the weapons which Arthur uses as Gloriana's champion (I.vii.36). The line, "But when he dyde, the Faerie Queene it brought To Faerie lond" suggests that the strength of God's grace -- symbolized by the magic shield -- which helped the historical Arthur to establish the English empire has been transferred to the present by Elizabeth's agency (in fact, of course by Dee). That Merlin is the maker of the magic shield represents Dee's activities as analogy to the effect of Merlin's prophecies in Geoffrey's History which gave courage to the Britons and helped them to defeat their enemies. The shield, bearing the image of the "holy virgin", implies that the prophecies of Dee together with the strength of divine grace (the sacred virginity of the queen) give England's heroes strength to fulfill their obligations towards Gloriana and God. Spenser's Merlin is further the maker of a magic mirror in which Britomart's father can foresee and thus defeat the actions of his enemies, while

Britomart herself is set upon her destined quest by seeing a vision of her future husband in the same mirror. Spenser represents Dee here in a role analogous to that of the Merlin of old who warned England's monarch of the dangers threatening the kingdom and provided prophetic counsel and a vision of future prosperity.

### 3. Spenser's Four Chronicles

Dee's interpretation of England's history as the history of an imperial destiny can be regarded as the motivating force for Spenser's own treatment of the history of Troy and of Arthur's line. He begins the first chronicle in Book II by stressing that it is to be the history of the origin of the present empire:

The land, which warlike Britons now possesse,  
And therein haue their mightie empire raysd,  
In antique times was saluage wilderness

(II.x.5)

Unlike Dee and most Renaissance historians, Spenser treats the present as the ideal political state which is set in contrast to a much inferior past. The chronicle describes the stages by which England was brought from an original state of brutishness to a certain degree of civilization through the establishment of a first empire by Brutus (II. x. 10) and continued through a long line of failures to the restoration of the empire by Uther. The omission of

Arthur is necessitated by the need to prevent any unfavourable comparisons between him and Elizabeth, for, after all, he is the Tudor hero par excellence. At the same time, his chronicle reveals the inferiority of the past to the present age. The frustrated nature of Arthur's chronicle, where the providential pattern of imperial history is marred by personal failures in morality and rulership, serves to create a sense of British antiquity yearning for its fulfillment in Elizabeth who is dimly foreshadowed typologically by such women as Helena, Bunduca, and Mertia. As in Dee's search for antiquities, the chronicle seems to foreshadow the present and coming empire.

The juxtaposition of Arthur's and Guyon's chronicles serves the same purpose. The Elfin chronicle is the history of the universal empire in its ideal state which is identified with Elizabeth's rule. Spenser's myth of Prometheus as creator of an imperial line represents an equation between the origin of civilization and the origin of imperial rule, for in the Renaissance Prometheus was interpreted as the creator of civilization,<sup>24</sup> and Spenser attributes to him also the creation of imperial power. It appears as a combination of heroic strength and god-like creativity

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<sup>24</sup>Roche, p.35.

which become the basis for the existence of human society. The former is represented by the figure of the Elf who is partly derived from beasts and partly from the heavenly sphere (the fire stolen from the gods). He is a type of the hero of pre-Christian antiquity, the god-like hero who excels in martial strength and courage, an ideal which Spenser also sees restored in Britomart's descendants who are to revive "the sleeping memorie Of those same antique Peres the heauens brood" (III.iii.22). This ideal is to be combined with another, represented by the Fay in the Garden of Adonis. The idea of a garden implies that there is a maker, and thus it is a metaphor for the order of grace which maintains the order of nature, in other words, the garden represents a Christian world order. The angelic figure of the Fay in the Garden of Adonis adds this spiritual dimension to the garden as image of the natural order. Her beauty suggests both gracefulness (or civility) and grace in the religious sense, for she resembles "no earthly wight" (II.x.71). The incompleteness of the antique heroic ideal is suggested by the Elf's wandering through the world "with wearie feete" (st.70) before he finds his complement, the Fay, in the Garden of Adonis. Their marriage symbolizes the perfection of the classical ideal of heroism, i.e. mere physical strength, by spiritual beauty or "grace" in the most comprehensive sense, an analogy to the mystic marriage



of body and soul, comparable to the castle of Alma which symbolically represents body and soul of the empire. The marriage of Elf and Fay produces an ideal combination, both martial power -- a "mightie people" and "puissant kings" (st.72) -- and a heroic civilization symbolized by Cleopolis, the city of earthly fame and human greatness. Gloriana's reign is thus derived from an ideal rooted both in the natural and spiritual orders and forms moreover its highest achievement: she is the "glorious flowre" of the history of heroic civilizations.<sup>25</sup> Thus she inherits a "sacred seat", symbol of the religious character of her imperial rule, and becomes the embodiment of the highest perfection in human civility: she excels both in "grace" and in "learned skill" (st. 76). In Ovid's Metamorphoses, the time of Prometheus is also the time of the golden age, the continued existence of which Spenser thus equates with the existence of imperial rulers and the creation of civility which appears as their main characteristic. In the Elfin chronicle, Spenser stresses the superiority of Gloriana's empire to that of Arthur's time and, in contrast to the theological dimension of the empire elaborated in Book I, he stresses here its

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<sup>25</sup>This background has been thoroughly documented by Rathborne, see The Meaning of Spenser's Faeryland, *passim*, although some of her arguments seem contrived, see Roche, pp.35-46; he uses her arguments with a different emphasis.

social or temporal aspects. This seems also the explanation for his use of classical myth for the description of its genesis.

The prophecy of Merlin in Book III also serves to establish the difference between the earlier national history and the history of the Tudor virgin. She is not described as descendant of Arthur which would have been the normal version of the Tudor myth, for he would have been a somewhat compromised candidate for the role of ancestor figure of a virginal queen, considering that neither the circumstances of his birth nor his reputation were exactly flawless, as Ascham noted pointedly in The Scholemaster. Spenser derives her instead from two figures who can be regarded as personifications of the ideal attributes of the Virgin Empress herself: chastity -- meaning a comprehensive ideal of "virtue" -- and justice, which amounts to an allegorization of one of her favourite emblems, the phoenix. It implies that she is only equal to herself and gives birth to her own greatness. These two virtues are personified by Arthegall and Britomart.

The descent of Arthegall from "Gorlois, brother to Cador Cornish king" (III.iii.27) and the lack of a name for his son which have induced many critics from Warton on to search for their analogies in the chronicles do not, in my

opinion, invite such a reaction from the reader.<sup>26</sup> Spenser does not invite us to find historical equivalents to them. His stratagem is designed to keep both these figures outside of any factual historical context, for otherwise they would become identifiable as one or the other of the rather uninspiring figures who fought over Arthur's succession through bloodshed and murder of kinsmen -- by no means a background on which to base an encomium of a virgin queen, praised for her peaceful rule who, moreover, disliked intensely to be reminded of the possible dangers of the succession. Arthegall's identification with the qualities of the Tudors seems instead the basis for Spenser's fictional genealogy. Like Britomart, he is not a historical figure but a personification of the strength, virtue, and concord which the Tudors saw as the hallmark of their rule. His descent from Gorlois, who was also Arthur's father, at least in appearance, implies that he is equal to Arthur (i.e. Arth=egall) in birth but without the dubious circumstances of Arthur's birth. This suggests in turn that the Tudor dynasty is based on virtues which equal those of Arthur while it is without his deficiencies. Spenser has thus avoided the genealogical complications represented by

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<sup>26</sup>See Variorum F.Q., III, 227-229.

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the rather intangible connections between Arthur and the Tudors on the basis of historical evidence and has turned their genealogy instead into an encomium of the moral excellence and heroic strength on which the Tudor dynasty is founded.

Consequently, three themes are stressed in the history of Britomart's descendants: (1) the personal excellence of the individual rulers -- none of them has any personal flaws or vices which work his downfall, as in the chronicle read by Arthur. Their misfortunes are entirely caused by fortune, i.e. by forces outside their control, as in the case of Vortipore, for example:

His sonne, hight Vortipore, shall him succeede  
In kingdome, but not in felicity:  
Yet shall he long time warre with happy speed,  
And with great honour many battles try:  
But at the last to th'importunity  
Of froward fortune shall be forst to yield.

(III.iii.31)

(2) Spenser stresses lawful succession. He changes therefore historical facts and fabricates blood-relationships between succeeding rulers which have no support in historical evidence. He replaces, for example, the bloody struggle for Arthur's succession by a nameless son of Arthegall who "shall take the crowne, that was his fathers right And therewith crowne himselfe in th'others stead" (III.iii.29), the "other" being his cousin Constantius of

whom nothing more than his name is mentioned. By leaving Arthegall's son nameless, Spenser obviously wishes to eliminate the possibility of his becoming identified with Conanus who killed first Constantine, his uncle, then cast another uncle into prison, and finally killed his two sons.<sup>27</sup> By stressing the glorious achievement of Arthegall's nameless son it seems, to paraphrase Harper, "as if Spenser had deliberately transferred the glory of Vortipore, his successor" not to Conan, as Harper says, but to Britomart's own son, "out of consideration for the listening Britomart".<sup>28</sup> Similarly, relationships of father and son have been invented by Spenser between Vortipore and Malgo, and Malgo and Careticus in order to establish the impression of a line of lawful succession, an allusion to an important theme in Tudor propaganda and a compliment to the queen whose genealogy Spenser here describes. (3) He stresses the heroic conquests achieved by Britomart's descendants, which are mainly concerned with defeating the "paynims", namely the Saxons, whom he makes the enemies of "holy church". However, the last of the line, Cadwallin, becomes the cause of God's wrath and of the punishment of

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<sup>27</sup>See Harper in Variorum F.Q., III, 229.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., p. 230.

the Britons, because he killed the "good king Oswald" (III. iii.38-39). After his death the "raine of Britons . . . shall dye" (III.iii.40), for his successor Cadwallader is prevented "by destiny" to return to England and the Britons become the victims of their Saxon enemies until the time "prefixt" for the return of the "spark from Mona" (III.iii.48), i.e. Henry VII. By making the history of Britomart's line identical with a history of "holy church" and by giving it a providential pattern, Spenser makes it typologically the analogy to the history of the sacred empire in the sixteenth century which seems to have been projected into a mythical past to represent Elizabeth both as mother of the sacred empire (Britomart) and as the imperial virgin who is to lead it to its crowning victory over Spain, namely in the figure of the royal virgin who is to "stretch her white rod over the Belgicke shore" to "smite" the "great Castle" (Castile).

In addition to these themes, Spenser introduces also the theme of the conquest of a maritime empire by the Tudors instead of by Arthur, as Dee had done. He establishes this idea by transferring Arthur's conquests to Malgo whom he makes, in addition, a blood-relation of the Tudors: Malgo turns out to be a son of Vortipore and grandson to Arthegall's son, a hero of special stature, worth a full stanza in praise of his accomplishments which thus become

a praise of Tudor heroism and enterprise and, indirectly, represent a plea to the queen to identify herself with this ideal:

Behold the man, and tell me Britomart,  
 If ay more goodly creature thou didst see,  
 How like a Gyaunt in each manly part  
 Beares he himselfe with portly maiestee,  
 That one of th'old heroes seemes to bee:  
 He the six Islands comprounciall  
 In auncient times unto great Britainee,  
 Shall to the same reduce, and to him call  
 Their sundry kings to do their homage seuerall.

(III.iii.32)

A few stanzas later Spenser mentions the theme again by speaking of Cadwallin's victory over the "king of Orkeny" (III.iii.37). The islands mentioned by Spenser had been conquered by Arthur, according to Geoffrey of Monmouth.<sup>29</sup> He uses the term sex comprovinciales insulas which Spenser paraphrases above for the description of Malgo's conquests. They are Ireland, Iceland, Gotland, the Orkneys, Norway, and Dacia.<sup>30</sup> By making Malgo a member of the Tudor line, Spenser eliminates Arthur's role entirely from the history of the maritime empire, contrary to Dee, and we see that he builds up a pattern of history which exalts the Tudors over anything which preceded them in the past.

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<sup>29</sup>Geoffrey of Monmouth, The History of the Kings of Britain, tr. L. Thorpe (London, 1971), pp.189-204; Harper in Variorum F.Q., III, 230.

<sup>30</sup>Harper, ibid.

Instead of establishing the greatness of Elizabeth by recourse to history, Spenser does so by recourse to myth. The lines, "O who shall helpe me to lament, and mourne / The royal seed, the antique Troian blood, Whose Empire lenger here, then euer any stood" (III.iii.42) suggest that the return of the "spark from Mona" and the arrival of the "royal virgin" are to be identified with a return of the greatness of Troy rather than of Arthur. The Trojan empire in its unfallen state seems to represent for Spenser the ideal of heroic civilization of which he speaks in the Elfin chronicle. Since Arthur's empire derived from fallen Troy, it is inferior by comparison. The phrase that the ancient Trojan line shall raise up the "feeble Britons" (III.iii.23) exhausted by long wars makes the beginning of the Tudor history identical with the return of the heroic spirit of the ancient Trojans (Arthegall) which by the marriage to the Briton Venus in the armour of Mars (Britomart) becomes the source of Elizabeth's political power and the means for the restoration of a new political golden age, i.e. Troy-novant. Since Spenser represents the return of the "spark from Mona", i.e. Henry VII, as an expression of divine and not just human will, the restoration of Troy becomes synonymous with the providential plan of sacred history. By restoring the martial ideal of antiquity, the Tudors become the instruments for the translatio imperii and for the



establishment of the universal empire in the form of the new Troy rather than the Arthurian empire:

For so must all things excellent begin,  
And eke enrooted deepe must be that Tree,  
Whose big embodied braunches shall not lin,  
Till they to heauens hight forth stretched bee.  
For from thy wombe a famous Progenie  
Shall spring, out of the auncient Troian blood,  
Which shall reuiue the sleeping memorie  
Of those same antique Peres the heauens brood,  
Which Greeke and Asian riuers stained with their  
blood.

Renowned kings, and sacred Emperours,  
Thy fruitful Ofspring, shall from thee descend;  
Braue Captaines, and most mighty warriors,  
That shall their conquests through all lands extend,  
And their decayed kingdomes shall amend:  
The feeble Britons, broken with long warre,  
They shall upreare, and mightily defend  
Against their forrein foe, that comes from farre,  
Till uniuersal peace compound all ciuill iarre.

(III.iii.22-23)

If contrasted with Arthur's chronicle, the vision of Merlin is in many ways parallel to the Elfin chronicle, for it suggests that the Britons will have to fight many battles and conquer surrounding tribes before universal harmony will crown their efforts, like the Elfin emperors, "which all the world warrayd, And to themselues all Nations did subdue" before they could lay "Cleopolis foundation" (II.x. 72). Unlike Dee and other Tudor propagandists who dreamed of the return of Arthur, Spenser envisages the climactic event of Tudor history as the return of a female figure, namely Astraea, the virgin who brings justice, peace, and plenty. Harry Levin has pointed out that Dike, who later

became identified with Astraea, represented both equity and chastity in the form of the constellation virgo. These are also Britomart's attributes and they foreshadow those which the "royal virgin" of Merlin's prophecy will bring back.<sup>31</sup> While Spenser refers to the theme of Arthur's return by a meagre one-line reference to the return of Uther, he hails the arrival of Britomart's last descendant, the Tudor virgin, in terms befitting the significance of her role which surpasses that of Arthur by far:

Thenceforth eternall union shall be made  
 Betweene the nations different afore,  
 And sacred peace shall lovingly perswade  
 The warlike minds, to learne her goodly lore,  
 And civile arms to exercise no more:  
 Then shall the royall virgin raine, which shall  
 Stretch her white rod over the Belgicke shore,  
 And the great Castle smite so sore withall,  
 That it shall make him shake, and shortly learne  
 to fall.

(III.iii.49)

As the reference to Spain and the war in the Netherlands indicates, the return of universal peace and of the restoration of the golden age of empire are equated with the defeat of Spain and with the extension of Elizabeth's protection to the Netherlands -- which, in fact, she was not at all anxious to do. This stanza is thus not mere encomium but a prophecy and a plea to the queen. Just as

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<sup>31</sup>The Myth of the Golden Age in the Renaissance  
 (Bloomington, 1969), p.15.

Dee had used history for the formulation of present policies, Spenser mixes universal themes with very concrete and important political matters pertaining to his own time. Spenser's imitation of Ariosto who also uses Merlin as prophet, however for the fortunes of the houses of Austria and Aragon is also determined by his political interests, namely to exalt England's ruling house and its imperial destiny. Yates has suggested that Spenser's use of Merlin as prophet of England's empire represents, in fact, a transfer of the imperial theme from the Habsburgs to the Tudors.<sup>32</sup> If the purpose of the Elfin chronicle is thus to show the superiority of the present empire over that of Arthur, the prophecy of Merlin, with its pronounced anti-Spanish ending, expresses further the superiority of the empire of the virgin queen over her present foreign rivals in an imperial status, Spain and, perhaps, also France.

This seems also to be the point of the encounter between Paridell and Britomart in the ninth canto of Book III. As we see, Paridell claims a Trojan (i.e. an imperial) and heroic descent like Britomart. He derives himself however from Paris and Oenone which immediately establishes

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<sup>32</sup>"Astraea", pp.49-52; 66.

negative connotations, for Paris, as was well known, treacherously broke his faith to Oenone when Helen, a much more attractive prize, was offered him by Venus. Paridell's Trojan descent is thus from the beginning designed to undermine his already shady reputation. There is an obvious allusion to France's capital Paris in his and his ancestor's names. His wavering loyalty to various ladies and to Hellenore may reflect the wavering attitude of the French king, Henry III, towards the Catholic interest, especially since the obvious Helen-whore pun insinuates one of the most common Protestant images for the Catholic church.

Malbecco is also a comic figure, an impotent miser who inhospitably shuts himself up "in close bowre" together with his treasures (III.ix.5), consumed by jealous fear. It was well known that the Spanish king had secluded himself in a fortress-like monastery, the Escorial, since his return to Spain in 1559. Like Malbecco, Philip II was, to the jaundiced eyes of the Protestants, consumed by his interest in his riches and his religion. It was also known that Philip had an almost pathological suspicion of those around him, so that the "cankred crabbed Carle" (III.ix.3 --perhaps a pun on the name of the emperor Charles V) may well be a caricature of the Spanish king, married to a lady of dubious virtue who is similar to Duessa and therefore possibly also a symbol of corrupt religion. That Malbecco is transformed

to an emblem of jealousy after his treasure has been stolen by the two brigands, Braggadocchio and Trompart, seems a witty commentary on the historical fact that the richest treasure ship ever sent to Spain, laden with the choicest parts of Cortez' booty from the conquest of Mexico, was taken by a French pirate and never reached its destined port. This event from Charles V's time may be alluded to by the word "carle" with capital "C". The allusion to Charles V would also be appropriate because he held the imperial title while Philip II did not, and so the episode would also pour ridicule on Spain's imperialistic pretensions.

The well-known perverseness of Henry III in his pleasures as in his devotions is symbolized by means of a mixture of theological and sexual overtones in the description of Faridell's wooing of Hellenore:

Thenceforth to her he sought to intimate  
 His inward griefe, by meanes to him well knowne,  
 Now Bacchus fruit out of the siluer plate  
 He on the table dasht, as ouerthrowne,  
 Or of the fruitfull liquor ouerflowne,  
 And by the dauncing bubbles did diuine,  
 Or therein write to let his loue be showne;  
 Which well she red out of the learned line,  
 A sacrament prophane in mistery of wine.

(III.ix.30)

Spenser's episode can be seen as deliberate parody of the praises of the French (i.e. Burgundian) and Spanish royal line in Jean Lemaire's Illustrations de Gaule et Singularit-

ez de Troye, written between 1510 and 1513, and dedicated to Margaret of Austria, the daughter of the Emperor Maximilian and aunt of the future Charles V. Her fate can also be seen reflected in Paridell's treatment of Hellenore who is associated with a type of the Spanish emperor, for she was brought up as the future bride of the French king, Charles VIII, who abandoned her for Anne, the heiress of Brittany, who, moreover was already married by proxy to Maximilian. This shameful treatment of Europe's imperial house by France would serve well for Spenser's purpose of ridiculing Spain's imperial status. Contrary to Jean Lemaire who had made Paris the model of an encomiastic mirror for princes, Spenser makes fun of such a claim by showing us Paris' descendant as a lecherous and shifty character like his ancestor.

By contrast to the unheroic history of Paridell's ancestors, of whom we learn nothing more than that they founded an obscure city on an obscure island (III.ix.37), Spenser emphasizes the heroic roles played by Britomart's ancestors among whom is Aeneas, the greatest hero of the Trojan line. The history of his "many perils" and fights in "cruel wars" (III.ix.41-42) distinctly outshines that of Paridell's obscure ancestor Parius of whom no chronicle makes any mention. Unlike Parius' descendant Paridell, the sons of Aeneas became even more famous than their father, namely as founders of the Roman empire, the second

Troy, from which Elizabeth's kingdom, the third Troy, will derive (III.ix.45). Spenser de-emphasizes the significance of the new Troy established by Brutus in order to link Queen Elizabeth's rule more closely with the two great empires of antiquity, Troy and Rome, and by stressing thus England's imperial destiny, he shows the vanity of Spain's claims to a similar destiny based on a Trojan descent, as it had been put forward by Jean Lemaire. The absurdity of Spain's (and France's) claim to greatness appears from the fact that their representative Paridell is made to praise the greatness of England's history as,

A famous history to be enrold.  
In euerlasting monuments of brasse,  
That all the antique Worthies merits farre did  
passe.

(III.ix.50)

which must be seen in an ironic contrast to the unheroic history of his own line, especially if we view it in connection with Jean Lemaire's enthusiastic praise of Paris.

The interpretation of Gloriana's reign as the third Troy to be restored is an important key to Spenser's view of history, for it is not based on one of the usual historical schemes current among his contemporaries, namely that of St. Augustine's six ages and that of the four monarchies of

the Book of Daniel.<sup>33</sup> Protestant historians favoured especially the Book of Revelation as basis for their view of history.<sup>34</sup> Spenser's idea of the three Troys, however, seems closer to a medieval scheme, namely Joachim da Fiore's systematization of history. His fundamental idea was that history was divided into the three eras of Nature, Law, and Grace; the third being "the last period of man's development prior to the Second Advent."<sup>35</sup> Spenser has used the apocalyptic scheme of the Reformers in Book I, for he puts the struggle over the empire between England and Rome in the framework of the last part of the Book of Revelation. His choice of a second scheme in connection with the history of Troy seems to be similar to Dante's view that mankind had a double goal, one associated with the body and the body politic and the other associated with the soul. Spenser's second time scheme seems to suggest likewise that there exists a kind of duality in the realm envisaged as the sacred empire, namely (a) that it has a timeless as well as a temporal existence. This appears also from the Elfin chronicle which contrasts with the chronicles of Arthur and

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<sup>33</sup>C. A. Patrides, The Grand Design of God (London, 1972), p.59.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., p.50.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., p.31.



Britomart. Spenser's three Troys refer to the flourishing of the actual historical manifestations of the empire, while the faery chronicle and Eleopolis are the symbols of its permanent or ideal existence, just as the Heavenly Jerusalem is the spiritual ideal outside of history of which the New Jerusalem at the end of Book I is a historical prefiguration..

The addition of the third Troy to the apocalyptic scheme of history means (b) that the temporal empire is concerned with the well-being of both body and soul of the individual and of the empire. Although they are in a sense inseparable, as are Alma and her castle, each exists in a different mode and needs different means for its functioning. In the history of the New Jerusalem Spenser seems to represent the spiritual fate of the empire, while in that of Troy he seems to envisage the flourishing of human and earthly civility and civilization, i.e. of the "body" of the sacred empire within the framework of sacred history, and thus Book II begins fittingly with an allegory of the temperate body and body politic.

If we apply Joachim's scheme to a reading of Spenser's chronicle histories, the first era, that of Nature, can be equated with the era of brutishness before the arrival of Brutus in England which was "saluage wilderness, Unpeopled, unmanurd, unprou'd, unpraysd" (II.x.5). Spenser's terms imply that this is the negative of what the humanists

understood by civilization, a state in which cultivated nature and human culture correspond and which forms the basis for praise or glory. By contrast, all this is lacking and has to be developed in a long historical process which will only come to its end with the arrival of the Faery Queen, the "flower" of civility (II.x.76).<sup>36</sup> The next stage, equivalent to Joachim's era of Law, can be equated with the history of Uther's line, as we can infer from the allusions to the gradual institution of civility and imperial rule by means of law, namely through Dunwallo, "the gracious Numa of great Britanie" (II.x.30) and "Dame Mertia the fayre" (II.x.42).

The third era, that of Grace, is foreshadowed in Britomart's line. It passes through a time of struggle between the chosen people (or "holy church") and the "paynims", and its history is meant as confirmation of "mens good endeours" by "the fates" which guide "the heavenly causes to their constant terme" (III.iii.25), the beginning of which is obviously the marriage of Arthegall and Britomart, "ordaynd" by the "heauens" (III.iii.26), and the end the arrival of the royal virgin (III.iii.49). One must see this last stage as yet incomplete, since Gloriana's champ-

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<sup>36</sup> See the discussion of flower images, the Tudor roses and the rosa electa, as part of the cult of virginity surrounding Queen Elizabeth in Douglas E. Schoenherr's "The Pageant of the People: A Study of Queen Elizabeth I's Royal Entries" (Yale Dissertation, 1973), p.53.

ions continue the struggle with the paynims, the enemies of grace and civility, and, as Merlin concludes with a ghastly shudder, "yet the end is not" (III.iii.50), it being presumably the "sacred peace" which the virgin is to restore and which will truly usher in the third Troy, an end, however, which the historical circumstances put very much in question. The first and second Troys seem to represent an ideal political order, comparable to Eden or an earthly paradise, which has been destroyed through the influence of Fortune and which is to be restored through grace and divine providence, as we see from the stress on the providential scheme both in Arthur's and Merlin's visions of history.

#### 4. Arthur and the Faery Queen

The elimination of Arthur from the history of the Tudor empire is an expression of Spenser's encomiastic purpose of making the queen superior to the past in every respect. Instead of making him the archetype of the Tudors, Spenser has given this place to personifications of the attributes of the Tudor queen, Arthegall (justice) and Britomart (chastity and equity), who become the founders of the Tudor genealogy. Their quest towards their destined marriage is, however, also contemporary with Gloriana's own time, for we see it only foreshadowed in the dream in Isis' Temple. The queen's own moral perfection and the search for peace and justice inspired by her, represented

by Britomart's search for Arthegall, seem thus to have been projected into the past in order to form simultaneously the beginning and the end of the sacred empire. Its history can therefore be seen as a circle of perfection, or as an allegory of the phoenix-like character of the queen who renews the empire out of herself and is not connected with the sins and crimes of her predecessors in history.

An expression of Spenser's encomiastic exaltation of the queen over Arthur is the fact that he is given a view of an ideal harmony and order in the form of a tour of Alma's castle, after which he is led by her to review his own past which conspicuously lacks these characteristics. The praise of his country's greatness, into which he breaks out at the end, suggests that it is he who has learned a lesson in history, and that his view is moreover limited to a merely earthly and non-spiritual framework. The "royal" origin of England is attributed to the "land, That gave us all, whatever good we have" (II.x.69). In other words, he is comparable to the Elf before his meeting with the Fay in the Garden of Adonis, i.e. without a vision of the soul or spiritual reality of the empire and perceives, so to speak, only the body or its physical reality. The ideal combination is obviously represented by Alma and her castle which are, however, outside of Arthur's experience, as far as he represents the past. Arthur's progress to Alma's head

amounts to an ironic reversal of the view of history which determines the epics of his predecessors, Ariosto and Tasso, namely that the present ruler should model himself upon the excellence shown by his real or mythical ancestors. Instead the ancestor figure comes to the ruling heroine of the present, i.e. to Alma, in order to learn the lessons of history which reveal that the past is insufficient to explain the present or to teach it any lessons which could be worth emulating. This ironic reversal of the didactic function of history is also implied in Una's address to Arthur as "worthy impe . . . and Pupill fit for such a Tutours hand" (I.ix.6), namely the Tudor queen as "tutor" of Arthur, assisted by Timon, i.e. Spenser himself who, in turn, has been inspired by Dee's "billowes", i.e. his dream of England's naval and colonial power. It appears, therefore, that history depends for its meaning on Elizabeth -- not she on it.

Another example for Spenser's replacement of Arthur by Elizabeth is his treatment of the motif of Arthur's return from Armorica (Brittany). The prophecy of Cadwallader's return from "Armoricke" in Merlin's chronicle of Book III is linked with the return of Henry Tudor as "spark from Mona" and thus with the arrival of Astraea-Elizabeth, the "royal virgin" with the "white rod" (III.iii.48-49). By a clever pun on the return of the Tudors from Armorica Spenser

makes it identical with their "return" to "America", namely in so far as it had been part of the English empire under Arthur, as Dee had made clear. The expansion of England's power to the limits of the then known world is thus identified with the return to its ancient imperial power:

Who then can thee, Mercilla, throughly prayse,  
That therein doest all earthly Princes pas?  
What heavenly Muse shall thy great honour rayse<sup>a</sup>  
Up to the skies, whence first deriu'd it was,  
And now on earth it selfe enlarged has,  
From th'utmost brinke of the Armericke shore,  
Unto the margent of the Moluccas?  
Those Nations farre thy iustice doe adore:  
But thine own people do thy mercy prayse much more.

(V.x.3)

Spenser alludes here to Drake's voyage around the world, for he was the first to reach the Moluccas or Spice Islands south of China by the westward route through the straits of Magellan, and from the direction taken by Drake these islands could indeed be said to be "th'utmost margent" of the then discovered world. The return of Arthur, commonly attributed to the Tudors, is here associated with a colonial policy of expansion and rule of the sea by Elizabeth, which amounts to a suggestion by the poet that the queen will only truly be worthy of her line if she adopts this role envisaged by the poet. Spenser presses the theme again in Book II when he has Guyon praise his liege lady as:

that great Queene  
Great and most glorious virgin Queen alieue,  
That with her soueraigne powre, and scepter shene  
All Faery lond does peaceably sustene.

In widest Ocean she her throne does reare,  
 That ouer all the earth it may be seene;  
 As morning Sunne her beames dispredden cleare,  
 And in her face faire peace and mercy doth appeare.

(II.ii.40)

Gloriana is here characterized as sea-born Venus, a role which represents her maritime power, and as imperial sunrise, sol oriens. She is equally an image of grace and nobility, and the just virgin whose peace and mercy are arising prophetically over the whole world.

In addition to making Gloriana "overgo" Arthur as dynastic figure, Spenser also shows her as focus of a superior chivalric order, the Order of Maidenhead, which surpasses Arthur's Table Round. Gloriana's knights seek not merely a chivalric but also a sacred ideal which is symbolized by the cult of virginity, a combination of the sacred virginity of the virgin Mary and of Astraea. The contrast between Gloriana's order and Arthur's Table Round can be explained by comparison to the contrast between Arthur's Round and the Holy Grail. The most distinguishing characteristic which its chosen hero Galahad had, and which Arthur's heroes lacked, was his virginity, symbolically described as the whiteness of the lily.<sup>37</sup> In The Faerie Queene the whiteness of the lily is attributed to Una, Belphoebe,

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<sup>37</sup>Malory, Works, ed. E. Vinaver (Oxford, 1972), p.600.

and Amoret, who can be regarded as symbols for the ideals sought by Gloriana's champions, namely earthly and heavenly beauty, love, and glory. The Grail parallel suggests itself also when at Satyrane's tournament, where its honour is to be defended, Florimell's girdle, the symbol of the Order of Maidenhead, is brought forward in a "golden vessel", because the "precious relicke" is not for the eyes of the profane, a description which also applies to the Grail (IV. iv.15). Its invisibility may also be the analogy to that of Gloriana, for only those elected to her service have seen her in her court.

The virginity of the queen, the focus of a chivalric cult, is for Spenser the metaphor for her sacred imperial power which is equal to the grace of God. Redcrosse, for example, sent to defend Una as personification of the queen's role as Defender of the Faith, does so in order to win the "grace" of Gloriana (I.i.3) so that hers and God's grace appear in a sense as identical. This appears also from Guyon's speech to Medina. He states that he serves a "most glorious virgin queen" who resembles "heavenly grace" (II. ii.40-41), and who is a personification of earthly and heavenly perfection:

That men beholding so great excellence,  
And rare perfection in mortality,  
Do her adore with sacred reverence,  
As th'Idole of her makers great magnificence.

(II.ii.45)



The significance of the "idole" appears more specifically in Spenser's description of Gloriana's image on Guyon's shield. It is a combination of neoplatonic and imperial characteristics which describe the queen's virgin role by allusion to the peace and justice of Astraea and to the spiritual beauty of the celestial Venus. The image of the "glorious visage" is compared to the far greater "beautie of her mind" and to her "imperiall powre" which pour "infinite desire" into the heart of the beholder (II.ix.3). This neoplatonic ideal is further characterized by reference to the "morning starre" and in terms of illumination, i.e. as image of the heavenly Venus,<sup>38</sup> and in addition as personification of mercy and peace, as well as "puissance in warre", i.e. as type of the sacred imperial virgin who also possesses martial or heroic qualities:

She is the mighty Queene of Faerie,  
Whose faire retrait I in my shield do beare;  
She is the flowre of grace and chastitie,  
Throughout the world renowned far and neare,  
My liefe, my liege, my Soueraigne, my deare,  
Whose glory shineth as the morning starre,  
And with her light the earth enlumines cleare;  
Far reach her mercies, and her prayes farre,  
As well in state of peace, as puissance in warre.

(II.ix.4)

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<sup>38</sup>Panofsky, Studies in Iconology, p.142. Cf. also the divine messenger as celestial Cupid in II.viii.6 who represents the complement to the celestial Venus as figure of grace.

Spenser seems to use the neoplatonic framework in order to exalt the queen's imperial virgin role to an ideal of the highest spiritual and unearthly perfection so that the political goals pursued by her government -- or rather suggested by the poet -- appear to coincide with the heavenly goal of mankind. A suggestion to this effect is the assurance given Arthur by the Faery Queen in a dream that he will gain her love "when iust time expired should appeare" (I.ix.14), that is, he will only reach her when time is replaced by eternity, for she is clearly the symbol of an ideal existing beyond the confines of time. The fact that her champions have seen her in her court suggests that England's queen is the visible manifestation of the heavenly ideal and comparable to the golden vessel in which Florimell's girdle is carried. Through Elizabeth's beauty her knights are inspired to seek heavenly beauty, i.e. grace. The platonic ideal of beauty is also the basis for the double aspects of Faeryland, for "faery" is often analogous to "fair". It is a land of earthly and heavenly beauty, both a transcendent ideal and a part of the historical world of England where the ideal seems to be closest to its potential realization, exemplified by the quests for perfection under Gloriana's patronage which are to be equated with the pursuits suggested by Spenser. The fact that several heroes, although no faeries themselves, have been brought

up at faery court seems to represent an allegory of the poet's own influence, for it is he who provides England's champions with a vision of spiritual and courtly grace, whereby they are being prepared for their quests in the service of the Faery Queen.

Britomart's and Arthegall's quest and marriage represent another treatment of the queen's superior virtue and imperial power, if compared to Arthur. Their fates seem to be an analogy to the allegory of Elf (Arthegall and Arthur) and Fay (Britomart and Elizabeth) in the faery chronicle. They represent the queen's restoration of the heroic virtues of antiquity (Arthegall and Britomart) and the creation of an age of concord and justice (their marriage). Their roles as champions of England's cause suggest that their love story, although also a story of a psychological development, is determined by the teleology of imperial history which is to culminate in a harmonious whole out of many discordant parts,<sup>39</sup> just as the Tudors restored the many discordant parts of the body politic to a new harmony. One could say that Spenser imitates Hall's treatment of the

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<sup>39</sup>See Henry Paolucci's introduction to St. Augustine's The Enchiridion on Faith, Hope, and Love (Chicago, 1961), pp.xii-xiii, on the "erotic principle" which moves man to seek "happiness and truth" through the establishment of a "well-ordered political society". See also Roche, p.56.

marriage of Lancaster and York as symbol for the restoration of universal concord and attributes the restoration of England's strength and concord to Elizabeth's accession to the throne, namely to her mystic marriage to England. In his description of Britomart and Arthegall, Spenser refers to the racial discords of the past which he sees resolved in a providential union or marriage of Britomart and Arthegall. Their names are a key to this theme. Arthegall is "Gallic Arthur" and a representative of Troy, for he inherits its emblem, the "ermilin",<sup>40</sup> which is, in addition, the emblem of the queen's chastity.<sup>41</sup> He represents thus a synthesis of the various parts of the Trojan race which is achieved in the person of Elizabeth. The fact that Arthegall wins the arms of the Greek hero Achilles suggests on one hand a parallel to Troynovant's victory over its enemies, Rome and Spain. Since Achilles is also the son of Peleus and Thetis, whose marriage on Haemus hill is for Spenser identical with the concord of a political golden age, Achilles' weapons in Arthegall's hands may on the other hand also represent the instruments for its restoration. If Arthegall is thus associated with the idea of

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<sup>40</sup>John Bossewell, Workes of Armory (1572), facs. (Amsterdam, 1969), fol. 120<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>41</sup>Strong, Portraits, Pl. 21b, Portrait 85.

concord and the link between Troy and England, Britomart represents concord in the sense of a blending of the heroic characteristics of Britons and Saxons. She is a personification of the ancient Briton stock who inherits the armour and arms of a Saxon maid, Angela. Both Britomart and Arthegall are in turn aspects of Elizabeth herself, for they are connected with chastity, that is, with the political and heroic strength of the imperial virgin.

The fact that Arthegall must be associated with the royal house of North Wales which derived itself from Arthur, while Britomart, as daughter of King Ryence, descends from that of South Wales, is a reference to the harmony established by Henry Tudor's return to England, for he came, like Arthur, from Brittany through Wales and, in addition, claimed descent from Rhys ap Tudor, "the famous hero of South Wales in the eleventh century."<sup>42</sup> Britomart and Arthegall are therefore not only personifications of the qualities of the Tudor queen but also of those of her grandfather, the founder of the Tudor monarchy. The marriage of these two almost identical figures announces symbolically the multiplication of harmonies under Elizabeth's rule. Britomart, as champion of Scudamore and Amoret,

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<sup>42</sup>Millican, pp.14-15.

appears as champion of private concord, symbolized by the marriage of these two, while Arthegall, as champion of justice, appears as champion of concord in the political sphere. To these two, Spenser has added other pairs of lovers to be joined in marriage who represent further images of the universal concord which is the fruit of the queen's government: the marriages of Una and Redcrosse, of Florimell and Marinell, and of Thames and Medway.

Spenser represents the search for concord as an erotic quest during which Britomart's battles represent symbolically the defeat of the obstacles to England's political harmony. It appears as dependent on the achievement of a proper balance between physical prowess and grace. Britomart's and Arthegall's encounter at the tournament of Satyrane forms the beginning of this process. Britomart represents the heroic role of the queen, a combination of beauty, wisdom, and strength, suggested by her comparison to Minerva, Bellona, Diana, and Venus in the armour of Mars who conquers "saluagesse sans finesse", i.e. Arthegall as representative of an imperfect heroic ideal which lacks the grace and refinement of the ideal glorified by the cult of the imperial virgin. Britomart represents this ideal through her defense of Florimell's girdle, the symbol of chastity, which Arthegall has challenged. Britomart's victory represents the victory of the queen's heroic virtue

over the insufficient chivalric virtue of the past, i.e. of Arthur's time. Spenser does not reject this ideal, however, for the two champions are destined to marry. In other words, concord can only be achieved by drawing strength from the great deeds of the ancestors of the Tudors, or by a marriage of past and present excellence, as in the marriage of Elf and Fay.

Spenser also emphasizes the superiority of the heroic virtue of the queen over that of her predecessors by giving Britomart a more important role in the symbolic marriage than Arthegall. She is praised as the "royal maid" (i.e. as virgin) who will produce "most famous fruite of matrimonial bowre" (III.iii.3), namely a line of heroes like those of the ancient empire. One can compare this to a similar paradoxical statement by Chapman that the Tudor queen shall become "her father, mother, and her heire" and produce a "golden world in this our iron age."<sup>43</sup> The "famous fruite of matrimonial bowre" prophetically announced by Merlin remains, however, still unborn, for it is only envisaged in the dream in the Temple of Isis. Spenser's allegory is therefore not a description of the queen's actual accomplishments but of what she could potentially achieve. The dream in which the crocodile (Arthegall) has to be subdued before

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<sup>43</sup>The Poems of George Chapman, ed. P. B. Bartlett (New York, 1962), p.354.

Britomart can assume the role of Astraea ( Isis with the white wand) and give birth to the lion, i.e. the Tudor lion as symbol of royal strength, represents allegorically how the queen can achieve the concord and justice by which her rule could be identified with that of the virgin Astraea.

In both Isis' Temple and Mercilla's court there are suggestions that this goal appears very much in doubt, however. Book IV can in this respect be regarded as an anti-climax to Book IV where the theme of concord and its fruits had been given a prominent place (the Temple of Venus and the marriage of the rivers). With regard to the allegory of justice, Arthegall represents "salvagesse sans finesse", namely the brute strength of mere law which has to be perfected by mercy and equity, two attributes derived from God.<sup>44</sup> This is the purpose of Britomart's and Arthegall's marriage. In analogy to the marriage of Elf and Fay it suggests that the era of law represented by Arthur's history must be redeemed and perfected by the succeeding era of the just virgin. Arthegall, although trained by Astraea herself in both justice and equity, brings to the marriage only the justice of the iron age, symbolized by his man Talus who, significantly, is not allowed to enter Isis' Temple, but

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<sup>44</sup> The classic formulation of this idea is Portia's speech in The Merchant of Venice (IV.i.184-197).



the brute force of his justice seems to intrude again and again into the ideal world of the just virgin. This is exemplified by the fact that the two icons of Isis and Mercilla which represent, so to speak, a vision of an ideal, are juxtaposed to episodes which represent the intrusion of unmerciful historical reality. Thus Britomart is stirred by a "sudden tempest" in the "midst of her felicitie" (V. vii.14), namely by the violence of mere law. "By clemence oft in things amis" (i.e. lacking), she must restrain "those stern behests and cruell doomes" of Arthegall's iron justice (V.vii.22). Only by its subordination to divine mercy and princely equity can the lion, symbol of royal power, be engendered. As we see in Mercilla's court, this vision of a reconciliation between justice and mercy fails when an actual test case arises. We see first Duessa's accuser Zeke, clamouring that strict justice be done:

He gan that Ladie strongly to appele  
Of many haynous crymes, by her enured,  
And with sharpe reasons rang her such a pele,  
That those, whom she to Pitle had allured,  
He now t'abhorre and loath her person had procured.

(V.ix.39)

However, it is significantly not Mercy but Pity who comes forward to mitigate the rigour of strict justice. At this point we are reminded of Seneca's distinction between cruelty (crudelitas) and pity (miseriordia) as the extremes

to which mercy (clementia) is the mean.<sup>45</sup> In spite of her name, Mercilla mistakes pity for mercy at this point, for the companions of Pity, representing emotions like grief, ruth, and dread (V.ix.40), are types of fallacious arguments for the mitigating of justice. As Seneca says, "pity regards the plight, not the cause . . . ; mercy is combined with reason."<sup>46</sup> This is, in fact, Mercilla's mistake, for her attempt to avoid cruelty, "iust vengeance" [my emphasis], leads her to another extreme, namely weakness or pity. Spenser indicates this by using the term "passion" for the description of the cause of her hesitation to punish Duessa, "though plaine she saw by all, that she did heare, That she of death was guiltie found by right" (V.ix.50). Spenser treats thus the queen's delaying tactics concerning the execution of Mary Stuart as a failure to live up to the standard he has symbolically set for her in the Temple of Isis episode. This instance foreshadows the poet's even more serious disillusionment with her execution of justice in Ireland, symbolized by Diana's excessive cruelty towards Arlo Hill in Book VII.

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<sup>45</sup>De clementia, II.iv.4, in Moral Essays, text with translation by J.W. Basore (London, 1928), I, 439. Cf. René Grasian, "Elizabeth at Isis Church", PMLA, 79 (1964), 376-389.

<sup>46</sup>De clementia, loc. cit.

### 5. Arthur as Figure of Grace and Chivalry

Turning now to a consideration of Arthur's actual role in The Faerie Queene, we note that his elimination from the chronicle history of the empire is not designed to show him in a less favourable light than those types who have taken his place. He has, after all, a prominent part in Spenser's poem. His representation as lover of Gloriana and instrument of divine providence (Arcturus) is a treatment of the myth of Arthur's return in a wholly new and original form. His character has been freed from the limitations of the historical character through his association with Arcturus as symbol of grace and theological perfection, and Spenser's complex ideal of grace allows the extension of Arthur's role to that of civilized and chivalrous behaviour. Robert Hoopes, in his discussion of Arthur's intervention in canto vii of Book II, notes the ambiguity of the several references to grace in the text. However, he does not take into account that for Spenser there is no distinction between the chivalric and theological meanings of grace.<sup>47</sup> Neither does he consider the description of the angelic messenger of grace as Cupid and brother to the three

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<sup>47</sup>"'God Guide Thee, Guyon': Nature and Grace Reconciled in The Faerie Queene, Book II" (1954), repr. in Essential Articles, pp.88-90.

Graces (II.viii.6) which one can further connect with the description of the Faery Queen as celestial Venus and figure of divine and earthly grace. A.S. P. Woodhouse's seminal article on the subject omits any consideration of the chivalric meaning of grace in Spenser's text, nor does he see it as part of Spenser's myth of the sacred empire. He discusses Spenser's heroes only from the point of view of individual perfection and overlooks the fact that each quest has as its goal Gloriana, herself the personification of grace.<sup>48</sup>

By introducing Arthur in Book I as a figure of heavenly grace which supports Gloriana and her realm, Spenser lays the groundwork for Arthur's role in the following books as mainly a figure of chivalric grace. This character does not constitute a separate role from his theological function, it represents rather a different modus operandi of God's grace. Arthur seems always to represent grace in the theological sense more strongly than the other heroes who fight mainly against unheroic figures, while Arthur specifically contends with figures of theological evil. As instrument of providence which comes to the rescue of Gloriana's champions, he may represent

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<sup>48</sup>"Nature and Grace in The Faerie Queene" (1949), repr. in Essential Articles, pp. 58-83.

specifically the ecclesia Anglicana and its support for the imperial policies of the queen. This appears through the fact that he plays a supporting role in each individual quest in which the heroes themselves also fight their own major battles with foes who seem to represent enemies of the heroic civilization of the empire, while Arthur's opponents are always associated with spiritual perversion: thus he fights with Orgoglio and Duessa, and Redorsse fights the dragon; Arthur fights with Maleger, the captain of the deadly sins, and Guyon fights Acrasia, an enemy to heroic virtue; Arthur fights Geryoneo and the Soldan, enemies of the faith, and Arthegall fights Grantorto, a tyrant only in the political sense. That Spenser, like Malory, attributes the defense of the "holy empire"<sup>49</sup> to Arthur can be seen in Book II, where he deliberately inserts the following passage in the chronicle which otherwise makes no mention of him, when speaking of Julius Caesar's victory over Britain:

Thenceforth this land was tributary made  
 T'ambitious Rome and did their rule obey,  
 Till Arthur all that reckoning defrayd

(II.x.49)

Arthur has thus returned in the form of the restored English church, not to defeat the secular but the spiritual Rome of

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<sup>49</sup>Works, p.140.

Elizabeth's time. His intervention in Book I provides the framework for the subsequent restoration of the heroic and chivalric graces in the following books; in other words, England's break with Rome becomes glorified as the instrument of a general restoration of grace and civilization.

Spenser seems therefore to insist throughout on a fusion of theological and heroic qualities. The personification of God's grace as Cupid, a brother to the Graces, which I mentioned before, is a good illustration. In neoplatonic philosophy, the three Graces signify the Trinity, as Edgar Wind has noted,<sup>50</sup> or the three qualities of the divine mind, as in Ficino's philosophy;<sup>51</sup> on the other hand, they are associated with friendship, beauty, graceful behaviour, courtesy, etc.<sup>52</sup> Spenser seems to include all these connotations in his concept of grace which combines the strictly theological sense with an aristocratic ideal and can be related to his ideal of heroism as a fusion of the active and contemplative lives. All forms of endeavour in the service of Gloriana, a personification of this complex

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<sup>50</sup>Pagan Mysteries in the Renaissance (Penguin, 1958), pp.36 and 41.

<sup>51</sup>Panofsky, p.169.

<sup>52</sup>Ripa, p.195; Cartari, pp.286-290.

ideal of grace, are considered worthy of glory and praise. The figure of the hermit on the Mount of Contemplation and the poet Colin Clout on Mount Acidale who experience grace or the Graces in a vision and transmit it to man are instruments of grace in the same sense as are the figures of the Church Militant and of the heroic ideal who restore the state of grace by martial endeavours. This is the ideal described by Belpheobe: "Abroad in armes, at home in studious kind who seekes with painfull toile, shall honor soonest find" (II.iii.40). Another illustration of the blending of chivalric and theological meanings of grace is Arthur's rescue of Guyon (II.viii). Arthur is described both as Christ-Hercules (I.vii.17) and as the Hercules of heroic virtue (II.viii.17) who are, in a sense, identical. Described as "floure of grace and nobillesse" (II.viii.18), Arthur appears as instrument of divine grace and of courtesy, while his enemies are both unholy and ignoble. The brothers Pyrochles and Cymochles are paynims who swear by "Termagaunt" and "Mahoune", and who disregard the code of chivalric behaviour towards the helpless Guyon. The seeming confusion of weapons, Arthur provided with Guyon's sword and his own spear, the paynims with Guyon's shield and Arthur's sword, illustrates the blending of unholy and ignoble characteristics on one side, and of holy and noble ones on the other. No matter what the weapons of the former, it appears that

the latter are invincible.

As martial and heroic figure, Arthur is the personification of the Church Militant, and its battles with Rome are set in the framework of another crusade.<sup>53</sup> It is very likely that Spenser's choice of such a role for his hero was influenced by his desire to overgo Ariosto and Tasso who had placed their encomium of the House of Este in the times of the two other Christian Worthies, Charlemagne and Godfrey of Bouillon, in order to revive the spirit of the crusades and encourage their patrons to emulate the heroic deeds of their ancestors. Ariosto's heroes in the Orlando furioso live in the time of Charlemagne's battles with the Moors, and Tasso's in the Gerusalemme liberata participate in the conquest of Jerusalem under Godfrey of Bouillon. Instead of stirring the hearts of his contemporaries to pursue the path to glory by a return to the past, as Tasso and Ariosto did, Spenser, using the motif of Arthur's return, presents the greatest of the Christian Worthies as stirred to a quest for glory (Gloriana) in the present. Spenser exalts thus the present as the time of greatest heroic achievement and as a crusade which outdoes all previous ones. He reverses the historical view of his

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<sup>53</sup>See F.Q., II.viii.2, the line "to aide us militant" which refers to Arthur's supporting role.



predecessors by making the ruling monarch to whom the poem is addressed the ideal to be sought and emulated by her own ancestor who is to be perfected by her and achieves his greatest glory in her service.

Critics like J. W. Bennett and C. B. Millican have sought for possible analogies to Spenser's Arthur by looking at various traditions of Arthurian lore,<sup>54</sup> but they were, of course, not aware of the allegory of the 1501 pageant which Sidney Anglo has only discovered recently, nor did they consider Arthur's connection with the Nine Worthies in the light of the fact that Ariosto and Tasso derive their chivalric ideal also from this tradition. Spenser's choice of Arthur as Christian Worthy is directly connected with the peculiar mixture of romance and epic features of the crusade-like battles in the poem.<sup>55</sup> It is a reflection of the connection of the cult of the Nine Worthies with the chivalric revival at the Burgundian court which accompanied the preparation for the crusades in the fourteenth century. Huizinga describes the signif-

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<sup>54</sup>Bennett, The Evolution of The Faery Queene, esp. chs. V-VII. Millican, Spenser and the Table Round, passim, discusses the Nine Worthies but not the connection with Tasso's and Ariosto's use of the tradition.

<sup>55</sup>Of. G. Hough, A Preface to the Faerie Queene (New York, 1963), ch. I, "Spenser and the Romantic Epic".

icance of this revival which focused on the Nine Worthies:

In reviving chivalry, the poets and princes imagined that they were returning to antiquity. In the minds of the fourteenth century, a vision of antiquity had hardly yet dissociated itself from the faeryland atmosphere of the Round Table. Classical heroes were still tinged with the general glow of romance. On the one hand, the figure of Alexander had long ago entered the sphere of chivalry; on the other, chivalry was supposed to be of Roman origin. "And he maintained the discipline of chivalry well, as did the Romans formerly," thus a Burgundian chronicler praised Henry V of England. The blazons of Caesar, of Hercules, and of Troilus are placed, in a fantasy of King René, side by side with those of Arthur and Launcelot.<sup>56</sup>

The Nine Worthies appear for the first time in a poem written at the Burgundian court at the beginning of the fourteenth century, Les Voeux du Paon, by Jacques Longuyon. Soon his catalogue of Worthies became a fashionable topos for literature and was expanded by a parallel catalogue of female Worthies, like Penthesilea, Tomyris, and Semiramis. Henry VI, for instance, was preceded by all eighteen worthies in his 1431 entry in Paris.<sup>57</sup> Spenser clearly refers to this tradition when he compares Belphebe to Penthesilea, "that famous Queene of Amazons" (II.iii.31), and flatteringly describes Britomart as superior to "Penthesilea".

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<sup>56</sup> The Waning of the Middle Ages (Garden City, N.J., 1954), p. 71.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., p. 72-73. See further H. Schroeder, Der Topos der Nine Worthies in Literatur und bildender Kunst (Goettingen, 1971).

"Debora", and "Camilla" (III.iv.2). Arthur, Britomart, and Belphebe thus form a glorious triumvirate of English Worthies which surpass those of the past.

Arthur's pursuit of Gloriana in the sense of "glory" can also be connected with the cult of the Nine Worthies, for in the Renaissance it appeared in connection with the cult of fame specifically in royal pageantry:

[Les neuf preux] . . . sont des types populaires de la gloire du Moyen Age, dès le règne de Charles V, voulut personifier la continuité de la civilisation et de l'histoire . . . par conséquent la victoire allégorique de la Renommée dans la perennité du Temps.<sup>58</sup>

We may in this connection remember the contemporary depiction of Queen Elizabeth as personification of Fame in a triumphal chariot in the style of Petrarch's Trionfi.<sup>59</sup> In creating Gloriana as focus for the chivalric enterprises of the various heroes and for Arthur's quest, Spenser has combined the features of Laura in the Cansoniere and Trionfi with an ideal which inspires heroic virtue and the desire for earthly as well as heavenly glory in a crusade-like struggle against the "paynim" enemies of England, conducted under the patronage of the greatest Christian Worthy.

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<sup>58</sup>Schneider, "Le thème des triomphes", p.88. See also Bernard Guéneé, François Lehoux, Les entrées royales françaises de 1328-1515 (Sources d'histoire médiévale, No. 3; Paris, 1968).

<sup>59</sup>Strong, Woodcut 4.

Spenser's characterization of Arthur in the Letter to Raleigh seems to reflect the chivalric context of the cult of the Nine Worthies with which Arthur had become associated:

The generall end therefore of all the booke is to fashion a gentleman or noble person in vertuous and gentle discipline: Which for that I conceived shoulde be most plausible and pleasing, being coloured with an historical fiction, the which the most part of men delight to read, rather for variety of matter, then for profite of the ensample: I chose the historye of king Arthure.

These lines seem to echo Caxton's preface to the Tale of King Arthur. It is an informative document for the manner in which the concept of Arthur as Christian-Worthy was transmitted to the Renaissance. Discussing the genesis of the work, Caxton stresses that he was less influenced by the chronicles which he considers to be of dubious veracity than by the fact that "in al places, Crysten and hethen, he is reputed and taken for one of the nine worthy, and the fyrst of these Crysten men."<sup>60</sup> Caxton stresses further that the value of Arthur's history lies less in its historical truth than in its representation of "noble actes of chyvalry" and "jentyll and vertuous dedes." This view of Arthur is also Spenser's, for he has eliminated him as a figure of chronicle history and turned him into an ideal of

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<sup>60</sup> Malory, Works, pp.xiv-xv.

highest virtue and gentility.

## Chapter Six

### SYMBOLIC MEANINGS OF THE VOYAGES OF THE TUDOR VENTURERS

Having considered Spenser's adaptation of Dee's imperialistic ideology with regard to the past, we shall now investigate the manner in which he elaborates its consequences for the future, namely Dee's dream of Elizabeth as future empress of the sea and of a colonial empire. The myths and images of Books II-IV must be regarded as the thematic complement to Spenser's treatment of chronicle history. If in the chronicles he represents the defeat of Spain by the "royal virgin" as type of the restoration of Troy in its unfallen heroic civilization, we shall see in the following that he envisages Spain's defeat also as a means to restore the concord which once reigned at the wedding feast of Peleus and Thetis, while the role of the fatal golden apple of the Hesperides which destroyed both this concord and Troy is equated with the threat of Spanish power against England. By means of myths and iconographical details, Spenser attributes this restoration to England's voyager heroes whom he associates with the heroes of antiquity, while Elizabeth's role is conceived as that of the fruitful Venus. As such, she is equally the imperial figure of Astraea and an analogy to Venus as ancient protectress of

Troy whose power extends over the sea and over the earthly paradise, a type of Venus' garden of the Hesperides in the western ocean. The queen is further the personification of the rewards which heroic labours produce, and, in this respect, she is associated with the Diana-role of Astraea, especially as Belpheobe who represents the glory England won in its rivalry with Spain. The colonial empire is presented in a vision which is to incite Englishmen by its beauty to pursue it more actively than they did in fact, and therefore it is called faeryland. Spenser makes this point in the Proem to Book II, when he equates the existence of faeryland with that of "fruitfullest Virginia" and Guiana. As the term "fruitfullest Virginia" shows, Spenser equates the paradoxical role of Astraea as Venus (fruitfulness) and Diana (virginity) with the imperialistic policies advocated by Dee and Raleigh.

Since the emphasis of my investigation is to be on Book II, a detailed study of the colonial myth, as outlined above, must be left for the future. I shall here focus on two subjects which illustrate the meaning Spenser gives the enterprises of the Tudor venturers, and the idea of a colonial empire as envisaged by Dee and Raleigh: Acrasia's Bower (the antithesis to Venus' garden), and Florimell's search for Marinell (the search for concord as a search for Raleigh's colonies). In a concluding chapter, I am going

to concentrate on Guyon's quest in relation to Mammon and Belphebe, that is, on the heroic ideal which Spenser makes the basis for England's ability to defeat Spain and restore Troy.

### 1. Acrasia's Bower

Spenser's characterization of Guyon's voyage to the Bower by allusions to the labours of Hercules and the voyage of Ulysses draws on the mythological context in which contemporaries saw the voyages of their countrymen like Frobisher, Drake, and Raleigh. The pillars of Hercules which in antiquity designated the western limits of the then known world had, in the sixteenth century, become symbols of Spain's imperial power, for they had been adopted by Charles V as one of his devices. When Queen Elizabeth adopted this image in some of her official portraits, it clearly announced a rival claim.<sup>1</sup> Its validity had been established through Drake's successful circumnavigation of the globe. Consequently, England could claim more justly than Spain that its power extended PLUS ULTRA, i.e. beyond the limits set by the pillars of Hercules. The significance of Drake's achievement in the eyes of his contemporaries can be illustrated by the fact that, as Yates points

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<sup>1</sup>Yates, "Astraea", p.52.



out, Sir John Harrington fitted Ariosto's passages touching on the voyages to the praise of Sir Frances Drake's successful voyage, when he translated the Orlando furioso.<sup>2</sup> In his Annals, Camden printed several samples of the verses which had been affixed to the mast of the Golden Hind in celebration of Drake's return in 1580. Their common theme is the association between Drake and Hercules, for example this distich: "PLUS ULTRA, Herculeis inscribis Columnis, Drace / Et magno, dicas, Hercule maior ero."<sup>3</sup> Drake's long and arduous voyage may thus be considered as analogy to Guyon's, and his associations with Hercules as the basis for the characteristics of Guyon (as we shall see in the next chapter).

The voyage and the obstacles on the way to the Bower of Bliss have been designed as analogy to Ulysses' voyage, and by overcoming them Guyon becomes a hero of equal stature, while the obstacles he meets appear to symbolize the many external and psychological impediments which English voyagers like Drake had to overcome at home and at sea. The Gulf of Greedinesse, for instance, alludes to their well-known taste for booty to which they often

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<sup>2</sup>"Astraea", loc. cit.

<sup>3</sup>Annales, tr. A. Darcie (from Bellegent's French version), ([London], 1625), I, 427.

subordinated the loftier purpose of expanding the colonial empire. Dee and Raleigh made this point often in their writings, and Spenser seems here to imply a similar message. The Rock of Vile Reproach reminds us of the enormous financial risks involved for the backers of these voyages. They often incurred substantial losses, as, for example, in the case of the Frobisher voyages. Spenser alludes to the dashed hopes of those who, blinded by gold fever, had lost nearly everything, when he describes the rock as "that wastefull clift, For spoyle of wretches, whose unhappy case, After lost credit and consumed thrift, At last them driuen hath to this despairefull drift" (II.xii.8). It appears thus that search for selfish enrichment leads only to disappointment and is not to be indulged in, if England's heroes are to succeed in their establishment of national glory.

The Wandring Islands represent another kind of obstacle. They suggest a lack of firmly grounded purpose and seem to refer to the wavering attitude of the queen. She often drove her admirals and captains to distraction by withdrawing her permission to sail at the last minute, as happened, for example, twice in the case of Drake. The allusion to the queen is clothed in an allusion to the Tudor roses:

Yet well they seeme to him that farre doth vew  
Both fair and fruitful, and the ground dispred

With grassie greene of delectable hew,  
 And the tall trees with leaues apparelled,  
 Are deckt with blossoms dyde in white and red,  
 That mote the passengers thereto allure;  
 But whosoever once hath fastened  
 His foot thereon, may neuer it recure,  
 But wandreth euer more uncertain and unsure.

(II.xii.12)

The terms "fair and fruitfull" can be taken as allusion to Elizabeth's role as imperial virgin in her Venus role, while the comparison of her island to the island of Apollo and Diana (st.13) seems to refer to her image as imperial moon in relation to the sol iustitiae. This description implies a critique of her motto semper eadem, for her lack of a firm commitment to the voyages of the kind Drake and Raleigh had in mind makes her rather a negative type of the moon goddess, namely "changeable as the moon", in the sense Mutability charges her in Book VII.

The Quicksand of Unthriftyhed and the Whirlpooles of Decay are complementary obstacles to the achievement of heroic fame. The first is a symbol for the consequences of a man's thoughtless rushing into action, especially with regard to maritime ventures in which many a time a ship ended up like the one seen by Guyon. Lying on the quicksand, it appears like a "goodly ship . . . Which through great misaventure or mesprize, Her selfe had runne into that hazardize" (II.xii.19). The Whirlpool is associated with the contrasting lack of opportunity or too slow action, a

factor which delayed many an enterprise of exploration into the New World and therefore prevented the achievement of fame. Guyon sees this loss as represented by the whirlpool, "in which full many had with haplesse doole, Beene suncke, of whom no memorie did stay" (II.xii.20). The comparison of its whirling waters to a "restlesse wheele" is based on an image of Fortuna's instability and her enmity to heroic achievement.

The other obstacles like fabulous maidens, sirens, birds, and fish derive from a long tradition of fantastic beast and travel lore which the men of the Renaissance had transferred to the New World together with other myths like that of the Fortunate Islands. Spenser uses these images to represent the psychological obstacles, created by the imagination, which held back England's prospective voyagers as they were confronted with tales of incredible sights and dangers in the foreign places across an unknown and frightening ocean. Comparable stories circulated among the more credulous as well as among the educated, and many a young sea-dog may well have had to overcome his fears in this respect before taking to the treacherous waves for England's greater glory.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Raleigh himself believed in El Dorado and the Amazons; however, in the History of the World, he gives examples for the kind of fabulous beliefs which his contemporaries took over uncritically from the past. See Renaissance England, ed. R. Lamson, H. Smith (New York, 1956), p.514.

Spenser's hero, however, shows how to overcome all these dangers courageously. He could be regarded as flattering portrait of England's successful voyager heroes whom contemporaries viewed similarly in the roles of Ulysses and other ancient heroes. Fleming, for instance, wrote a poem in praise of Frobisher and sees his voyages as those of another Ulysses:

Through sundrie foming fretes and storming streightes,  
That ventrous knight of Ithac' soyle did sayle:  
Against the force of Syrens baulmed beightes,  
His noble skill and courage did preuaile.  
His hap was hard, his hope yet nothing fraile.  
Nor ragged rocks, not sinking Syrtes or sandes  
His stoutnesse staide, from viewing foreigne lands.

After having thus presented Ulysses as model for Frobisher, Fleming continues with his praise of the English Ulysses:

A right Heroicall heart of Britaine blood,  
Ulysses match in skill and Martiall might:  
For princes fame and countries speciall good,  
Through brackish seas (where Neptune reigns by right)  
Hath safely saild, in perils great despight:  
The Golden Fleece (like Iason) hath he got,  
And rich returnd, saunce losse or lucklesse lot.<sup>5</sup>

Like Ulysses and Frobisher, Guyon, too, is a skilful sailor and manages to escape the many traps laid for him by the Spanish Circe and by a threatening ocean full of unknown

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<sup>5</sup>Printed after the title page in Dionyse Settle's True report of the last voyages. . . by Captaine Frobisher (London, 1577). The comparison is full of unconscious irony, for Frobisher did not find any gold at all, but such disconcerting facts were obviously no obstacle for a patriotic mind and imagination.

dangers. A similar admiration for the navigational skills of England's heroes appears, for example, in Gascoigne's sonnet in praise of Sir Humphrey Gilbert whom he calls a fourth Neptune among such distinguished explorers as Columbus, Vespucci, and Magellan.<sup>6</sup> Guyon can be considered a composite of all these men and his voyage a composite of the many difficulties which had to be overcome in the expansion of England's power at sea and in foreign countries overseas.

Contrary to Fleming's positive reference to Jason's golden fleece, Spenser gives it a negative connotation, for the search for gold is by him associated with unheroic and unpatriotic behaviour. It is therefore the first thing which greets Guyon in Acrasia's Bower and must be seen as a warning sign that danger lies ahead for Britain's hero:

Yt framed was of precious yuory,  
That seemd a worke of admirable wit;  
And therein all the famous history  
Of Iason and Medaea was ywrit;  
Her mighty charmes, her furious louing fit,  
His goodly conquest of the golden fleece,  
His falsed faith, and loue too lightly flit,  
The wondred Argo, which in venturous peece  
First through the Euxine seas bore all the flowr  
of Greece.

Ye might haue seene the frothy billowes fry  
Under the ship, as thorough them she went,  
That seemd the waues were into yuory,  
Or yuory into the waues were sent;

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<sup>6</sup>In Sir Humphrey Gilbert's A Discourse of a discouerie for a new passage to Cataia ([London], 1576).

And other where the snowy substaunce sprent  
 With vermell, like the boyes bloud therein shed,  
 A piteous spectacle did represent,  
 And otherwhiles with gold besprinkeled;  
 Yt seemd th'enchanted flame, which did Creusa wad.

(II.xii.44-45)

Gold is here connected with bloodshed, murder, and false love, and turns into an instrument of moral perversion and the destruction of life, exemplified by the comparison between gold and the flames which cause Creusa's death. Since the Greeks were the enemies of Troy, Spenser's reference to a Greek hero and to gold used for evil purposes draws the reader's attention to the fact that Acrasia's Bower is a threat to Troynovant as well as to the virtue of the individual hero. The enemy who undermined Troynovant's strength by means of gold was, of course, Spain, and in the following I shall introduce analogies to Spenser's description of the Bower from texts which establish this connection.

Apart from its indebtedness to Ariosto, Tasso, and other literary sources, Acrasia's garden paradise of luxurious artificiality is clearly related to contemporary reports of the riches of Spain's overseas dominions. In these the praise of the extraordinary beauty, fertility, and wealth of these places is expressed by means of topoi drawn from the ancient myths of the Fortunate Isles, of the earthly paradise, Solomon's Ophir, and the Garden of the

Hesperides.<sup>7</sup> Since Spenser attributes the myths of the Garden of the Hesperides and of the earthly paradise in their positive sense to the empire of the English Venus, Acrasia's Bower and she herself are to be seen as a perverted form of Venus' garden and of Venus herself. As in his passage on Jason and the Greeks, Spenser expresses this by images of the corrupting power of gold. Acrasia's sterile lust is a parallel to the character of the garden itself where the fertility of nature is reduced to the production of mere metal, namely fruits and flowers of gold and precious stones. They exhibit clearly a sinister character, for they appear "as lurking from the vew of couetous guest" (II.xii. 55). We can therefore see a connection between Acrasia's temptations and the gold offered by Mammon; however, she works by indirect means, by a surface which pleases and attracts the eye (similar to Lucifer's court), while underneath the "Spanish Pluto"<sup>8</sup> lurks and waits to entrap his

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<sup>7</sup>Cawley, Unpathed Waters, esp. Part I, "The Heritage of the Middle Ages", and Lewis Hanke, Aristotle and the American Indians (Bloomington, 1970), ch. I, "America as Fantasy", discuss the transfer of these myths to the New World.

<sup>8</sup>This term is an interpolation by Sylvester in his translation of the Fourth Part of the First Day of the Second Week of DuBartas' Divine Weeks, and seems very fitting in the context of Spenser's allegory. See The Complete Works of Joshua Sylvester, I, 122-123.



victims.

The cunning replacement of nature by art and artifice which is the outstanding characteristic of Acrasia's Bower can be compared to the description of a plain in the interior of Hispaniola (Haiti) which was intended to give an idea of the riches acquired by Spain in this island:

They haue founde by experience, that the vayne of golde is a living tree, and that the same by all wayes that it spreadeth and springeth from the roote by the soft pores and passages of the earth, putteth forth branches, even unto the uppermost parte of the earth, and ceaseth not untill it discover it-selfe unto the open ayre: at which tyme, it showeth forth certaine beautiful colours in the steede of floures, rounde stones of golden earth in the steede of frutes, and thynne plates in the steede of leaues . . . They say that the roote of the golden tree extendeth to the center of the<sup>9</sup> earth, and there taketh nourishment and increase.

This description can be compared to the enticing vines hanging from the Porch in Spenser's Bower, which are, however, placed in a context where they acquire negative connotations:

Some deepe empurpled as the Hyacynt,  
Some as the Rubine, laughing sweetly red,  
Some like faire Emeraudes, not yet well ripened.

And them amongst, some were of burnisht gold  
So made by art, to beautify the rest,  
Which did themselues amongst the leaues enfold,  
As lurking from the vew of couetous guest

(II.xii.54-55)

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<sup>9</sup>Peter Martyr Anglerius, The historye of trauayle in the west Indies, tr. R. Eden, augm. R. Willis (London, 1577), fol.139v.

Another comparable passage is the fountain "of richest substance" from which a "silver flood" is running continually (II.xii.60). It is also characterized by the imagery of metal, like Peter Martyr's description of the golden tree:

And ouer all, of purest gold was spred,  
A trayle of yule in his natiue hew:  
For the rich mettall was so coloured,  
That wight, who did not well aduis'd it vew,  
Would surely deeme it to be yule trew

(II.xii.61)

The fact that Acrasia's Bower consists of gold, silver, rubies, and other gems which are so coloured as to deceive the eye into accepting them as real nature can be taken as an indication that this garden originates underground like Peter Martyr's golden tree, and is, in fact, an extension of Mammon's realm. It seems as if it is a disguised version of Proserpina's garden full of poisonous trees "direfull deadly blacke both leafe and bloom", i.e. also covered with dead fruits as are the trees in Acrasia's Bower (II.vii.51), and these deadly trees in Proserpina's garden surround a "goodly tree" full of golden apples, which clearly establishes the character of the images of gold and metal in Spenser's description of the Bower.

A second analogy to Acrasia's Bower with its artificial fruits and flowers could have been the golden garden of the Inca which Raleigh mentions in the Discoverie of Guiana (1596). Reports of it were very likely circulating by word of mouth, so that Spenser could well have heard of

it even if he had not read the passage from the "120. chapter of Lopez in his generall historie of the Indies" from which Raleigh quotes. Lopez tells of the grandfather of the emperor of Guiana that "there was nothing in his countrey, whereof he had not the counterfeate in gold. Yea, and they say, The Ingas had a garden . . . which had all kinds of garden hearbes, flowers, and trees of Gold and Silver."<sup>10</sup> Spenser's allusions to places in the New World which procured the riches of Golden Castile seem to suggest that the hunger for gold has corrupted the Spaniards who in turn use it as a kind of Circe who emaculates the strength of England's heroes. We can see an expression of this in the episode where a lady, named Excesse, offers her corrupting drink in a golden cup. One could compare her action to Sir Walter Raleigh's comment on the source of Spanish power: "it is his Indian Golde that indaungereth and disturbeth all the nations of Europe."<sup>11</sup> The Bower, described as "daintie Paradise" (II.xii.58) which is decked "with all the ornaments of Floraes pride" and, "as half in scorne of niggard Nature", is decked like a "pompous bride" (II.xii.50) suggests the idea of Venus' earthly paradise

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<sup>10</sup> The Discoverie of the Large, Rich, and Bewtiful Empyre of Guiana, by Sir Walter Raleigh (London, 1596), facs. (Leeds, 1967), pp.11-12.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., fol. 43<sup>v</sup>.

(i.e. nature in its original state) having been usurped by Circe (Acrasia) and its natural fertility having been transformed to corrupt purposes, as suggested by the association of a bridal figure with Flora. Her associations with moral perversion appear through Acrasia's Circe role. She perverts nature by transforming men to beasts, for her garden is surrounded by "an hideous bellowing Of many beasts" (II. xii.39), and the fact that they are enraged by either "hunger" or "Venus sting" suggests a connection between moral corruption and hunger for gold which is expressed by a sexual metaphor. We must see Acrasia's charms as connected with the golden cup of Excesse, namely gold as drink which corrupts moral and natural strength, and with the metallic fruits in the garden, namely gold as food which is unable to provide proper nourishment. By their connection with a Circe-like figure and sexual attraction Spenser characterizes Spanish gold as a type of bad Venus and antitype to Gloriana. As such it is also turned into an enemy of heroic fame, for Acrasia appears as the type of Venus who has entrapped Mars, a frequent motif in Renaissance art, as we see from the description of her victim Verdant:

His warlike arms, the idle instruments  
Of sleeping praise, were hong upon a tree,  
And his braue shield, full of old monuments,  
Was fowly ra'st, ne for honour cared hee,

Ne ought that did to his aduancement tend,  
 But in lewd loues, and wastefull luxuree,  
 His dayes, his goods, his bodie he did spend;  
 O horrible enchantment, that him so did blend.

(II.xii.80)

As his name suggests, Verdant represents the potential but sleeping antithesis to the metal-coloured fruits of Acrasia's garden. The destruction of the Bower is therefore the preparation for the greening of the true type of earthly paradise, ruled over by the fruitful Venus who rules England. It is represented as the liberation of "Verdant", i.e. "greening". Since the earthly paradise is represented as Raleigh's Virginia colony ("fruitfullest Virginia"), Acrasia represents Spain's power, based on gold, which threatens England's heroic strength and thus prevents the realization of the colonial dream.

By equating the destruction of Spain's power with the restoration of the natural order, Spenser seems to represent those anti-Spanish sentiments, which William S. Maltby has called the "black legend", in the allegory of Guyon's quest.<sup>12</sup> The "black legend" originated in connection with the Spanish Inquisition and other Counter-Reformation measures supported by Spain and drew its inspiration largely from the exposure of the cruelty of the Spaniards against the Indians in Las Casas' Brevissima Relacion de la

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<sup>12</sup>The Black Legend in England (Durham, N.C., 1971).

Destruccion de las Indias. Las Casas seems to have viewed the Indians as "living in a state of nature, 'without malice or subtlety', a golden age whose primal innocence was shattered forever by the coming of the Spaniards."<sup>13</sup> The moral indignation felt by the English at such horror stories may have been the inspiration for Guyon's revenge motif for his quest, for he departs on the search for Acrasia when he discovers the murderous effects of her poisoned cup (perhaps a symbol of corrupt doctrine like Duessa's cup in Book I) on Mordant and Amavia. In contemporary writings which propagated voyages to the new world, one of the arguments in their favour was frequently that of preventing the spreading of the poisonous doctrine of Rome and of introducing the inhabitants of the new regions to the true and unpolluted faith. Although Guyon comes too late to aid Amavia and her lover, he manages to destroy the possibility of a repetition of such a misdeed by Acrasia when he dashes the golden cup of Excesse to the ground before he enters the Bower. This seems to imply that by destroying the power of Spanish gold, England's heroes will also be able to destroy the false doctrine upheld by Spain through the gold from the colonies.

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<sup>13</sup> Maltby, p.16.



heroic determination by Englishmen to further England's glory abroad. The life led by the voyagers is thus to be equated with heroic action and virtue and the restoration of England's sleeping fame. As Spenser's terms "Verdant" and "fruitfullest Virginia" suggest, the voyages of the Tudor venturers, allegorized as means for the restoration of nature, are meant in particular to further the colonial empire of the imperial virgin, and its realization is made dependent on the destruction of Spain's gold which is turned into a force which saps and entraps England's heroic strength.<sup>15</sup>

If seen in this political context, Guyon's thorough destruction of the Bower of Bliss may also be a reflection of a particularly successful stroke against the Spanish colonies which did much to contribute to England's eventual victory over Spanish power and gold, namely Sir Frances Drake's West Indian raid of 1585. I shall first review the relevant facts and their political significance, and secondly, present a possible thematic connection between contemporary views of this dashing feat and Spenser's episode.

In 1584, provoked by the Spanish king's embargo on

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<sup>15</sup>The flourishing of Virginia alluded to in Spenser's term may also refer to England herself, for, as Camden notes, Orpheus used to call England Ceres' seat, and once it was counted among the Fortunate Isles, see Camden's Britain, or a chorographicall Description of the most flourishing Kingdomes, tr. Philemon Holland (London, 1637), pp.3-4.



a fleet of English cornships in Spanish ports, where they had been invited by Spain for friendly trade, national indignation in England rose to unprecedented heights. The queen responded to the public mood by abandoning her usual reticence concerning anti-Spanish ventures and allowed Sir Frances Drake to sail with a fleet against the Spanish colonies. The preparations for this voyage coincided with Sir Richard Grenville's departure for the establishing of a first settlement in Virginia. He had been charged to look out for useful information which could benefit Drake's expedition. A letter, dated August 12, 1585, arrived just in time before Drake sailed in September. Written by Ralph Lane to Sir Philip Sidney, it related not only the defenseless condition of the ports of Puerto Rico and Santo Domingo, but also their "infinite riches". It concluded, "I find it an attempt most honourable, feasible, and profitable, and only fit for yourself to be commander in",<sup>16</sup> an ending which must have done little to console Sidney who was forced to stay at home.

Unlike the circumnavigation of the globe, which had mainly been devoted to the amassing of rich booty, this expedition of Drake was not a "mere raid for plunder. It

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<sup>16</sup> Sir Julian S. Corbett, Drake and the Tudor Navy, II, 17.

[was] the broadly conceived design of a great captain aimed at destroying the fountain-head of the enemy's supplies, and seizing and occupying against him the point upon which his whole system of communications turned",<sup>17</sup> that is, the cities of the West Indies and Central America which provided Spain with gold and precious stones. Drake's mission ended, like Guyon's, in a resounding triumph. Not only had he again managed to collect a great amount of valuable things, something which always made a good impression at home, but he had achieved something far more important, namely to strike a decisive blow against Spain's prestige and power.<sup>18</sup> Corbett has summed up the significance of Drake's exploit:

Shortly before Drake had sailed, Antwerp had capitulated to Parma, and the Counter-reformation had reached its highest point. All that was left of Protestantism seemed about to be submerged beneath the flowing tide of Spanish empire, when suddenly it was checked. For the moment Spanish credit was completely shattered. The sources of Philip's wealth and power seemed to be at Elizabeth's mercy . . . In the great commercial centres it was reported that the Bank of Seville had broken, and that that of Venice was likely to follow. Philip himself had failed to raise a loan of half a million ducats, and in Paris it was thought he must become bankrupt. In spite of the vast preparations against England which for a year had been the talk

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<sup>17</sup>Corbett, p.26.

<sup>18</sup>In 1589, so to speak in recognition of Drake's contribution to the Armada victory, a splendid edition of a description of his raid appeared in London, complete with maps: [Walter Bigges,] Sir Frances Drake's West Indian Voyage, facs. (Amsterdam, 1968).

of every exchange and court in Western Europe, he had not been able to lift a finger to help himself. It was not until April 16, nearly six months after Drake's defiance at Bayona, that Santa Cruz got his flying squadron to sea, and in the very zenith of her power, Spain became a laughing stock.<sup>19</sup>

Not content with this, Drake had gone on a second raid in 1587, when the queen sent him against the Spanish ports in order to disrupt the preparations for a fleet against England. He caused such havoc among the Spanish vessels and supplies all along the Spanish coast that he successfully interrupted Spain's preparations and effected a full year's postponement of the attack by the Armada. An important psychological factor in these raids was also that they gave English sailors a demonstration of the inferior fighting ability of the large Spanish galleys if compared to English ships, a lesson which was probably not lost on the English and may well have strengthened their resolve to defeat the Spaniards when they met them in the historic battle of the next year.<sup>20</sup>

One could equate Drake's destruction of the Spanish ports and ships with Guyon's destruction of the Bower, and Verdant's liberation with the awakening of the long dormant heroic spirit of Englishmen who, instead of heroically

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<sup>19</sup>Corbett, II, 58-59.

<sup>20</sup>Robert Leng, Sir Frances Drake's Memorable Service Done Against the Spaniards in 1587, ed. C. Hopper in The Camden Miscellany (1864), V, repr. (New York, 1968).

fighting Spain spent their time going on fruitless searches for gold and other treasure and thereby allowed Spain to increase her power and threats to England's empire. Similar to Guyon who "broke down" without pity "all those pleasant bowres and Pallace braue" (II.xii.83), Sir Frances Drake had been described as restorer of moral and theological order by one of his countrymen. Describing Drake's raid by "Theyr Idoll gods eche where puld downe, With all theyr fond Idolatrye", he continues with a comparison between Drake and Gideon, and praises him for having freed the prisoners of the Spaniards:

So likewise by Gods mighty hands  
Syr Francis Drake by dreadfull sworde  
Did foyle his foes in forraine lande  
Which did contemne Christes holy word.  
And many Captives did sette free,<sup>21</sup>  
Which erst were long in miserye.<sup>21</sup>

This could be regarded as a parallel to Guyon's freeing of Acrasia's victims. His long and arduous voyage could be a moralized version of the voyage to the West Indies, places which contemporaries had described in terms of the earthly paradises of antiquity. The sterility of Acrasia's sensual pleasures may reflect the perversion of heroic virtue by the hunger for gold. Since Drake's raid destroyed the fruits which fed the Spanish hunger for gold and emasculated

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<sup>21</sup>Printed in The true and perfecte newes of the ex-  
ploytes performed by Sir Francis Drake by Thomas Greepe  
([London], 1587), fol. Aiiii<sup>v</sup>.

England's strength, it may well serve as a parallel to Guyon's razing of the Bower of Bliss. As I shall show in the final chapter of this thesis, the identification of Guyon with Hercules' maritime adventures plays a role in the entire quest of Book II, and this may add to the validity of my argument at this point, if we consider, as I pointed out earlier, that Drake was the British hero most clearly identified with Hercules since his circumnavigation of the globe.

## 2. Florimell

The transition from a stress on the contrast between gold (as symbol of selfishness and unpatriotic pursuits) and virtue in Book II to the pursuits connected with Florimell and Marinell in Books III-IV may represent allegorically the poet's attempt to persuade his countrymen to transfer their interest from the purposes of the earlier voyages of the Elizabethan age to those advocated by Dee and his friend Raleigh. While the former were mainly concerned with the discovery of riches (gold and the spices from Cathay), or with mere pirating raids on Spanish ships for personal enrichment, Raleigh's plans of founding a colony and, in fact, an empire abroad seem to have appeared to the poet as true expression of disinterested patriotism and a genuinely heroic character. He seems to indicate the shift in attitude required of his countrymen when he presents Guyon, having

disdainfully rejected Mammon's gold and Acrasia's golden cup, in full pursuit of Florimell, accompanied by Arthur. If we wish to see the historical relevance of Spenser's allegory, we shall have to place it in the context of the development which led from the earlier voyages to Raleigh's plans for an empire.

The origin of voyages of exploration, in England as in Spain and Portugal, had been the desire of gaining access to the spice trade in the Far East. Since the African and Western routes were already occupied by Spanish and Portuguese vessels when English interests finally turned to Cathay, Englishmen began to look for an alternate route outside the Spanish zone of influence. It would have meant a considerable gain to the English, if they could have found a different and perhaps shorter route to the East than their rivals, and it would have given them a means to influence the balance of power in Europe which until then was wholly determined by Spanish gold. This idea led to explorations of the Northwest Passage and of the Arctic coast line towards Russia, the latter, however, soon to be abandoned.

The first English voyage in search of Cathay had taken place in the reign of Edward VI.<sup>22</sup> The interest in such voyages continued through Mary Tudor's marriage to

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<sup>22</sup>Taylor, p.93.

Philip II which resulted in an increase in information about the New World. During this time Richard Eden, for instance, published his translation of Peter Martyr's Decades, one of the most comprehensive descriptions of the discovery of the West Indies, and it is interesting to note that they were re-issued in an augmented version by Richard Willis in 1577 -- at a time when English voyages of exploration began in earnest. By the early sixties, interest in the Northwest Passage had declined because of the Muscovy Company's discovery of a land-route to Persia, but by 1566 a remarkable resurgence in interest can be inferred from the great number of maps from the Plantin Press ordered by British booksellers. Taylor ascribes this to the fact that the famous geographer Ortelius had published a new map in 1564 which showed "a northwest passage even more open than did Gemma Phrysius' Globe."<sup>23</sup> In the winter of 1565-66, Sir Humphrey Gilbert

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<sup>23</sup>Ibid., pp.98-99. Gemma Phrysius was cosmographer to the Emperor Charles V at his court in Brussels. His globe of 1537 and his world map of 1540 "became the standard authorities in the Low Countries and in Western Europe generally. Their influence is . . . traceable in the writings of such men as Eden, Gilbert, and the elder Hakluyt" (Taylor, pp.79; 81-83). Gemma's celestial and terrestrial globes, both of 1537, must have been those Dee brought to Trinity College after a visit to Louvain (Taylor, "Document 8", p.256). Gemma believed that the new lands were separate from Asia, and that there existed a northern strait leading to Cathay. Abraham Ortelius was a cartographer and antiquarian in Antwerp, where, in 1554, he set up a shop as seller of maps. About 1560 he became interested in map making under the influence of Mercator, one of his friends.

and Anthony Jenkinson appeared before the queen and Privy Council to discuss the project of the Northwest Passage, obviously inspired by the arguments brought forward by Ortelius; however, the meeting ended without success for the idea. Gilbert began instead to collect materials in support of his plan, and they finally appeared in print in 1576 as A Discourse of a Discovery for a new Passage to Cataia. In its fourth chapter the influence of Ortelius' arguments is clearly visible.<sup>24</sup>

The year of the publication of Gilbert's treatise was also the year that saw the departure of Martin Frobisher for the first of three voyages in search of the Northwest Passage. It was carried out with the support of Edward Dyer and his friends, whose interest in and relationship to Frobisher's enterprise have been described by Ralph M. Sargent:

A child of the West Country, Dyer, like his neighbours Drake, Hawkins, Gilbert, Frobisher, and Raleigh, confidently expected that some day Englishmen could discover the great North-west Passage to Cathay. So early as 1566 Edward Dyer had interrogated John Dee, regarded as the leading authority in maritime affairs at the time, on the subject of this northern sea-route. When Martin Frobisher, in 1575, received a patent to lead an expedition in search of the route, Dyer was one of the first to become interested. He already knew the opinion of Humphrey Gilbert, who had written a tract

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<sup>24</sup>Taylor, loc. cit.



on the North-west Passage, picturing the 'great abundance of gold, silver, precious stones, cloth of gold, silkes, all manner of Spices, Grocery wares, and other wares, and other kindes of Merchandize of an inestimable price' to which the English trade would have direct and exclusive access if he could find a way north of the Spanish Main.<sup>25</sup>

Frobisher's voyage was almost entirely financed by Dyer and his friends. The only exception was Michael Lok, a London merchant. Among the subscribers to the venture were the Earls of Warwick, Leicester, Sussex, Secretary Walsingham, the Lord Treasurer, and the Lord Admiral.<sup>26</sup> Frobisher did not discover the passage, of course, but he brought back samples of some black stone which he believed to contain gold. As a consequence, a wild gold fever took possession of London. His backers began immediate preparations for a second voyage which took place in 1577. He left in May and returned in October. The excitement aroused by the returning ships was so great that the queen had the cargo locked up. In January of 1578, a Royal Commission was appointed by the Privy Council to take care of the smelting of the ore.<sup>27</sup> But soon the truth about the presumed gold came to light, and Dyer, Sidney, and Leicester found that they had

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<sup>25</sup>The Life and Lyrics of Sir Edward Dyer (Oxford, 1935), repr. (Oxford, 1968), pp.40-41.

<sup>26</sup>Sargent, loc. cit.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., p.43.

lost everything they had invested in their search for riches.

The next great venture in this respect, in which Leicester and his friends invested, turned out quite differently, namely Drake's circumnavigation of the earth from 1577 to 1580. This feat had an extraordinary impact on the minds of contemporaries. Not only did Drake surpass all expectations of the riches which his supporters, including the queen herself, had hoped for, but his venture also demonstrated for the first time that England could successfully compete with Spain on the oceans of the world. Spenser alludes to the significance of Drake's voyage in Book V of The Faerie Queene when he praises Mercilla's great "honour" which "now on earth it selfe enlarged has, From th'utmost brinke of the Armericke shore, Unto the margent of the Moluccas" (V.x.3).

In these voyages by Drake and Frobisher the search for gold or riches in general was the predominant motif, as we have seen. Unlike these men, Spenser seems to have felt that England's glory depended on different things than the pursuit of private gain which so demeaned the Spaniards and quite a few of his own countrymen. He identifies heroic virtue and fame therefore with the imperialistic ideas of Dee and Raleigh. In Book II the contrast between gold and honour is presented in terms of the Choice of Hercules, as we shall see, and in the following books Spenser uses gold-

imagery to stress the contrast between the heroic virtue of Gloriana's champions and the ignoble character of their antitypes who follow the "filthy mucke". Heroic virtue is also clearly brought in connection with the voyages, as we see from the description of Arthur and Guyon:

To hunt for glorie and renowned praise;  
Full many countries they did overronne,  
From the uprising to the setting Sunne

(III.i.3)

Britomart's resolve to find her destined husband is also related to the glory sought by the voyager heroes:

For though beyond the Africk Ismaell  
Or th'Indian Peru he were, she thought  
Him forth through infinite endeavour to have  
sought.

(III.ii.6)

Through contrasting use of gold imagery, Spenser establishes the contrast between national glory and ignoble goals. Florimell's golden belt can be regarded as symbol of heroic virtue required of those who wish to be counted champions of the Order of Maidenhead. Florimell's snowy counterpart, created by a witch who is associated with the Stygian forces and with brutishness, is represented as the work of a "guilefull goldsmith" (IV.v.15). The witch is thus typologically an analogy to Mammon; like him she forges an idol of dead metal by which she leads the soul to hell:

As guilefull Goldsmith that by secret skill,  
With golden foyle doth finely overspred  
Some baser metall, which commend he will  
Unto the vulgar for good gold insted,

He much more goodly glosse thereon doth shed,  
 To hide his falsehood, then if it were true:  
 So hard, this Idole was to be ared  
 That Florimell her selfe in all mens vew  
 She seem'd to passe: so forged things do fairest  
 shew.

(IV.v.15)

The forged tests of the gold brought back by Frobisher from the snowy regions of North America can be seen as the factual context for Spenser's allegory of the two Florimells. Their competition before the eyes of England's champions mirrors the rival interests which strove with each other in the minds of Spenser's contemporaries, some of whom preferred the search for the Northwest Passage as a way to England's greatness, while others wanted to establish colonies and political influence for England in the flourishing paradises farther south. Since Spenser's preferences lay with the latter scheme, propagated by Sir Walter Raleigh, he characterizes the other as motivated by unheroic and unpatriotic greed for private gain (the snowy Florimell made by "guileful goldsmith" consists of "base" metal" and commends itself only to the "vulgar").

The Order of Maidenhead is a flattering description of the voyager-heroes who procure the future empire of the imperial virgin by their efforts. This appears, for example, from the fact that Florimell's golden girdle is carried in a "golden arke". The gold imagery in this case suggests

the genuine gold or values to be supported by Gloriana's champions, by contrast to the false "foyle" in the case of the snowy Florimell. The golden ark in which the girdle is carried suggests that the girdle has sacred qualities comparable to those of the Holy Grail, and the term may be a blend of the names of Drake's ship, The Golden Hind, and Raleigh's Ark Royal. The Golden Hind was the vessel which established England's glory through the voyage around the world and first proved that England could compete with Spain, while Raleigh's ship became the flagship of the Royal Navy when the Armada approached England and represents therefore the victory of England over Spain's power at sea.<sup>28</sup> Since both vessels played a role in the defeat of Spanish prestige, one could discover anti-Spanish implications in Spenser's allegory of the girdle and its defense at the tournament of Satyrane in Book IV.

To incite his compatriots for the pursuit of Raleigh's colonizing schemes, Spenser associates Florimell both with private virtue (chastity) and national glory. Florimell seems to represent both Virginia and Guiana, for Raleigh attributed a similar virgin role to Guiana as Spenser to Florimell, and in both cases it has to do with

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<sup>28</sup>J. H. Adamson, H. F. Holland, The Shepherd of the Ocean (Boston, 1969), p.155.

the fact that these places had not yet been desecrated by the Spanish hunger for gold:

To conclude, Guiana is a Countrey that hath yet her Maydenhead, neuer sacked, turned, nor wrought, the face of the earth hath not beene torne, nor the vertue and salt of the soyle spent by manurance, the graves have not beene opened for gold, the mines not broken with sledges, nor their Images puld down out of their temples.<sup>29</sup>

The Order of Maidenhead seems thus to be connected with preserving the colonies sought for England's virgin queen from private greed and sacrilege, and thus they would presumably represent the moral and political antithesis to those of Spain. The name of Florimell alludes to the name often quoted in connection with the Virginia project: Terra Florida or flower-land, which was the northern border of Spain's territories. Considering the fact that "Florida" for Raleigh and others meant everything north and west of the Spanish territories, Spenser obviously took Virginia and Florida as synonyms, especially since the flower name contains connotations of fruitfulness and the earthly paradise and establishes thus a connection to the role of the imperial virgin as fruitful virgin, i.e. as empress of Virginia. Spenser flatteringly suggests that this represents actually the queen's own idea, for he says that Florim-

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<sup>29</sup>Discoverie of Guiana, p.96.

ell was raised on Mount Acidale, the seat of Venus and the Graces (IV.v.5), an allusion to Elizabeth's role as imperial Venus!

In reality, the origin of the plan was, of course, slightly different. It was the continuation of a project set in motion by Raleigh's half-brother, Sir Humphrey Gilbert. In 1578, he had obtained a licence from the queen "to search, find out, and view such remote, heathen and barbarous lands, countries and territories not actually possessed of any Christian prince or people."<sup>30</sup> Before applying for his patent, he had visited John Dee a year previously, very likely in order to inquire into the historical foundation for such a claim to English sovereignty in the lands north of Florida.<sup>31</sup> Among those who, between 1580 and 1583, acquired landrights under Gilbert's patent were Dee and Sidney. Gilbert's project was, however, singularly unsuccessful in the execution. The voyage did not take place until 1583, and he sank with his ship on the return voyage. But when his licence expired in 1584, his half-brother Raleigh had it renewed in his name and carried on where Gilbert had left off. In the same year, Raleigh asked the younger Hakluyt to write the Discourse of Western

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<sup>30</sup>Quoted from A. L. Rowse, The Elizabethans in America, p.32.

<sup>31</sup>Taylor, p.122.

Planting, a treatise in support of his planned colony to be submitted to the queen. Prevented to go to Virginia himself by her orders, Raleigh, in 1585, sent his cousin, Sir Richard Grenville, with a first group who landed on Roanoke Island and established a first settlement. The fact that Raleigh could not personally participate in the Virginian voyage may be alluded to in the fate of Spenser's Timias, for, unlike Arthur and Guyon who follow Florimell, Timias fights the grisly forester and his brothers. The episode may be an allusion to the fact that, while Grenville went abroad, Raleigh spent the years of 1585-1590 in Ireland and was busy with the settlement of his Irish estate.<sup>32</sup>

Spenser's description of Florimell at her first appearance makes use of both Geoffrey of Monmouth's History and the Book of Revelation and thereby establishes an identity between England's providential history and Raleigh's pursuit of a colonial empire. The following lines --

All as a blazing starre doth farre outcast  
His hearie beames, and flaming lockes dispred,  
At sight whereof the people stand aghast;  
But the sage wisard telles, as he has red,  
That it importunes death and dolefull drerihed.

(III.i.16)

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<sup>32</sup>Cf. Adamson, Holland, The Shepherd of the Ocean, pp. 68 and 168.



-- link Florimell with two prophetic visions of England's future victory and greatness in Geoffrey of Monmouth's chronicle history. Her appearance, though startling, seems to have a positive character, suggested by the conjunction "but". Her threatening effect does not seem to be directed towards those who are startled by her appearance. This effect can be compared to two apparitions procured by Merlin. The first, a prophecy made to Vortiger, "filled all those present with amazement".<sup>33</sup> It was connected with a forecast of the destruction which the Trojan and Briton race was going to work on its enemies, and this was also the purpose of the second prophetic occurrence, the blazing comet which Uther saw when his brother died. Geoffrey's description of it is a significant analogy to Spenser's description of Florimell:

there appeared a star of great magnitude and brilliance with a single beam shining from it. At the end of this beam was a ball of fire, spread out in the shape of a dragon. From the dragon's mouth stretched forth two rays of light, one of which seemed to extend its length beyond the latitude of Gaul, while the second turned towards the Irish Sea and split up into seven smaller shafts of light.

Geoffrey continues that "all who saw it were struck with fear and wonder". The star, he predicts, means great danger, because it predicts Aurelius' death, but help is

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<sup>33</sup>Geoffrey of Monmouth, The History of the Kings of Britain, p.162.

imminent, for the star and dragon in the sky represent Uther himself.<sup>34</sup> Florimell is thus a personification of a similar prophecy for Elizabeth's empire. Her threatening aspect spells doom for England's enemies and victory for the royal house and its supporters. She seems to announce a forecast of national destiny in the sense of England's expansion of power over North America (Florida or Virginia) and a continuous line of powerful rulers who will maintain it.

Florimell is also described as type of the sacred virgin of the Apocalypse and is therefore in many ways a parallel to Una. It is therefore possible that she was an earlier version whose possibilities Spenser developed later in Book I. This role would suggest what importance Spenser attributed to the colonial idea, for it appears as of equally sacred stature as the restoration of the church. Florimell's connection with the Apocalypse appears in connection with the previously quoted passage which gives her a prophetic role:

All suddenly out of the thickest bush,  
Upon a milk-white Palfrey all alone  
A goodly Ladie did foreby them rush,  
Whose face did seeme as cleare as Christall  
stone . . .

(III.i.15)

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<sup>34</sup>Ibid., pp.177-178.

The "milk-white palfrey" reminds us of the one on which the Saviour appears in the Apocalypse (Rev. 19.11), while the "christall stone" recalls the description of the Heavenly Jerusalem, "and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal" (Rev. 21.11). She seems thus to represent both a potential way to national salvation and the Virginia colony as identical to the imperial virgin as bride of England. These theological and political aspects of her role are also apparent in the description the dwarf gives of Florimell, when he is interrogated by Arthur:

What mister wight (said he) and how arrayd?  
 Royally clad (quoth he) in cloth of gold,  
 As meetest may beseeme a noble mayd;  
 Her faire lockes in rich circlet be enrold,  
 A fairer wight did neuer Sunne behold,  
 And on a palfrey rides more white than snow,  
 Yet she her selfe is whiter manifold:  
 The surest signe, whereby ye may her know,  
 Is, that she is the fairest wight alieue, I trow.

(III.v.5)

Her fairness suggests her desirability, and it parallels the beauty of "faeryland", namely of the imperial idea. The cloth of gold symbolizes the royal power connected with it, while the whiteness of her garment, connected with that of her palfrey, alludes to the bridal role of the Heavenly Jerusalem and in addition perhaps also to the description of the armies following the apocalyptic saviour, "clothed in fine linen, white and clean" (Rev. 19.14). The Christ-

ological allusions are deliberately ironic. Far from being a saviour herself, the rider on Spenser's white horse is depicted as being in need of one, for her whiteness is also the whiteness of fear (III.i.15). The "whales bone" symbolizes perhaps her fear of the snowy regions, and her appeal for a saviour seems a plea to the supporters of the Virginia project. Florimell is thus -- like Una -- an exilic Christ-figure who appeals to England (Gloriana's champions) for protection. The fact that for Spenser the colonial empire is of equal importance and sacredness as the church is also enforced through the description of her two pursuers, Arthur (as Arcturus the spiritual power of the empire) and Guyon who follow her "equally byline" (III.i.18). The fact that Britomart is "not so lightly" enflamed for the pursuit is also in accord with history, for Elizabeth preferred practical results, like Drake's treasures, to dreams of glory -- "beauties chace" (III.i.19), and she is only set on her search "beyond the Africk Ismaell Or th'Indian Peru" (III.iii,6) after looking into Merlin's magic mirror, i.e. Dee's imperialistic ideas.

Spenser attempts similarly to persuade the queen by describing Florimell in a manner which makes her identical with Elizabeth's role as Faery Queen and imperial Venus -- goddess of fruitfulness and ruler of the sea. An illuminating comment in this connection is Blissett's discussion of

the parallels between the romance Arthur of Little Britain and the Florimell episodes, for in this work the Faery Queen is named Proserpyne and has a double called Florence.<sup>35</sup> Florimell's imprisonment and her replacement by the snowy Florimell, a version of the rape of Proserpina, seem to be an allegory of the queen's fears of Spanish sea-power (Proteus) which prevent the realization of the Virginia colony. The name "Florimell" suggests further the other aspect of the Faery Queen as Florence, namely her fruitfulness or Venus-role which Spenser has made identical to her role as empress of Virginia by introducing the term "fruitfullest Virginia" in the Proem to Book II. It is elaborated in the following books by the multiple images of the fruitfulness of the imperial Venus prophetically envisaged by the poet as alternative to the queen's adoption of a Proserpina-role. Florimell symbolizes the fruits of colonial expansion, Belphoebe the fruitfulness of heroic virtue exercised in defeating Spain (as we shall see in the next chapter), Amoret the fruits of virtuous love, and the garden of Adonis the fruitfulness of nature and of the earthly paradise inhabited by England's political Venus. By presenting these images of

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<sup>35</sup>"Florimell and Marinell", Studies in English Literature, 5 (1965), 102.

the queen's potential influence on her empire as established fact -- although only in "faeryland", i.e. in the poet's imagination -- Spenser presents his political advice in the form of an extravagant compliment.

Its seeming extravagance can be matched by similar compliments to the queen's political abilities by contemporary poets. In a poem addressed by Chapman to Raleigh's second colonial project, Guiana, the queen's "fruitful virginity" is equated with the spiritual power of the Holy Spirit:

. . . our most sacred Maide: whose barrennesse  
Is the true fruite of vertue, that may get,  
Beare and bring foorth anew in all perfection,  
What heretofore sayage corruption held  
In barbarous Chaos; and in this affaire  
Become her father, mother, and her heire.

Then most admired Soueraigne, let your breath  
Goe forth upon the waters, and create<sup>36</sup>  
A golden worlde in this our iron age.

Chapman uses the phoenix-metaphor as image for the mystic power of the queen especially in connection with the proposed empire of Guiana. Spenser also presents three images of Venus' potential fruitfulness as goddess of the earthly paradise and of the sea in reference to the colonial empire: the Garden of Adonis, the Temple of Concord, and the marriage of the rivers. As we see from the theme

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<sup>36</sup>"De Guiana. Carmen Epicum", in Poems, p.354.

stressed in the last two, Venus' fruitfulness is especially the metaphor for peace or political concord which Spenser makes the major purpose of Elizabeth's reign, and, by analogy to the peace to be established by the royal virgin announced by Merlin, it must be seen in connection with the defeat of Spain's power over the sea and over the American colonies.

In other words, in addition to propagating Raleigh's Virginia colony, Spenser's allegory also alludes to Dee's idea of English rule over the sea and to Raleigh's of gaining the empire of Guiana. In the following, I shall review Dee's significance in this respect, and this will give us a basis for the understanding of the symbolic marriages of Florimell and Marinell and of the English rivers.

The projection of the imperial idea through the myth of the fruitfulness of Venus and her birth from the foam of the sea in The Faerie Queene has an analogy in Dee's use of Foxe's initial letter "C" in a significant new context in his Arte of Navigation (Fig. 2).<sup>37</sup> Dee uses it as the first letter of a reprint of Gemisthus Pletho's oration to Theodore, the last Byzantine emperor.

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<sup>37</sup>Yates, "Astraea", p.47; her ideas are summarized in the following paragraph.

The oration contains advice for the naval defense of the Peloponnesus, and -- as Yates has stated -- Dee intends it as indirect advice which Elizabeth could apply to herself. As the Byzantine emperor had been threatened by the Turk, England was now threatened by the Spaniard. Dee's intention becomes unmistakable, if we consider further that the letter is the initial to the pregnant phrase "Cum in Navi Gubernator" and that Dee's book consists of "Tables Gubernaticke", that is, of tables for pilots and mariners which he hopes will be used widely and will form a "world-wide monument to the Eternall and Heroical Renown of Q. Elizabeth". Yates has underlined the importance of Dee's use of the initial, for she points out that the theme of the letter, namely the rule of England's empress over the sea, is the dominant theme in Dee's entire book; therefore, one cannot ascribe the appearance of the portrait in Dee's book merely to the coincidence that both Foxe and Dee used the same printer, John Daye. In support of this she compares the initial with the illustration on the title page of the Arte of Navigation (Fig. 6) which shows Elizabeth on the imperial ship, holding a rudder, an equivalent to the phrase "Cum in Navi Gubernator". Dee can therefore be considered as the father of Spenser's idea of combining the theme of a maritime imperial ruler with the traditional theme of the fruitful virginity of the queen. The latter was already



part of the image, namely the cornucopia of peace and plenty above the queen's throne.

The water-imagery in Books II-IV can be related to Dee's idea of maritime power for England, although, as Blissett has noted, it appears in the framework of moral allegory. Comparing especially Books II and IV, he points out that --

Guyon there had separated the waters of passion from the air of reason and rebuked them; the waters for him and in terms of his virtue of Temperance were a symbol of chaos, waste, and void, or teeming with devouring monsters. But there are other qualities of the great waters . . . All the countless progeny of the sea meet together in Proteus' house to celebrate the wedding of two of their number.<sup>38</sup>

To this we need only add that the negative connotations of the waters must be applied to Spain, while their positive connotations reflect the role of Elizabeth as ruler of the sea in the form of the sea-born Venus.<sup>39</sup> In the following stanza, Spenser makes a poetic allusion to the roles of Elizabeth as fruitful and sea-born Venus whose actions he recounts:

O what an endlesse worke haue I in hand,  
To count the seas abundant progeny,  
Whose fruitful seede farre passeth those on land,  
And also those which wonne in th'azure sky?

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<sup>38</sup>"Florimell and Marinell", p.98.

<sup>39</sup>Cf. Daniel M. Murtaugh, "The Garden and the Sea: The Typography of The Faerie Queene, III", ELH, 40 (1973), 325-338.

For much more eath to tell the starres on hy,  
 Albe they endlesse seeme in estimation,  
 Then to recount the Seas posterity:  
 So fertile be the flouds in generation,  
 So huge their numbers, and so numberlesse their  
 nation.

Therefore the antique wisards well invented,  
 That Venus of the fomy sea was bred;  
 For that the seas by her are most augmented.

(IV.xii.1-2)

The allusion to the wisard can here again be regarded as allusion to Dee who was, after all, the "inventor" of the idea that Elizabeth's reign over the oceans was an ancient right and would bring new strength and prosperity for England.

The best example for negative images of water and of Venus as images of Spain's sea-power are the garden of Acrasia and the threatening ocean which separates her from mankind. The episode of the damsels at the fountain illustrates particularly well the antithesis between the English Venus and her antitype. Their attempts to seduce Guyon are attempts to substitute a false image of Gloriana as stella Veneris and sea-born Venus for the true type:

As that faire Starre, -the messenger of morne,  
 His deawy face out of the sea doth reare:  
 Or as the Cyprian goddesse, newly borne  
 Of th'Oceans fruitfull froth, did first appeare!  
 Such seemed they, and so their yellow heare  
 Christalline humour dropped downe apace.

(II.xii.65)

Berger rightly notes the incongruity of the image of

"oceans fruitfull froth" in association with a shallow lake "whose depth exceeded not three cubits hight" (II.xii. 62).<sup>40</sup> The episode seems therefore to have the purpose of ridiculing Spain's sea-power.

The marriage of Thames and Medway at the end of Book IV is the crowning conclusion to the themes of Venus' fruitfulness, English rule over the seas, a colonial empire, and political concord. It symbolically foreshadows the fulfillment of the ideals pursued by Raleigh and Dee in terms of a political myth: a restoration of an ideal state as it existed before Troy fell. The restoration of Troy is alluded to in the description of the bridegroom, the Thames, who appears crowned with Troynovant, the capital of the Tudor virgin, as the Ocean and his offspring pay tribute to him. The marriage metaphor is determined by the mythological analogy Spenser chose for the celebration of Elizabeth's future role, namely the wedding feast of Peleus and Thetis which he equates with Troy's unfallen greatness. It was at this feast that Ate, goddess of discord and strife (who also plays a major role in the allegory of Book IV) initiated the fateful contest among the three goddesses with the well-known consequences for Troy. For Spenser this wedding

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<sup>40</sup>The Allegorical Temper (New Haven, 1957), p.218.

and feast of the gods seems to be the equivalent of the golden age in the sense of political concord, since he introduces it with these connotations in the Mutability Cantos (VII.vii.12). The marriage of Thames and Medway is its analogy and can further be seen as complement to the marriage of Una and Redcrosse foreshadowed at the end of Book I which is associated with heavenly concord and harmony (I.xii.38-39).

In the following, I shall point out the imperialistic connotations in Spenser's treatment of the ancient myth, and this will lead us further to a consideration of Marinell's connection with the river wedding and with Florimell.

In the ancient myth, Thetis was the bride of Peleus, a mortal, while she was a sea-nymph and daughter of the sea-god Nereus. At her wedding, the gods assembled to celebrate and bring gifts as do the sea-gods who arrive at the wedding of Thames and Medway. Fowler has noted the fact that Spenser combines the marriage of the rivers with a feast of the gods,<sup>41</sup> but he seems to have overlooked their combination in the ancient myth. Spenser singles out Nereus, though not as father of the bride, but as

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<sup>41</sup>Spenser and the Numbers of Time, p.172, note.

eldest son of Thetis and Ocean.<sup>42</sup> She is Thetis Magna, the daughter of Celius, the sky, as we may read in Boccaccio's Genealogy of the Gods,<sup>43</sup> which attributes a quasi-divine or celestial origin to Spenser's Nereus, in contrast to the Nereus of ancient myth. By stressing the importance of Nereus, Spenser seems to suggest an analogy between him and his grandson Achilles, born by the nymph Thetis, his daughter. Nereus is represented as prophet similar to Merlin and as contrast to the bad prophet Proteus. Nereus is "most voide of guile, most free from fowle despight, Doing himselfe, and teaching others to doe right" (IV.xi. 18). He combines the function of Virgil, the prophet of empire, with qualities of the just virgin. He may therefore be a complimentary version of Raleigh and Dee whose vision of an empire is related to the voyager-heroes as Nereus is to Achilles.<sup>44</sup> This seems also to be the basis for the

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<sup>42</sup>Sawtelle points out that, according to Hesiod, Nereus is the son of Earth and Ocean. His characterization as righteous and dutiful derives also from Hesiod, and his prophetic role is attested to by Horace and Conti, as Lot-speich and Jortin have noted, see Variorum F.Q., IV, 246-47.

<sup>43</sup>Gen. deor., III.iii.

<sup>44</sup>We may in this context think of the fact that in Colin Clouts Come Home Again Spenser referred to Raleigh as the "shepherd of the Ocean", a reference to Raleigh's lost poem, of which only a fragment is in existence, and which is entitled The Ocean to Cynthia.

fact that Spenser makes him the eldest brother in the procession of famous rivers which come to pay their homage and tribute at the wedding of the Thames. They seem to be a symbolic expression of Dee's idea that the Arthurian, i.e. also the Trojan empire, once encompassed the farthest corners of the earth (comparatively speaking), while their arrival becomes the announcement of the restoration of the heroic past in the form of Troynovant:

Great Ganges, and immortal Euphrates,  
 Deep Indus, and Maeander intricate,  
 Slow Peneus, and tempestuous Phasides,  
 Swift Rhene, and Alpheus still immaculate;  
 Ooraxes, feared for great Cyrus fate;  
 Tybris, renowned for the Romaines fame,  
 Rich Oranochy, though but known late;  
 And that huge Riuer, which doth beare his name  
 Of warlike Amazons, which doe possesse the same.

Ioy on those warlike women, which so long  
 Can from all men so rich a kingdome hold;  
 And shame on you, O men, which boast your strong  
 and valiant hearts, in thoughts lesse hard and bold,  
 Yet quaille in conquest of that land of gold.  
 But this to you, O Britons, most pertaines,  
 To whom the right thereof it selfe hath sold;  
 The which for sparing litle cost or paines,  
 Loose so immortall glory, and so endlesse gaines.

(IV.xi.21-22)

It is significant that from the empires of Cyrus and of Rome Spenser comes directly to the "Oranochy", i.e. the river in Raleigh's empire of Guiana, in order to appeal to the patriotism of his countrymen and inspire them to support the imperial idea. Its connection with power over the sea is suggested through the description of the sea-

gods Neptune and Amphitrite. Neptune wears a "Diademe imperiall", and his wife is clothed in the attributes of plenty which the universal empire envisaged by Raleigh and Dee is to bring England. She is "most diuinely faire", like Venus, and her shoulders are covered by "siluer haire, and deckt with pearles, which th'Indian seas for her prepare" (IV.xi.11), an allusion to the riches of Cathay which seem to come to England of their own as consequence of Raleigh's and Dee's efforts. Even more important, Neptune and Amphitrite bring their sons who "rule the billowes" (IV.xi.12) and are founders of "puissant Nations, which the world possest" (IV.xi.15), among them Albion, father of the British people. His death at the hand of Hercules seems merely to serve to stress his heroic stature, for his real significance lies in the fact that his "immortal spright" is still alive and present at the wedding feast of Thames and Medway (IV.xi.16). By reference to Albion, Spenser implies England's natural right as a sea-power, namely to wear an imperial diadem and rule "the billowes". The myth is thus a parallel to that of the sea-born Venus which expresses the maritime rule of the queen. The homage paid to Troynovant by Neptune and the Ocean foreshadows prophetically England's control over the oceans of the world in analogy to the splendid empires of the past located on those rivers like Tiber and Euphrates which come to the

wedding of Thames and Medway.

Marinell, Florimell's future bridegroom, is part of the symbolic meaning of the marriage of Thames and Medway, for as son of Cymoent, a sea-nymph and daughter of Nereus, and Dumarin, a mortal, Marinell is the complement to the role of Nereus in the river wedding, namely a type of Achilles, the son of Peleus and Thetis.<sup>45</sup> Since Arthegall is said to have won Achilles' arms (III.ii.25), he seems to be connected with Marinell in the sense that he represents the heroic strength which is needed to defeat the obstacles on the way to political concord. If Marinell is an extension of the myth of Peleus and Thetis, his and Florimell's marriage seems to be the corresponding symbol of concord for England's future. By connecting their fate with the river marriage, Spenser suggests that the establishment of England's maritime sovereignty (Dee's idea, represented by Nereus' prophetic role) is the condition for the marriage of Florimell and Marinell, i.e. the real-

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<sup>45</sup> Isabel Rathborne has discussed the allegorized treatments of the myth of Thetis in reference to Spain and Portugal, namely in Peter Martyr's Decades and Camoens' Lusiads, see "The Political Allegory of the Florimell-Marinell Story", ELH, 12 (1945), 283-284. I would, however, object to her identification of Dumarin with Columbus and of Marinell as the sea-power of Spain. Rathborne overlooks the fact that the same myth could be used to serve diverse poetic purposes, and that the fact that it had once been applied to Spain does not prove that Spenser does. See also Upton and Lotspeich in Variorum F.Q., III, 240, and Blissett, "Florimell and Marinell", pp.279-289.



ization of Raleigh's two colonial projects, Virginia and Guiana. This is suggested when Marinell's and Florimell's eventual union is set in motion through Marinell's discovery of the imprisoned Florimell in Proteus' house where the wedding is being held. Proteus seems to be related to Spanish sea-power which England overcomes in Spenser's poem through the intervention of England's (i.e. Albion's) mythical ancestor Neptune (IV.xii.32).

Spenser's description of Marinell suggests that we can see in him a manifestation of Raleigh's empire of Guiana. The "rich strond" which Marinell possesses as gift of the sea seems to be an allusion to the riches of El Dorado, the legendary golden city of the Incas, which Raleigh hoped to find in the interior of Guiana. Since Marinell inhabits a "strond" instead, Spenser alludes perhaps both to the riches connected with Guiana and those to be gained by the establishment of a strong navy and rule over the sea. Like Raleigh, Spenser sees the queen as conqueror of the new empire, for it is Britomart who conquers Marinell:

The noble Mayd stayd not him to lament,  
 But forward rode, and kept her ready way  
 Along the strond, which as she ouer-went,  
 She saw bestowed all with rich aray  
 Of pearles and pretious stones of great assay,  
 And all the grauell mixt with golden owre;  
 Whereat she wondred much, but would not stay  
 For gold, or pretious stones an howre,  
 But them despised all; for all was in her powre.

(III.iv.18)

This stanza may be regarded as a description of the queen's reaction to Raleigh's suggestions put forward in the concluding words of The Discoverie of Guiana:

And I hope, as wee with these fewe handes haue dis-  
planted the first garrison, and driuen them [i.e.  
the Spaniards] out of the said countrey, so her  
Maiesty will giue order for the rest, and eyther  
defend it, and hold it as tributary, or conquere  
and keepe it as Empresse of the same. For what-  
soeuer Prince shall possesse it, shalbee greatest,  
and if the king of Spayne enioy it, he will become  
unresistable. Her Maiesty heereby shall confirme  
and strengthen the opinions of al nations, as  
touching her great and princely actions. And  
where the south border of Guiana reacheth to the  
Dominion and Empire of the Amazones, those women  
shall heereby heare the name of a virgin, which  
is not onely able to defend her owne territories  
and her neighbors, but also to inuade and conquere  
so great Emypres and so farre remoued.<sup>46</sup>

If the last line in Spenser's stanza alludes to Dee's view of the queen's assured sovereignty over the American shores, Britomart's unconcern for the riches on Marinell's "strond" also reflects the queen's lack of interest in Raleigh's imperialistic plans, for she did not jump at the opportunity offered her by Raleigh in the above quoted passage.

Britomart's characterization as a type of Amazon can be interpreted as a challenge to the queen, comparable to the one expressed above in Raleigh's passage, namely that she should pursue more courageously a policy of foreign conquests. The reference to the Amazon-theme in

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<sup>46</sup>Discoverie, pp.100-101.

the Proem to Book II --

Who euer heard of th'Indian Peru?  
Or who in venturous vessell measured  
The Amazons huge riuer now found trew?  
Or fruittfullest Virginia who did euer vew?

(st.2)

-- establishes without doubt that it is linked with the political goals envisaged by Raleigh, and, as I have suggested, the allegories of Acrasia's Bower and of the Florimell story can be taken as an idealized elaboration of the means required for their realization, as well as a plea to queen and courtiers to be less interested in fruitless searches for gold through voyages to the North or pirating raids and to show their appreciation for the advantages offered for England's political future through Raleigh's plans.

## Chapter Seven

### GUYON AND THE GOLDEN APPLES OF THE HESPERIDES

If we proceed to ask ourselves about the point of Spenser's allegory of Temperance and why it forms the beginning of his treatment of the theme of the colonial empire, we can discover the answer by recalling his basic mythological framework. An important part of it is the representation of the queen as celestial Venus and Hesperus who is identical with Venus as traditional protectress of Troy to whom belong the golden apples and the garden of the Hesperides. Since in the sixteenth century the myth of the Hesperides had been transferred to the New World, the celestial and sacred connotations of Gloriana's image as Hesperus in Book I contain implications for her future role as ruler over a colonial empire. It is envisaged as a "return" to Arthur's empire, as promulgated by Dee, and as identical with the founding of Virginia. Spenser's allusion to "fruitfullest Virginia" in the Proem to Book II implies that Raleigh's project is a type of Venus' garden of the Hesperides which is the queen's by right. Her return to it would complement her historical role as restorer of Troy. The allegorical quests in Books II-IV must be seen as expression of England's actual and potential progress towards this goal. The fact that Spain was also called

Hesperia and occupied, in fact, the greatest portion of the earthly paradises overseas determines the mythological and iconographical details in Spenser's characterization of England's antagonist, who appears as perverter and antitype of Venus and her garden (Acrasia and the Bower of Bliss) and as antagonist of Troynovant (Mammon and Philotime).

To establish this last point, Spenser exploits the negative connotations of the golden apples of the Hesperides in the sense that one of them had been the instrument for Troy's fall. Ate, the goddess of discord, had taken it from the garden and secretly thrown it among the gods celebrating the marriage on "Haemus hill" with the instruction that it should be given to the most beautiful of the goddesses, and then she had disappeared. This event had not only destroyed the heavenly harmony, but also the harmony and glory of ancient Troy because of Paris' fatal judgment. It had aroused the fury of Juno who did not rest until Troy was destroyed. Spenser uses Juno's role as analogy for the roles of Rome (Lucifera) and Spain. In Book II, Mammon and Philotime represent the threat posed to England by Spain and Spanish gold in roles which combine Juno's evil character with that of the fatal golden apple of antiquity.

This brings us to a consideration of Guyon, the hero of Book II. He is obviously in a position similar to Paris in regard to the golden apple, but acts contrary

to his predecessor by refusing Spain's Hesperidean gold, namely the golden apple from Proserpina's tree in the Cave of Mammon. The contrast to Paris is elaborated by means of two other myths, one the myth of Hercules and his labours which is a reference to Drake and the Tudor venturers and thus connects Guyon's virtue with Drake's defeat of Spanish prestige; the other is Spenser's own myth of Elf and Fay. It can be used to illustrate the purpose of Guyon's faint, namely his rescue by Arthur and his subsequent instruction by Alma. As Hercules figure, Guyon is comparable to the Elf before his meeting with the Fay, namely a figure expressing a heroism which is based only on human strength and needs for its perfection the addition of divine grace and the direction towards patriotic goals. Grace is connected both with England and with God, for it appears as a celestial messenger and as Arthur. The equivalent to the Garden of Adonis, where Elf and Fay meet, is obviously Alma's castle, for both garden and castle are symbols of the empire of the virgin queen. Guyon's fainting fit seems to be the equivalent to the weariness of the Elf before he meets the Fay, and Alma's banquet and lessons in history seem to be the basis for the virtue required to restore the heroic civilization of ancient Elfin emperors, expressed as Alma's assistance in making the "frame of Temperance Fairely to rise" (II.xii.12), i.e. giving England's hero

the strength to defeat her antitype Acrasia.

The influence of Alma on the hero's virtue is also connected with the praise of Elizabeth's own political virtue: her example and influence are suggested by the two icons of temperate government, Medina's and Alma's castles. They stand out in the hero's quest like two pillars of strength or two beacons and can be compared to the description of the queen as Guyon's guiding star:

As Pilot well expert in perilous waue,  
That to a stedfast starre his course hath bent,  
When foggy mists, or cloudy tempests haue  
The faithfull light of that faire lampe yblent,  
And couer'd heauen with hideous dreriment,  
Upon his card and compas firmes his eye,  
The maisters of his long experiment,  
And to them does the steddy helm apply,  
Bidding his winged vessell fairely forward fly:

So Guyon hauing lost his trusty guide,  
Late left beyond that Ydle lake, proceedes

(II.vii.1-2)

The "stedfast starre" recalls the image of the North-Star of I.ii.1, and represents Elizabeth's role as analogy to that of the Virgin Mary as "stella maris", which seems to be complemented by the "Tables Gubernaticke" of Dee, namely his instructions on how to use card and compass for the navigations of the voyagers as well as for the navigation of the ship of empire.

The importance of Temperance for the fate of the empire appears from the fact that the reader is confronted

with many exempla of intemperate rulers in Arthur's chronicle while Arthur himself, together with Guyon, has a lesson in political temperance from Alma (the guided tour through her castle). The contrast between her castle and the past underlines the stability of the Tudor monarchy. It also reflects the queen's own characteristics, for already her brother Edward VI called her his "sweet sister Temperance"<sup>1</sup> which is reflected in her motto semper eadem, an expression of her preference for the Golden Mean. Spenser's implication that this is the basis of the queen's political success at home and abroad can be compared to a similar contemporary view of temperance as the supreme political virtue, namely the Epistle to the Reader in the 1574 edition of the Mirror for Magistrates. The definition in this passage provides moreover an analogy for Spenser's use of temperance as a type of heroic virtue, represented by Guyon, for like Spenser, the author sees it as a tripartite form of self-control:

Plotinus that wonderfull and excellent Phylosopher hath these wordes: The propertie of Temperaunce is to couet nothing which may be repented: not to exceede the bandes of measure, and to keepe desire

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<sup>1</sup>See A chaine of pearles, or a memoriall of the pearlesse Graces, and Heroick Vertues of Queene Elizabeth of Glorious Memory by one Diana Primrose -- obviously a pseudonym -- (London, 1630), pp.6-7.



under the yoke of reason.<sup>2</sup>

Proceeding to a comparison of temperance with the other three moral virtues, the author maintains that none of them can be achieved without its moderating influence and quotes Cicero's statement that "Temperaunce . . . is of reason in lust and other evil assaultes of ye minde, a sure and moderate domination and rule" in support of his argument.<sup>3</sup>

#### 1. Guyon as Hercules

Although Spenser's treatment of temperance as moderation of the passions is in accordance with Cicero's idea, as far as the allegory of the Castle of Medina is concerned, he also uses the more limited concept of temperance as moderation in food and drink, if we think of Guyon's visits to Mammon's and Alma's "kitchens". In addition to these, and this leads us to the significance of the myth of Hercules, he treats temperance as a tripartite virtue. In the first part of his test, Guyon shows how the irascible passions can be tempered when he overcomes Archimago's influence in his encounter with Redcrosse (II.i.12), when

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<sup>2</sup>The first part of the Mirour for Magistrates  
(London, 1574); fol.\*iiij<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., fol.\*iiij<sup>r</sup>.

he chains Furor and subdues Pyrochles (types of wrath), and pacifies Phedon (a personification of excessive grief). In the second part of his test, Guyon demonstrates his disdain for female charms (Phaedria), and in the third for riches (Mammon).

This representation of temperance is modelled upon the traditional allegorization of Hercules as personification of self-control or heroic virtue. Thus Spenser's allegory contains a political message. It suggests that self-restraint, especially with regard to gold, in England's voyager heroes is the basis of their fame. Spenser uses the myth to suggest the necessity of a choice between the search for mere riches and the search for patriotic goals, namely conquests which would establish England's colonial empire and England's glory. Guyon's visit to Mammon's Cave is allegorically a representation of this political choice to be made, and it is modelled upon the Choice of Hercules, traditionally the antithesis to the Judgment of Paris. Belphebe is characterized as the personification of the true gold to be sought, namely grace as well as honour in the service of the queen, rather more intangible an ideal than the solid substance Mammon has to offer, and Spenser has therefore taken special care not only to make her particularly attractive but also to present her in connection with a parody on Spain's vain-

glory and lack of heroic virtue.

To illustrate Guyon's Hercules role, we must look at some characteristics which Hercules had acquired by the force of tradition. Eugene M. Waith, in The Herculean Hero, has pointed out that the Renaissance Hercules inherited on one hand the symbolic meaning of the Middle Ages which associated him with heroes of the Old Testament and with Christ.<sup>4</sup> These theological qualities are comparable to the Herculean features of Arthur, for they are combined with his role as personification of grace. On the other hand, as Waith noted, Hercules became the symbol of "perfect man" in the Renaissance, as in Coluccio Salutati's De laboribus Herculis. In Cartari's Imagini delli dei and Conti's Mythologiae Hercules is the personification of heroic virtue and symbol of the "triumph of the mind over all sorts of vice."<sup>5</sup> This can be regarded as the analogy to Guyon's role: on his way to become "perfect man" he needs the additional strength of grace which appears in the person of Arthur.

The best illustration of Guyon's role as Hercules is Ripa's representation of the heroic character through images

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<sup>4</sup>(New York, 1967), see his ch. II, p.39.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p.40.

of Hercules. He describes, for example, Valore as a naked man with a lion skin who is choking a huge serpent wound around his body.<sup>6</sup> Ripa explains that valour is a virtue of both body and soul. The lion skin represents physical courage in tests of physical strength (the serpent) and, parallel to it, courage as a force of the soul. Ripa equates valour further with virtù.<sup>7</sup> These double aspects seem to be comparable to Spenser's allegory of Elf and Fay, Guyon and Arthur, and Guyon and Alma, for Guyon represents an insufficient ideal of heroism until he is perfected by the heroic virtue and grace of the Faery Queen. The attempts of his enemies to separate him from his guide, the palmer, and from his horse (an allusion to the image of horse and rider as image of reason's control over the passions) can be seen as actions designed to prevent Guyon's progress towards the perfection of his virtue in the double senses indicated by Ripa.

For the characterization of Guyon's quest as a threefold test of anger, covetousness, and lust, Ripa is even more illuminating, for he also associates Hercules with the garden of the Hesperides. His nudity, according to

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<sup>6</sup>Iconologia, p.492.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., 508.

Ripa, suggests that he seeks glory instead of riches. His virtue consists essentially in self-control or moderation of the passions, and his reward (immortal fame) is symbolized by the three golden apples from the garden of the Hesperides. They represent moderation of wrath, disdain of concupiscence, and the tempering of avarice. Ripa concludes that such a man, after having subjected the affections to reason through his virtue, can reach to a perfection equal to that of the angels.<sup>8</sup> Hercules' association with these golden apples must be seen as the contrast to the golden apples offered by Mammon. Since Hercules' garden of heroic fame is identical with the garden of the Hesperides which is also Venus' seat, Spenser establishes allegorically the connection between Guyon's quest and England's pursuit of the Virginia project. The contrasting allegorical meanings of the golden apples account also for Spenser's use of contrasting gold images for his heroes and their antitypes, as we shall see later on.

In accordance with his allegorical role, Guyon acts like Hercules in his encounter with Mammon, for he states his preference for honour instead of riches. This decision seems to be the most difficult and most significant act in

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p.507.

the career of England's hero, for it ends with his fainting fit. The contrast between honour and riches is made clear in Guyon's answer to Mammon:

Mammon (said he) thy godheades vaunt is vaine,  
and idle offers of thy golden fee;  
To them, that couet such eye-glutting gaine,  
Proffer thy giftes, and fitter seruants entertaine.

Me ill besits, that in der-doing armes,  
And honours suit my vowed dayes do spend,  
Unto thy bounteous baytes, and pleasing charmes,  
With which weake men thou witchest, to attend:  
Regard of worldly mucke doth fowly blend,  
And low abase the high heroicke spright

(II.vii.9-10)

That this is not just an impressive exercise in rhetoric but had considerable topical interest for Spenser's contemporaries appears from the comparison of Guyon's speech to several texts connected with the purposes of the voyages, and especially Raleigh's views on these. We note, for example in Dee's Arte of Navigation the repeated exhortations to Englishmen to reject the "Mammon of iniquity" and to consider instead the common good and the honour of England,<sup>9</sup> namely the strengthening of England's influence overseas. Raleigh was, of course, the best example for such behaviour as that demonstrated by Guyon. In justifying his voyage to Guiana, he failed not to inform his country-

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<sup>9</sup>See pp.11, 14, 15, 17, 33, 39.

men that unlike many other voyagers he had sought England's glory and not personal wealth:

From myselfe, I have deserved no thankes, for I am returned a beggar, and withered, but that I might have bettered my poore estate, it shall appeare by the following discourse, if I had not onely respected her Maiesties future Honor, and riches. It became not the former fortune in which I once liued, to goe iourneys of picorie, and it had sorted ill with the offices of Honor, which by her Maiesties grace, I hold this day in England, to run from Cape to Cape, & from place to place for the pillage of ordinary prizes.<sup>10</sup>

In Chapman's poem, "De Guiana. Carmen Epicum", mentioned in previous chapters, the pursuit of Raleigh's imperial dream is similarly seen in terms of a contrast between gold and honour. Beginning with the theme of rich conquest, he stresses its connection with honour:

Riches and Conquest, and Renowme I sing,  
Riches with honour, Conquest without blood,  
 Enough to seat the Monarchie of earth  
 Like Ioues eagle, on Eliza's hand.

Continuing this theme in another passage, Chapman uses moreover the contrast between gold and honour to criticize the selfishness and skepticism of his countrymen regarding the plans of Raleigh in a tone similar to Guyon's in the Cave of Mammon:

You that choose nought for right but certaintie,  
 And feare that value [i.e. valour] will get onlie blowes,

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<sup>10</sup>Discoverie of Guiana, fol. A3<sup>v</sup>.

Placing your faith in Incredulitie;  
 Sit till you see a wonder, Vertue rich;  
 Till Honour hauing golde, rob gold of honour.<sup>11</sup>

Although Guyon makes his choice for the right ideal, his remark that he will not "receaue Thing offred, till I know it well be got" (II.vii.19) suggests that even the noble hero has his difficulties in keeping his equanimity when confronted with the opportunity of sudden wealth. This may well be a reflection of the difference between Drake and Raleigh in regard to their attitude to pirating raids. Camden reports that when Drake returned in 1580 laden with prizes, several of Elizabeth's courtiers, among them Burleigh, refused to have any share in them, because they considered it below their dignity to accept a pirate's booty. The common people, on the other hand, celebrated Drake as England's hero. Guyon's remark may thus contain a flattering allusion to the virtue of Elizabeth's courtiers, and his rejection of Mammon's offer in favour of honour implies a critique of pirating raids and a suggestion that they are neither patriotic nor in accord with the heroic character.

Cantos vi and vii represent the test for the hero concerning the steadfastness of his choice of the right kind of goal. The goods offered by Phaedria and Mammon are

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<sup>11</sup>In Poems of George Chapman, p.353.



offers of false substitutes for the heroic labours -- the destruction of the Bower of Bliss -- through which Guyon will gain the true apples of the Hesperides, namely honour and glory. The test is to be seen as proof of the hero's virtue and as a means to reverse the evil judgment of Paris. By contrast to Paris who chose the broad path to pleasure and vice, Hercules chose the narrow path to virtue and fame. Ripa shows, for instance, an emblem of Hercules as "Libero arbitrio", faced by two alternatives to the "sommo bene".<sup>12</sup> The allegory reflects the idea that self-control and heroic virtue are based on self-knowledge.<sup>13</sup> Guyon's visit to Phaedria and Mammon is connected with the theme of the choice by the detail of the broad beaten track leading to Mammon's Cave (II.vii.21). The two are comparable to the vice figures in the allegory of Hercules who step into his path to offer their wares in a tempting manner. If seen in this framework, Guyon's visit has no implications of guilt or failure on his part, for his role is, like that of Hercules, to make a choice -- namely to

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<sup>12</sup>Iconologia, pp.295-297; also Panofsky, Herkules am Scheidewege (Leipzig, 1930), who treats the theme in depth.

<sup>13</sup>Lawrence Babb, The Elizabethan Malady (East Lansing, Mich., 1951), p.19.

reject the ignoble alternative to the heroic life, and this is what he clearly does.<sup>14</sup>

The encounter with Phaedria and the trip to her island represent a false version of Guyon's voyage to the Bower of Bliss. In both cases, we have a sea-journey and an ambiguous earthly paradise. Phaedria's is obviously designed to lead the hero in the wrong direction and to the wrong goal, and, furthermore, to arrest his progress. We can see this from the manner in which she offers the reverse of heroic action and glory clothed in martial and quasi-heroic terms. She proposes "present pleasures" as the summum bonum or "fruit" of a hero's life and refers scornfully to the "fruitless" labours of Hercules (II.vi.17). She suggests the idea of pleasure further in a martial image, namely as warfare, but transferred to the sphere of luxuria: "Another warre, and other weapons I doe loue" (II.vi.34). She is in this instance a type like Acrasia as bad Venus who is trying to entrap a figure of martial or heroic virtue (II.vi.35 as parallel to xii.80). By contrast to Guyon, who acts out the heroic Hercules role, Cymochles acts out the other alternative to the choice of Hercules.

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<sup>14</sup>See Harry Berger, The Allegorical Temper, pp.18-23, who attributes "sinful curiosity" to Guyon.

He is described in terms which suggest a parallel to Hercules' yielding to Iole, for Cymochles yields his "martial might" to "weake wench" (II.vi.8). Cymochles appears also earlier as antithesis to the heroic life, for the wanton "arbor" in which Atin surprises him lies directly opposite the "grove" of Alcides (II.v.19). The latter seems to symbolize heroic fame in the same way as does Belpheobe's forest grove (III.v.39).

While Phaedria offers a private ideal of hedonistic pleasures as substitute for heroic action, Mammon offers a substitute for the long and arduous way to political greatness and glory. In both episodes, moral or ideal values are replaced by merely sensual or materialistic goods. It seems that Guyon's opponents are trying to arrest his progress towards spiritual grace by attempting to tie him to mere matter. If we recall Ripa's definition of valour as a virtue of both body and soul, we could compare Mammon's and Phaedria's offers to an attempt to destroy the hero's balance and separate his spiritual from his physical strength. Guyon's fainting fit at the end seems to be the effect of their efforts in this respect. In the following we shall investigate how it is to be understood.

By making allusions to Spain as type of Troy's enemy through his use of gold-imagery, Spenser conveys the political importance of his hero's choice. Mammon's "Ingoes"

and Philotime's golden chain can be taken as images of the wealth of the Incas. The rumours of its existence had transformed Spain's voyagers to gold-hungry monsters of ambition, comparable to those who climb Philotime's chain thinking "to raise themselves to high degree, By riches and unrighteous reward" (II.vii.47). There may be a pun on Incas in the word "Ingoes", especially if we consider that one can find spellings like "Inga" for "Inca" in the sixteenth century writings on the New World. The golden chain of Philotime may represent a reference to the golden chain of the Inca emperors which was a well-known part of the lore about the wealth of Peru.<sup>15</sup> Mammon's forge, where deformed creatures labour incessantly, recalls the Spanish gold and silver mines in the New World where the original natives and imported Negro slaves were put to forced labour and early death to satisfy Spain's hunger for gold. Spenser alludes to this fact through the use of kitchen imagery in the description of the forge. By contrast to Alma's kitchen, the forge indicates the moral decay of Spain's body politic.<sup>16</sup> Guyon's answer to Mammon's offer is a restatement of

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<sup>15</sup>Dr. Cain's suggestion. Concerning the chain, see Garcilaso de la Vega, El Inca, Royal Commentaries of the Incas, tr. H. V. Livermore (Austin, 1966), I, 543-544.

<sup>16</sup>Cf. H. Gombel, Die Fabel Vom Magen und den Gliedern in der Weltliteratur (Halle, 1934) on the function of the stomach in the body politic.

the need for moderation in all desires, especially the desire for riches which has grown to excess in Mammon:

Suffise it then, thou Money God (quoth hee)  
That all thine idle offers I refuse.  
All that I need I haue; what needeth mee  
To couet more, then I haue cause to use?

(II.vii.39)

In addition to alluding to the corruption which gold has caused in Spain's body politic, Spenser uses the image of the chain also as symbol of Spain's eventual defeat. As I pointed out in Chapter IV, the golden chain is an important image of the victory of providence over evil Fortune and is to be equated with Juno in the framework of the Trojan myth. Philotime's chain is a symbol of ambition (II.vii.46) and is, therefore, also the antithesis to Jupiter's golden chain. Philotime's holding the chain aloft can be compared to Juno's attempt to destroy the golden chain of concord through ambition. The allegorization of Juno's rebellion, as we find it in Conti, can therefore also be applied to Philotime who, by analogy, appears also as enemy of the universal order and of the sacred empire. Conti interprets Juno's rebellion under three aspects:

1. with regard to the church:

Quod attinet ad auream catenam, quod omnes Dii  
Iouem de caelo detrahere non possent, ego modo  
auaritiam, modo ambitione esse auream catenam  
crediderim, quae etsi potentissima est, multos-  
que a vera Dei religione ad falsa dogmata  
retraxit . . .

2. with regard to the individual:

Qui enim vir bonus vere existit, ille neque auaritia  
neque ambitione ulla loco dimouetur . . .

3. with regard to the laws which uphold divine  
and political authority:

Sic igitur neque Iupiter cum rebus ciuilibus pro  
lege capiatur neque lex Christi, quae est anima  
ciuitatum bene institutarum, neque iudices, . .  
. vel Imperatores, si viri boni sint, dimoueri<sup>17</sup>  
possunt de recta sententia largitionibus . . .

By rejecting Philotime's golden chain, Guyon affirms equally  
that he is a "vir bonus" in Conti's sense both with regard  
to the authority of God and empress, for he rejects Philot-  
ime by referring to the lady to whom he is already bound.

When Spenser tells us that Philotime has been  
thrust out of the company of the gods (II.vii.49), he  
reminds us of the parallel fate which befell Juno as the  
consequence of her rebellion. Both Juno and Philotime are  
types of the fallen Lucifer, and their characteristics  
amount to a prophecy of Spain's fall, caused by its  
exceeding greed and ambition. Since the enemies of the  
chain are also types of discord, Philotime's offer of a  
false type must also be seen as directed towards preventing  
the restoration of concord by England. Since Spain's  
hunger for gold seems to be the origin of the rise of

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<sup>17</sup>Mythologiae, II.iv, "De Iunone".

Philotime as personification of discord and ambition equal to that of Juno, the destructive effects of these apply, in fact, to Spain, and they are suggested by the allusion to the little gate "next adioyning" to Hell-gate and the fact that it was "but a litle stride, That did the house of Richesse from hell-mouth diuide" (II.vii.24).

The test of the hero's virtue comes to a climax in the garden of Proserpina. The golden apples in its centre are comparable to Spanish gold as antithesis to the golden apples of the Hercules myth and of Troy's patroness, Venus, i.e. Elizabeth as future empress of "fruitfullest Virginia". Conti's allegorization of the golden apples illustrates well the manner in which Guyon's behaviour forms a positive contrast to that of Paris, for Conti calls them touchstones of the soul which incite the virtuous man to glorious action and the ignoble man to the opposite:

Atque ut summatim colligam sententiam huiusce figmenti, tanquam serpentes illi seruant aurea poma, qui ob auaritiam neque dormire quidem tuto possunt. Quare praeclare dictum est a sapientibus, diuitias tanquam lapidem iudicem animi cuiusquam esse datas hominibus, que viris bonis & prudentibus facultas essent, & quasi opportunitates ad res praeclare gerendas, ad patriae, ad sui ipsorum, ad amicorum, ad bonorum commoda concessae: at impudentibus & malis quasi supplicium, cum augeant desiderium ipsum etiam accumulandi, quod vel ex ipsarum diuitiarum usu quantopere quisque sit vir bonus, & Dei amicus, posset dignoscere.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Mythologiae, VII.vii, "De Hesperidibus".

Guyon's rejection of Mammon's gold and Proserpina's apple is based on the fact that they symbolize antiheroic values, namely ignoble sloth and avarice. When Guyon answers Mammon at the beginning of their encounter that he must know if the gold is well or ill gotten, he seems to say that gold is not to be rejected as such but for the noble or ignoble intentions connected with it. The episodes of Tantalus and Pilate illustrate the reverse of heroic behaviour and serve to underline by contrast the correctness of Guyon's behaviour. Tantalus consumes himself in "labour vaine and idle industry". (II.vii.61 and 59), namely by the pursuit of the golden apples on Proserpina's tree. As in Palingenius' Zodiake of Life, he is the personification of greed.<sup>19</sup> His "intemperate mind" (vii.60) suggests that his greed is equal to an unheroic character, for his passions are not under the control of the mind. Pilate is a symbol of the consequences of ignoble "labours", namely of "infamy"; therefore he cannot wash the stain of his dishonourable deed from his hands.

Spenser characterizes Paris' role as the reverse of Guyon and Hercules by reference to Helen as the "meed" or reward for his unheroic act or "labour" of choosing,

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<sup>19</sup>Tr. B. Googe, p.13.



like Tantalus, the golden apple of the Hesperides out of ignoble and unheroic motives. By reference to Ate and the discord she created through the golden apple, Spenser points also to the political implications of Paris' choice in contrast to Guyon's.<sup>20</sup> Paris' lack of the heroic virtue which Guyon has demonstrated is underlined by Spenser's addition of the story of Atalanta and Acontius as parallel to that of Paris and Helen. Atalanta is, like Helen, an ignoble object, for Conti allegorized her as voluntas,<sup>21</sup> and Acontius' pursuit of her is therefore called a "fruitless" suit in Spenser's poem, namely with regard to the fruits of heroic virtue. His reward is clearly not gained by the latter but by "craft", namely through throwing the golden apple into Atalanta's path, instead of winning her by his own efforts.

A significant characteristic of the gold in Mammon's Cave is that its moral destructiveness is represented through images of food and drink, and this forms also the key to our understanding of Guyon's fainting fit. The images represent a blending of the concept of Temperance as

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<sup>20</sup>Cf. also the lecherous figure of Paridell, III.ix, who also personifies England's political enemy as an unheroic and ignoble character.

<sup>21</sup>Mythol., II.viii.

heroic virtue ( i.e. self-control especially with regard to gold) and as moderation in food and drink. Tantalus' greed is represented as hunger and thirst, and Guyon is offered the golden apple also as food. The inspiration for such a combination between hunger and gold may have been a line in the margin of Peter Martyr's Historie of the West Indies, which establishes a link between fallen Troy and Spain and fits therefore well into Spenser's allegory. The line is a quote from Virgil's Aeneid, where the fleeing Trojans encounter the spirit of murdered Polydorus. Having been entrusted to the king of Thrace with a great treasure which was to ensure his safekeeping, he had instead been murdered by his foster father who had been overcome by the desire for Polydorus' wealth. Polydorus' spirit greets his countrymen on the spot where the murder took place, and he exclaims, "quid non mortalia pectora cogis, Auri sacra fames" (Aeneid, III, 56-57).<sup>22</sup> Spenser obviously knew the significance of the phrase, for he used it in an adapted form in Book V to describe the ambition of France: "O sacred hunger of ambitious mindes" (xii.1). By playing with the phonetic similarity of fames and fama, Spenser

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<sup>22</sup>The quotation appears in the 1577 edition of Peter Martyr's Decades in the augmented version by R. Willis, p.148.

suggests in Book II that Spain's sacrilegious hunger for gold is the opposite of the life in pursuit of fame. The offer of the golden apple from Proserpina's tree is both a substitute for fames, namely the wrong kind of food for the natural appetite, and for fama, because fame is based on virtue and not on gold.

The temptation is an attempt to divert the natural desire (hunger) from its original object and to make it the substitute for the heroic desire for fame. A passage at the beginning of the episode makes this clear and also illustrates Mammon's own nature:

And in his lap a masse of coyne he told,  
And turned upsidowne, to feede his eye  
And couetous desire with his huge threasury.

(II.vii.4)

The word "upsidowne" is the key-word for the whole episode. The tour through the cave consists of attempts to offer gold as food -- not to the stomach but to the eyes. Since the eyes are often a symbol for the rational faculty, one can see Mammon's offer as the attempt to misdirect the heroic desire which is part of the rational soul towards a merely material or sensual substitute for its true object. By pressing his gold on Guyon, Mammon is trying to replace the power of the will (libero arbitrio) with sensual desire and thereby turn Guyon's nature "upsidowne". The many allusions to entrapment and to the "eye-glutting" effect of

the gold (II.vii.9) suggest that Mammon's strategy is to overwhelm Guyon's senses to the point where they will overwhelm his self-control:

Well hoped he, ere long that hardy guest,  
If euer couetous hand, or lustfull eye,  
Or lips he layd on thing, that likt him best,  
Or euer sleepe his eye-strings did untye,  
Should be his pray.

(II.vii.27)

But whenas Mammon saw his purpose mist,  
Him to entrap unwares another way he wist.

(II.vii.34)

But Spenser makes it clear without doubt that the visit to the cave ends with Guyon's victory:

But he was warie wise in all his way,  
And well perceiued his deceitfull sleight,  
Ne suffred lust his safetie to betray,  
So goodly did beguile the Guyler of his pray.

(II.vii.64)

However, since Mammon deprived him of actual food as well as of sleep by offering him gold as "food for the eyes", the hero ironically becomes a victim of fames in the literal sense. This, I believe, does not demonstrate his culpability but rather the insufficiency of heroic virtue based only on individual and human strength, in comparison to the spiritual strength of Arthur and Alma who represent the power of the sacred empire and of the ecclesia Anglicana combined with heroic virtue (Arthur's Hercules role). To restore him from fames, Guyon is therefore not given

food, but the aid of God through the medium of the sacred empire, namely Arthur (the ecclesia Anglicana) and Alma (its soul and guiding force), whereby the phrase "to aide us millitant" (II.vii.2) suggests the combination of martial strength and grace (i.e. Elf and Fay) which constitute England's strength.<sup>22</sup> By contrast to Mammon, Alma also offers the proper nourishment for the body and soul: she feeds the hero's eyes by giving him his history to read and thus stirs up his heroic and patriotic desire, and she feasts him at a banquet. Thereby she restores the balance between body and soul which Mammon had tried to destroy. In other words, she reconciles fames with fama. The visit to Alma's castle appears therefore as the thematic complement to Guyon's visit and test in the cave, for as this showed the limits of the virtue and strength of the individual and his dependence on a higher force, Alma and Arthur provide the additional spiritual strength for the hero as well as the goal for his desire for fame, namely the destruction of the enemy to England's heroic destiny, the Bower of Acrasia. In terms of political allegory this episode seems to suggest that desire for gold is unpatriot-

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<sup>22</sup>Since Guyon as Hercules represents the will (libero arbitrio), we can equate his relationship to Alma with that between libero arbitrio and ratio, and as such they form the complementary parts of the rational soul in the individual and in the body politic.

ic and detracts England from achieving its true goal, to free the New World from the perversions of Spanish power. As such, the hero's test and instructions in history represent a plea for Dee's and Raleigh's ideas which is turned to a flattering compliment by the suggestion that it is inspired by the queen (Alma) herself.

That the heroic desire of England's voyager heroes depends for its direction on the imperial virgin is also stated elsewhere in the poem, first, by reference to the "stedfast starre" which guides Guyon (II.vii.1), and, second, by the fact that the queen's own heroic strength and fame appear personified as Belphebe who lectures Braggadocchio (vainly, as we know) on the requirements for finding the temple of fame. They appear as the direct opposite to those offered by Mammon as means to greatness:

Abroad in armes, at home in studious kind  
Who seekes with painfull toile, shall honor soonest  
find..

In woods, in waues, in warres she wents to dwell,  
And will be found with perill and with paine;  
Ne can the man, that moulds in idle cell,  
Unto her happie mansion attaine;  
Before her gate high God did sweat ordaine,  
And wakefull watches euer to abide;  
But easie is the way, and passage plaine  
To pleasures pallace; it may soone be spide,  
And day and night her dores to all stand open wide.

(II.iii.40-41)

Of most interest in this passage is the reference to "waues", for it associates specifically the voyages with

heroic labours and the pursuit of fame. Equally important is that for Spenser heroism is a composite ideal which includes the active and contemplative lives, or martial exercise and scholarly labours. The latter are exemplified by the important roles of poet and historian in the poem as instruments for the awakening of patriotic desire and the restoration of England's glory. Spenser reflects here the Renaissance view of Hercules both as martial hero and as personification of the power of rhetoric (Hercules Gallicus). Guyon himself represents this composite type at various stages in his progress: he uses persuasion, possesses self-control and physical strength, and is a successful voyager, obviously the ideal which Spenser wishes his contemporaries to emulate.

It seems to be an ideal based on the heroic strength of a hero like Drake, which has been cleansed of Drake's well-known taste for gold under the influence of Raleigh's patriotic virtue. The latter is moreover represented as identical with the spiritual grace personified by the queen who directs the hero, freed from materialistic desires, to those goals which Raleigh had envisaged. The connection between Drake's and Raleigh's heroic dedication to England's cause can be illustrated by the implications of Guyon's name and the positive gold-imagery used in his description. It forms the antithesis to the negative gold-imagery which

describes Spain's lack of virtue and fame. Guyon's name has been brought in connection with Jacob de Voragine's etymology for St. George's name,<sup>23</sup> but it seems even more significant that it can be connected with allegorizations of one of the rivers of Paradise, Gihon or Gehon, as Fowler has suggested.<sup>24</sup> These allegories can be regarded as analogies to the purifying role which Spenser attributes to Raleigh's political plans, especially to the idea of an empire of Guiana, for it seems to be echoed by Guyon's name.<sup>25</sup> The connection between Raleigh and the qualities of the river Gehon can be attributed to the fact that the queen's nickname for Raleigh was "Water". The allegorical meanings of the river of paradise, described by Fowler, are thus a means for Spenser to project the sacredness and moral value of Raleigh's contribution to England's glory and future greatness.

The Garden of the Hesperides as image of the new colonial empire seems for Spenser to be identical with the image of the sacred empire of England as a type of Eden,

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<sup>23</sup>Susan Snyder, "Guyon as Wrestler", Renaissance News, 14 (1961), 249-52.

<sup>24</sup>"The River Guyon", MLN, 4 (1960), 289-92; see also Variorum F.Q., II, 187-88.

<sup>25</sup>Dr. Cain's suggestion.



for he has established this identity by a significant description of the queen's realm in Book I. Spenser says that Una's kingdom (i.e. England as sacred empire) is called Eden and that it is surrounded by three rivers, among them "Gehons golden waues" (vii.43). Guyon's role in Book II can be seen as complement to those of Arthur and Redcrosse in Book I in the sense that the latter two defeat two of the triple evils of Lucifera's court, Pride and Lechery, while Guyon, as third river of paradise, defeats the third of the Infernal Trinity, namely Avarice in its specific manifestation as Spanish gold. If we consider Guyon's role as that of the cleansing of moral perversion by the waters of the river Gehon, we can assume that the negative water images in Book II, associated with Cymochles, Proserpina's garden, the standing waters in which Maleger drowns, and the ocean around Acrasia's Bower, are meant as the antithesis to Guyon's character. The fact that Spenser names only three instead of the traditional four rivers of paradise seems to be determined by his strategy to depict England as antithesis to the moral corruption of its enemies and especially of the Catholic forces represented by the triple perversions of Lucifera's court. Their antithetical roles can be compared to the allegorisation of the three rivers of paradise mentioned by Fowler, who says that they had been described by Philo as analogy to the three divis-

ions of the body with its "reasonable, passionate, and lustful parts."<sup>26</sup> Since Lucifera's court and Mammon's cave are images of the decayed commonwealth or the corrupt body politic of the Catholic forces, the three rivers around Una's garden represent the antithesis to the decay of religion (Book I) and to the decay of heroic virtue (Book II), namely their restoration in the sacred garden of the imperial virgin who rules England.

As Fowler has noted, Gehon was traditionally interpreted as the river Nile whose waves must cleanse Egypt and Ethiopia, places of fleshly corruption. The allegorical equivalent to this in Spenser's poem seems to be Guyon's destruction of the Bower of Bliss. Its allegorical connection with England's struggle with Spain can be established by the fact that Egypt and the river Gihon were frequently used as political metaphors for England and Spain by other Elizabethan poets. An example is Tamburlaine's exclamation that he will not spare the Egyptians "for all the wealth of Gihon's golden waves",<sup>27</sup> if we accept McCann's interpretation of the play as an expression of England's imperialistic aspirations.<sup>28</sup> Like Marlowe, Spenser uses

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<sup>26</sup> Fowler, *ibid.*, p.290.

<sup>27</sup> *Tamburlaine*, I.i.123.

<sup>28</sup> *English Discovery of America to 1585*, p.207.

the term "Soldan", Marlowe for Egypt's ruler and Spenser for Philip II (Book V). For both, Gehon seems to be the symbol of the virtues needed for the defeat of Spain. As in Tamburlaine, Gehon's golden waves are also mentioned in two plays by Robert Greene in connection with Spain and England.<sup>29</sup> At the end of Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, Greene speaks of England as "that wealthy Ile circled with Gihen and swift Euphrates" (2255-56), while in The Historie of Orlando Furioso Cuba, one of Spain's colonies, is described as "that wealthy Paradise From whence floweth Gyhon and swift Euphrates":

The earth within her bowels hath inwrapt  
As in the massie storehouse of the world  
Millions of golde, as bright as was the showre  
That wanton Ioue sent down to Danae.

(42-51)

Greene's introduction of Danae and of the corrupting power of Spain's gold puts the allusion to Gehon's wealth in a clear moral perspective. For Greene as for Spenser, the gold of Gehon seems to have honourable meanings if applied to England, and dishonourable ones if applied to Spain, and the same applies to their treatment of the topos of the earthly paradise. Spenser's characterization of

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<sup>29</sup>The edition from which the following quotations are taken is Robert Greene, The Life and Complete Works, ed. A. B. Grosart (New York, 1964), XIII.

Mammon's gold as an "ample flood" (II.vii.8) fits well into this context. It may be interpreted as a contrast to the purifying waters of the river of paradise, personified by Guyon's virtue. By combining thus the qualities of Hercules and of the river Gehon in his allegory of heroic virtue, Spenser has, in a sense, combined the roles of Drake and Raleigh as vanquishers of Spain's power and has presented a heroic ideal which has been purified from the unheroic and unpatriotic desire for personal gain and is presented to his readers as the basis on which the glory of queen and country can be established. In this sense we may interpret his comment that, at the end of Guyon's visit to Alma, the "frame" of Temperance has risen and is ready "To pricke of highest praise forth to aduance" (II.xii.1).

The contrast between ignoble desires and heroic virtue implied by the above quoted references to golden Gehon extends also to the meaning of Guyon's horse. Fowler has suggested that its name Brigadore is based on Briglia d'Oro (Golden Bridle).<sup>30</sup> It seems to be based on the emblematic representations of temperance as bridle of the passions,<sup>31</sup> and of self-control as image of horse and rider.

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<sup>30</sup>"Emblems of Temperance in The Faerie Queene, Book II". Review of English Studies, n.s. 11 (1960), 143.

<sup>31</sup>Ripa, Iconologia, p.481.

If we take the Spanish word in the sense of Bridle of Gold, we could see in the horse especially an image of the desire or passion for gold which is to be bridled by its rider. Since Guyon has already mastered this art, the loss of his horse does not stop him in his heroic quest, while Braggadocchio, a type of Spanish vainglory, as we shall see below, is, by implication a type like Mammon who cannot bridle his ignoble passions, especially the desire for gold. The contrast between ignoble Spanish gold and the noble gold of heroic action is also implied by the "golden sell" of Guyon's horse. It symbolizes equally mastery of the passions, as we see, for example, in canto viii where Pyrochles, raging furiously, cannot unseat Arthur from his "sell: For well of yore he learned had to ride" (II.viii.31). Its antithesis is the "siluer stoole" which Mammon offers Guyon in the garden of Proserpina. It is obviously a substitute of inferior metal and a seat of unheroic sloth and inactivity. The connection between Guyon's mastery of the desire for gold and the defeat of Spain seems also to be the reason for the fact that his stolen horse is returned to him at the marriage of Florimell and Marinell in Book V which symbolizes the triumph of England's maritime and colonial power over that of Spain.

## 2. Guyon and the Pillars of Hercules

Braggadocchio's stealing of Guyon's horse and his subsequent encounter with Belpheobe can be regarded as a continuous allegory of Spain's lack of heroic virtue and fame by contrast to Gloriana's champion Guyon. This interpretation can be based on two of the labours of Hercules and their allegorizations which have been used in order to give a flattering treatment to Drake's circumnavigation of the globe, namely his gaining the "pillars of Hercules" as symbol of England's glory.

As I noted earlier, Guyon does not need his horse, because he already possesses the ability to bridle his desire for gold, and thus the theft mainly represents a means of ridiculing Braggadocchio's incompetence. The fact that Guyon walks away, however, is what must interest us, for it is an allusion to one of the labours of Hercules and an important key to Spenser's allegory in Book II. The explanation for this part of Guyon's quest can be found in Coluccio Salutati's De laboribus Herculis. Salutati uses a passage from Seneca's Hercules furens to show that Hercules could not possibly become immobilized in the underworld to which he had just descended. In order to prove this point, Amphytrion reminds Megara, Hercules' wife, that Hercules once made his way "across the parched desert and the

sands, billowing like the stormy sea" and also "across the strait" and its "twice receding, twice returning waves".

and when his barque abandoned, he was stranded, a prisoner on Syrtes' shoals, and, though his vessel was held fast, he crossed over seas on foot.<sup>32</sup>

Salutati, commenting on this passage, equates Hercules with reason, his crossing of the wave-like desert and the fluctuating tides on the sandbank with reason's disregard for temporal goods, among them riches, and his success with his steadfast adherence to guidance by the stars, i.e. heavenly goods. Salutati goes on to say that Hercules or reason is related to two kinds of will, voluntas and liberum arbitrium, the first a lower faculty, symbolized by the boat stuck in the sand, i.e. worldly pleasures, and the second a higher faculty which sets the reason free again, symbolized by Hercules' feet which walk safely away from the toys of fortune.

Sed omnium victor Hercules, id est virtus et ratio, «maria superavit pedes», hoc est arbitrii libertate. Nec miretur aliquis quod fixa puppe, id est voluntate, per libertatem fugiat Hercules. Sicut enim due sunt partes rationis, ut Augustini autoritate probatum est, sic habet et annexas geminas voluntates, primam qua superior pars rationis pergit in eterna, alteram qua gubernationi temporalium admiscetur. Nam cum superior ratio non detineatur temporalibus, inferior tamen sic ipsis inheret

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<sup>32</sup>Seneca's Tragedies, ed. F. J. Miller (Loeb Classical Library), I, 29.

pro regimine corporis quod illam non impediat suis  
pedibus ambulare.<sup>33</sup>

If we compare this passage with Guyon's walking away, we may see his continuation of his journey, undeterred by the theft of his horse, as a sign of his victory over the temporal world and the power of fortune. The connection of the Senecan passage with the theme of the Hercules furens may explain why Guyon's pedestrian adventure occurs in that part of his quest which has to do with the irascible passions. The walking as type of a labour of Hercules is also a foreshadowing of Guyon's further adventures, notably his descent to Mammon's cave and his journey to the Bower of Bliss. Spenser mixes, for example, pedestrian and marine terms when he describes Guyon's approach to the cave. As in Salutati's allegory, there is a reference to Guyon's "steadfast starre" which guides him, and, like Hercules, Guyon is described as an expert seafarer (II.vii.1-2). Salutati's combination of walking and treacherous sandbanks also establishes a thematic link between the first part of Guyon's quest and his voyage to the Bower. By contrast to Hercules and his boat, Guyon does not become a captive of the many sandbanks which obstruct his progress.

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<sup>33</sup>De laboribus Herculis, III.xxxiii.13-14.



Having arrived, he leaves his boat behind and walks towards Acrasia's Bower, a foreshadowing, perhaps, of his subsequent actions which demonstrate the victory of ratio and liberum arbitrium over the sensual passions. The theft at the beginning of his journey thus serves to establish the contrast between him and Braggadocchio: while Guyon is a Hercules, Braggadocchio is a horse-thief and a poor rider as well.

The allegory of Hercules' labour seems specifically intended as a flattering treatment of Drake's marine ventures by which he exposed Spain's vainglory. This latter point is the reason for the fact that the theft of the horse is followed by the encounter with Belphebe. Spenser refers to the fact that the emblem of the pillars of Hercules had become an emblem of Spain's loss of prestige and England's glory since Drake's circumnavigation of the globe and the victory over the Armada when he compares Belphebe's legs to two "fair marble pillours . . . which doe the temple of the Gods support" (II.iii.28). As Yates has shown, Charles V's device PLUS ULTRA became the symbol of Spain's loss of fame after Drake had completed his voyage around the world. In an engraving made a year after the Armada, the device appears, for example, in a portrait of the queen by William Rogers which symbolizes her victory over Spain

and is inscribed "Eliza Triumphans".<sup>34</sup>

Spenser's comparison obviously is meant as an expression of the national glory acquired through the conquest of this device by Drake's Herculean feat. As Belphoebe is compared to the temple of the gods, upheld by the pillars, she can be regarded as an analogy to Panthea, a type of Pantheon or temple of the gods in Gloriana's city of fame, Cleopolis.<sup>35</sup> The "green garlands" which decorate the pillars may refer to the recent victory over the Armada, and the transformation of the pillars to nimble instruments of hunting is a flattering suggestion that the queen is not resting idly on her laurels but continues to perform noble deeds. By contrast, Spain's loss of fame appears through Braggadocchio's vain attempt to lay hands on Belphoebe who, as it were, runs away with the two pillars.

The reading of the episode as ridicule of Spanish vainglory can be illustrated by an analogous passage from T. Nicholas' translation of Zarate's History of Peru. Nicholas contrasts the vain boasts of Spain with the true fame achieved by Sir Frances Drake's voyages and ventures:

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<sup>34</sup>"Astraea", pp. 54-57; see also Marot's satirical poem, "Sur la devise de l'Empereur: Plus Oultre", in Oeuvres, ed. Jean Plattard (Geneve, 1969), V, 343.

<sup>35</sup>Cf. Boccaccio, Gen. decr., XIII.1 "De Hercule".

I may at this day, God be praised, boldlie write, that, where the Spanish and Portingall Naciõs dare glorie of their discoveries and Navigacions, with great commendations of their Captaines . . . Now may our most gracious Queen, most iustly cõpaire withall the Princes of the world, both for discovery and for navigacion.

.....

The Discovery of the Portingall East India, was atchived in 26. monethes and the West India, in shorter space . . . But our valyant and noble minded Captaine, Maister Francis Drake, in his Navigation, was occupied more, or nighe three yeares: In which time he sayled, and had attained to the knowledge of the East and West course, which none at any time had euer atchived.

His paineful trauaile, and maruailous Navigation, was not obtayned with white handes, perfumed gloves, daintie fare, or softe lodging: no, no; Honour is not gotten with pleasures, and quiet mindes. For the sweet Roses groweth among Thornes: yet the ignorant will iudge that perpetuall Fame and heuently Felicitye is a thing to be gotten with facilitie and ease. But if the poore Sayler should sit as Judge, I am sure that hee would say how extreame hunger, thyrst, hard lodging upon thatches . . . blustryng stormes . . . and continuall perill of life, leadeth to the hie pathway to the Court of eternall Fame.

According to Spenser's allegory, the temple of fame which Sir Frances Drake and his sailors have found is identical with the queen herself to whom also the conquest of the pillars is attributed.

Apart from these political connotations, the pillars also have a moral significance which equals that of Hercules'

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<sup>36</sup>Augustine Zarate, The strange and delectable History of the Conquest of Peru, tr. T. Nicholas (London, 1581), fols. Aiiii<sup>v</sup> and qir<sup>v</sup>.

golden apples as symbols of self-control. As such, they represent the queen's exertion of this virtue to the greater glory of her realm. We can compare Spenser's description of Belpheobe's "pillars" to Salutati's interpretation of the two pillars of Hercules as signs for the function of heroic virtue or ratio to set limits to human sensuality (the ocean):

Sed Hercules, id est potentia rationalis, sinum aperit oceano, hoc est sensualitati, divisus abinvicem promuntoriis que Calpem et Abilam diximus appellari. Quid sunt hec promuntoria nisi vis irascibilis et concupiscibilis? Que licet realiter unum sint (ambo quidem tendunt in bonum, concupiscibilis scilicet in bonum eo quod bonum, irascibilis autem etiam in bonum, sed in eo quod arduum atque difficile et adipiscibile), ratione tamen diversa sunt et abinvicem dividuntur. -- Et inter hec a rationali virtute, quam significat Hercules, admittitur oceanus, id est sensualitas, qua dum vivimus non possumus omnino carere. Extra latitudinem quidem boni, cuius extrema sunt Calpes et Abila, id est summa facilitas et ardua difficultas adipiscendi, Hercules, id est ratio, excludit oceanum, id est sensualitatem, nec ipsam recipit vel admittit. Ratio quidem non sinit quod desideria nostra ad impossibile dirigantur vel ad illa que mala sunt.<sup>37</sup>

An allusion to the queen's own Hercules role may be the line that Belpheobe "taught" the pillars "to tread" with "stately grace, and princely port" (II.iii.28), namely an allusion to the analogy between self-control and virtuous government. It is interesting to note that Spenser, like Salutati, seems to regard temperance not as a stoic virtue but as a quality modified by the knowledge of human frailty. Thus he stresses

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<sup>37</sup>De lab. Hercul., III.xxxiii.7-8 and xxxii.6.

frequently the dependence of his heroes on grace and shows in several instances Guyon's susceptibility to the passions. The allegory of the pillars can also be seen as the basis for the introduction of two icons of the queen's heroic virtue or temperance in Book II which form the antithesis to two negative types of pillars, namely Mammon and Acrasia. The association of the pillars with two contrasting passions may also be reflected in the pairs of obstacles Guyon encounters on his voyage to the Bower of Bliss.<sup>38</sup>

Mammon and Cymochles can be regarded as the equivalents to the negative meaning of the ocean in the above quoted allegorization of Hercules' feat. Cymochles is first seen opposite to the grove of Hercules which means that his position indicates his moral condition. His lack of self-control is described by water imagery comparable to the ocean of sin in Salutati's passage:

And now he has pourd out his idle mind  
In daintie delices, and lavish ioyes,  
Hauing his warlike weapons cast behind,  
And flowes in pleasures, and vaine pleasing toyes,  
Mingled emongst loose Ladies and lasciuious boyes.

(II.v.28)

Atin, his valet, finds him, as Sponser says, wading "in still waues of deepe delight" (II.v.35). The phrase "pourd out

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<sup>38</sup>I have discussed some of these pairs in the previous chapter and indicated their complementary character.

his idle mind" suggests that idleness is the cause of Cymochles' losing his rational control (his mind) which has been "drowned" in the waters of sensuality. In the episode with Guyon and Phaedria he succumbs again to a temptation to sloth, while Guyon, an expert "seafarer" on the waters of the temporal world, escapes it. Mammon's cave is, by extension, another type of the "ocean of sin", as Spenser indicates by the marine image at the beginning of canto vii and by the terms "spourd" and "ample flood" for Mammon's gold (II.vii.6 and 8) which destroys both heroic virtue and physical strength. The destruction of heroic virtue by Mammon's gold is represented by his golden armour, all "ouergrowne with rust" (II.vii.4), as Guyon finds him "sitting" on the ground (an image of unheroic sloth) toying with his wealth as Cymochles did with his loose friends. The destruction of physical strength is represented as Mammon's use of gold for the destruction of food and sleep, the two "pillars" which maintain man's frail life (II.vii.65).

### 3. Belpheobe

By equating Belpheobe with England's glory and triumph over Spain, Spenser makes the goal of Guyon's quest identical with his finding of the imperial virgin, for Belpheobe's name suggests the double roles of Venus and

Diana: "Bel" suggests Venus' beauty, and "Phoebe" is another name for Diana, a combination also apparent from the fact that both the laurel and the myrtle grow in Belpheobe's forest grove (III.v.40). The laurel is the symbol of the heroic ideal represented by Diana as huntress, and the myrtle is Venus' tree, a symbol of the fruitfulness of the queen's political virtue and heroism. Since Spenser emphasizes the theme of England's honour and associates it with the queen's role as Diana, her opponents in Book II appear as antitypes to Diana. Mammon's cave is pervaded by gloom and seems like "the Moone cloathed with cloudy night" (II.vii.29). This antithesis is also the reason that instead of Venus' negative counterpart it is the infernal type of Diana, Proserpina, who rules over a negative type of Venus' garden of the Hesperides (II.vii.53).

By analogy to the contrast between the negative and positive gold-images based on the antithetical golden apples of the Hesperides, Spenser characterizes Belpheobe by gold-imagery which is meant to stress the celestial and non-materialistic ideal which she represents. Like Spenser's grace, honour is a comprehensive ideal. By personifying it as Belpheobe, he combines the praise of the queen's human excellence with that of her sacred imperial virtue which derives from heaven. As model for such a figure Spenser seems to have taken Petrarch's Laura, for in her, as in

Belpheobe, l'auro (gold in the sense of grace) and il lauro (laurel or honour) are combined in a positive sense. This appears from the fact that the description of Belpheobe is full of gold-imagery and thus forms a positive contrast to the description of Mammon's cave. Her dress is glistening with "golden aygulets", her "buskins" are "gilden", her skirt is "hemd with golden fringe", and she wears a "golden bauldricks" (II.iii.26; 27; 29). It recalls Arthur's baldrick in Book I with its image of the stella Veneris. Belpheobe seems another image of the queen as North-Star and celestial Venus, for her dress is shining with golden "aygulets . . . Like twinkling starres", and she is apparently identical with the image of the stella maris which guides Guyon (II.vii.1). Belpheobe's "yellow lockes crisped, like golden wyre" which flatter in the wind as she passes through the forest recall Petrarch's line "erano i capei d'oro a l'aura sparsi".<sup>39</sup> She is also described with the colours of the Petrarchan lady, red, white, and gold, and, like Laura, she is associated with the laurel tree. The laurel trees in Proserpina's and Acrasia's gardens are obviously the antithesis to Belpheobe's tree.

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<sup>39</sup>Canzoniere, sonnet LXIX.



Belpheobe's encounter with Braggadocchio can be illustrated by comparison to one of Petrarch's favourite myths, Apollo's pursuit of Daphne who turns into a laurel tree. Like Apollo, Braggadocchio sees in Belpheobe only an incitement to beastly desires and to a "hunt" for very different game than glory. He is therefore ignominiously repelled by her "bear-spear", a weapon made for the defeat of beastly nature. What adds an extra touch of comedy to the scene is that Belpheobe, unlike Daphne, flees out of disdain and not of fear. These Petrarchan analogies are part of Spenser's strategy of praising the queen's and England's glory at the expense of Spain.

The gold-imagery used for the description of Belpheobe's birth suggests clearly that it has to do with the celestial and sacred origin of honour and must be seen as of a piece with that of Book II. It can again be illustrated by recourse to an analogous passage in Petrarch's Canzonere. Like Petrarch, who sees two radiant female figures, Glory and Virtue, who tell him that they derive from heaven and are born from the same "seed",<sup>40</sup> Spenser implies the celestial origin of Belpheobe and Amoret through their mother's name, Chrysogonee, which can be translated as

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<sup>40</sup> Canzone XII.

"golden-born".<sup>41</sup> Belpheobe and Amoret personify the features of the queen as Petrarchan lady, namely her beauty, her glory, and her virtue. Spenser's myth of their twin-birth seems to reflect the Renaissance commonplace that one cannot enter the Temple of Honour except through the Temple of Virtue. Amoret who personifies private virtue is thus the complement to the queen's heroic virtue and honour personified by Belpheobe. Unlike Petrarch, who makes Virtue the older sister, Spenser reverses this order, because for him the moral perfection of the individual depends on the political and sacred virtue of the imperial virgin, and so he makes Belpheobe the older sister.

Several other passages in the description of Belpheobe's birth make the sacred connotations of Spenser's ideal of honour even clearer. Roche has taken up Upton's suggestion that Spenser's line "Her birth was of the wombe of Morning dew" (III.v.3) restates the line of the Prayer Book, "The dew of thy birth is of the womb of the morning" (Ps.110.3). He notes that these lines occur in a number of passages, often with commentaries which interpret it as a reference to the birth of Christ or the church.<sup>42</sup> The

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<sup>41</sup>Harper, Variorum F.Q., II, 249.

<sup>42</sup>The Kindly Flame, pp.105-106.

comparison of Belpheobe's birth to this sacred event serves to illustrate the extravagant praise of the queen's sacred role in which she appears completely dissociated from any earthly blemish and, like Laura, becomes a personification of a divine as well as a courtly ideal.<sup>43</sup>

The conjunction of Jupiter, Venus, and the sun also indicates that her birth, similar to Laura's, heralds the birth of celestial grace and earthly glory, for at Laura's birth we observe a similar constellation of planets:

Il di che costei nacque eran le stelle  
che producon fra voi felici effetti.  
in luoghi alti ed eletti  
l'una ver l'altra con amor converse;  
Venero e 'l padre con benigni aspetti  
tenean le parti signorili e belle  
e le luci impio e folle  
quasi in tutto del ciel eran disperse;  
Il sol mai sì bel giorno non aperse

(canzone XXV, 61-68)

At Belpheobe's birth, there is, however, no threatening cloud in the sky. She can thus be viewed as a figure surpassing Laura. The three planets, according to Fowler, are Ficino's symbols of the three Graces. Fowler says that Spenser wants to indicate that "Belpheobe is endowed by nature with those qualities which are the gift of the

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<sup>43</sup>A complement to her is Arthur as figure of grace and chivalry and Gloriana who combines features of Petrarch's Vergine santa with the moral and courtly perfection of the mortal Laura. Spenser's Petrarchism is thus part of his idealization of the queen's imperial virgin role.

Graces".<sup>44</sup> If we connect this with the myth of her sacred birth, we can add to Fowler's idea that Belpheobe also seems to be a personification of God's grace.

We can take Chrysogonee moreover as representation of the queen's sacred mother-role so that the birth of Glory and Virtue (Belpheobe and Amoret) appears as the result of the queen's theological function. The description of their origin seems to be an allusion to the fruitfulness of the queen as imperial virgin comparable to the role of Caelia in Book I: "For not as other womens commune brood, They were enwombed in the sacred throne Of her chaste bodie, nor with commune food, As other babes, they sucked vitall blood" (III.vi.5) -- "But wondrously they were begot, and bred Through influence of th'heauens fruitfull ray" (st.6). We note that Chrysogonee is a virgin and that her daughters have only a spiritual father, namely Phoebus, i.e. Christ or grace. Belpheobe's description in Book II suggests this connection between the queen's grace and honour. Draper's suggestion that Belpheobe's name can be interpreted as "pure, radiant", derived from phoibos serves to illustrate the celestial element in her character.<sup>45</sup> It is also

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<sup>44</sup>Spenser and the Numbers of Time, p.83.

<sup>45</sup>Variorum F.Q., II, 249.

stated in the description of her eyes. They shine with a light derived from heaven, while Belpheobe herself appears "cleare as the skie, withouten blame or blot" (II.iii.22). "Cleare" may be a pun on clarus in the sense of "famous", and thus we can regard honour or earthly fame as an analogy to the light of God's grace. Spenser has stated this clearly when he describes Belpheobe, the personification of the queen's honour, as "mirrhoe of celestiall grace" (II.iii.25).

Belpheobe's radiant brightness seems therefore comparable to the brightness of Gloriana's temple of fame described in Book I. In both cases, the image of radiant light refers to a heavenly origin, namely to the grace of the Heavenly Jerusalem. The hermits instructions that it should be sought by performing heroic actions in the service of Gloriana seem to have been carried out in the form of the Herculean feats of Elizabeth's voyager-heroes which are alluded to in Guyon's quest. Guyon seems to suggest such an idea when he parts from Redcrosse and says, "But wretched we, where ye haue left your marke, Must now anew begin, like race to runne" (II.i.32). The term "like race to runne" turns the labours for the expansion of England's maritime and colonial power into a parallel to the quest for "holiness". Both will "after all" lead to heaven, namely when the "royal maid" referred to by the hermit has been

liberated from the oppression by her enemies (I.x.60). Both quests are parallel in the sense that they represent a search for human as well as heavenly grace which seems to depend for its success and direction on the guidance of the queen whom Spenser introduces as "Mirrour of grace and Maiestie diuine" in the Proem to Book I (st.4).

## CONCLUSION

It has always been recognized that The Faerie Queene is connected with Tudor politics, as the name of the poem itself indicates. We know further that Spenser's dedicatory sonnets to important figures at Elizabeth's court openly invite to a search for concealed identities in the allegorical context of the poem.

Scholarship in the earlier part of this century tended to take Spenser's invitation as a suggestion that his allegory was disguised historical biography. This resulted in a number of futile attempts to match biographical data concerning prominent Elizabethans with the allegorical adventures of Spenser's heroes, for example Arthur as Leicester or Duessa as Mary, Queen of Scots. By insisting that an allegorical character must be the equivalent of a single historical character, these scholars disregarded the "polysemous" nature of Spenser's allegory, and thus their method led merely to inconclusive and conflicting proposals, well documented in the notes of the Variorum, which ultimately brought the whole subject of Spenser's political allegory into disrepute.

More recently, Spenser scholarship has taken a different approach to confront the problem of political allegory in The Faerie Queene. Led by the studies of F. A.

Yates, F. Kermode, and others, Spenser scholars are beginning to demonstrate that the political aspects of The Faerie Queene are closest in affinity to the idealized versions of Elizabeth's rule projected in contemporary pageantry and apologies for the Tudor regime. Analogies for Spenser's method are the polemical writings of Foxe and Jewel, the symbolic devices of Tudor pageantry, and the poetic expressions of political encomium by other Elizabethan poets, as Yates, Wilson, and Kermode have demonstrated.

What I have attempted to show in the preceding chapters is the degree to which Spenser has utilized one feature of the political propaganda of his time -- the assertion of the Tudor empire -- by borrowing from the available stock of inevitably idealizing images and myths. In contrast to the identifications made by such earlier scholars as Paderford and Wistanley, I have made them on the assumption that mythological and allegorical allusions to contemporaries are determined by the purposes of imperialistic propaganda and not by an interest in the historical circumstances of an individual character. Spenser's invitation to Elizabeth's courtiers to identify themselves with figures in the poem is not an invitation to decipher their biography but an expression of his strategy to persuade them to identify themselves with the pursuit of the empire.



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