

WOMEN BEHAVING BADLY: THE PROBLEM OF FEMININE DISSENT

IN BOOK V OF *THE FAERIE QUEENE*

A Thesis

Presented to the Honors Program of

Angelo State University

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for Highest University Honors

BACHELOR OF ARTS

by

TALON SHOEMAKE

May 2019

Major: English

WOMEN BEHAVING BADLY: THE PROBLEM OF FEMININE DISSENT

IN BOOK V OF *THE FAERIE QUEENE*

by

Talon Shoemake

APPROVED:

Dr. Erin Ashworth-King

Dr. Roger Mark Jackson

Dr. Allison Dushane

April 26, 2019

Approved:

Dr. Shirley M. Eoff May 3, 2019
Director, Honors Program

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to Milo and Percy, the lights of my life.

Acknowledgments

First and foremost, the completion of this project would not have been possible without Dr. Shirley Eoff. During my time at Angelo State University, Dr. Eoff has been a mentor, a professor, and above all else, a role model. From the first day that I stepped on campus, Dr. Eoff has played a vital role in molding me into the young man I am today.

I would also like to thank Dr. Erin Ashworth-King. In my life, I have never met another person able to perfectly balance an already full slate of obligations and responsibilities. However, Dr. Ashworth-King, throughout my academic career has agreed to oversee a research project as well as to direct this honors thesis. I can, without a doubt, say that Dr. Ashworth-King is the most challenging professor I have ever had the pleasure to study under. It is her unwavering commitment to academic excellence that has motivated me to strive every single day for perfection. As I pursue my PhD in the years to come, I do so with the knowledge and confidence that she has instilled in me as a mentor.

I also would like to extend a great deal of gratitude to Dr. Mark Jackson and Dr. Allison Dushane for agreeing to serve on my thesis committee. I enjoyed being a student in various courses that they each taught. Additionally, I am thankful that these two professors agreed to devote both their time and effort into this project.

I would be remiss if I did not express my appreciation for Dr. Gabby Serrano. Despite being an American literature specialist, I admire and value Dr. Serrano so much. She has the rare ability to foster personable relationships with students that I, too, hope to one day achieve as a professor. I want to thank her for truly embodying an open-door policy, for directing a semester of independent research, and for always bringing a smile to my face

when I needed it most. In Dr. Serrano, I have gained not just a professor or a mentor, but a lifelong friend.

In addition, I would like to express my gratitude to Mrs. Erika Munoz and Taylor Ball-Watson from the Honors Program. During my time as a member of the program, I always knew that I could come to one of them for whatever I needed. The dedication and the work that they each commit to the program allow students to succeed.

I would not be where I am today without the unwavering support of my parents, Lois and Tiger Shoemake. Thank you for always believing in me and allowing me to pursue any endeavor I set my mind to. I cannot wait to see my finished thesis sitting on the bookshelf collecting dust.

This project was made much more bearable with the help of family friend, Theresa Kroutter. I would like to thank her for acting as my (unpaid) personal editor. Whenever I needed, I could always count on her to stay up into the night reading line-by-line with me until I was satisfied.

I also would like to extend a thanks to some of the friends that I have made during my time at Angelo State University. Natalie Quesnel, Hailey Smith, and Allie Denham, who each have made my college career extremely enjoyable. It was always comforting to know that I possessed friends who truly understood what I was going through. Our friendships have taught me many things, the most notable being that misery truly does love company.

Finally, I would like to thank my lifelong friends. Karlee Barney and Taylor Kroutter have been impactful in my life for over two decades. Even though the two of them, most

likely, will never read any page of my thesis other than this one, I want to thank them both for being an unfailing support system no matter what I needed. I love them both with all of my heart.

Abstract

The canonical poem, *The Faerie Queene*, investigates the nature of six virtues through the adventures of individual titular heroes. The fifth book, “The Legend of Justice,” seems to be where Spenser’s allegory begins to break down. Two critical interpretations of how best to approach Book V have risen to prominence: first, as a strict historical allegory and the other, as a moral investigation of Spenser’s fashioning of justice. This thesis melds the two readings—historical and moral—through a gendered lens, arguing that the critical rifts of Book V are primarily as a result of pity. Specifically, pity evoked by feminine characters, who perplex and hinder male justicers during their quests of virtue. With male justicers sidelined, Spenser utilizes feminine enactors of the virtue to enact justice which must be governed by equity and stymied by mercy to restore natural order and remedy early modern anxieties regarding dissenting women.

TABLE OF CONTENTS	Page
DEDICATION	i
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	ii
ABSTRACT	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	vi
LIST OF FIGURES	vii
INTRODUCTION	1
THE AMAZONIAN QUEEN AND THE KNIGHT OF CHASTITY.....	12
THE GUILFUL HAG AND THE MERCIFUL QUEEN	30
CONCLUSION.....	42
WORKS CITED	45
BIOGRAPHY	50

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE 1: The Body Natural vs. The Body Politic	8
FIGURE 2: The figure of Injustice from Ripa's <i>Iconologia</i>	16
FIGURE 3: The figure of Fraud from Ripa's <i>Iconologia</i>	33
FIGURE 4: The figure of Clemency from Ripa's <i>Iconologia</i>	40

INTRODUCTION

The Faerie Queene, first published by Edmund Spenser in 1590, and later expanded into its current form in 1596, has fascinated and perplexed readers for over four centuries. Transcendent of its age, the epic poem engages allegorical representations of private and public virtues, societal anxieties, and topical concerns. *The Faerie Queene*, to quote the poet John Milton is “doctrinal and exemplary to a Nation” (2). Indeed, according to one of its most seminal scholars and the editor of what is still the standard edition of Spenser’s work, A.C. Hamilton, there is no part of culture, “from religion to ethics and from philosophy to politics” that the poem is not relevant to, “either directly or allusively” (Hamilton, Introduction 1).

To introduce *The Faerie Queene* and the monumental nature of his task as a poet, Spenser opens the work with a letter to Sir Walter Raleigh in which he describes the work as “a continued allegory, or dark conceit” (1). Spenser’s original coinage of the term “dark conceit” defines the complex and multifaceted allegorical nature of his work. Most simply and transparently, *The Faerie Queene* functions didactically by employing a catalog of characters used to express a moral or political truth, often yoking Elizabethan politics to internal and external virtues. On the narrative level, the heroes of each book embark on journeys, along the way working to master six different virtues to which readers should aspire. The virtues—holiness, temperance, chastity, friendship, justice, and courtesy—are divided into the first three books which focus upon the internal virtues and the later books which look outside the soul. But Spenser’s conceit is not neat; it is “dark,” a word that Spenser poignantly uses to diagnose his largest concern about his allegorical task.

For Spenser, like virtue itself, allegory must be interpreted. It cannot dictate virtue with a set of rules that will always work in every situation. Rather, virtue is defined by circumstance, making it both ideally suited to allegory and widely susceptible to misinterpretation. This is nowhere more true than in Spenser's most complicated virtue, Justice, which he negotiates in Book V of *The Faerie Queen* in the form of the Knight of Justice, Artegall.

Book V, or the Book of Justice, in Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*, is, according to Hamilton, the area of the allegory where "Spenser's fiction seems to break down," adding that "probably for this reason, [Book V] is the least popular" (*The Structure of Allegory* 170). The allegorical breakdown that occurs in Book V can be attributed to the difficulty of negotiating early modern notions of moral and historical justice. Of all the virtues, justice is the most problematic, in part thanks to its all-encompassing nature which comprehends all other virtues. Aristotle frames justice as the sum of every other virtue in his *Nicomachean Ethics*, in large part because justice extends further than the soul to encompass both the body and the realm (5.1.13-15). As such, Spenser's task must expand from the other virtues to work to promote and fulfil human nature to include those also responsible for oppressing it. In other words, as Spenser's contemporary Phillip Sidney notes in his *Defense of Posey*, justice seeks to make men good as much as a result of fear of punishment as a love of virtue. For Sidney, who is more cynical about the nature of justice than Spenser himself, the virtue must aim lower than the just soul and must content itself with creating good members of the commonwealth: "[justice] does not endeavor to make men good, but that their evil hurt not others, having no care, so he be a good citizen, how bad a man be" (24). The dual nature of justice—that of acting upon the individual soul and the commonwealth at large—is what

brings Spenser's allegory into contention, its interpretation pulled between both its moral and topical concerns.

Spenser's allegory must directly contend with questions of general morality and particular topicality which depicts the evolving early modern legal system charged with administering justice across the realm. Spenser fashions the virtue of justice at a point in history when the relation of justice to equity and mercy was being determined and distributed among both common-law courts and the crown. In Elizabethan jurisprudence, according to Hamilton, equity existed as a "supplement to the ordinary operations of the Common Law" and was "institutionally embodied in the Court of Chancery," which primarily dealt with a system that operated under a loose set of rules to avoid the slow pace of change and possible harshness of the Common Law (354). Specifically, equity finds its power in natural law rather than precedent, a freedom which allowed early modern justicers to make judgments on a case-by-case basis, particularly in the absence of a clear precedent from Common Law (Haigh 82). Though equity allowed for the extension of mercy where the letter of the law denied it, equity is not to be confused with mercy. In defining mercy in his *Spenser Encyclopedia*, Hamilton associates it exclusively with the monarch and turns to Erasmus, who writes "the king shows mercy in helping the oppressed, truth in judging honestly, and clemency in tempering the severity of the law" (qtd. in Hamilton 469). Indeed, mercy was, "in Tudor popular culture," considered to be a vital aspect of sovereign power, "both a necessary and a legitimate adjunct to justice," according to K.J. Kesselring, a scholar of early modern jurisprudence (3). Furthermore, mercy became a tool of state formation and "enabled Tudor sovereigns to present themselves as merciful despite an increasingly severe set of laws" (Kesselring 47). Early modern mercy's extenuation of the severity of law's punishment

functioned as “a performance of royalty,” an act reserved for the sovereign to be used at their discretion (Lake 279). Kesselring writes that “over the Tudor period, the Crown insisted on a greater role in dictating acceptable behavior with mercy and justice shaping the existence of authority” (11). The negotiation of justice within the complicated moral spectrum of equity and mercy thus positions the monarch as the deputy of God, an authority not unquestioned in early modern England with a feminine monarch on the throne.

Given the difficulty of separating out a “perfect” justice from the corresponding virtues of equity and mercy, it stands to reason that Spenser’s Knight of Justice would not progress through the events of Book V linearly, moving from ignorance to mastery of the virtue. Rather, Artegall stumbles between the extremities of scorn and pity, attempting to work out how best to enact justice upon the bodies of others. What seems to particularly challenge Artegall’s progression in justice is his propensity to confuse equity, mercy, and pity in his administration of justice upon feminine bodies. Women who are positioned in moments of distress, traditionally objects of pity in Arthurian romance, are allegorized in *The Faerie Queene* into complex moral challenges that directly engage Artegall’s responses of scorn and pity. Munera, Radigund, and Duessa all present themselves before Artegall as kinds of supplicants in defeat, arriving at such supplication through very different means. Artegall first encounters Munera, the daughter of the villain Pollenete, early in his quest after he defeats her father. Munera, who receives the treasures her father steals from those he robs and kills when they attempt to cross his bridge, represents a kind of corruption and bribery, signified by her golden hands and silver feet that “sought vnrighteousnesse, and iustice sold” (V. ii. 26.8). A site of “rew” to Artegall, Munera is nevertheless ruthlessly dispatched by Talus, the text’s representation of “justice rigorous” while Artegall silently looks on (25.9).

In this instance, Artegall is made passive, the execution taken over by his “yron man” (V. i. 12.2). Next, Artegall fights Radigund, the Queen of the Amazons, who executes knights or enslaves them, forcing them to cross-dress and behave as women. Artegall challenges Radigund to single combat but when he defeats her, he pities her, once again becoming passive, enough so to allow Radigund to rally to defeat and imprison him, necessitating that he be freed later by Britomart, his love. Lastly, Artegall encounters Duessa standing trial in the courtroom of Mercilla for the crimes she perpetuates on the knights throughout *The Faerie Queene*. In Duessa’s trial, she is represented by Pitie and prosecuted by Zele, with Mercilla presiding over the verdict, Artegall and Arthur positioned to either side of her to represent perfect monarchical mercy. In all of these instances of feminine interaction, Artegall is marginalized, moved to the side in favor of another administrator of justice, be it Talus, Britomart, or Mercilla. In this thesis, I examine the places in *The Faerie Queene* where justice and the allegories of justice appear to “break down” to return to A.C. Hamilton’s language about Book V more generally. It is these moments that beg for additional consideration which can be provided through a careful interdisciplinary approach that marshals literary scholarship, the emblem tradition, moral philosophy, and historical topicality to argue for a re-interrogation of justice as it is enacted upon feminine bodies in early modern England. Through a combination of these lenses, I examine the anxiety of the feminine associated with Spenser’s allegory of justice, an anxiety that permeates not simply *The Faerie Queene*, but also gets inflected in the period’s emblem tradition, moral philosophy, and royal iconography.

Spenser's allegory reconstructs the icons of the emblem tradition,¹ better defined by Jane Aptekar as "intensely visual images which are interpretations of reality in its metaphoric and symbolic dimensions" (3). Aptekar, whose seminal text *Icons of Justice* argues that the visual characteristics employed in *The Faerie Queene* are closely-aligned with well-known iconographical traditions, notes the influence of these Renaissance conventions. As a result, the verbal tapestry woven by Spenser is inspired by the rich emblem tradition in vogue in England at the time, informing the epic's indebtedness to such "unstated conceptual signification" (Aptekar 4). Aptekar recuperates Spenser's description from the charge that it is elaborate and irrelevant decoration, countering critics like Douglas Bush who write that the author's metaphors are "patches stuck on rather than a growth from within" (93). Still, other studies have closely examined Spenser's imagery and phraseology to argue that "most of Spenser's images are the natural outcroppings of rich substrata of meaning" found in the visual tradition of justice emblems that open up the text's interpretation (Aptekar 5). Aligned with such emblems, for example, it becomes apparent that Artegall's maturation is deeply problematic, the Knight of Justice often found to be an objectionable hero and man. Aptekar marshals iconographical evidence to support her readings of Artegall as a deeply conflicted hero, yet one befitting the complicated justice of early modern England.

Despite the persuasive power of Aptekar's work, the emblem tradition is not a sufficient lens to apply to Spenser's text in and of itself. To present a moral truth visually, an emblem must sacrifice historical context and circumstance, stripping away the particulars to

¹ "Icon" in literary criticism has been chiefly influenced by the work of W.K Wimsatt, who writes: "The term *icon* is used today by semeiotic writers to refer to a verbal sign which *somehow* shares the properties of, or resembles, the objects which it denotes" (10). For a more comprehensive explanation of the term as related to literary criticism, see Wimsatt's book *The Verbal Icon* p. 10.

embody a kind of universal. Fortunately, Spenser's allegory is able to restore such particulars to Book V's portrait of monarchical justice, its historical relevance key to recuperating Spenser's "dark conceit." According to some historical accounts, in Book V, monarchical rule is problematized in both nature and action: in nature through the feminine body of Queen Elizabeth and in action through Elizabeth's ruinous policies in Ireland. To speak to the anxiety surrounding feminine rule, Spenser allegorizes the perfect monarch, Mercilla, as a historical representation of Queen Elizabeth I.² Adopting an analysis that reads the book as an allegory for Queen Elizabeth and her enemies, Duessa functions as a historical representation of Mary Stuart. The relationship between the two, according to John Guy, "sees Elizabeth and Mary as rival queens," adding that "the latter stood as a great, if not the greatest, threat to the former's reign" (495-496). Furthering this assertion, Kerby Neil argues that, to Spenser, "Mary Stuart was a woman whose former nobility was sullied with the worse crimes"³ and her threat to Elizabeth "constituted a national danger" (212). It is through the quelling of such a threat in the form of Mercilla's decision to execute Duessa, as Queen Elizabeth executed Mary in 1587, that Spenser's anxieties regarding a feminine sovereign are remedied. Spenser finds his root in the co-option of the political theology of the King's Two Bodies, in which Mercilla is able to exist as a female monarch and still expertly deliver justice to Duessa, as Queen Elizabeth I did. The body natural exists as the physical, corporal body of a monarch, while the body politic is an abstracted idea containing "mysterious forces

² Nelson pursues this historical route, writing that "the governing principle of Spenser's poems is intellectual and thematic rather than narrative, dramatic, or symbolic" (7).

³ Neill chronicles the crimes of Mary Stuart: "She threatened the country with both civil war and foreign invasion; she had plotted against Elizabeth's life and the Protestant religion; she had seduced subjects from their allegiance; and her private life was unspeakably vile" (212).

which reduce, or even remove, the imperfections of the fragile human nature” (Kantorowicz 109). The two might be illustrated in the manner outlined below:



Figure 1: The Body Natural vs. The Body Politic

On the other end of the historical allegory, many Spenserian scholars have argued that Book V is Spenser’s retelling of his “own political prose treatise, *A View of the Present State of Ireland*” (Aptekar 8). Hamilton echoes this sentiment, writing that *The Legend of Justice* “comes closest to Spenser’s own political experience in Ireland,” adding that the book “is hard-edged and uncompromising” (*The Spenser Encyclopedia* 356). Spenser worked as a colonial official in Ireland, a country where the failures of justice were apparent. Justice, in Spenser’s view, “as he clearly tells us through Irenius in *The View of the State of Ireland*, meant the imposition of English law on the recalcitrant Irish population” (Hamilton 355). Justice, in Spenser’s experience, failed utterly in Ireland, so much so that C.S. Lewis directly blames Spenser’s time in Ireland for the failure of Book V: “Spenser was the instrument of a detestable policy in Ireland, and in his fifth book, the wickedness he had shared begins to

corrupt his imagination” (349). Lewis’s scathing critique culminates in his assertion that Spenser “becomes a bad poet because he is, in certain respects, a bad man” (350). Modern critics, like Shelia Cavanagh, have argued that such critiques of Spenser’s attitude toward Ireland are too brash, writing that his “poetry illustrates the poet’s consciousness of Ireland’s divided nature,” adding that “book 5 makes it clear that he tried to approach the country pragmatically” (“Ireland in Spenser’s Prose and Poetry” 47). Cavanagh’s fresh take on Spenser and Ireland is punctuated by her assertion that “any hope he held for the restoration of the Golden Age to Ireland or to the world was secondary to his awareness of any such dream’s recurrent disappointment” (“Ireland in Spenser’s Prose and Poetry” 48). As one can see with careful examination, like an exclusively emblematic reading, a strictly historical reading of the allegory ignores the moral implications of the virtues being explored by Spenser, while a moral examination prevents the overt political implications in Book V from being fully fleshed out.

Critics have put forward multiple and various critical interrogations of Book V; however, two common trends of scholarship rise to prominence. Both recapitulate the problems outlined above. The first critical trend reads the work as a strict historical allegory for Queen Elizabeth I and her enemies. Critics such as William Nelson argue that Spenser utilizes the book’s representations of feminine monarchy, Queen Mercilla, to celebrate a ruler whose courage and strength kept her throne secure and her nation at peace and to undercut the legitimacy of those who opposed her. In such a reading, feminine authority is made particular to Elizabeth, the singular isolated exception to the rule of patriarchy. The second critical trend unpacks the moral allegories of justice interrogated in Spenser’s work, looking to Aristotle and Seneca, as Jane Aptekar does, to explore how Spenser’s Knight of Justice

demonstrates early modern conceptions of “justice” and a just monarch. Hamilton’s lamentations of a fictional rift are dramatized in the division between the moral and the historical allegories, which leaves much of feminist and gender theory on the margins of scholarship—made singular in the first and dismissed in the second.

This thesis attempts to fold gender criticism into the allegory of justice in order to complicate the rather narrow readings of Spenser’s moral allegories, which would laud Britomart and Mercilla as savior and perfect queen and dismiss figures such as Radigund and Duessa as mere villainesses and enemies to virtue. I argue that such narrow type-castings are far too rigid and ignore the complexities of Spenser’s allegory. In arguing for such complication, I do not mean to imply that readers should approach Spenser’s conservative allegory as evidence of the author’s radicalism; however, I claim that Spenser’s depictions of justice as executed by Britomart and Mercilla upon the malefactors Radigund and Duessa, respectively, represent a particular early modern anxiety about the administration of justice by and upon feminine bodies.

Specifically, Radigund and Duessa evoke pity from the male characters who are tasked with administering justice onto the feminine object. Throughout the work, Artegall’s quest requires that he “restore ordinary justice” (Eggert 272), but the major episodes of Book V both sideline Artegall in the moments of the allegory that the Knight of Justice must act upon feminine bodies. These bodies evoke pity rather than pure Aristotelian justice typical of the male justicer tasked with executing order. Struck by the beauty of the malefactors, the male justicers’ pity promptly moves them from male action and authority to feminized inaction and subordination. While the effects of such passivity are made relatively benign in the Munera episode when Artegall is paralyzed by Munera’s weeping, Radigund,

the Amazonian warrior who usurps male dominion and imprisons Artegall, and Duessa, the duplicitous villainess whose crimes range from false religion, usurpation, lechery, adultery, and fraud, who stands trial in the court of Mercilla, represent more distinct problems for justice. In the former, Artegall is awestruck by the Amazon's beauty, which paralyzes the Knight of Justice, while in the latter, he must similarly rise to action by submitting himself to the tutelage of the perfect monarch.⁴ Artegall falls prey to pity, on the one hand, and cruelty on the other, demonstrating the particular danger of pity and scorn and their effects, which are transferrable from the feminine object onto the masculine subject.

When Spenser engages pity as an impediment to justice, he seems to set Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, one of his primary sources for *The Faerie Queene*, beside Seneca's *De Clementia* to marry the two related virtues of justice and mercy. Seneca overtly criticizes pity, opposing it to true wisdom: "the wise man does not show pity" (2.5.2), which Seneca claims is a weakness of the mind that serves to only blind the wise to reality. For Seneca, pity is particularly dangerous in that it is infectious and can spread among the susceptible in that only wise men are immune to its effects. Seneca pointedly juxtaposes the wise and virtuous men with weak and pitiful women, writing that "all good men will display clemency and gentleness," but not pity "for it is the failing of a weak nature that old women and wretched females [anus et milicerculae] who are moved by the tears of the wickedest criminals, who, if they could, would break open their prison" (2.5.3). The vice of pity, according to John Staines, is made by Seneca "a specifically feminine vice, the mark of a degenerate,

⁴ This is evidenced by the swiftness with which less than attractive male characters are handled by the Knight of Justice, such as the giant of Book V Canto II who is "shouldered from off the higher ground / And down the rock him throwing, in the sea" to drown by Talus (Spenser 49.8-9). Artegall fails to even put forward a reaction to the violent death of the giant at the hands of the rigorous enactor of justice, Talus. Conversely, however, when Radigund overtakes Artegall in battle, even the robotic Talus is unable to act, and he instead flees the scene.

effeminate passive mind” (134). For Staines, however, such feminine pity must be countered by masculine authority, which he reads as reaching its culmination in Book V, “a place in which masculine values and powers are not only glorified but take over the poem” (130). Yet, such binary opposition has the effect of simplifying the complex moral allegory at stake in Spenser’s epic, one that resists such easy configurations. Rather, readers are presented with a series of situations in which male authority and action is compromised by pity until it finally must be resolved by feminine enactors of justice. Ultimately, when confronted with a feminine malefactor, the male justicer must step aside in order for Spenser to eliminate the difference of gender entirely: posed with a degenerate feminine body, a feminine justicer must act. The removal of this difference equips women with the tools necessary to better ward off pity. A female enactor of justice, when seeking to act upon a dissenting woman, is not forced to negotiate gender, allowing them to operate with a level of fluidity not possessed by their male counterparts. Justice bends to societal gender norms in Artegall’s encounters with piteous women. Ordinarily, a male justicer would not be forced to act at all upon a feminine body; however, the villainesses of Book V exist as abnormal women, refusing to fit into the typical archetypes afforded to female characters in Arthurian romance. As a result, early modern justice breaks down, restored only through the employment of feminine justicers countering with virtuous opposition.

The Amazonian Queen and the Knight of Chastity

The Radigund episode presents readers with an initial look at Artegall’s inability to counter appropriately Radigund’s transgressions as a violent usurper, because he is immobilized by the disease of the mind Seneca calls pity. The Knight of Justice is imprisoned by Radigund following their one-on-one combat. Initially, Artegall defeats

Radigund in combat; however, upon removing her helmet, he is awestruck by her beauty, pitying her defeated state. In this moment, Radigund capitalizes on Artegall's hesitation, overtaking him and forcing him to serve as her thrall, completing the process of feminization begun with Artegall's pity, dressing him in women's weeds and forcing him to women's work. Spenser's probing into the virtue of justice is contingent upon the progression of Artegall's understanding of and his education in the virtue throughout the duration of Book V, which is first problematized by inaction to then be transformed into the removal of virtue, resulting ultimately in the hiatus of justice. In this interrogation of the virtue of justice, Britomart, the crossdressing knight, recuses her prophesized beloved, Artegall.

Spenser's initial description of Radigund confirms the Amazon's duality—she possesses a feminine nature and a masculine appearance—presenting a problem for justice. The natural impulse of Artegall, as dictated by Radigund's outward appearance and her usurpation of male power, is to enact the rigorous justice typical to the knight at this juncture of his quest. However, this is complicated by her femininity, which has the effect of evoking pity. This feminine aspect of Radigund is highlighted in Spenser's description of the Amazon, which dwells on her body with the male gaze of the speaker seemingly indulging her sensuality. The assessments of her garb and the body that lies beneath, suggest an appraisal of sexual viability occurring within the mind of the speaker that is then passed on to the reader and Artegall. Of this phenomenon, John Berger writes that “men survey women before treating them:’ a treatment is dependent upon “how a woman appears to a man” (46). Thus, prior to the battle, Spenser's Radigund approaches Artegall as a powerful monarch, a posture that physically juxtaposes masculine power with feminine beauty. In this description, Radigund is portrayed as a vexation that is neither masculine enough to warrant strictness in

Seneca's model nor womanly enough to warrant pardon. Instead, the Amazon queen becomes a hybrid, designed to misconstrue truth and obstruct justice. This is done, in part, through her physical appearance that contains elements that are both masculine and feminine, as well as through her actions that have allowed her to occupy her throne. Her description promotes her physicality, prefiguring what will ultimately elicit Artegall's downfall by associating her with a kind of dangerous and seductive femininity:

All in a Camis light of purple silke
Wouen vppon with siluer, subtly wrought,
And quilted vppon sattin white as milke,
Trayled with ribbands diuersly distraught
Like as the workman had their courses taught;
Which was short tucked for light motion
Vp to her ham, but when she list, it raught
Downe to her lowest heele, and thereupon
She wore for her defence a mayled habergeon (V. v. 2.1-9).

Radigund's attire associates her with the highly sexualized imagery of both spiritual and martial threat. Hamilton notes in his annotations of *The Faerie Queene* that, "Radigund's camis is purple (Lat. *purpurea*, crimson), creating a garment that is actually a strong red color, inclining to purple (539)⁵. Such coloring likens her to the whore of Babylon, an

⁵ Radigund is depicted as aspiring toward sovereignty in her garb, but the description more closely aligns her to Duessa, another fraudulent monarch who was given "gold and purple pall to weare" (I. vii. 16.3).

emblem of Catholicism for Spenser, who was also arrayed in hues of purple and red.⁶

Gerhardt Schuette writes that “by the time Spenser wrote *The Faerie Queene*, the Whore of Babylon had become a popular biblical symbol for Protestants to use to refer to the Church of Rome” (111). S.K. Heniger elaborates on this assertion, adding that, originally, St. John’s Apocalypse functioned to “encourage Christians in their resistance against their primary religious enemy at the time of its writing (the pagan and powerful Rome)” (179). He furthers this argument, adding that it eventually evolved “to refer to current events for Spenser’s contemporaries who saw Babylon as the Roman Catholic Church” (179). Similarly, Radigund serves as an emblem of false sovereignty, royal only in appearance but not in actuality. Likewise, her suit of armor is revealing and sexually charged: it is short enough to allow her freedom of movement but also dramatizes the threat of her powerful and transgressive femininity. John Adams asserts that, of the cross-dressing characters in the work, “Radigund’s armour is far more sensually characterized” (21). In this way, the sensual language used to describe Radigund places a repeated “emphasis on the body underneath her armour” (Adams 21). The armor becomes an outward display of her usurped power rather than a cleverly-crafted disguise to protect her identity. Radigund repurposes the intentional use of armor—defensive protection—transforming it into a physically tangible exhibition of her offensive and powerful prowess. Additionally, her garb goes as far as to accentuate her feminine features, highlighting her feminine sexuality. Once on her body, even armor becomes feminized.

⁶ Based on Revelations 17.3-5: “I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.”

Spenser's language is indebted to the emblem tradition of Cesare Ripa, who in *Iconologia* includes a portrait of injustice that Spenser uses to describe Radigund in abjectly sexual terms. Spenser goes to great lengths to align Radigund with all enemies of the true Protestant religion, both Catholics and Muslims who would stand opposed to Artegall's action as the Knight of Justice, and yet the description of Radigund repeatedly hovers over the Amazon's body. The subversive portrait of Radigund culminates in the poet's inverted blazon cataloguing the Amazonian's beauty in a rhetorical move that confuses the martial threat of Radigund with the language of a love object, narrating the danger hinted at in Ripa's emblem.⁷

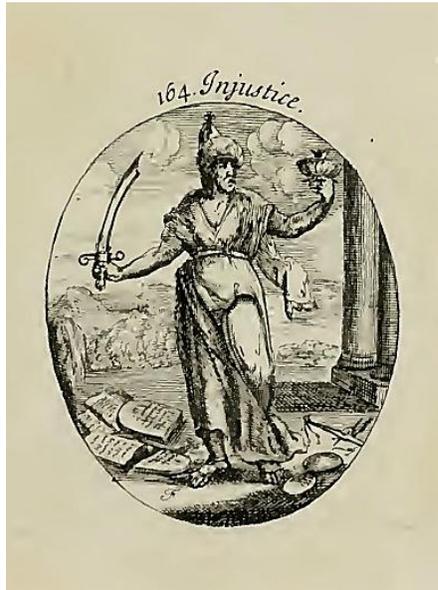


Figure 2: The figure of injustice from Ripa's *Iconologia*

In Spenser's skillful hands, this emblem is overtly sexualized, the poet describing Radigund that melds physical threat and sexual attraction:

⁷ *Iconologia* was a highly influential emblem book based on Egyptian, Greek, and Roman emblematic representations written by Italian iconographer Cesare Ripa. Of Injustice, Ripa writes: "The personification of Injustice is a tall woman of commanding appearance, wearing a helmet and a rich robe. Her white cloak is spattered with blood, and she holds a blood-stained scimitar in one hand. The curving scimitar symbolizes twisted justice" (117).

And on her legs she painted buskins wore,

Basted with bends of gold on euery side,

And mailes betweene, and laced close afore:

Vppon her thigh her Cemitare was tide,

With an embrodered belt of mickell pride; (V. v. 3.1-5).

Traditionally utilized to anatomize the body of an unrequited love object, the blazon here heralds “Injustice.” Mirroring the transgressive nature of the blazons written by John Donne and Thomas Nashe, the subject is sensual; Hannah Betts writes that the blazon commonly traded in “sexual explicitness,” repurposing poetry into “a vehicle for an exposé of the female body” (168). As the description of Radigund travels, untraditionally, up her body rather than from the seat of reason down, the mechanics of the blazon are inverted, turning them sinister and simultaneously highlighting Radigund’s sensuality to culminate in the Amazon’s “phallus,” her scimitar, or a curved sword, attached to her thigh, a weapon overtly associated with pagan infidels.⁸ In addition to its shape, the placement of her weapon is noteworthy. Her sword of injustice is tied upon her thigh and is unsheathed. Historically, swords have served to symbolize power, authority, and strength as a phallic symbol. David Van Meter writes that “in literature, the sword assumes a cognate sense of masculinity and social power, just as the phallus serves to strengthen the biological structure of society” (178). By arming Radigund with an exposed blade, Spenser’s Amazon warrior is lent a false

⁸ In the book *Sword and Scimitar: Fourteen Centuries of War between Islam and the West*, by Raymond Ibrahim, the scimitar is the weapon of choice for the Muslim soldiers. However, in such context, the weapon is proved useless against “the long two-handed sword of the Christians” p.32.

phallus that serves to represent her imitation of a masculine knight. Importantly, her phallus is only temporarily attached to her body, mirroring the illegitimacy of her power.

Spenser symbolically opposes Radigund to Artegall in his description of her shield which is associated with the full moon, a symbol antithetical to Artegall's repeated association with the sun.⁹ Describing her shield: "As the faire Moone in her most full aspect, / that to the Moone it mote be like in each respect," Spenser turns to a symbol of inconstancy (V. v 3.7-10).¹⁰ Spenser's juxtaposition of the sun and the moon serves a dual-purpose. On the one hand, it associates Artegall with the glory and goodness of the sun, which, according to Aptekar, aligns him with positive figures of justice in Book V that all "resemble or [are] symbolized by the sun," which is considered to be one "of the true representations of justice" (71). However, in this particular instance, Artegall is associated with the setting sun, suggesting that the Knight of Justice is waning, and will soon be replaced by the lunar Radigund. Radigund's shield depicts the moon during its most powerful phase, a description that endows the Amazonian warrior with the authority to act as a challenge to Artegall.

Throughout the battle itself, Radigund and Artegall dramatize Seneca's model of pity and strictness, negotiating the moral allegory of justice through their traded blows. Radigund is framed as an unmitigated opponent to Artegall not only symbolically but also in behavior; the Amazonian warrior is associated with abject rage during her fight with Artegall, who is characterized initially by a virtuous temperance. Allegorically, through the battle between

⁹ "Till euening, that the Sunne gan downward bend. / Then rushed forth out of the thickest rout" IV. iv. 43.6-7.

¹⁰ Spenser breaks from historical accuracy when describing the Amazonian Radigund's shield with its full moon shape. Aptekar briefly touches on this difference, arguing that "like the Amazons in the Greek stories, Radigund carries a moon-like shield. Though theirs, to be sure, were in the shape of half moons; Radigund's is like a full moon" (176). This difference that Aptekar highlights but does not elaborate on, is a logical choice operating at the plot level. The increased size of her shield allows Radigund to counter Artegall's attacks.

Artegall and Radigund, Spenser works to contrast the virtue of the former with the vice of the latter, but such an allegory ultimately fails when Artégall is confronted with Radigund's particular combination of beauty and vice, demonstrating the problem of pity in the execution of justice. At first, the allegorical fight is largely typical: the virtue of temperance is able to withstand the vice of rage:

She at first encounter on him ran

With furious rage, as if she had intended

Out of his breast the very heart haue rended:

But he that had like tempests often tride,

From that first flaw him selfe right well defended.

The more she rag'd, the more he did abide;

She hewed, she foyn'd, she lasht, she laid on euery side. (V. v. 6.3-9).

Throughout the battle, Artégall maintains the upper hand not through force, but through patience, a virtue which risks associating Artégall with a less active virtue and casting the Knight of Justice as passive in his fight against Radigund. The fight turns on Artégall's movement from action to inaction in response to Radigund's ferocity:

Yet still her blowes he bore, and her forbore,

Weening at last to win advantage new;

Yet still her crueltie increased more,

And though powre faild, her courage did accrew,

Which fayling he gan fiercely her pursew. (V. v. 7.1-5)

Spenser's language turns here, transferring Radigund's cruelty and rage—virtues opposed to mercy and justice by Seneca—directly to the Knight of Justice, who initially absorbs the Amazon's rage with forbearance and temperance, which are then revised to “fierce” at the fight's *volta*. From this point on, until the culmination of the battle and the disarming of Radigund, Artegall is re-characterized by rage and action, assuming his masculine authority over the Amazonian woman, who he lays into with blows Spenser likens to that of a blacksmith at the anvil. Radigund can only defend herself with her mighty shield until it too succumbs to Artegall's blows, being sliced in half by the Knight of Justice's passionate attack. When she attacks again, she wounds Artegall in the thigh, a symbolic wound that simultaneously characterizes the lust Radigund may inspire in Artegall and also threatens him with a kind of castration. Artegall responds in kind and with masculine indignation, smiting Radigund on the helmet and winning the chivalric battle.

While strictness and cruelty characterize their fight, pity enters Artegall once Radigund's femininity is revealed. It is evident that, physically, Artegall is capable of winning the battle; however, mentally and emotionally, he is unable to end the life of his opponent because he is overcome with pity for Radigund immediately upon disarming her, as he “lept with deadly dreadfull looke” to disarm Radigund, removing the “sunshynie helmet” which cover her beauty, (11.8-9) “a miracle of natures goodly grace... bath'd in bloud and sweat together” (12.3-5). As Artegall looms over the disarmed warrior, he is awestruck and no longer sees Radigund as an adversary but as a beautiful woman. Ultimately, the subduing of Radigund serves to both emotionally and mentally disarm not the Amazon, but Artegall. At her reveal, Spenser revisits the lunar language of her shield to describe all of Radigund:

“Like as the Moone in foggie winters night, / Doth seeme to be her selfe though darkned be her light” (V. v. 12.8-9). Seeing the bloodied face of the now visually female Radigund, Artegall casts his sword away “with pittiful regard” (V. v. 13.2). The revealed femininity of his opponent produces pity in her prosecutor. The Knight of Justice, by regarding Radigund as pitiful, exchanges a sound mind for a tender heart, traversing down the slippery slope of which Seneca forewarned.

Artegall here exchanges the rigorous justice he has employed throughout the duration of his quest with feminizing pity, which moves the Knight of Justice from a posture of action to one of passivity. Radigund, lacking a moral compass possessed by Artegall, opportunistically regroupes, her cruelty galvanized by her opponent’s hesitation. What Seneca would term “strictness” is evidenced by Radigund’s cruelty and utter lack of mercy even after Artegall’s concession:

Soone as the knight she there by her did spy,

Standing with emptie hands all weaponlesse,

With fresh assault vpon him she did fly,

And gan renew her former cruelnesse:

And though he still retyr’d, yet nathesle

With huge redoubled strokes she on him layd;

And more increast her outrage mercilesse,

The more that he with meeke intreatie prayd,

Her wrathful hand from greedy vengeance to haue stayd. (V. v. 14).

Embodying the forcefulness of the Iron Age and the feminine strength of the full moon, Radigund ceaselessly attacks Artegall until the Knight of Justice is left completely defeated.¹¹ Decidedly, Radigund exists as a subversive embodiment of *virtu*, which by definition and etymology is typified by aggressive masculine rage (Frye 14). Radigund repurposes *virtu* and transfers the masculine authority granted to such actors from Artegall to herself.

Artegall's defeat at the hands of Radigund serves to forewarn readers of the danger of pity, highlighting Artegall's insufficiency in his understanding of justice at this juncture of his quest. Radigund exists as a preliminary test, which Artegall must initially fail in order to prepare for the upcoming trial of Duessa, which he passes, signifying the maturation of his understanding of the virtue of justice. Here, at the halfway point of Artegall's quest, he is yet unable to deliver justice. Numerous critics, such as Brian Lockey, have read the Radigund episode as indicating "Artegall's inability to apply equity in a way that would not involve his own personal desires," equating the Knight of Justice with lust by concentrating upon the symbolic wound he receives from Radigund (57). Similarly, many critics associate Radigund with Mary Stuart, reading the battle and enslavement of Artegall as a topical allegory for what may have been Elizabeth's greatest threat. Nicholas Knight and K.J Kesselring observe

¹¹ The opposing combatants, again, are allegorized as the Golden Age and the Iron Age by Artegall and Radigund, respectively. In this moral allegory, Artegall represents what Harry Levin calls the "nostalgia for a happier day," while Radigund symbolizes "an implicit critique of nowadays" (5). Of the Golden Age, Spenser writes: "Ne then of guile had made experiment, / But voide of vile and treacherous intent, / Held vertue for it self in souveraine awe: (IV. viii. 30.3-5). The Golden Age was a time of perfect justice, completely devoid of force and fraud, which pervade that of the Iron Age. As a result, the Golden Age does not require pity. Ripa, through explication of his emblem for the Iron Age presents a stark contrast to the description of the Golden Age. The Iron Age depicts an armed woman of terrible appearance donning iron garments. Atop her head she wears a jeweled helmet. She wields a naked sword in fighting position in one hand, and a large shield in the other. Artegall's reticent approach to the battle could be explained by his link to the Golden Age: he lacks force. Conversely, however, Radigund's brashness in charging straightaway into battle is utterly reflective of the negative aspects the Iron Age is characterized by: an abundance of dehumanizing force.

that Radigund should not “be strictly associated with Mary,” but rather with “elements of pity” (Knight 284) and that “reason prompted the former [mercy, but] emotion the latter [pity]” (Kesselring 20). To borrow from Seneca’s rather stoic definition of clemency as a virtue that mediated between the two extremes, Artegall is unable to exist in a liminal state between the two. His attempt at mercy deteriorates into weak pity, which creates an impasse that Artegall, as an enactor of justice, is unable to overcome. In this sense, Artegall becomes full of pity after viewing Radigund, who he interprets as pitiful. The contagious nature of Seneca’s definition of pity is dramatized as Artegall becomes a host for the vice. His inability to negotiate the intricacies of justice is, ultimately, the real reason for Artegall’s downfall and his subsequent enslavement.

Following his defeat, the Knight of Justice willfully consents to serve Radigund as his master: he “to her yielded of his owne accord” (V. v. 17.2). Some critics read this as a testament to Artegall’s temperance as he, instead of actually being defeated by Radigund, chooses to be subjected. The literal feminization of the Knight of Justice leads to his eventual marginalization in important matters of justice throughout the rest of the book until his education in the virtue is complete. Pity, being associated by Seneca with, “a weakness of the mind, a loss of rational control over judgement” (2.5.4), impairs the delivery of justice. Without sound judgment, it follows that justice can no longer be delivered. It is thus implied by Seneca that a ruler or a judge must be a masculine manifestation of both reason and of virtue devoid of effeminizing qualities that would compromise the execution of justice. Artegall undergoes a process of feminization that hampers his status as not only the Knight of Justice but also as a figure of masculine authority at all. Under the rule of Radigund, Artegall is stripped of all masculine attributes and in their place is given feminine

occupations and characteristics that Spenser associates with the belittlement of the once virtuous knight. Spenser laments Artegall's now low estate in two punctuated lines that act as his editorial commentary on Artegall's descent: "A sordid office for a mind so brave. / So hard it is to be a woman's slave" (V.v.23.4-5). He later overtly condemns the subversive gendering of Radigund and the enforced feminization of Artegall, associating such demeaning behavior with unchecked feminine power, loosed from the confinement of male restraint:

Such is the crueltie of womenkynd

When they have shaken off the shamefast band,

T'obay the heasts of mans well ruling hand,

That then all rule and reason they withstand,

To purchase licentious libertie. (25.1-6).

For Spenser, unchecked femininity is associated with Seneca's cruelty, its effects upon the male slave, a locus of ruth or pity. The current state of Artegall fully embodies the feminine pity Seneca warns so clearly of, while the powers that put him into such slavery are associated with Senecan strictness. In contrast to such an effeminate portrait of a worthy knight stands the masculine embodiment of justice rigorous, Talus. While Artegall passively submits to Radigund's enslavement and the pity that brought him so low, Talus fights Radigund's fellow Amazonian warriors: "he with his yron flaile amongst them thondred, / That they were fayne to let him scape away, / Glad from his companie to be so sondred" (V.v.19.2-4). Spenser's "iron man" Talus, who acts as Artegall's aid throughout the duration of his quest, executing malefactors without a second's hesitation, cannot withstand such

unchecked femininity and is forced to flee, seeking out Artegall's rescue, turning to Britomart, the Knight of Chastity and Artegall's beloved.

The movement from Artegall to Britomart in Book V shifts the book from the masculine to a feminized narrator, unplagued by the pity that seemingly infects masculine characters. This marks a decided change in Book V, as the feminine is no longer simply the subject of disdain or containment, restrained to the margins of the allegory, but instead takes center stage as in Book III. In Radigund's confused and inverted world, Spenser's most sufficient knight, Britomart, is needed.¹² Notably, this canto ends with no definite ending, a sharp contrast from the previous cantos of Book V which end in a manner that is decidedly final. Artegall remains subservient to Radigund and in bondage, "disarmed quight, / Of all the ornaments of knightly name" (V. v. 20.3-4). The text asserts that his release will have to be postponed until another time, "which in an other Canto will be best containd," suggesting that he is immobilized by his pity, and as a result, his fate hangs in the balance between two women, Radigund and Britomart respectively (V. v. 57.9). Artegall is completely pushed to the margins of the work in this and the following canto in which he is not rescued but instead kept, in a state of poetic stagnation or stasis, left with both his sword and his masculinity broken. The ensuing cantos following Artegall's defeat lend the work not masculine but feminine authority, which offers a glimpse into Spenser's apparent anxiety regarding dissenting women who refuse to adhere to traditional gender roles.

The dilemma of the text, according to Katherine Eggert, "begins to be resolved as Book V works its way out of this feminine center," a process which is confirmed in

¹² The ability of Britomart is evidenced by the fact that she is the only knight of a book to not need a guide and is capable of demonstrating her allegorical abilities throughout not only her own book, but also in order to save her beloved.

Britomart's tenure at the Temple of Isis (275). This particular episode has proven to be a critical conundrum for critics trying to navigate their way through Book V. For some, like Claire Kinney, the relevancy and the necessity of its inclusion in the episode is challenged because it "seems oddly irrelevant to the actual narrative progress of Artegall and his automaton-slave Talus" (84). When taking into consideration Artegall's diminished role at this point of the narrative, the Isis Church episode is less "irrelevant" as he no longer serves as the book's focal point. Conversely, however, other critics, like T.K. Dunseath, label Britomart's time at Isis Church as an avenue through which she must travel for rescue and restoration: "Once Britomart submits herself to Divine Providence in the Church of Isis, she discovers the true nature of her mission and is able to free her lover from woman's slavery" (142).¹³ Isis Church is the vehicle through which gender roles are remedied, restoring the natural order that has been damaged by pity, which "threatens the order of the civic polity" (Staines 129). It is within its walls that Britomart is able to repurpose this occurrence, harnessing it to use later against Radigund to restore natural order. This restoration occurs as "the ambiguous or oscillating gender identities" present both in the temple and the poem's narrative "sort themselves out" (Staines 276). From this point forward, Britomart exhibits masculine heroics that she must enforce, yet internalize. Through her time in Isis Church, Britomart is able to embody a kind of righteous femininity that can oppose Radigund, one that Spenser makes room for in a brief editorial commentary about Artegall's servitude and Radigund's usurpation of masculine authority. In his earlier condemnation of women who have "shaken off the shamefast band" of masculine authority, Spenser hints at the possibility that not all women were "borne to base humilitie" and subservience; rather, there is an

¹³ For a persuasive reading of the complex iconography of Isis Church, see Dunseath, 142.

exception: “Unlesse the heavens them lift to lawfull soveraintie” (V.v.25.2,8,9). Such language obviously positions Queen Elizabeth as the exception to the rule but opens the door to other lawful feminine sovereigns as well. Such a sovereign is Britomart.

The nature of Britomart’s duel with Radigund differs drastically from that of Artegall’s battle with the Amazonian warrior. During their parlay, Radigund outlines the same terms given to Artegall, which he had accepted affably.¹⁴ Britomart, however, indignantly rejects identical terms, as chivalry does not impose preset conditions, instead leaving the victor free to offer mercy. Unlike her male counterparts, Britomart is unconcerned with mercy, and is instead driven by a need to enact justice at any cost. The singular combat between the two is less personalized than that of Radigund and Artegall and is also much shorter in duration. As critics like Katherine Eggert have noticed, in Britomart’s victory over Radigund, “the two women warriors are scarcely distinguishable” (276). The melding of the two women suggest that Britomart’s task is to subdue a sinister mirror image of herself with language associating both women with a type of masculine authority formerly condemned by Spenser as unnatural. Indeed, Spenser repeatedly emphasizes the “rage” of the two women and yet takes pains to remind the reader of the feminine sex of each character:

Ne either sought the others strokes to shun

But through great fury both their skill forgot,

And practice use in armes: ne spared not

Their dainty parts, which nature had created

¹⁴ V.v.51

So faire and tender, without staine or spot,

For other uses, then they them translated:

Which they now hackt and hewd, as if such use they hated. (V.vii.29.2-9).

Spenser, as if aghast at the behavior of his lady knights, questions their relationship to their own sex and associates them simultaneously with martial skills and childbirth. The double business to which both Radigund and Britomart are bound in their duel appears so vexing to Spenser that he must allegorize the allegory further, likening the two women to a lion and a tiger rather than further grapple with their femininity. In the end, Britomart subdues Radigund in a manner that underscores the sense of finality. When justice is to be delivered, Britomart is unplagued by any semblance of pity: the “stroke” of her sword “so cruelle passage found” on the “shoulder plate” of Radigund that she pierces her helmet (V. vii. 33.1-2). The brute force of Britomart is displayed as her sword “bit / Vnto the bone, and made a griesly wound,” removing the head of the Amazonian queen completely (33.2-3). Her actions in combat are characterized by wrath, anger, and revenge for the crimes inflicted upon Artegall, rather than mercy, the “wrothfull Britonesse” cast as an agent of masculine vengeance (34.1).

The removal of Radigund’s head is a fitting mode of execution, the seat of reason removed from the body completely. Radigund’s beheading is noted by Eggert, who writes that Book V contains a “curious catalogue of ways to abuse the human head,” but that these are eventually “cancelled in one stroke” with Britomart’s decapitation of Radigund (277). The long catalogue of abused heads indicates that head bashing serves as the most common

punishment of usurping authority.¹⁵ Maureen Quilligan notes that the original blow to the head, followed by complete decapitation are acts that equate to “capital punishment for the usurping female ruler” who, against natural order, becomes head of state (169). Spenser suggests that the best means of disposing of a dissenting and ambitious woman who has ascended to the position of a head of state is an act of decapitation.

Following the beheading of Radigund, the narrative itself begins to know where it is heading. Though justice is delivered here by a feminine authority, masculinity once again rejoins the central narrative of the work, pushing femininity back to the margins: Artegall ventures forth once more with the goal of completing his delayed quest, leaving Britomart behind. Staines observes that, at this point in Book V, “the general thrust of the narrative, moreover, once more sets limits to feminine influence over the masculine aspects of justice” (132). This is made possible by Britomart’s decision to return society to its natural, male-dominated norms. Britomart uses her victory over the Amazons to “be a counterrevolutionary against female rule” (133). While Britomart may very well serve as a counterrevolutionary figure, she is allowed to remain in Radigund’s former city, ruling “as Princess” because Spenser’s Knight of Chastity is benign to the natural order of things. While reigning over the city, “the liberty of women [she] did repeale,” giving the long-usurped power back “to mens subiection,” as “tru Iustice” would dictate (V. viii. 42.7). If a woman was necessary to remove the threat of injustice, it would naturally follow that a woman would be necessary to restore the just order of the patriarchy. Thus, Spenser presents his readers with an allegory that makes the feminine enactors of justice co-opt certain masculine elements of justice

¹⁵ For a complete list, note the decapitated lady of 1.18, Pollenete’s “groome of euille guize,” of 2.6, and the bare-headed Terpine, whom Radigund “smite on his head-peece” who is hanged, not by his neck, but “by the hed” by the Amazons (4.22, 4.40, and 5.18).

without becoming masculine themselves. This co-option is understood always to be temporary, as in the case of Britomart, who is allowed to reign ephemerally and unthreateningly. To frame the argument in another way, Staines writes that “force and guile of masculine justice must constrain feminine equity and mercy” (135). It is for this reason that Britomart, following the restoration of a male-dominated society, disappears from the poem, while Artegall continues his quest, allowing Spenser to dispel pity as a threat to justice that is particularly effeminizing.

The Guileful Hag and the Merciful Queen

In Queen Mercilla’s trial and subsequent execution of Duessa in Book V of *The Faerie Queene*, the queen’s courtroom becomes another arena in which masculine power and its response of pity is sidelined by Spenser in favor of feminine enactors of justice as well as a topical allegory for the trial of Mary Queen of Scots. Duessa, appears before the court with “titles of nobilitie defeace[d]” (V. ix. 38.4-7), facing judgment for her “many haynous crymes” (39.6). In a recapitulated allegory of Seneca’s *De Clementia*, the trial of Duessa juxtaposes Seneca’s vice of cruelty, embodied by Zele, and Pittie, who argues for the mitigation of Duessa’s punishment. Queen Mercilla serves as Spenser’s pièce de résistance of a feminine enactor of justice, perfectly able to negotiate the intricacies of justice, reconciling scorn with mercy and, unimpaired by pity, one ultimately able to sentence Duessa to death.

While Radigund operated in a manner of physical force, the duplicitous Duessa, as her name suggests, relies heavily upon her skills at deception, particularly her ability to disguise her foulness and vice in favor of a pleasing façade that serves primarily to evoke pity from the many men who view her as a damsel and attempt to “rescue” her throughout

The Faerie Queene. However, in Book V, Duessa's façade falls away, as she appears before the reader "as a prisoner" (ix 38.1). Even in her captive state, however, Duessa possesses a tarnished attractiveness: appearing with "rare beautie in her face, / But blotted with condition vile and base" (ix 38.4-5). The current physical appearance of Duessa, with her outward beauty waning, presents a sharp contrast to the initial introduction the reader is given to Duessa.

Mirroring Radigund, Duessa is first introduced in a magnificent manner. True to her name, the devious Duessa enters the narrative masquerading as Fidessa, who is described as a site of both majesty and pity. Spenser initially describes her majesty in terms that associate her with the trappings of royalty but little of its substance:

A goodly Lady clad in scarlot red,
Purfled with gold and pearle of rich assay,
And like a *Persian* mitre on her hed
Shee wore, with crowns and owches garnished,
The which her lauish louers to her gaue;
Her wanton palfrey all was ouerspred
With tinsell trappings, wouen like a waue,
Whose bridle rung with golden bells and bosse braue. (I. ii. 13).

The monarchial garb of Duessa is similar to that of Radigund in that she is associated with a kind of sexualized usurped majesty that alludes to the whore of Babylon. While she is described initially as a "goodly Lady," it is understood to be used ironically by Spenser in

order to suggest that Duessa is only good in appearance “seeming [like a] glorious show” (I. ii. 21.5). Similarly, Duessa also repeatedly becomes a site of alleged pity, but only pitiful in appearance, not in actuality. Dressed in a manner to overtly evoke the whore of Babylon with scarlet robes, precious stones, and pearls, Duessa is presented as a false image of royalty and beauty.¹⁶ Unlike Una, her allegorical opposition, Duessa is openly sexualized, evidenced by her Babylonian headgear which she receives as gifts from her lavish lovers.¹⁷ Through our initial introduction to Duessa, her status as a seductress is apparent. However, once she is thrust into the courtroom of Mercilla in Book V, the truth is laid bare, which results first in the evocation of pity, and then in the deliverance of justice.

Duessa’s appearance throughout the allegory is indebted to Ripa’s iconography of fraud, a vice with which Duessa is repeatedly associated. Aptekar overtly links the two, observing that “Duessa’s name defines her duality—the essentially twofold nature of guile” (143). As the vice of pity itself is fraudulent, it naturally follows that Spenser would align Duessa with such an emblem. Ripa describes his emblem of *fraude* as:

A Woman with two Faces, one *young*, the other *old*; Feet like Eagles Talons; a Tail like a Scorpion, two Hearts in her right Hand, and a Mask in her left. The two faces denote *Fraud* and *Deceit*, ever pretending well: The two Hearts, the two *Appearances*; the Mask, that Fraud makes things appear *otherwise* than they are; the Scorpion, and Eagle, the *bale Defignes*, and *Discord* they foment, like Birds of Prey, to rob Men of their Goods or Honour. (30).

¹⁶ See Revelations 17.4.

¹⁷ For the initial description of Una, see Spenser I. i. 4.



Figure 3. Fraud from Ripa's *Iconologia*.

Duessa has two heads, so to speak, and is quite proficient in the art of masquerading as a goodly lady by donning pleasing and magnificent garments, extending to her the appearance of a beautiful and young woman, her posture typically that of a distressed maiden in need of rescue. However, beneath the façade, Spenser reveals that Duessa is quite monstrous, a sight of distrust and aversion rather than pity. Her true form is only visible when she is bathing alone, subject to no male gaze but that of the poem's speaker, who is immediately disgusted and full of scorn:

Bathing her selfe in origane and thyme:

A filthy foule old woman I did vew,

That euer to haue touche her, I did deadly rew.

Her neather partes misshapen, monstrous,

Were hidde in water, that I could not see,

But they did seeme more foule and hideous,

Than womans shape man would beleeeue to bee. (I. ii. 40-41).

One of her feet mirrors the depiction of Ripa's *fraude*, an eagle's talon, while the other is an uneven paw of a bear, which according to Aptekar, serves as "a symbol of asymmetry and irregularity" (143). Her tail, however, breaks with traditional iconography, as Spenser lends Duessa the fraudulently fitting tail of a fox. Her "neather partes," a fitting locus for the speaker's scorn of such monstrous femininity, are deformed and appalling. The speaker's scorn here is positioned as a natural response to such disfigurement as a result of Duessa's vice, his judgment a just rendering of Duessa's monstrosity.

In the courtroom, however, Duessa adapts a posture overtly associated with pity, maintaining an appearance as a "wretched semblant," which garners "the peoples great compassion" (V. ix. 38.8-9). The deceptive employment of pity is utilized as an effeminate strategy by Duessa, who attempts to capitalize on her appearance of weakness to evoke the pity of the trial's spectators. Staines observes that Spenser's language of supplication—"semblant"—reminds his reader that "the pitiful can be a performance" (135), divorced from reality. Supplication acts as an overt demand on pity. However, unlike mercy, which is dictated by reason, supplication relies on compassion alone. Duessa's duplicity is evident in this performance, as she appears as a distorted manifestation of mercy, falsely demanding compassion with the goal of evoking pity.

To defeat Duessa's performance of pity, Spenser employs Zele, a representation of Seneca's vice of cruelty, who serves as a prosecutor with the chief goal of dismantling the façade of Duessa, publicly accusing her of "many haynous crimes," listing "pittie" among her list of charges (V. ix. 39.8). However, Zele does not exist as a paragon of absolute justice. Instead, the persecutor is manifested as strictness, the allegorical antithesis to pity. When faced with his own allegorical opposition, in the form of "Pittie, with full tender heart" (V. ix. 45.3), Zele is made less sufficient, strictness bending to pity. This is evidenced as Pittie is successful in winning over Arthur, who Spenser describes in the same terms, having himself a "tender hart...sore empassionate" (46.1-2). As Arthur looks upon the apparently pitiful Duessa, his "courage gan relent" (46.6). In this instance, Spenser juxtaposes the effeminizing and passive nature of pity with the masculine and active impulses of courage. Arthur, the sufficient knight who will become the most famous and virtuous king of the Britons, immediately collapses his masculine authority—here put in terms of "courage" or masculine heart—to the effeminizing force of pity. Here, Spenser is referring to the defenders of Mary Stuart, notably the Bishop of Ross who, in 1569, approached "Elizabeth and complained of the libels" made against the Queen of Scots (Neill 198).¹⁸ Artegall, however, unlike Arthur, remains steadfast "with constant firme intent," a paragon of masculine virility and power (49.4). This illustrates the maturation of Artegall's education in the virtue of justice, as he is no longer plagued by pity. Zele, however, doubles down on his persecution of Duessa following the testimony of "Pittie," eventually winning over Arthur by

¹⁸ The Bishop of Ross published a defense of the Scottish queen: *A Defence of the Honour of the right highe, mighty and noble Princess Marie Queene of Scotlande and Dowager of France, with a Declaration as well of her Right, Title and Interest to the Succession of the Crown of Englande, as that the Regimente of Women is comfortable to the Lawe of God and Nature*. For a detailed examination of his account see Neill 198-199.

countering the image of Pittie with that of Ate. Zele's argument directly takes on the assumptions that underwrite pity, with strictness observing that Duessa is far from helpless. Staines writes that the hag, Ate, who was conjured earlier by Duessa has "long been a sort of disorder" (135). This is drawn from Spenser's description of Duessa in which she is "glad of spoyle and ruinous decay" (V. ix. 47.4). In this depiction, Duessa is aligned more overtly with Seneca's assertion that pity is a diseased vice that can spread if left unchecked. It is not the prosecution, led by Zele, that actually results in Duessa being "brought to her sad doome" (V. ix. 42.9), but rather the character witness of Ate, the embodiment of chaos. In an attempt to closely align the sinner with the sin, Zele calls upon Ate to witness against Duessa. On the one hand, having conjured the spirit from hell herself, Duessa places herself in a position to be condemned by Ate. On the other, however, Zele's eagerness to prove Duessa's guilt, specifically his choice of witness, "paradoxically aligns [him] with the very crimes he seeks to condemn" (Kaplan 41). His strong verbal onslaught is able to banish any remorse that the spectators of the trial may be inclined to feel for the fallen hag, Ate actually taints the prosecution's moral high ground. This has the twofold effect of complicating a reading of Duessa that results in thoughtless conviction, as well as diminishing the credibility of Zele as an unbiased enactor of justice. Ultimately, Zele, as the embodiment of scorn highlights the problem of attempting to deliver justice when guided by the opposite extreme, cruelty.

Critics, seemingly following from Spenser's own discomfort with scorn and strictness, have likewise pointed out the callous nature of Zele's arraignment of Duessa. In cataloguing the laundry list of charges brought against Duessa, Zele functions as too "rigorous...of a representation of the letter of the law," according to Knight (287). Abraham Stoll likewise echoes this lament, adding that Zele exists as "too strict of an allegorical

personification in Mercilla's court" (202). This recurring trend in scholarship recapitulates the very notions of Spenser's own discomfort with force being applied to feminine bodies. Those who are weak, or appear to be weak, naturally evoke pity, even in literary scholars. As a result, scorning the already downtrodden is a double affront to readers' own levels of comfort.

Despite the strong indictment of Duessa by Zele, Mercilla displays her own reservations in exactly how to hand the guileful hag and the canto ends with the queen in tears, her "Princely breasts... touched nere / With piteous ruth" but with no action taken (50.1-2). Spenser's "piteous ruth" engages the apparent tensions between justice and mercy in the scene. Mercilla, like Queen Elizabeth, is forced to strike the perfect balance between mercy and pity, while still executing justice. The "Gender" entry of *The Spenser Encyclopedia*, presents readers with the notion that "Spenser attempted to envision a moral structure that could integrate the two realms, [male and female], without undermining the sexual-political structure of society, to create a morality that could heal the split between private virtue and public power" (Hamilton 325). This endeavor is complicated by justice, which Aristotle lauds as "a perfect virtue because it is the practice of perfect virtue... because its possessor can practise his virtue towards others and not merely himself" (V. i. 15). Pity should only be practiced as a private virtue, for Spenser, whereas mercy, conversely, is a public property and power. Both Mercilla and Elizabeth are forced to navigate between these two realms—the public and the private. Mercilla's own public performance is rather ambiguous, as Duessa is executed between cantos. The legitimacy of the nature of Mercilla's tears are thereby called into question, as Staines writes that they are no more than "cover for the Stoic decision to punish" (135). Knight echoes this, adding that "Mercilla's tears are,

overall, ineffectual” (287). However, this dismissal of the benign nature of Mercilla does not take into account how the queen co-opts the liminal space between the queen’s two bodies that is afforded to the early modern sovereign through the King’s Two Bodies, which was “a distinctive feature of English political thought in the age of Elizabeth and the early Stuarts” (Kantorowicz 42). In short, her outward display of sadness illustrates her struggle as a public enactor of justice.

In the end, Mercilla is just and chooses the option that is best for the realm, while refraining from scorning Duessa as rigorously as Zele or Artegall or pitying excessively like Arthur. Neil writes that as a result of the danger posed by Duessa, “it was necessary that the claims of justice should supersede policies of mercy” (212). Spenser’s view mirrors the accepted defense of the English government, under which the House of Commons charged Mary in 1572:

The late Scottish Queen hath heaped up together all the sins of the Licentious Sons of *David*, Adulteries, Murders, Conspiracies, Treasons, and Blasphemies against God; and if she escape with small punishment, her Majesty in Conscience ought, as also good and faithful Subjects to fear that God will reserve her as an Instrument to put her from the Royal Seat of this Kingdom, and to plague the unthankful and naughty. (Qtd. In D’Ewes 204).

Neill observes that “the same view can be found in nearly all of the writings against Mary in the last phase of the battle of the books” (213). As her name suggests, Mercilla is not only the allegorical representation of Seneca’s clemency, the balanced mediation between the extremities of pity and strictness, but also the representation of monarchical power as demonstrated in royal iconography and the rich emblem tradition of early modern England,

of which Aptekar writes “the popularity and the widespread circulation of emblem literature in the sixteenth century is well known and a commonplace” (3). In Ripa’s *Iconologia*, as shown in Figure 4 below, Clemency sits on a lion, holding a spear in one hand and *una saetta* in the other.¹⁹ Although the lion, itself a symbol of royal clemency, can easily overpower men, it does not harm without reason. Spenser’s Mercilla mirrors such iconography: she holds “a Scepter in her royall hand,” seated upon a throne, and at her feet, “An huge great Lyon lay” collared and chained (V. ix. 30, 33). Mercilla sits above the chained lion to illustrate her power and control of the hostile force. While she possesses the brute force of the lion, as the embodiment of clemency and mercy, she refrains from releasing it from bondage. Just so she reconciles her own internal struggle between pity and strictness. Mercilla avoids the common pitfall of pity in that, as Knight observes, “pity [has the effect of making] authority worthless,” (281).

¹⁹ A lightning bolt, likening her to Jove.



Figure 4: Clemency from Ripa's *Iconologia*.

Mercilla's dual personae—public magistrate and embodiment of mercy—renders the queen unable to side fully with the prosecutor Zele but also incapable of extending any form of tangible mercy to Duessa. To negotiate these seemingly contradictory impulses, Spenser reminds readers that Mercilla's status as an early modern monarch affords her two persons: that of the body natural and the body politic. Through the doctrine of the king's two bodies, monarchs, like Mercilla, "exist as dual selves" (Kantorowicz 19). This dichotomous division of the body consists of the body natural and the body politic. As a result, the monarch may possess a weak, earthly body; however, they also have a body politic that is strong, and even eternal. Despite the decrepit and always decaying state of their body natural, the monarch's body politic is, according to Tudor jurist Edmund Plowden, "devoid of Infancy and Old Age, and other natural Defects and imbecilities" (213). More specifically for Spenser, the doctrine of the king's two bodies, to quote Queen Elizabeth herself, allows the "weak and feeble body of a woman" to occupy the throne. Spenser furthers this doctrine to allow Mercilla an avenue

through which she is able to balance pity and scorn successfully. Mary Villeponteaux reads Mercilla's two bodies as becoming that of "her rule and her virtue" (207).

It is the nature of her unquestioned sovereignty, as divinely-anointed monarch, that allows Mercilla to feel a certain level of personal pity for Duessa without falling prey to the paralysis that often accompanies the vice, as it does first with Artegall, then with Arthur. While Duessa exists, undoubtably, as a site of pity for Mercilla, as a prisoner, the guileful hag is no longer viewed as a threat to the realm or to Mercilla's reign. As a result, Mercilla is exempt from scorn. Through her body natural, which is justifiably feminine, Mercilla exhibits her personal pity for Duessa, illustrated through the tears that flow down her face but do not inhibit her ability or authority to condemn Duessa as a malefactor. Mercilla is able to emerge from the trial morally unscathed as her body natural spares her from the cruelty of Zele while simultaneously, her body politic remains unblemished by pity.

The ambivalent reactions of Mercilla that work to mitigate the scorn and pity at the extremes of justice also delay the actual execution of Duessa, which occurs only in the background of the work itself. Some critics, like Eggert, argue that the wavering exhibited by Mercilla is surprising, especially when considering the book's "handling of beheadings" (282).²⁰ Others, however, like Hamilton in his annotations of *The Faerie Queene*, assert that the time lapse between verdict and execution serves to symbolize Elizabeth's delay when consenting to Mary Queen of Scots' execution, writing that "the usual interval between a verdict and the sentencing, which is carried out in canto ten, stanza four, is marked by a gap of three stanzas," reflecting the three month gap between Mary's indictment and execution

²⁰ Eggert argues that this silence on the part of the poem suggests that perhaps Duessa was not in fact executed p. 278.

(577). In the following canto, it is simply revealed that Duessa had met “her doome,” following the judgment of Mercilla which with “strong constraint did her thereto enforce” (V. x. 4.3-6). Hamilton notes that “thereto” directly connects the doom of Mercilla to Duessa’s beheading without the need for further editorial commentary on the part of the speaker: “the loss of Duessa’s seat of reason is deliberately not said, nor need it be” (578). Fittingly, as the offenses of Duessa are committed against the state, capital punishment through decapitation serves as an appropriate form of punishment.

Spenser continues the pattern set in Book V of having feminine forces enact corporal justice. As a result, Artegall and Arthur are reduced to spectators, only pupils of the powerful and virtuous Mercilla. Despite—or perhaps because of—Artegall’s movement from pity to scorn, Spenser’s discomfort with masculine justice being performed on feminine bodies remains, preventing Artegall from ever reaching the moral level of Mercilla. It is this unwillingness to allow male justicers to enact punishment on dissenting women that ultimately hampers the allegory, forcing Spenser to erase gender completely in order to enact the version of justice that early moderns viewed as morally righteous.

Conclusion

Throughout Book V, justice is the most comprehensive and heralded moral virtue, reflective of Aristotle’s assertion that “In Justice is all Virtue found in sum” (V. i. 13-15). The first three books of *The Faerie Queene* deal with internal virtues; however, the latter three books grapple with external virtues, making them intrinsically more difficult to navigate through the epic. Spenser’s difficulties with dealing with external virtues, such as justice, can be explained by Aristotle’s belief that the virtue is so challenging to master

because “there are many who can practice virtue in their own private affairs but cannot do so in their relations with another” (V. i. 13-15).

If justice is inherently difficult to practice, the addition of gender, specifically when male justicers attempt to act upon the bodies of dissenting females, only complicates the matter further. Artegall, the Knight of Justice, is according to Judith Anderson, “the most disappointing and ineffectual hero of the entire poem” (65) because of this complication.²¹ In the early cantos of the book, Artegall delivers justice that is simplistic, and at times, even vengeful.

As Spenser navigates the turbulences of the virtue, he also engages with his apparent anxieties in regard to dissenting women in the form of Radigund and Duessa. In earlier parts of the work, male characters are unsure exactly of how best to handle these dissenting women. As a result, justice and natural order dissolve into the margins of the work. Artegall—the embodiment of justice—is left suspended as a prisoner of Radigund who supplants natural order with a matriarchal, misandrist society.

As a result, Spenser employs feminine justicers unplagued by pity to carry out the execution of justice. The Knight of Chastity from Book III defeats Radigund, the emblem of injustice, which has the dual effect of begetting justice and restoring natural order. Spenser’s anxieties regarding feminine dissent occur once more in his handling of Duessa, who until the end of Book V wreaks havoc without consequence. It is not until Duessa is brought to Queen Mercilla that she is forced to pay for her transgressions. Through feminine

²¹ Anderson’s rebuke of the Knight of Justice may be too critical: Artegall exhibits more growth than any other titular hero of the epic. Additionally, he is tasked with mastering justice, the most demanding virtue of all.

sovereignty, Spenser is able to offer a more nuanced portrait of justice. By inserting gender into the moral allegory, Spenser is able to engage with modes of thought that are associated with the politics of early modern England, contextualizing Seneca and Aristotle to deal more overtly with the feminine.

The virtue of justice makes demands that neither the history of mankind nor any individual can truly meet. It is for this reason that the two exemplars of justice are allegorical women who symbolize abstract and larger-than-life ideals. Britomart exists as the physical personification of Britain, and Mercilla, as the material manifestation of Queen Elizabeth's reign as monarch. The thematic progression of Book V is driven by the emergence of Britomart as Artegall's savior, and Mercilla as a symbol of equity and mercy; conversely, Radigund and Duessa, as villainesses, exist largely as symbols of false equity and false compassion. Male characters, like Artegall and Arthur symbolize justice, governed by the examples of feminine sufficiency who act as their tutors. Their education made possible only through feminine justicers who must intervene to respond to feminine dissent, confining masculinity temporarily to the margins of the work. Unlike previous scholarship, which seeks to dismiss gender in Book V, I submit that gender functions as a catalyst that is absolutely necessary to dismantle the enemy to justice, which is not injustice, but rather pity.

Works Cited

- Adams, John Henry. "Assembling Radigund and Artegall: Gender Identities in Spenser's *Faerie Queene*". *Early Modern Literary Studies*, no. 1-2, 2015. *EBSCOhost*, easydb.angelo.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=edsclr&AN=edsqcl.451229224&site=eds-live.
- Anderson, Judith. "'Nor Man It Is': The Knight of Justice in Book V of Spenser's *Faerie Queene*". *Modern Language Association*, vol. 85, no. 1, pp. 65-77, 1970.
- Aptekar, Jane. *Icons of Justice: Iconography & Thematic Imagery in Book V of "The Faerie Queene"*. Columbia University Press, 1969.
- Aristotle. *The Nicomachean Ethics*. Translated by H. Rackham, Harvard University Press, 1994.
- Bennett, Kristen Abbott. "Re-Conceiving Britomart: Spenser's Shift in the Fashioning of Feminine Virtue between Books 3 and 5 of the *Faerie Queene*". *The AnaChronisT*, 2009, pp. 1-23.
- Berger, John. *Ways of Seeing*. Penguin Books, 1972.
- Betts, Hannah. "The Pornographic Blazon." *Dissing Elizabeth: Negative Representations of Gloriana*. Edited by Julia M. Walker, Duke University Press, 1998, pp. 153-184.
- Britain., Great. "The Commentaries, or Reports of Edmund Plowden ... Containing Divers Cases upon Matters of Law, Argued and Adjudged in the Several Reigns of King Edward ... Vol.1." *HathiTrust*, 1968, <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=njp.32101066468222;view=1up;seq=1>

- Bush, Douglas. *Mythology and the Renaissance Tradition in English Poetry*. W.W. Norton, 1963.
- Cavanagh, Shelia. "Nightmares of Desire: Evil Women in 'The Faerie Queene'". *Studies in Philology*, vol. 91, no. 3, 1994, pp. 313-338.
- . "'Such Was Irena's Countenance': Ireland in Spenser's Prose and Poetry." *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*, vol. 28, no. 1, 1986, pp. 24-50.
- D'Ewes, Simonds. *The Journals of all the Parliaments during the Reign of Queen Elizabeth*. London, 1682, <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/no-series/jrnl-parliament-eliz1/pp205-221>.
- Dunseath, T.K. *Spenser's Allegory of Justice in Book Five of "The Faerie Queene"*. Princeton University Press, 1968.
- Eggert, Katherine. "Genre and the Repeal of Queenship in 'The Faerie Queene,' Book 5". *English Literary Renaissance*, vol. 26, no. 2, 1996, pp. 259-290.
- Frye, Susan. *Elizabeth I: The Competition for Representation*. Oxford University Press, 1997.
- Guy, John. *The True Life of Mary Stuart: Queen of Scots*. Houghton Mifflin, 2004.
- Haigh, Christopher. *English Reformations: Religion, Politics, and Society under the Tudors*. Clarendon Press, 1993.
- Hamilton, A.C. Introduction. *The Faerie Queene*, by Edmund Spenser, 2nd ed., Routledge, 2007.
- . *The Spenser Encyclopedia*. University of Toronto Press, 1990, pp. 325-327.

--. *The Structure of Allegory in the Faerie Queene*. Clarendon Press, 1970.

Heninger, S. K. Jr. "The Orgoglio Episode in *The Faerie Queene*." *ELH*, vol. 26, no. 2, 1959, pp. 171-187.

Kantorowicz, Ernst. *The King's Two Bodies*. Princeton University Press, 2016.

Kaplan, M. Lindsay. *The Culture of Slander in Early Modern England*. Cambridge University Press, 2008.

Kesselring, K. J. *Mercy and Authority in the Tudor State*. Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Kinney, Claire. *Strategies of Poetic Narrative: Chaucer, Spenser, Milton, and Eliot*. Cambridge, 1992.

Knight, Nicholas W. "The Narrative Unity of Book V of *The Faerie Queene*: 'That Part of Justice Which is Equity.'" *The Review of English Studies*, vol. 21, no. 83, 1970, pp. 267-294.

Lake, Peter. "Rethinking the Public Sphere in Early Modern England." *Journal of British Studies*, vol. 45, no. 2, pp. 270-292, 2006.

Lewis, C.S. *The Allegory of Love*. Clarendon Press, 1936.

Levin, Harry. *The Myth of the Golden Age in the Renaissance*. Oxford University Press, 1969.

Lockey, Brian C. "'Equitie to Measure': The Perils of Imperial Imitation in Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*." *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies (Indiana University Press)*, vol. 10, no. 1, 2010, pp. 52-70.

- Milton, John. "The Reason of Church Government: Book Two." *The Reason of Church Government: Book 2*, 2018, www.dartmouth.edu/~milton/reading_room/reason/book_2/text.shtml.
- Neill, Kerby. "The Faerie Queene and the Mary Stuart Controversy." *ELH*, vol. 2, no. 2, 1935, pp. 192-214.
- Nelson, William. *The Poetry of Edmund Spenser*. Columbia Univ. Pr., 1965.
- Quilligan, Maureen. "The Comedy of Female Authority in *The Faerie Queene*." *English Literary Renaissance*, vol. 17, no. 2, 1987, pp. 156-171.
- Ripa, Cesare. *Baroque and Rococo Pictorial Imagery*. Translated by Edward Maser, Dover, 1971.
- Schuette, Gerhardt. "Edmund Spenser's Anti-Catholicism: Duessa's Part in it All." *Michigan Academician*, vol. 42, no. 1, 2015, pp. 108-118.
- Seneca. *De Clementia*, edited by Susanna Braund, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.
- Sidney, Philip. "A Defence of Poesie." *Shakespeare's Sonnets*, 2014, www.shakespeares-sonnets.com/defence#note21.
- Spenser, Edmund. *The Faerie Queene*. Edited by A.C. Hamilton, 2nd ed., Routledge, 2007.
- .. "Prefatory Letter to Sir Walter Raleigh On *The Faerie Queene*." *Prefatory Letter to Sir Walter Raleigh On The Faerie Queene. Edmund Spenser (1589). 1909-14. Famous Prefaces. The Harvard Classics*, Bartleby, 2015, www.bartleby.com/39/14.html.

Staines, John. "Pity and the Authority of Feminine Passions in Books V and VI of *The Faerie Queene*." *Spenser Studies: A Renaissance Poetry Annual*, vol. 25, 2010, pp. 129-161.

Stoll, Abraham. "Spenser's Allegorical Conscience." *Modern Philology*, vol. 111, no. 2, 2013, pp. 181-204.

Van Meter, David. "The Ritualized Presentation of Weapons and the Ideology of Nobility in 'Beowulf'." *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, vol. 95, no. 2, 1996, pp. 175-189.

Villeponteaux, Mary. "Spenser's Amazon Queen." *Dissing Elizabeth: Negative Representations of Gloriana*. Edited by Julia M. Walker, Duke University Press, 1998, pp. 209-225.

Wimsatt, W.K. *The Verbal Icon*. University Press of Kentucky, 1954.

BIOGRAPHY

Talon Christian Shoemake is originally from Deweyville, Texas. He began his education at Angelo State University in the fall of 2015, after graduating valedictorian from Deweyville High School. He will be graduating *summa cum laude* in May of 2019 as the distinguished graduate of the College of Arts and Humanities, with his Bachelor of Arts in English and a minor in Gender Studies. He will be continuing his education in the Doctor of Philosophy in English program at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, starting in the fall of 2019. While at Angelo State University, Talon was an active member of the Honors Program, where he served as a peer mentor to incoming freshmen for two years. Mr. Shoemake worked with professors such as Dr. Erin Ashworth-King and Dr. Gabriela Serrano on various independent research projects. During his junior year, his research conducted under Dr. Ashworth-King was selected as one of only seventeen papers to be presented in a Student Interdisciplinary Research Panel at the National Collegiate Honors Council in Boston, Massachusetts. As a senior, he was named the 2019 College of Arts and Humanities Distinguished Student. Mr. Shoemake plans to acquire his PhD, concentrating on medieval to early modern English texts, with a dream of one day teaching at the collegiate level and working in an administrative role with his future university's honors program.