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Images of Vice and Virtue in Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*

Parallels and Contrasts with Renaissance Emblem Art

Portrait of Edmund Spenser, Wikipedia

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Introduction

The first edition of *The Faerie Queene* was published in 1590 and contained the first three

books of what was supposed to become a twelve volume epic, all in verse. Unfortunately the

second edition with three additional volumes that was published in 1596 was the last to be

written, as Edmund Spenser passed away in 1599. Each book in *The Faerie* Queene addresses

a particular virtue and its opposing vice. In order to maintain a coherent and concise

argument, I shall limit discussion to Books III and IV on the virtues of chastity and friendship

respectively. In this paper, I shall attempt to demonstrate the relationship between Spenser's

allegory in Books III and IV of *The Faerie Queene* and the Renaissance emblem tradition.

Although establishing a direct connection between different works of Renaissance art is

hardly ever possible, a parallel can often be found in the imagery employed by different

artists, and through these parallels the authors' views on morality may become discernable.

To be able to provide coherent images, research will be limited to the juxtapositions of

chastity and lust, and that of concord and discord, which constitute a major part of the

allegory of Books III and IV.

A wide range of research topics on *The Faerie Queene* have already been explored by

scholars, including its relationship with the emblem tradition. This is mostly due to the

structure of Spenser's metaphors, which allow for an elaborate comparison with Renaissance

emblems, and as Charles Moseley argues: "*The Faerie Queene* itself became a considerable

source of emblems in the half-century after its appearance, and greatly influenced

emblematists like Henry Peacham."[1] It must be stated, however, that research attempting to

establish a direct relationship between Spenser and his contemporaries or "the numerous

attempts to show that Spenser's word-pictures are 'like' certain pictures […] are energetic and

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[1] Charles Moseley, *A Century of Emblems – An Introductory Anthology* (Aldershot: Scholarly Press. 1989), 35.

interesting but ultimately of only peripheral concern."[2] Most research on Spenser therefore, acknowledges his connection with the emblem tradition, but rather tends to compare Spenser's imagery with more general themes found in both Classical and Renaissance literature. It should be considered, however, that comparing and contrasting particular instances of imagery can provide an interesting insight into the different, or perhaps common, attitudes adhered to by Renaissance artists.

In order to establish a firm basis on which to rely when discussing particular instances of imagery, the first chapter shall elaborate on the Renaissance emblem tradition and its influence. The second chapter shall provide a brief insight into the common view on chastity and concord, or friendship, as these can be found in Classical and Renaissance literature. The pre-final chapter will be comprised of emblems from different artists and their thematic connection with specific scenes and characters in Spenser's work. Finally, I will venture to elaborate on the correlation and contrast between *The Faerie Queene* and emblems previously discussed and attempt to formulate a conclusion with regard to the correlation between Books III and IV of *The Faerie Queene* and the images produced by his contemporaries.

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[2] *The Oxford Handbook of Edmund Spenser,* ed. Richard McCabe (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 689.

Renaissance Emblem Art

During the Renaissance, the art of creating moral emblems to represent virtue, vice and moral guidelines through images flourished throughout the artistic world. The tradition is indebted to the ambiguity of words and the fact "that they relate only problematically to what they purport to describe, and that verbal discourse is as a result imprecise and offers huge possibilities for confusion."[3] The emphasis on the visual arts during the Renaissance can partially be attributed to Christianity, since it was believed that verbal confusion and inaccuracy originated from the collapse of the tower of Babel. In the book of Genesis, it was written that "the LORD said, Behold, the people *is* [sic] one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech."[4] some, therefore, considered it prudent to find another means of expression in order to convey ideas that are not easily transmitted through speech. This sparked the tradition of the emblem, a picture of a particular theme, usually mythological or Christian, depicting an idea. In addition, a poem was usually inserted beneath the picture to elaborate on its meaning. Although there are no established guidelines encapsulating the emblem genre, a typical emblem consists of a quotation from a Classical writer, usually in Latin, a motto, an epigram with its own title and a picture.[5] Peter Boot explains that "attempts to identify a uniquely emblematic distribution of functions over the emblem's structural components have failed," which he attributes to the wide variety of emblems and emblem books that were produced during the Mediaeval and Renaissance eras. Boot does identify a number of features that seem to be common in emblems. He distinguishes four properties that

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[3] Charles Mosely, *A Century of Emblems – An Introductory Anthology* (Aldershot: Scholarly Press, 1989), 6.
[4] *The Holy Bible: The King James version* (London: HarperCollins, 2010), Genesis 11:5-8.
[5] Peter Boot, "Mesotext: Digitalised Emblems, Modelled Annotations and Humanities" (Utrecht: Utrecht University, 2009), 20.

occur frequently, comprising the frequent use of Latin, the use of multiple languages, a reference to a classical author and either a single page or adjacent pages for each emblem.[6] Other than these general characteristics, which are not even necessarily shared by all emblems, the sheer quantity and variety of both style and topic makes establishing an objective definition of the emblem an impossible task.

As the variety of images and metaphors grew, a need for cataloguing and explaining them arose, spawning the emblem book tradition. Although the bulk of these emblem books originated from mainland Europe, they enjoyed widespread circulation in England.[7] Spenser's work was heavily influenced by these moral emblems and in turn, inspired a whole generation of emblem artists after its publication.[8] Nevertheless it should be noted that "if Spenser's imagery often appears emblematic […] it is not that he has necessarily borrowed from emblem or device books; rather, he has either 'invented' his images according to mimetic ideals common to both poetics and emblem art or based them on sources common to both poetry and emblems."[9] The fact that there was such a widespread use of similar Classical and Christian ideas utilised in the arts of the Renaissance provides an interesting opportunity for research into both the origins of Spenser's imagery and the tradition of new images that might have sprung from his writing. It could even be argued that Spenser's work is similar to emblems even in form, as "sixteenth-century theorists do not define their emblems as images. They apply the term metaphorically to a particular kind of poem which describes an image, statue or work of art and explicates its meaning."[10] In fact it was often the printer who would provide the illustrations to accompany the poems in emblem books and these were merely added, because "the cultivated brevity and obscurity of the verse […] defeated the less learned

[6] Peter Boot, "Mesotext: Digitalised Emblems, Modelled Annotations and Humanities" (Utrecht: Utrecht University, 2009), 20.
[7] Charles Moseley, *A Century of Emblems – An Introductory Anthology* (Aldershot: Scholarly Press, 1989), 20.
[8] Charles Moseley, *A Century of Emblems – An Introductory Anthology* (Aldershot: Scholarly Press, 1989), 35.
[9] *The Spenser Encyclopedia*, ed. A.C. Hamilton e.a. (London: Routledge, 1990), 246.
[10] *The Spenser Encyclopedia*, ed. A.C. Hamilton e.a. (London: Routledge, 1990), 247.

members of the reading public, who gained access to the author's intention by means of the woodcuts."[11] Those who were educated would have no need for the images and merely the poem and motto would suffice to convey the author's message. Spenser's poetry follows the same guidelines as many emblems in its metaphors, except that Spenser creates images with words. It should, however, be stressed once more that proving a direct correlation between Spenser and other artists is very difficult, if not impossible.

The allegorical style of *The Faerie Queene* shows great resemblance to the style employed by emblem artists, as both pictorial and verbal metaphor employs a description or picture, functioning as the 'vehicle', to exemplify the intended meaning, or 'tenor'[12] This distinction that lies at the root of the metaphor was widely utilised due to the rediscovered purpose of poetic imagery, where it was held that "the vehicle (picture or body) must please the eye or the imagination so that the tenor (motto or soul) will feed the mind."[13] Spenser's work, in particular, "urges readers to 'behold' its represented sights,"[14] rather than merely narrating his storyline, making his poetry appear picture-like. This practice originated in Aristotle's *Poetics*, which was held in high regard during the Renaissance, where Aristotle argues that "an ideal imitation enables the artist to 'invent' a new reality that transcends its model and has its own organic life."[15] The degree of realism an artist could fabricate would be held as indicative of his skill, as well as determine the successful conveyance of the didactic element in his work of art. Another Classical influence on Renaissance poets was Horace's *Ars Poetica*, from which the famous phrase 'ut pictura poesis', "as is painting, so is poetry,"[16] originates. During the Renaissance, there was much debate on the importance of individual art forms, because "while both painting and poetry were popular, arguments of this era focused

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[11] *The Spenser Encyclopedia*, ed. A.C. Hamilton e.a. (London: Routledge, 1990),247.
[12] *The Spenser Encyclopedia*, ed. A.C. Hamilton e.a. (London: Routledge, 1990), 246.
[13] *The Spenser Encyclopedia*, ed. A.C. Hamilton e.a. (London: Routledge, 1990), 246.
[14] *The Oxford Handbook of Edmund Spenser* ed. Richard A. McCabe (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 440.
[15] *The Spenser Encyclopedia*, ed. A.C. Hamilton e.a. (London: Routledge, 1990), 246.
[16] Judith Harvey "Ut Pictura Poesis" (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2002), 1.

mainly around which should have precedence."[17] This competition inspired many artists to prove they could outdo other forms of art, which is why some poetry, like Spenser's, may seem pictorial in its focus. Specifically, "from almost the beginning of his career, Spenser seems consciously to have referred his poetic images to the concretely painterly and plastic; and he was consistently recognized and applauded […] for the rich, apparently 'visual' character of his poetry."[18]

      The emblem arts that flourished during the Renaissance seem to resemble Spenser's style of writing in their way of depicting scenes or characters and attributing moral qualities to the images. Through this reasoning, I shall attempt to establish parallels between individual emblems from various artists, and episodes from Spenser's work.

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[17] Judith Harvey "Ut Pictura Poesis" (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2002), 1.
[18] *The Oxford Handbook of Edmund Spenser*, ed. Richard A. McCabe (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 684.

Love, Chastity and Concord in the Renaissance

The Renaissance, implying the rebirth of the Classical era in the arts, featured many concepts from ancient philosophers and writers. Classical morals and virtues were reintroduced alongside existing medieval and Christian conventions. The notion of love and its connection to virtue also underwent a shift, as a new 'enlightened' ideology was adopted. Previously, "when early medieval poets and writers of the seventh through eleventh centuries employed the term 'love', they intended to imply a moral, ethical and social phenomenon only, intimately connected with friendship, which in turn contributed to the development of virtues." [19] Only after the eleventh century does love become more of an emotional force between men and women as well as an important theme and purpose for the aristocracy.[20] Spenser's work is permeated with interpretations of the love-theme. Love, for the purpose of this paper, should be interpreted as both romantic love and brotherly love or true friendship in a more broad understanding. The main part of this chapter shall be devoted to chastity; the interpretation of this virtue seems more variable than concord, which is fairly straightforward in its meaning. Therefore, a somewhat smaller section will be devoted to concord and its relation to friendship.

Books III and IV of *The Faerie Queene*, containing the legends of Chastity and Friendship, explicate Spenser's many views on love and concord. In order to grasp the idea of love linked to virtue and especially love in relation to chastity, it must be explained that the definition of chastity in the Renaissance was different from the modern understanding of the word. Erasmus explains that there are "two kinds of chastity: the absolute abstinence which

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[19] Albrecht Classen, "Introduction: Love, Marriage and Transgression in Medieval and Early Modern Literature: Discourse, Communication and Social Interaction, in *Discourses on Love Marriage and Transgression in Medieval and Early Modern Literature.* ed. Albrecht Classen. (Temple: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2004), 1.

[20] Albrecht Classen, "Introduction: Love, Marriage and Transgression in Medieval and Early Modern Literature: Discourse, Communication and Social Interaction, in *Discourses on Love Marriage and Transgression in Medieval and Early Modern Literature.* ed. Albrecht Classen. (Temple: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2004), 2.

befits a woman before marriage; and the chastity within marriage which consists in the partners having children for the state, and for Christ."[21] Complete abstinence, also referred to as 'negative chastity', was seen as a great virtue during the Mediaeval period, when the Roman Catholic clergy were celibate. During the Renaissance however, the Protestant Reformation had cast doubt on the traditional religious virtues, establishing a melting pot of religious ideas. This shift led to a new interpretation of chastity, as explained by Erasmus, namely strict monogamy, dubbed 'positive chastity'. These very different interpretations of the virtue of chastity are featured in 1 Corinthians, where it is stated that "it is good for a man not to touch a woman. Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband."[22]

Spenser's own definition of love seems rather more liberal. It seems that "for Spenser, not only free choice but love is a necessary adjunct or even part of marital chastity,"[23] as he argues that it is unnatural to maintain faithful monogamy towards an individual to whom no affection is born.[24] In an age where political marriages amongst the aristocracy flourished, this is quite a liberal position to maintain on the topic of marriage. *The Spenser Encyclopedia* explains: "Spenser's negative form of chastity, then, is outwardly more traditional and yet more problematic; he seems to have adapted imagery traditional for virginal chastity to new ideas […]. His exaltation of the positive marital form of chastity determines most of his ethic, plots, and characters in books III-IV […]"[25] Still, Spenser seems conservative in holding on to a traditional outlook on vice and virtue, and "in consequence, love aligns with chastity against

[21] *The Spenser Encyclopedia*. ed. A.C. Hamilton (London: Routledge, 1990), 142.
[22] *The Holy Bible: The King James version* (London: HarperCollins, 2010), 1 Corinthians 7:1-2.
[23] *The Spenser Encyclopedia*. ed. A.C. Hamilton (London: Routledge, 1990), 143.
[24] *The Spenser Encyclopedia*. ed. A.C. Hamilton (London: Routledge, 1990), 143.
[25] *The Spenser Encyclopedia*. ed. A.C. Hamilton (London: Routledge, 1990), 144.

lust and invokes Spenser's entire sexual ethic."[26] It is important to note, however, that he seems to emphasise the positive aspects of love more than condemning the unchaste.[27]

Another interesting aspect of the legend of chastity is the apparent advantage abstinence provides to women. In women's studies, a trend has been observed "that many women figures in the sixteenth century English dramas are portrayed almost as a-sexual and free from their biological function as females, which allows them to suddenly gain tremendous influence within their society and to exert their own role in public life."[28] In the Renaissance, chastity in its absolute form was the only way for a woman to be able to choose her own vocation, as theoretically, husbands were dominant over their wives. Another major issue was the absence of birth control measures, and pregnancy and motherhood entailed that a woman would be forced to look after her offspring. Spenser is also likely to have put great effort into showing respect for absolute chastity, as Elizabeth I, who was queen of England at the time, was not married. Her long reign "shows an enigmatic Virgin Queen dexterously negotiating the perilous milieu of national and international politics, adored by her peaceful people."[29] It is often argued that "this myth of Elizabeth is largely the product of her government's effort to promote her regime."[30]

Although Book IV is the legend of friendship, much of Spenser's imagery in the book relates directly to concord, specifically how there must be concord in friendship, in order for it to be successful. Once more, a key contribution to this view was made by Aristotle, who states: "Where friendship is based solely on pleasure, or solely on utility, it cannot be strong

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[26] *The Spenser Encyclopedia*. ed. A.C. Hamilton (London: Routledge, 1990), 143.
[27] *The Spenser Encyclopedia*. ed. A.C. Hamilton (London: Routledge, 1990), 143.
[28] Albrecht Classen, "Introduction: Love, Marriage and Transgression in Medieval and Early Modern Literature: Discourse, Communication and Social Interaction, in *Discourses on Love Marriage and Transgression in Medieval and Early Modern Literature.* ed. Albrecht Classen (Temple: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2004), 40.
[29] *The Spenser Encyclopedia*. ed. A.C. Hamilton (London: Routledge, 1990), 235.
[30] *The Spenser Encyclopedia*. ed. A.C. Hamilton (London: Routledge, 1990), 235.

and lasting,"[31]implying a need for balance and generosity in friendship. What makes Spenser's views on concord particularly interesting, however, is his "use of the goddess concord and his use of the three sons of Agape,"[32] to denote both virtuous friendship and concord. When introducing the goddess Concord, Spenser states that she is the "mother of blessed Peace, and Friendship trew;" and her divinity is proven, because of the "strength, and wealth, and happinesse she lends, / And strife, and warre, and anger does subdew: / Of little much, of foes she maketh frends, / And to afflicted minds sweet rest and quiet sends."[33] Opposing concord is discord, which brings hatred and chaos and in Spenser's work, this stems from the characters Ate and Duessa in Book IV of *The Faerie Queene*. Ate, associated by Spenser with dissention, which corresponds to discord, is attributed an important part in the personification of vice in this book, and shall be discussed in greater detail in the following chapter.

Although the aforementioned themes and images are but a fraction of the number of metaphors and personifications which Book IV contains, I shall have to limit my study to these particular themes and their related images in the discussion of emblems and Spenser's work in the following chapter.

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[31] John E. Hankins, *Source and Meaning in Spenser's Allegory: A Study of The Faerie Queene* (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), 142.

[32] John E. Hankins, *Source and Meaning in Spenser's Allegory: A Study of The Faerie Queene* (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), 144.

[33] Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, ed. A.C. Hamilton, (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2007), 487.

Images of *The Faerie Queene*

With the theoretical framework established, I shall now contrast particular emblems with specific instances of Spenser's so-called 'picture-like' language, regarding the moral and thematic opposition of chastity and lust, and concord and discord. The reason for choosing these particular themes is twofold; it is both due to their widespread use in both Spenser's work and Renaissance emblem art, and to the fact that they are perfectly juxtaposed in books III and IV of *The Faerie Queene*. Chastity has been divided into 'married love' and 'total abstinence' as discussed in the previous chapter. Opposed to chastity in book III is lust featuring as the main vice, occurring in a variety of shapes and images in Spenser's work. Although book IV discusses the virtue of friendship, Spenser makes it very clear that friendship can only be achieved through concord, and therefore, there are many personifications and images related to concord in this book.

Married Love

In the 1590 edition of *The Faerie Queene* the final stanzas of book III portray the union of Scudamour and Amoret outside of Busirane's mansion, from which she had been rescued by Britomart. Spenser writes how:

> Lightly he clipt her twixt his armes twaine,
>
> And streightly did embrace her body bright,
>
> Her body, late the prison of sad paine,
>
> Now the sweet lodge of loue and deare delight:
>
> But she faire Lady ouercommen quight
>
> Of huge affection, did in pleasure melt
>
> And in sweete rauishment pourd out her spright:
>
> No word they spake, nor earthly thing they felt,
>
> But like two senceles stocks in long embracement dwelt.[34]

This description was later replaced by an open ending in the 1596 edition of *The Faerie Queene*, possibly due to criticism at court, as Spenser explains in the proem to Book IV, where he is most likely "alluding to William Cecil, Lord Burghley, Elizabeth's Lord Treasurer, […] [who] in his official capacity may well have been offended by the erotic ending of Book III." [35] The theme itself, however, is featured in a great number of emblems, celebrating the union of lovers in marriage.

Otto van Veen, or Vaenius, composed a number of emblem books specifically concerning love, in which he utilises the image of the Classical god of love, Cupid, in various

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[34] Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, ed. A.C. Hamilton (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2007), 405.

[35] Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, ed. A.C. Hamilton (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2007), 409.

poses and accompanied by a multitude of attributes and characters to explicate his didactic intention. The emblem most relevant to this particular scene in Spenser's work portrays two Cupids, embracing each other in a fashion that resembles the image of Amoret and Scudamour presented by Spenser.

Otto Vaenius, *Amorum Emblemata*, 1608, London: Garland Publishing, 1979, 9.

In the motto, Vaenius quotes Aristotle's *Symposion*, where it reads: "the goal of love is that two become one in wish and love."[36] It could be argued that this corresponds roughly to Spenser's use of the image in *The Faerie Queene*, where it features as the final scene of the legend of chastity. The embrace and union of Amoret and Scudamour is the final realisation

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[36] Otto Vaenius, "Amoris finis est, vt dvo vnvm fiant volvntate et amore", *Amorum Emblemata*, (http://emblems.let.uu.nl/v1608009.html)

of the virtue of chastity or was at least supposed to be until the ending was changed in the

second edition. Vaenius' poem also matches Spenser's image, as it reads:

> The louers long desyre his hope doth keep contented,
>
> That lastly with his loues vnited he agrees.
>
> One mynd in bodyes twayn may well conjoyned bee,
>
> But yet with payn to both when bodeys are absented.[37]

The resemblance that this verse bears to Spenser is most striking, as Scudamour suffers great

emotional pain, when separated from Amoret, whereas Amoret actually suffers physical pain

at the hands of Busirane. This pain instantly dissipates as Spenser reminds us: "Her body, late

the prison of sad paine, / Now the sweet lodge of loue and deare delight".[38] So both are indeed

in pain, because of their desire for each other. This matching situation is, however, rather

general in nature and, therefore, not the most convincing parallel.

  Another image that may also be compared to Spenser's description is a particularly

appealing emblem from another one of Vaenius' emblem books, *Emblemata aliquot*

selectiora amatoria.

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[37] Otto Vaenius, "Amoris finis est, vt dvo vnvm fiant volvntate et amore", *Amorum Emblemata*, http://emblems.let.uu.nl/v1608009.html

[38] Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, ed. A.C. Hamilton, (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2007), 405.

Otto Vaenius, "Flammescit Vterqve", *Emblemata aliquot selectiora amatoria*, The Utrecht

Emblem Project, 68.

This image, entitled: "Flammescit Uterque", is part of Vaenius' emblem regarding how two

lovers increase their desire for one another. The verse reads:

Loue enkindleth loue.

A kynd of wood there is, that rubbed with thesame,

Doth first encrease in heat and lastly come on fyre,

So do two lovers eyes encrease their hot desyre,

When loues augmented force doth both their hartes enflame.[39]

This, of course, matches Spenser's description of: "two senceles stocks in long embracement

dwelt."[40] Stocks here should be understood as the archaic word, meaning log or block of

wood. The two sticks held by Cupid are also 'entwined' or 'embracing'. This may provide

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[39] Otto Vaenius, "Flammescit Uterque", in *Emblemata aliquot selectiora amatoria,*
http://emblems.let.uu.nl/v1608068.html#folio_pb135

[40] Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, ed. A.C. Hamilton (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2007), 405.

another dimension to what Spenser meant by his utilisation of the stock metaphor. Although

the image he probably intends is of two, most likely living stocks, namely trees entwined in

an embrace, when a parallel between this metaphor and this emblem of Vaenius' is

established, an interesting dimension to Spenser's metaphor is created. Vaenius describes how

a fire can be sparked by creating friction between two sticks by rubbing them together. In a

similar manner, the passion of Amoret and Scudamour is also kindled when they embrace,

even to such an extent that Amoret "ouercommen quight / Of huge affection, did in pleasure

melt,"[41] obviously from the warmth of their passion.

A final interesting emblem to consider involves a recurring theme in *The Faerie*

Queene, namely that of Hermaphrodite, the unity of a man and a woman in love. A direct

image of Hermaphrodite features in Book IV, when Scudamour takes Amoret from the temple

of Venus, where she is "the supreme symbol of creative sexuality suggesting in her own dual

nature the fulfilment of married love."[42] It has been argued that this particular scene was

implemented, because "in the 1596 edition of the poem Britomart is denied the vision of

Amoret and Scudamour's hermaphroditic embrace,"[43] and Spenser, therefore, lets the image

recur in Book IV, when Scudamour enters the inner temple and remarks Venus "hath both

kinds in one, / both male and female, both vnder one name: / she syre and mother is her selfe

alone, begets and eke conceiues, ne needeth other none."[44] Nicholas Flamel, in his treatise on

the relation of thematic images and alchemy, includes an image of Hermaphrodite, which is

conform to Spenser's depiction of the dual nature of Venus. Flamel writes: "I made then to be

painted here two bodies, one of a male, and another of a female, to teach thee, that in this

second operation, thou hast truly, but not yet perfectly, two natures conjoyned and married

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[41] Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, ed. A.C. Hamilton (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2007), 405.
[42] Richard A. McCabe, *The Pillars of Eternity: Time and Providence in The Faerie Queene* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1989), 136.
[43] Richard A. McCabe, *The Pillars of Eternity: Time and Providence in The Faerie Queene* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1989), 223.
[44] Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, ed. A.C. Hamilton (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2007), 488

together, the masculine and the feminine."[45] Especially the use of the word 'married' by

Flamel in the context of them becoming one seems interesting when Spenser's image of the

two entangled lovers is considered. The concept of the Hermaphrodite as an ideal has both

Christian and Classical roots. In the book of Genesis is written that "the rib, which the LORD

God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man,[46]" which explains

how Renaissance artists perceived perfection in the reunion of man and woman into a single

entity. The Classical origin of the Hermaphrodite, Flamel argues, "is the Andrygone, or

Hermaphrodite of the Ancients."[47]

Hieronymus Reusner, "Hermaphrodite", *Nicholas Flamel: His Exposition of the*

Hieroglyphical Figures (1624), London: Garland Publishing, 1994, fig. 11.

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[45] *Nicholas Flamel: His Exposition of the Hierogkyphical Figures (1624)*, ed. Laurinda Dixon (London: Garland Publishing, 1994), 32.
[46] *The Holy Bible: The King James version* (London: HarperCollins, 2010), Gen. 2:22.
[47] *Nicholas Flamel: His Exposition of the Hieroglyphical Figures (1624)*, ed. Laurinda Dixon (London: Garland Publishing, 1994), 32-33.

Britomart & Chastity

Britomart is one of the main characters of *The Faerie Queene*, and her story is interwoven with all other characters. The aforementioned contradiction between complete abstinence and married love is joined within her, as although she is in love, she has only met her lover in a vision. Some scholars perceive this paradox as the mediation of "the Venus-Diana opposition in Spenser; […] her name is one of Diana's,"[48] her "iconographical prototype, on the other hand, is the variation of Venus […] known as Venus Armata."[49] The depiction of an armed Venus originates from the idea that Venus conquered Mars, the god of war, in her bed and she is, therefore, mightier than he. Hence, the link between Venus and Mars is established, and she no longer wears robes, but "on her head she wears a helmet instead of a veil, and bears a spear instead of golden branches."[50] The contradiction between Mars and Venus symbolises concord, which provides harmony between love and hate.[51] Spenser attributes great beauty to her, as he describes "the beautie and the shining ray, / with which fayre Britomart gaue light vnto the day."[52] He equips her with a full suit of armour and a shield and spear with which she fights mostly from horseback.[53]

Johann Kreihing, in his *Emblemata ethico-politica*, also employs the image of an armed virgin, who is blocking Cupid's arrows with her shield. Although she is robed rather than fully armoured, the depiction of a shield accompanied by a spear in her hands make the resemblance with Britomart striking enough, as well as showing many similarities with the Venus Armata. The motto reads: "virgin, beware of those arrows – if they penetrate your soul

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[48] James Nohrnberg, *The Analogy of the Faerie Queene* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1976), 454.
[49] James Nohrnberg, *The Analogy of the Faerie Queene* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1976), 454.
[50] James Nohrnberg, *The Analogy of the Faerie Queene* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1976), 455
[51] James Nohrnberg, *The Analogy of the Faerie Queene* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1976), 456
[52] Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene,* ed. A.C. Hamilton (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2007), 297.
[53] Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene,* ed. A.C. Hamilton (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2007), 324.

no remedy cures."[54] The armament worn by the virgin in Kreiheing's emblem serves as protection against love's arrows. Britomart already is in love, but since she has no information regarding the whereabouts of her lover and is still a virgin, she has to shield herself from peril, which in the book of chastity tends to take on the form of Lust.

Johann Kreihing, *Emblemata ethico-politica (Antwerp 1661),* Turnhout: Brepolis, 1999, 110.

Another one of Alciatus' emblems also bears a resemblance to Spenser's depiction of Britomart, both in vehicle and tenor. His image, however, depicts the goddess Pallas Athena, rather than Venus or Diana, whom Britomart is most likely to be related to. The motto of the emblem reads: "That virgins must be protected with great diligence."[55] This emblem holds a very similar tenor to that of Kreihing, utilising a goddess known for her armed appearance to personify virginity. For it was Pallas Athena who is known to be depicted often in full battle gear, here accompanied by a dragon to escape the snares of Eros. Britomart also protects her own virtue and chastity, for while wearing her armour, she is mistaken by all other characters for a man, and therefore no object of lust.

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[54] Johann Kreihing, *Emblemata ethico-politica (Antwerp 1661)* (Turnhout: Brepolis, 1999), 110.
[55] Andreas Alciatus, *1 The Latin Emblems*, ed. Peter M. Daly (London: University of Toronto Press, 1985), 21.

Andreas Alciatus, *2 Emblems in Translation*, ed. Peter M. Daly, Simon Cuttler, London:

University of Toronto Press, 1985, 21.

Concord

Book IV of *the Faerie Queene*, elaborating on friendship, assigns great value to concord as the source of friendship. Throughout the book, concord is what seems to contrast true friendship and false. As Aristotle explains: "Where friendship is based solely on pleasure or solely on utility, it cannot be strong and lasting,"[56] mutual respect that comes with concord is required.

The main example of friendship and concord in Book IV, is the relationship "between Cambell and Triamond, who with their two ladies make up a group of four, a number symbolising concord."[57] It is, however, the story of Triamond that seems most pictorial of Spenser's writing. Triamond is the youngest of three brothers, whose mother was an elf who found out their life lines were short due to their valiant nature. She then arranged that "His [Priamond's] line, which is the eldest of the three, / which is of them the shortest, as I see, / Eftsoones his life may pass into the next [Diamond]; / and when the next shall likewise ended bee, '/ that both their liues may likewise be annext / vnto the third,"[58] basically extending Triamond's life span with that of his brothers', in the event of their death. Surely, this is exactly what happens during a tournament for the hand of Cambell's sister, and "that same soule, which therein [in Diamond] dwelt, / streight entring into Triamond, him fild / with double life."[59] This image is particularly important in exemplifying the main theme of friendship and concord in book IV, as it was believed that "best of all is the friendship of brothers, when nature, fortune, and virtue happily conspire to join them by a common outlook

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56 John E. Hankins, *Source and Meaning in Spenser's Allegory: A Study of the Faerie Queene* (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), 142.
57 *The Cambridge Companion to Spenser*, ed. A. Hadfield (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 129.
58 Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, ed. A.C. Hamilton (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2007), 426.
59 Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, ed. A.C. Hamilton (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2007), 431.

on things."[60] Spenser takes this virtue further, by having three souls sharing a single body in Triamond.

Research has been conducted into this particular image from Spenser, and although the difficulties of proving any direct relationship between metaphors in different art forms have been discussed, these particular images "of the three sons of Agape […] as to illustrate friendship, suggest an indebtedness to *the Emblemata* of Andreas Alciatus."[61] Emblem 40 in Alciatus' book is a depiction of the Classical myth of Geryon, and is titled: "Concordia insuperabile,"[62] or 'invincible concord'. The resemblance to Spenser's image becomes most apparent when the epigram is considered, which reads: "Three brothers were united in such concord that they could be considered one body. In this way they possessed various countries and they did not fear a whole throng against them. They conquered the forces of many and thus deserve one name for the three."[63]

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[60] John E. Hankins, *Source and Meaning in Spenser's Allegory: A Study of the Faerie Queene* (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), 143.

[61] John E. Hankins, *Source and Meaning in Spenser's Allegory: A Study of the Faerie Queene* (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), 144.

[62] Andreas Alciatus, *2 Emblems in Translation*, ed. Peter M. Daly, Simon Cuttler (London: University of Toronto Press, 1985), 40.

[63] Andreas Alciatus, *2 Emblems in Translation*, ed. Peter M. Daly, Simon Cuttler (London: University of Toronto Press, 1985), 40.

Andreas Alciatus, *2 Emblems in Translation*, ed. Peter M. Daly, Simon Cuttler, London:

University of Toronto Press, 1985, 40.

Spenser's three brothers, like Geryon, are famed for their prowess with arms, although their strengths were distributed and each had his own skill. As "stout Priamond, but not so strong to strike, / strong Diamond, but not so stout a knight, / But Triamond was stout and strong alike." Their skill in arms comes to signify both their personalities as well as their unity in Triamond. The difference in the depiction of the vehicle, is that Alciatus portrays Geryon with six arms and legs, in order to show his tripartite nature, whereas for Spenser who utilises verse to sketch his images, this is not necessary. The tenor for both metaphors, however, is concord through friendship and love.

A very similar image to that of Alciatus is one of George Wither's emblems, in which he also utilises the image of Geryon to convey his message. Although the images correspond, the tenor is somewhat different, particularly from Spenser's Triamond, as Wither focuses on the potential of a group gained through concord. The motto he added to the emblem reads:

"Where many Forces joined are, / Vnconquerable pow'r, is there."[64] And yet Wither also

mentions the importance of friendship and concord, in order to achieve this unconquerable

power. Wither explains that "he, that hath many Faculties, or Friends, / to keepe him safe (or

to acquire his ends) […] that man, by their assistance, may at length, / attaine to an

unconquerable strength."[65]

George Wither *A Collection of Emblemes: Ancient and Moderne*, 1635, South Carolina:

University of South Carolina Press, 1975, 179.

Another interesting viewpoint to consider is the relationship between concord and

kingdoms, as a state relies greatly on stability to be successful, and stability emanates from

concord only. The correlation between the two is explained by Alciatus, who states: "a

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[64] George Wither *A Collection of Emblemes: Ancient and Moderne,* 1635 (South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 1975), 179.

[65] George Wither *A Collection of Emblemes: Ancient and Moderne,* 1635 (South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 1975), 179.

kingdom grows by concord. But if concord is missing, the kingdom is deprived of support, and, in a short time, sees itself in ruins,"[66] This particular notion of concord and kingdom is often depicted in the form of a sceptre on a pedestal. Alciatus' emblem on the subject employs this image as the main metaphor for concord, with "an example of concord" as a motto. Crows, supposedly, "never break faith,"[67] and are, therefore, an image for concord, which can only exist where people are faithful.

Andreas Alciatus, *2 Emblems in Translation*, ed. Peter M. Daly, Simon Cuttler, London: University of Toronto Press, 1985, 37.

In *The Faerie Queene*, there is also a scene where a sceptre is utilised to facilitate a transition from discord to concord and friendship among two characters. When Triamond and Cambell are fighting to the death, Triamond's sister Cambina succeeds at reconciling them.

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[66] Andreas Alciatus, *2 Emblems inTranslation*, ed. Peter M. Daly, Simon Cuttler (London: University of Toronto Press, 1985), 37.
[67] Andreas Alciatus, *2 Emblems inTranslation*, ed. Peter M. Daly, Simon Cuttler (London: University of Toronto Press, 1985), 37.

in her right hand a rod of peace shee bore,

About the which two Serpents weren wound,

entrayled mutually in louely lore,

And by the tailes together firmely bound,

And both were with one oliue garland crownd,

Like to the rod which Maias sonne doth wield,

Wherewith the hellish fiends he doth confound.[68]

This image of Cambina bears great resemblance to an emblem of Ripa's, which also personifies concord. This emblem shows "A grave beautiful Lady, in an antique dress, holding in her right hand, a basin with a heart, and a pomegranate, in it, and a garland of fruits and flowers on her head, and in her left, a sceptre, on the top of which are various flowers and fruits."[69] Maia's son was Hermes and the staff which Spenser describes closely resembles Caduceus, Hermes' rod, associated with messengers and ambassadors.[70]

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[68] Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, ed. A.C. Hamilton (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2007), 434.
[69] Cesare Ripa, *Iconologia: or, moral emblems* (London: ECCO Print Editions, 1709), 14.
[70] "Caduceus", *Encyclopædia Britannica, Encyclopædia Britannica Online* (Encyclopædia Britannica, 2011)

Cesare Ripa, *Iconologia: or, moral emblems*, London: ECCO Print Editions, 1709, 14.

Cambina fulfils the role of ambassador of concord, and enchants Triamond and Cambell with her wand and the fighting immediately ceases. And Spenser immediately establishes a new unity of concord, "for Triamond had Canacee to wife, […] and Cambell tooke Cambina to his fere,"[71] establishing new friendships and relationships. Thus, there is "true friendship between Cambel and Triamond, who with their two ladies make up a group of four, a number symbolising concord."[72]

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[71] Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, ed. A.C. Hamilton (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2007), 435.
[72] *The Cambridge Companion to Spenser,* ed. A. Hadfield (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 126.

The Darker Side of Love

A new ending was introduced for Book III with the addition of three new books in the second edition. Scudamour, after waiting for a long a time with Britomart's nurse Glauce, decides to leave the mansion to seek out aid to retrieve Britomart and Amoret. When Britomart leads Amoret out of Busirane's mansion and does not find Scudamour there, she leads Amoret away to find him. In this passage, Spenser elaborates on the darker side of love, when Scudamour falls prey to envy and despair because of his love for Amoret. His distrust of Britomart stems from Ate, a newly introduced character in book IV. Spenser describes her as the "mother of debate, / and all dissention, which doth dayly grow / Amongst fraile men,"[73] her nature betraying her purpose. Ate and Duessa, who are the main antagonists in the legend of friendship, are introduced by Spenser, who describes how: "outward shew faire semblance they did beare; / For vnder maske of beautie and good grace, 'Vile treason and fowle falsehood hidden were."[74] The images Spenser then employs to elaborate on the nature of these two foul imposters, are very detailed and once again, imply the nature of his characters in the tenor.

On Duessa, who has been one of the main antagonists in *the Faerie Queene* from book I onwards, Spenser writes that she "had chang'd her former wonted hew: / For she could d'on so many shapes in sight, / As euer could Cameleon colours new; / So could she forge all colours saue the trew."[75] The image of the chameleon is a very common emblematic picture, occurring, for instance, in Alciatus' work. The following emblem of his shows a chameleon seated on a branch and has the motto: "In Adulatores", translating to "On flatterers".[76] The epigram to Alciatus' emblem explains that "also the flatterer feeds on the vulgar air, / and,

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[73] Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, ed. A.C. Hamilton (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2007), 414.
[74] Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, ed. A.C. Hamilton (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2007), 413.
[75] Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, ed. A.C. Hamilton (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2007), 413.
[76] Andreas Alciatus, *1 The Latin Emblems*, ed. Peter M. Daly (London: University of Toronto Press, 1985), 53.

gaping, devours all; / and he imitates only the black habits of his prince, / being ignorant of the pure and the chaste."[77] And keeping up appearances is what the chameleon and Duessa truly excel at.
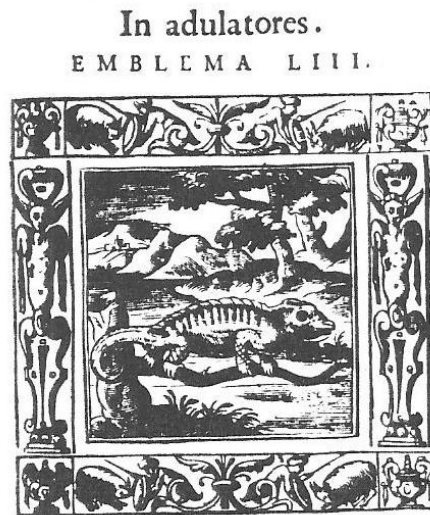
In adulatores.

EMBLEMA LIII.

Andreas Alciatus, *1 The Latin Emblems*, ed. Peter M. Daly, London: University of Toronto Press, 1985, 52.

The vehicle used in Spenser's metaphor is also employed by Alciatus however; I would argue that the tenors are only partially overlapping. Duessa is consistently intent on manipulation towards hatred, and the means she tends to employ to achieve this is deception. As illustrated in the following passage from Spenser:

Ah gentle knight, then false Duessa sayd,

Why do ye striue for Ladies loue so sore,

Whose chiefe desire is loue and friendly aid

Mongst gentle Knights to nourish euermore?

Ne be ye wroth Sir Scudamour therefore,

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[77] Andreas Alciatus, *1 The Latin Emblems*, ed. Peter M. Daly (London: University of Toronto Press, 1985), 53.

That she your loue list loue another knight,

Ne do your selfe dislike a whit the more;

For Loue is free, and led with selfe delight,

Ne will enforced be with maisterdome or might.[78]

Although her words seem noble and kind at first, her intent is fixed on manipulating Scudamour into challenging Britomart. It is here that the tenors in both metaphors seem separate in meaning. Whereas Alciatus claims it is the flatterer who merely imitates his master, Duessa has no master and only superficially utilises some flattery, being arrogant and egocentric within.

Ate is quite different in nature than her deceitful companion, lacking the subtlety utilised by Duessa for manipulation. Spenser associates her with the ancient goddess who "plucked the golden apple from the Garden of Proserpina and thus caused the dispute among Venus, Juno, and Minerva which led to the Trojan war."[79] Ate's calling, is to mislead and she is the goddess and bringer of Discord in *The Faerie Queene*. Spenser's description of her is interesting due to the subtle details he employs to etch her into his reader's mind.

Her face most fowle and filthy was to see,

With squinted eyes contrarie wayes intended,

And loathly mouth, vnmeete a mouth to bee,

That nought but gall and venim comprehended,

And wicked wordes that God and man offended:

Her lying tongue was in two parts diuided,

And both the parts did speake, and both contended;

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[78] Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, ed. A.C. Hamilton (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2007), 417.
[79] *The Spenser Encyclopedia* ed. A.C. Hamilton e.a. (London: Routledge, 1990), 76.

And as her tongue, so was her hart discided,

That neuer thought one thing, but doubly stil was guided.[80]

A number of features he attributes to Ate make her head seem very serpent-like; the squinted, slanting eyes and forked tongue, as well as the idea that nought but bile and venom comes forth from her mouth, combined form a snake-like facial structure. Portraying Ate as a snake is a very logical thematic step, as she personifies a vile creature that spreads malice and discord through words. The picture of the snake was widely employed also in emblem art, however, usually constituting but part of a far more complicated tenor, involving various different attributes.

Cesare Ripa, for instance, created a number of emblems in which he utilises the serpent theme. In his emblem on heresy, he creates a complicated picture that matches Spenser's sketch of Ate to a substantial degree.

Cesare Ripa, *Iconologia: or, moral emblems*, London: ECCO Print Editions, 1709, 145.

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[80] Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, ed. A.C. Hamilton (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2007), 415.

This emblem is particularly apt due to similar words utilised by Ripa in his explanation; both Ripa and Spenser employ the word 'hag' in order to describe their antagonist's appearance. It must be stated though that Ripa's text was originally written in Italian and therefore he, obviously, did not utilise this denomination himself, rather its Italian equivalent. Ripa describes Heresie as being: "An old lean hag, of a terrible Aspect […] in her left Hand a Book shut up, Serpents coming out of it, and, with her right, seems to scatter them abroad."[81] Interesting here is how the tenor overall does not match; whereas Spenser has Ate personify discord, Ripa's emblem deals with heresy. The parallel, however, is signified by the meaning of the snakes themselves, rather than the whole picture. The book of Genesis narrates how "the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made."[82] It was the serpent that convinced Eve to eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, leading to the eventual 'Fall of Man'. This is likely the most important utilisation of the serpent as a cunning liar, and therefore a proper image for Ate, but even more so for heresy, as the snake urged upon Adam and Eve the first ever act of heresy among people. The reason why Ripa depicts an old hag is because "oldness denotes the inveterate Malice", and made her ugly, because she is "depriv'd of the Light of Faith."[83] Both explanations also hold true for Ate, who inhabits the gates of hell in Spenser's tale.

Two other emblem writers, who use serpents or serpent-like imagery are Vaenius and Alciatus. Their emblems, however, utilise this particular vehicle to personify envy, which is also malicious:

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[81] Cesare Ripa, *Iconologia: or, moral emblems* (London: ECCO Print Editions, 1709), 145
[82] *The Holy Bible: The King James version* (London: HarperCollins, 2010), Genesis 3:1
[83] Cesare Ripa, *Iconologia: or, moral emblems* (London: ECCO Print Editions, 1709), 145

Inuidia .

EMBLEMA LXXI.

Andreas Alciatus, *1 The Latin Emblems*, ed. Peter M. Daly, London: University of Toronto

Press, 1985, 71.

Alciatus' emblem portrays another hag, "chewing on viper's flesh,"[84] and whose head is

covered with snakes, as is the head of the Medusa in classical mythology. This similarity in

the vehicles of these metaphors can be stretched to great lengths and great diligence should be

taken to not over generalise a particular theme in an image as to avoid any misconceptions on

the relationship between tenor and vehicle in the metaphor itself. Vaenius' emblem depicts a

Cupid, the personification of love, and portrays it with the shadow of a Medusa and the

theme: "enuy is loue's shadowe". [85]

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[84] Andreas Alciatus, *1 The Latin Emblems*, ed. Peter M. Daly (London: University of Toronto Press, 1985), 71.
[85] Otto Vaenius, *Amorum Emblemata* (London: Garland publishing, 1979), 50.

Otto Vaenius, *Amorum Emblemata*, London: Garland publishing, 1979, 50.

Interesting about this emblem in relation to the previous one is that the observant reader may discern the snakes carried by the Medusa shadow in the picture. This exactly matches the image sketched by Alciatus. This emblem is particularly interesting for Spenser-related purposes due to its tenor, as it establishes the connection between love, as a virtue, and envy, as its corresponding sin. This way of combining themes is also found in Spenser's work where he pits a particular virtue against a sin in each book of *the Faerie Queene,* for example chastity and lust in Book III.

Lust

The vice corresponding to chastity in book III of *the Faerie Queene* has many diverse personifications, both in Spenser and the visual arts. It is often associated with blind or irrational love, as "passion has blinded the lover's eyes and taken reason away from him, causing him to direct his lustful feelings towards another than the one who serves him:"[86] the one who truly loves him. Although Spenser employs a very broad definition of the virtue of chastity, he clearly distinguishes between love and lust, as "throughout *the Faerie Queene* 'love' aspires to the condition of eternity, while 'lust' degenerates into the destructive patterns of malign fate."[87]

The most overt image of lust in *the Faerie Queene* is definitely that of Malbecco, whose beautiful wife, Hellenore, is taken by the false knight Paridell and refuses to return to him. He is described tracking her in a pasture with goats, near a camp of satyrs:

Vpon his hands and feete he crept full light

And like a Gote emongst the Gotes did rush,

That through the helpe of his faire hornes on hight,

And misty dampe of misconceyuing night,

And eke through likenesse of his gotish beard,

He did the better counterfeite aright:[88]

The image of the goat relating to lust is utilised also by Cesare Ripa in his emblem on lust. He portrays a pretty woman with a scorpion and a goat next to her, commenting: "The scorpion is

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[86] *The European Emblem: Selected papers from the Glasgow conference 11-14 August 1987*, ed. B.F. Scholz, M. Bath & D. Weston (Leiden, 1990), 156.

[87] Richard A. McCabe, *The Pillars of Eternity: Time and Providence in the Faerie Queene* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1989), 184.

[88] Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, ed. A.C. Hamilton (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2007), 385.

an emblem of lust, as is the goat," explaining also why Spenser chose this very subtle implementation of the goat to depict Malbecco's lustfulness.

198 Lust

Cesare Ripa, *Iconologia: or, moral emblems*, London: ECCO Print Editions, 1709, 50

Malbecco's wife, Hellenore, ends up with a group of Satyrs in the woods, after she is raped and abandoned by Paridell. Her own lustfulness is uncovered by Spenser earlier in the story, when Paridell makes his intentions clear at the dinner table.

> With speaking lookes, that close embassage bore,
>
> He rou'd at her and told his secret care:
>
> For all that art he learned had of yore.
>
> Ne was she ignoraunt of that leud lore,
>
> But in his eye his meaning wisely redd,
>
> And with the like him aunswerd euermore:
>
> Shee sent at him one fyrie dart, whose hedd
>
> Empoisned was with priuy lust and gealous dredd.[89]

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[89] Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, ed. A.C. Hamilton (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2007), 374.

Due to her lustful nature, she prefers the company of the satyrs over that of her husband, as the satyr was known as the epitome of lust due to their virility. The fact that they are half goat, half man is the basis of this interpretation. Also "they are followers of Dionysos, and in representing the natural forces of fertility, they are often licentious."[90] Spenser describes how Malbecco sees that "his louely wife emongst them lay, / embraced of a satyre rough and rude, who all the night did minde his ioyous play,"[91] and she becomes infatuated with lust and passion.

P.C. Hooft's emblem that also utilises a satyr to signify lust, reads: "Froide, elle allume", meaning 'being cold, she creates fire'. The emblem is a warning to women who are too cold towards men and, through disinterest, are often the target of lust.
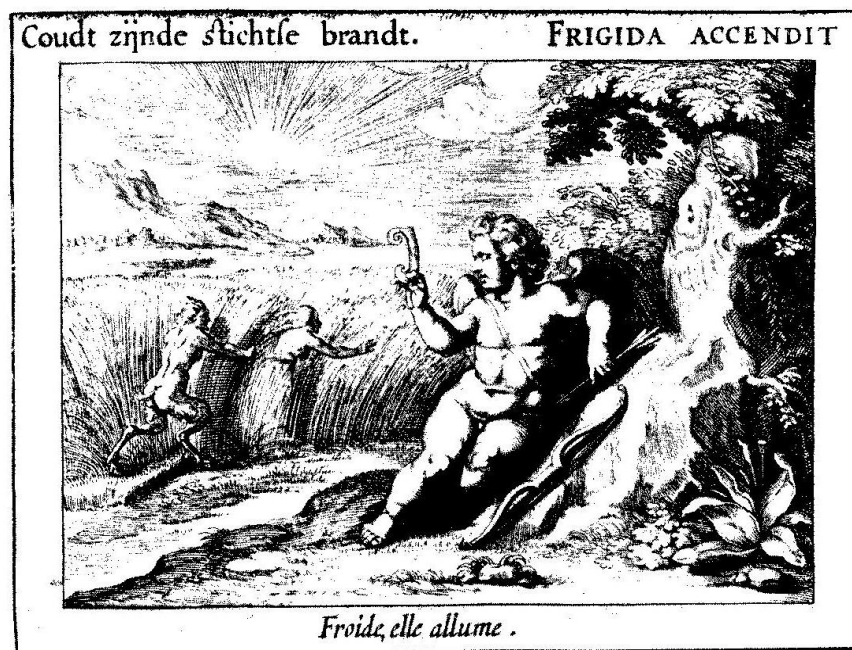
P.C. Hooft, *Emblemata Amatoria*, Leiden: Martinus Nijhoff, 1983, 56-7.

The emblem portrays a woman fleeing into the woods while being pursued by a satyr. Cupid watches them from a distance. Spenser employs the image of the satyr in the same manner as

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[90] *The Spenser Encyclopedia* ed. A.C. Hamilton e.a. (London: Routledge, 1990), 628.
[91] Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, ed. A.C. Hamilton (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2007), 385.

Hooft, but the woman in the emblem flees from the satyrs' lustful intentions whilst Hellenore elects to remain with the creatures in their village, showing a shimmer of her own nature as well. Hooft, however, does seem to leave women in a difficult position, as by being cold they appear to attract unwanted attention, but when they are open towards men, their behaviour could also be interpreted as lustful. Spenser does not directly impose the same paradox on women, but does judge Hellenore for her actions.

Spenser derives Hellenore's name from Helen of Troy, the most beautiful woman in the world, whose abduction sparked the Trojan war. Spenser himself writes how:

> she to his [Malbecco's] closet went, where all his wealth
>
> Lay hid: thereof she countlesse summes did reare,
>
> the which she meant away with her to beare;
>
> the rest she fyr'd for sport, or for despight;
>
> As Hellene, when she saw aloft appeare
>
> the Troiane flames, and reach to heuens hight
>
> Did clap her hands and ioyed at that dolefull sight.[92]

Spenser depicts the destruction of Troy in the Illiad through Malbecco's burning mansion. Spenser employs fire imagery with both negative and positive connotations, in this instance it is "an emblem of Hellenore's unquenchable lust and Malbecco's insatiable jealousy,"[93] because "lust also is a fire which consumes a person from within."[94] There are multiple ways of interpreting the image of Helen of Troy as a personification of lust. In Spenser, Hellenore is called "the second Helen, a symbol of woman's infidelity who goes dancing with the satyrs

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[92] Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, ed. A.C. Hamilton (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2007), 380.
[93] *The Spenser Encyclopedia*, ed. A.C. Hamilton e.a. (London: Routledge, 1990), 307
[94] *The Spenser Encyclopedia*, ed. A.C. Hamilton e.a. (London: Routledge, 1990), 307

garlanded as Queen of the May."[95] Another interpretation is utilised by George Wither, who

focuses rather on the men who lust after Helen. The emblem bears the following motto:

"Where Hellen is, there, will be Warre; / For, Death and Lust, Companions are."
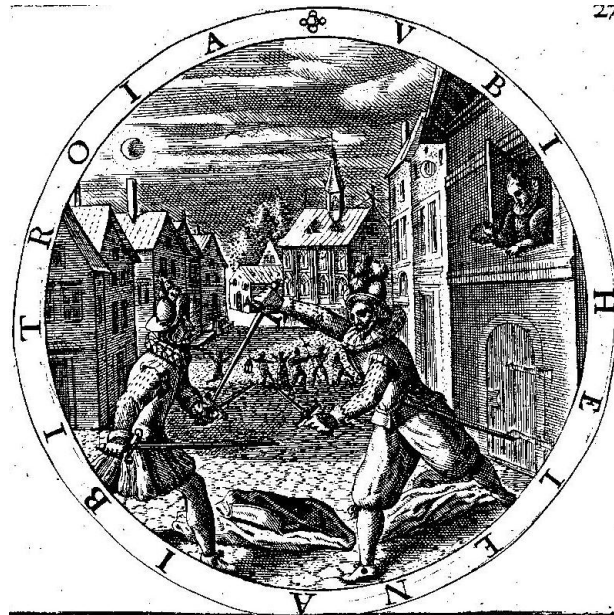
George Wither *A Collection of Emblemes: Ancient and Moderne*, (South Carolina: University

of South Carolina Press, 1975), 26.

Although it does not involve Hellenore , a similar usage of this theme does occur later in *the*

Faerie Queene, when knights battle for Florimell's girdle.[96] Whereas "the satyrs in book III

are so primitive and lecherous as to be excluded from the virtue of chastity and even from its

abuse: their sexual appetites are so far distanced from the human and the civilized as to be

neither good nor evil, […] this amorality does not extend to Hellenore,"[97] who is judged by

Spenser for her lustful actions. Wither warns that men should "converse with none, but those

that modest are; / for, they that can of whoredome make a jest, / will entertaine it,"[98] which

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[95] *The Spenser Encyclopedia*, ed. A.C. Hamilton e.a. (London: Routledge, 1990), 628.
[96] Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, ed. A.C. Hamilton (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2007), 436.
[97] *The Spenser Encyclopedia*, ed. A.C. Hamilton e.a. (London: Routledge, 1990), 628.
[98] George Wither, *A Collection of Emblemes: Ancient and Moderne* (South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 1975), 27.

somewhat corresponds to Hellenore's behaviour in Spenser's work, whose lustful disposition takes her beyond human sexual interaction.

By discussing emblems by a variety of artists and themes, I have been able to establish a number of parallels in theme, tenor and vehicle in the imagery of Spenser and his contemporaries. Although the nature of the correlation differs for each emblem and only a single direct link has been somewhat proven, a great amount of common ground can be established, much indebted to the common sources available to Renaissance artists.

5. Conclusion

Spenser's *The Faerie Queene* contains many themes and scenes that seem common in Renaissance moral literature, especially the emblem art that was produced at the time, which addresses a great variety of themes and images that also occur in Spenser's work. Spenser's elaborate imagery lends itself particularly well to comparison with emblems, due to its descriptive, visual characteristic. Although it is hardly possible to discern any direct correlation between Spenser's metaphors and personifications and particular Renaissance emblems, there are a number of conclusions that can still be drawn. The Renaissance interest in the visual arts stemmed largely from Classical works of Aristotle, Plato and Horace, specifically the rivalry between poetry and painting, as interpreted by Renaissance artists and critics. Spenser's awareness of his images shows most clearly when there are "carefully composed mental pictures built into the text of a work, […] [and] their visualisation is intended both to summarise and make memorable the important content."[99]

Only a handful of emblems show a clear correlation with Spenser's work. Alciatus' image of Geryon has already been affirmed to be a likely source of inspiration for Spenser in his depiction of Triamond. There is also great variance in matching tenors and vehicles between Spenser and the emblem artists, a testament to the great variety in depictions of Classical scenes and their interpretation by artists. The image of the sceptre as a bringer of diplomacy and concord, which occurs both in Spenser and in the work of other Renaissance artists shows a likely indebtedness to the Classical god Mercury and his sceptre: Caduceus.

The image of the armed virgin, which has a very Christian interpretation, but can be traced back to Classical times also seems widespread in Renaissance emblems, and features a key role in *The Faerie Queene* through Britomart. The contrary vice of Lust, is personified by

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[99] Charles Moseley, *A Century of Emblems – An Introductory Anthology* (Aldershot: Scholarly Press, 1989), 6.

a variety of beastlike creatures, from goat to satyr, expressing their virility and incapability of love as key in their lustfulness. The human epitome of lust in the Renaissance seems to come in the form of Helen of Troy, whose frivolous behaviour sparked a war.

The vices of dissent and pretention as opposed to concord are personified in Spenser's work by Ate and Duessa, who are compared to the serpent and the chameleon, both of which seem to have inherited their negative connotations from a number of their biological characteristics, and in the case of the serpent, its prominence in the book of Genesis. Also the oldness that is associated with falsehood seems a commonly recurring theme in Renaissance art, when both Ate and Duessa are represented by Spenser as being old hags.

I hope that, through establishing these parallels between different forms of art in the Renaissance, some insight has been provided into the philosophy and morality of the time, as well as featuring a great variety of interpretations and differences in opinion between artists, although their historical sources seem similar in many cases.

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