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Exemplars of Error in the Works of Spenser and Sidney

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EXEMPLARS OF ERROR IN THE WORKS OF SPENSER AND SIDNEY

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To: Dean Michael R. Heithaus
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This thesis, written by Rene Ferrer, and entitled Exemplars of Error in the Works of Spenser and Sidney, having been approved in respect to style and intellectual content, is referred to you for judgment.

We have read this thesis and recommend that it be approved.

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Date of Defense: November 15, 2019

The thesis of Rene Ferrer is approved.

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Vice President for Research and Economic Development
and Dean of the University Graduate School

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my family, my friends, and my loved ones. I have been blessed to have a life filled with people who care for me and have picked me up when I stumbled, and for that I will always be grateful. I am where I am because of your love and support.

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My coursework through the English Department has challenged me, stimulated me, and given me a chance to not only explore literature, but examine how it both reflects and shapes our lives.

ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

EXEMPLARS OF ERROR IN THE WORKS OF SPENSER AND SIDNEY

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The purpose of this thesis was to examine how the Elizabethan poets Edmund Spenser and Sir Philip Sidney explored the idea of emulation within the pages of The Faerie Queene and The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia. Specifically, how both poets employed the unorthodox characters of Malbecco and Amphialus within texts meant to provide moral instruction to the reader.

This research will be accomplished by examining the philosophical underpinnings relating to ideas about emulation, conducting a thorough close reading of primary texts, and studying scholarly articles relating to Spenser, Sidney, the English Renaissance, and emulation.

This thesis will endeavor to establish that the figures of Malbecco and Amphialus serve a vital role within their respective texts. Their role in Spenser and Sidney's seminal works is to serve not as exemplars of emulation for the reader to imitate, but exemplars of error whose example the reader is meant to be wary of.

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Introduction

In the days of the Roman Republic, it was a common tradition for fathers in Rome to introduce their sons to Homer's epic poem, *The Iliad*. They would instruct their sons to look to the Trojan hero Hector who, as Ben Tipping describes in his book, *Exemplary Epic*, served "as [a] complex exemplar of Roman republicanism" and "social responsibility" (74). Hector was viewed as the quintessential Roman and it was believed that, by emulating his behavior, the young man studying Hector might come to a better understanding of what it means to be a citizen of Rome.

To understand what ancient Romans hoped to gain from a study of Hector, one must first come to an understanding of the concept of emulation. Aristotle attempted to define emulation as early as the 4th century B.C. in his work, *The Rhetoric*. In it, Aristotle writes that:

> Emulation is pain caused by seeing the presence, in persons whose nature is like our own, of good things that are highly valued and are possible for ourselves to acquire; but it is felt not because others have these goods, but because we have not got them ourselves. It is therefore a good feeling felt by good persons, whereas envy is a bad feeling felt by bad persons. Emulation makes us take steps to secure the good things in question, envy makes us take steps to stop our neighbour having them (202)

In the quoted passage, Aristotle describes a relationship between the emulated, the one who achieves and acquires good things, and the emulator, who sees the example set forth by the emulated and, rather that envying the success of the emulated, is instead inspired to seek to attain good things for themselves. Aristotle describes emulation as the virtuous

expression of the emotions behind envy, with a positive rather than negative outcome, as emulation leads one to achieve honor, personal fortune, or success, while envy leads one to tear down another. Aristotle also illustrates the subtle but important distinction between imitation, which is the act of modeling or copying someone else, and emulation, which is similar to imitation, but with the goal of attempting to match or surpass a person or an achievement.

The argument that emulation is not mere imitation or reproduction is one which the first century Roman rhetorician Marcus Fabius Quintilianus, also known as Quintilian, would agree with. As he writes in *The Orator's Education*, "I do not want Paraphrase to be a mere passive reproduction, but to rival and vie with the original in expressing the same thoughts." Quintilian was speaking specifically of learning from texts in order to become a better rhetorician, but his statement is applicable to all forms of emulation, not just the art of rhetoric. As Quintilian explains elsewhere within the text, "it is a disgrace too to be content merely to attain the effect you are imitating. Once again, what would have happened if no one had achieved more than the man he was following?" According to Quintilian, the value which comes from emulation is not simply in imitating what came before but learning from what came before so that it can be bettered and improved upon. So, when Hector offers up a prayer in *The Iliad*, crying out "Zeus, grant that this my child may be even as myself, chief among the Trojans; let him be not less excellent in strength, and let him rule Ilium with his might. Then may one say of him as he comes from battle, 'The son is far better than the father'" (Homer 108), Hector is expressing his desire to the gods that his son emulate him. And in so doing, Hector is echoing the hopes of those ancient Roman fathers who also hoped for the same. That their sons would learn

valuable lessons on how to be a Roman through emulation, and thus better them and surpass them.

Homer's portrayal of Hector in *The Iliad* is just one example of a long-standing tradition of authors and poets crafting fictional works and characters for their readers which are not only meant to simply delight or entertain, but to provide moral instruction, as well. The parable is a common example of how literature can be used to impart a moral lesson on the audience, but it is not the only means to accomplish that goal, with both poetry and prose providing examples of moral rectitude and virtuous behavior in fictional characters who are meant to serve as exemplars for the purpose of emulation.

The value of literary characters serving as the basis for emulation to shape the morals and character of the reader is one which finds support in the work of noted English Renaissance rhetorician Roger Ascham. While Ascham is not speaking specifically of literary characters, he makes the claim in *The Schoolmaster* that exemplars are "more valuable, for good and ill, then twenty precepts written in books." In Ascham's view, learning by example was far more effective than learning by rule. His contemporary and fellow rhetorician Thomas Wilson also had a similar viewpoint. One which Wilson espoused in his book, *The Arte of Rhetorique*, where he states:

> Now before we use either to write, or speake eloquently we must dedicate our myndes wholly, to folowe the moste wise and learned menne, and seke to fashion, aswell their speache and gesturing, as their wit or endityng. The whiche when we earnestly mynde to do, we cannot but in time apere somewhat like the[m]

Like Ascham, Wilson believes that learning from the example of others is more profitable than learning from rule. By emulating the wisest and most learned men, the emulator is more likely to become like the figures which they are attempting to emulate.

Wilson goes one step further than Ascham, arguing that art is "a surer guide, then nature, considering we se as lively by the art, what we do, as though we red a thing in writtyng, wheras natures doings are not to open to all men." Ascham's philosophy supports the idea of fictional characters serving as examples of emulation, but Wilson specifically argues in favor of fictional characters as models for emulation, even stating that good exemplars are more likely to be found in literature than in reality. As Wilson states, fictional characters allow for a fuller examination of the exemplary character, whereas real life figures are not necessarily so transparent to the outside observer. Fictional characters, therefore, make for more effective sources for emulation than historical figures. And yet for all their philosophy and rhetoric, it is not Roger Ascham or Thomas Wilson who put their belief in the power of exemplary characters in literature into practice, but two Elizabethan poets, Sir Philip Sidney and Edmund Spenser, who not only subscribed to that belief, but put it into practice in their own poetic works.

Edmund Spenser and Sir Philip Sidney are remarkably similar in a great many ways. Born in 1552 and 1554, respectively, both men were members of Queen Elizabeth's court at various times and are remembered as two of the most prominent poets of Elizabethan England. More than that, both men were advocates for the idea that literature could serve a purpose beyond mere artistic expression, and that literary characters could serve as a basis for moral instruction and emulation. Edmund Spenser's intent to write about characters worthy of emulation can be seen in the very first canto of his epic poem,

The Faerie Queene, which begins with a scene in which "A Gentle Knight was pricking on the plaine,/Ycladd in mightie armes and siluer shielde" (Spenser 31). The character depicted in the quoted passage is the Red Cross Knight, and his role in Spenser's poem, like that of several other characters introduced throughout the course of *The Faerie Queene*, is clearly explained in Spenser's "Letter to Raleigh", where Spenser lays bare his plan for his epic poem, stating that:

> The generall end therefore of all the booke is to fashion a gentleman or noble person in vertuous and gentle discipline: Which for that I conceiued shoulde be most plausible and pleasing, being coloured with an historicall fiction, the which the most part of men delight to read, rather for variety of matter, then for profite of the ensample (714-5)

Spenser's purpose throughout his epic is not simply to create a literary work to entertain his readers, but to produce a work in which men might find exemplars worthy of emulation, and through those examples become as virtuous, if not more so, than the characters which they emulate. To that end, every trial faced by each of Spenser's heroes, whether it be the Redcross Knight, Guyon, Britomart, Cambel, Triamond, Artegal, Calidore, or Prince Arthur himself, was designed by Spenser to provide moral instruction in each of the virtues represented by each character.

Spenser goes even further, explaining his reasoning for why he considers fictional works to be suitable for moral instruction, stating that "much more profitable and gratious is doctrine by ensample, then by rule" (715) in his "Letter to Raleigh." In Spenser's view, moral instruction is most effective when done through example, modeling behavior through the use of fictional characters, rather than simply telling another what is or is not

moral behavior. To support his argument, Spenser looked to past epic poets and the subjects of their poems, writing of how he:

> followed all the antique Poets historicall, first Homere, who in the Persons of Agamemnon and Vlysses hath ensampled a good gouernor and a virtuous man, the one in his Ilias, the other in his Odysseis: then Virgil, whose like intention was to doe in the person of Aeneas: after him Ariosto comprised them both in his Orlando: and lately Tasso disseuered them againe, and formed both parts in two persons, namely that part which they in Philosophy call Ethice, or vertues of a priuate man, coloured in his Rinaldo: The other named Politice in his Godfredo (714)

Spenser illustrates his point by citing the epic heroes of prior works and how the poets who composed those respective works used those characters as exemplars worthy of emulation for their audiences, exemplifying the traits of good governorship in Agamemnon, virtue in Odysseus, ethics in Reynaldo, and so on.

That belief also informed Spenser's choice in the subject matter of his poem, which is why he "chose the historye of king Arthure, as most fitte for the excellency of his person, being made famous by many mens former workes, and also further from the daunger of enuy, and suspition of present time" (714). King Arthur was, in Spenser's view, a suitable subject for his epic poem due to his great fame, making him a significant and worthwhile subject of an epic poem, as well as his great virtues and his noteworthy character, making him worthy of emulation. The other great motivator for Spenser is that King Arthur was not a true historical figure, and so free of the prejudices which come with viewing historical characters. That last point was especially important to Spenser,

given that he was writing in a very politically charged climate and so could not afford using historical figures whose presence may detract from the stated purpose for his work or, worse, potentially turn his reader against him. Particularly when his intended audience included no less a personage than Queen Elizabeth herself.

But while Spenser provided a brief discourse into his ideas of the value of poetry for the edification and instruction of the reader in virtuous behavior in his "Letter to Raleigh," Sir Philip Sidney wrote a more thorough treatise on the subject with *The Defence of Poesy*. Going into greater detail than Spenser did in his letter, Sidney reflected on the idea of using historical figures rather than fictional characters for the purpose of emulation, writing that "the historian, bound to tell things as things were, cannot be liberal (without he will be poetical) of a perfect pattern, but, as in Alexander or Scipio himself, show doings, some to be liked, some to be misliked. And then how will you discern what to follow but by your own discretion" (224). The disadvantage of using a historical figure, as Sidney would argue, is that the reader must take the historical figure as they truly were. That fact made them inherently useless for the purpose of emulation, as flesh and blood human beings are inherently contradictory beings, and history has demonstrated the failure of attempting to emulate historical figures time and time again. No matter who the historical figure may be, no matter how noble society may have considered their cause or actions to have been, all human beings are flawed, fallible, and often contradictory in their thoughts and behavior. For every person who attempts to point to Abraham Lincoln, for example, as someone whose beliefs and character are worthy of emulation, there will

be another, such as *New York Times* blogger Barry Gewen, who will point out that Lincoln was himself a virulent racist who did not believe Africans to be equal to Whites. In his blog titled "Abraham Lincoln, Racist", Gewen points out that Lincoln:

> held opinions not very different from those of the majority of his racist countrymen. Even if slavery was wrong, "there is a physical difference between the white and black races that will for ever forbid the two races from living together on terms of social and political equality." His solution was a form of ethnic cleansing: shipping blacks off to Liberia, or Haiti, or Central America — anywhere as long as it wasn't the United States

That is but one example out of a multitude. No matter who the historical figure may be or what role they played in their society, whether as a president, a civil rights leader, or war hero, they will all be imperfect beings. They will all possess any number of moral failings or character flaws. And according to both Spenser and Sidney, the inherent flaws which every person possesses is what makes them ultimately unsuitable to be held up as an object of emulation, because while they may have achieved a great deal of good in their lives, their failings can only serve to obscure the noble qualities which one may wish to highlight, or distract the audience from the moral lessons which the speaker or author may wish to impart.

Sidney also further expands on the ideas which Spenser puts forward in his "Letter to Raleigh", commenting on the role which philosophy has in the shaping of moral character, and how it too fails in the arena of providing moral instruction. Sidney negatively compares the philosopher to the poet, declaring that:

> the philosopher, in respect of his methodical proceeding, doth teach more perfectly than the poet, yet do I think that no man is so much philophilosophos as to compare the philosopher in moving with the poet. And that moving is of a higher degree than teaching, it may by this appear, that it is well nigh both the cause and effect of teaching. For who will be taught, if he be not moved with desire to be taught? And what so much good doth that teaching bring forth (I speak still of moral doctrine) as that it moveth one to do that which it doth teach? (226)

Sidney lays bare the limitations of dependence on philosophers for moral instruction, as philosophers can not initiate a desire to learn moral correctness. They do not inspire others to learn and grow. Rather, they provide knowledge and insight to those who have already chosen to seek out that knowledge offered by the philosopher and who, under their own will, have moved themselves into taking action. Philosophers educate the intellectually curious and the introspective who have already begun a quest of contemplation and personal growth. In short, philosophy teaches those who least need to be taught, while never reaching those most in need of instruction. And, having provided that knowledge, their teachings do not ensure that their students take that knowledge and put it into practice.

Sidney speaks further on the subject, arguing that solely acquiring knowledge is not enough. For that knowledge to have meaning, it must be put into practice. There must be a tangible result, a positive change, from acquiring that knowledge. Continuing, Sidney argues that:

> it is not gnosis but praxis must be the fruit. And how praxis can be, without being moved to practise, it is no hard matter to consider. The philosopher showeth you the way, he informeth you of the particularities, as well of the tediousness of the way, as of the pleasant lodging you shall have when your journey is ended, as of the many by-turnings that may divert you from your way. But this is to no man but to him that will read him, and read him with attentive studious painfullness; which constant desire whosoever hath in him, hath already passed half the hardness of the way, and therefore is beholding to the philosopher but for the other half (226)

As Sidney rightly reminds us, the end goal is not gnosis, which is no more than the acquisition of knowledge or an understanding of what constitutes moral behavior. Rather, the end goal should be praxis, when the student acquires that knowledge and puts that knowledge to practical use in their own lives. In Sidney's estimation, the philosopher fails in that regard, as the philosopher can neither inspire a student to action to learn what is moral and can only inform a student of what is moral. The student must do all the work, as the philosopher never starts the student on their journey, and only meets them halfway in their journey. The student must do most of the work, first in seeking out instruction, and then in learning how to apply those lessons to their own life.

For Sidney, it is the poet who succeeds where both the historian and the philosopher fail. As he writes:

> our poet is the monarch. For he doth not only show the way, but give them so sweet a prospect into the way, as will entice any man to enter into it. Nay, he doth, as if your journey should lie through a fair vineyard, at the

> first give you a cluster of grapes, that full of that taste, you may long to pass further. He beginneth not with obscure definitions which must blur the margin with interpretations, and load the memory with doubtfulness; but he cometh to you with words set in delightful proportion, (...) with a tale forsooth he cometh unto you, with a tale which holdeth children from play, and old men from the chimney corner (226-7)

Sidney demonstrates the first major difference between the philosopher and the poet, in that the poet does not require their audience to come to them the way the philosopher requires a student to come to them, willing to sit, study, and learn the lexicon required to understand the philosopher's beliefs. Instead, the poet entices the interest of their audience by employing words in such a fashion that they draw the interest of a wide and varied audience, thus setting them on the path. Rather than requiring students to learn their language, as the philosopher demands, the poet speaks to the audience in terms they can understand. In an artistic, almost musical way which is pleasing to the ears of their audience.

The other principal difference between the philosopher and the poet is the way the poet conveys their moral messages to their intended audience. Continuing, Sidney writes that the poet:

> pretending no more, doth intend the winning of the mind from wickedness to virtue - even as the child is often brought to take most wholesome things by hiding them in such other as have a pleasant taste, which, if one should begin to tell them the nature of aloes or rhubarbum they should receive, would sooner take their physic at their ears than at their mouth. So

> is it in men (most of which are childish in the best of things, till they be cradled in their graves): glad will they be to hear the tales of Hercules, Achilles, Cyrus, Aeneas; and, hearing them, must needs hear the right description of wisdom, valour, and justice; which, if they had been barely, that is to say philosophically, set out, they would swear they be brought to school again (227)

Sidney's presents an image of the philosopher who provides their students with hard, often unpalatable truths, while the poet presents those truths in such a way that they are not only palatable, but sweet and easier to digest. The poet presents truths within the beauty and richness of narrative, and in so doing, makes their audience more receptive to those truths, and in that manner educates their audience without the audience realizing that their education was the goal.

In *The Defence of Poesy*, Sidney adeptly illustrates the difference between the philosopher and the poet. Both are able to provide moral instruction, but unlike the philosopher, who requires a student who comes to the philosopher hungry for learning, the poet creates that desire for greater understanding through the power of their narrative. Whereas philosophers are dependent on their students finding their inspiration elsewhere, poets create inspiration. And rather than lecturing a student with a recitation of virtues and explaining why that behavior is just and good the way a philosopher would, the poet instead embeds their moral teachings within the narrative through the example of the virtuous behavior of fictional characters such as Hector, Achilles, and Aeneas. By capturing

the imagination of their audience, the poet is better able to impart valuable moral and ethical lessons to their audience without the audience being aware that they are consuming a difficult truth or a valuable moral lesson.

Understanding the value which both Spenser and Sidney place on the power of literature to transform a person for the better provides the reader with a lens through which to see both their seminal works, *The Faerie Queene* and *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, in a new light. Spenser made it clear in his "Letter to Raleigh" precisely what he intended to do with his epic. And after a reading of *The Defence of Poesy*, one can surmise that Sidney was doing something very similar with *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*. In both we see many of the same elements: the heroes who represent important values and, through hardship and conflict, rise to become a version of their better selves. Antagonists who help the heroes become their better selves by giving them something to strive against, confront, and finally overcome, bettering themselves in the process. Like a whetstone, these antagonists help sharpen the protagonists into the representatives of moral virtue which they ultimately become. And lastly, the innocent whom the protagonists will either rescue from harm or avenge, or who will exhort the protagonists on to even greater acts of heroism and moral virtue.

Most of the characters in both tales fall fairly simply within those broad categories, but not all of them. In some cases, there are characters who seem to blur the lines. Who behave like antagonists, and yet, sometimes, they are not actually there for the protagonist to confront and overcome, but are instead there so that the poet can chart their own progression, or rather, regression. In other cases, they seem to be mirror images of

the protagonists, sharing many of the same traits, and their fall is not seen as a great triumph but instead a great tragedy.

This thesis will deal with two such characters: Malbecco from Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*, and Amphialus from Sir Philip Sidney's *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*. An argument could be made that both characters represent a category which neither Spenser nor Sidney explicitly detail but which, for their purposes, would have been vital. It is not enough to illustrate correct moral behavior and expect the audience to emulate that behavior. The audience must also be presented with examples of failure. Instances in which individuals have the potential to pursue the right and just path, but who instead fall away from that path for whatever reason and come to pay the price for their mistakes. These exemplars of error in Spenser's and Sidney's works exist to illustrate how those with the best of intentions or the noblest of hearts can still be brought low by their own human frailties. By charting the course of the lives of characters like Malbecco and Amphialus, Spenser and Sidney are not simply providing an interesting narrative, but are once again educating their audience in such a way that the audience does not know that they are learning a valuable lesson, and doing so in such a way that they would not otherwise be able to with protagonists like the Redcross Knight and Musidorus. Rather than being meant to be emulated, Malbecco and Amphialus instead serve as warning signs, a reminder of what could happen if one allows corruption, whether it is an internal corruption of the heart or an external corruption of purpose, to darken them and taint everything that they do.

Malbecco

In the "Letter to Raleigh", Edmund Spenser explains his primary purpose for writing *The Faerie Queene*, which "is to fashion a gentleman or noble person in vertuous and gentle discipline" (714). Through the protagonists of his works, Spenser hopes that his readers will be inspired by the examples set forth by his characters and grow to become better human beings. He goes on to speak of the protagonists of the first three books of *The Faerie Queene*, stating that the first book is "of the knight of the Redcrosse, in whome I expresse Holynes: The seconde of Sir Guyon, in whome I sette forth Temperaunce: The third of Britomartis a Lady knight, in whome I picture Chastity" (716). All three characters are what Paul Suttie, in his journal article titled "Exemplary Behavior in *The Faerie Queene*", would refer to as exemplars. In Spenser's own words, each character exemplifies a specific virtuous trait. The Redcross Knight exemplifies holiness, Guyon exemplifies temperance, and Britomart exemplifies chastity. That Spenser would fill his epic poem with exemplary characters is no surprise, as he made it clear that was the stated purpose of his work.

Suttie, however, notes that the exemplars are not the only principal figures in Spenser's work. There are also the allegorical beings within it, or personifications. These are the creatures known as Error, Furor, the Blatant Beast, and so on. And while Spenser draws a line between the exemplars and allegorical personifications to separate their roles in his poem, there is one figure who seemingly occupies both roles at various stages of Spenser's text. According to Suttie, "contrasting states of being may be seen in Malbecco, who, in turning from an exemplar into an actual personification of "Gealosie", dramatises the potential tyranny of this vice by showing it as capable of so taking over a person as to become

his very essence" (317). Malbecco is unusual in the entirety of *The Faerie Queene* in that he begins as a form of exemplar, albeit an apparent negative one, and through the course of Spenser's narrative, Malbecco's transformed into one of the many allegorical personifications populating the world of Spenser's fairy land.

For Spenser, the exemplary characters were the focus and the most important aspect of his work. As Suttie notes, "modern critics often define the exemplary in opposition to the allegorical... but this is not the way Spenser himself seems to understand the matter. Rather, his account... consists chiefly in his expounding the exemplary aspects of his poem's meaning" (313-4). And yet without the allegorical personifications found throughout his text, Spenser would not be able to accomplish his principal goal. The allegorical personifications represent the vices and challenges which his exemplars need to overcome in order to achieve their role as figures fit for emulation. Suttie points this out in his article, writing that "it is not so much that these principal characters have a "characteristic way of acting, which is severely limited in variety," as that they acquire one in the course of the story — are reduced to a significant simplicity of character" (319). As with Malbecco, all of Spenser's protagonists begin their respective books as fuller but flawed human beings. Suttie reminds us of this fact when he points out how:

> it is far from obvious that everything the Redcross knight does can properly be said to "expresse Holynes" (his dalliance with Duessa scarcely qualifies), or that Guyon's behaviour is invariably temperate (even in the act of accomplishing his mission in the Bower of Bliss, some critics have accused him of being just the opposite), or that Britomart is always the picture of chastity (witness her strangely flirtatious behaviour towards Amoret); and

> even Arthur himself, said by the letter to be "perfected in" all twelve of the virtues represented severally by the others, may be found to have his lapses — as in rushing off in passionate pursuit of Florimell, an action the narrator as much as calls unchaste (318)

As Suttie points out, none of the characters named live up to the ideals of the values which they are meant to represent at the onset of their journey. Without the presence of the allegorical personifications which they are forced to encounter and overcome, the exemplary characters of Spenser's text can never become figures worthy of emulation.

A strong argument for the value of those allegorical beings can be found in the first chapter of *Mythologies* by Roland Barthes, where he discusses the symbolism at play within the world of wrestling. Wrestling, as we know it, is not a true professional sport. The winner is not decided by a contest of strength or skill, as we would see in sports such as boxing or mixed martial arts competitions, and the audience knows it, too. As Barthes points out, the "public knows very well the distinction between wrestling and boxing; it knows that boxing is a Jansenist sport, based on a demonstration of excellence. One can bet on the outcome of a boxing-match: with wrestling, it would make no sense" (15), because "the function of the wrestler is not to win; it is to go exactly through the motions which are expected of him" (16). The winner and loser are chosen beforehand, and what we see take place is essentially pageantry. A modern-day morality play for modern consumption. Barthes further clarifies his argument, writing that "what is thus displayed for the public is the great spectacle of Suffering, Defeat, and Justice" (19), and that "what wrestling is above all meant to portray is a purely moral concept: that of justice" (21).

Beneath the spectacle, the purpose of wrestling is to impart universal truths onto its audience, using players who, rather than portraying human beings, instead signify either basic human vices or universal virtues.

That Barthesian worldview is what we see at play within the pages of *The Faerie Queene*, as the heroes of Spenser's world are essentially engaged in a form of pageantry, during which they encounter various figures on their journeys which they must bypass or overcome in order to accomplish their goals. Whether it is the serpentine Errour who entraps the Redcross Knight within her coils, the grotesque Blatant Beast who is pursued far and wide by Sir Calidore, or the wrathful Furor who assails Sir Guyon at the behest of his mother Occasion, they are all purely allegorical beings. They are the personification of ideas and concepts, a single trait which defines their being, and which motivates them to behave in the ways that they do. As Barthes points out when speaking of wrestlers, "as soon as the adversaries are in the ring, the public is overwhelmed with the obviousness of the roles" (Barthes 17). The same holds true of Spenser's creations, which play a very clear and obvious role within the story, which their names can attest to. As such, they are not fully-formed beings like their human opponents, who have all the attendant vices and virtues which make up the human heart. More than that, they specifically personify the sins and vices of those whom they oppose, giving them a way to overcome those faults within themselves and thus become the exemplar of virtue which they are meant to be. And since they all serve as a personification of the negative traits within their respective opponents, none are cast in a sympathetic light.

The sole exception to the pattern of casting the allegorical beings in a strictly negative light is Malbecco, whose story is told throughout Cantos IX and X of Book III of *The*

Faerie Queene, and who one could argue is depicted as an exemplary character in his own right by Spenser, albeit an exemplar of greed and jealousy. By the end of his story, Malbecco is transformed from a human being to the allegorical being known as Gelosy, which makes Malbecco/Gelosy unique in Spenser's text. As Suttie argues, the "apparent instability of the distinction between the two in the case of Malbecco, should alert us to just how fine is the line between the two kinds of figures in *The Faerie Queene*" (317). With the example of Malbecco, Spenser shows us that the exemplars of his story, the heroes which are meant to serve as models of emulation, are not quite so far removed from the allegorical monsters of his story. And yet, despite how fine a line exists between the two, no other character is depicted as an exemplar before being reduced to a state of pure personification as with Malbecco. And no allegorical personification is given a human face or a life before their existence as a personification of sin or vice. With Malbecco, however, Spenser describes the process by which he is transformed from man to allegory, a reductive process which strips away all there is of Malbecco until there is nothing left of him but his burning jealousy. Like the wrestlers which Barthes analyzes, wherein "each physical type expresses to excess the part which has been assigned to the contestant" (Barthes 17), Malbecco's body is likewise transformed until it to, in its own way, expresses to excess the part which has been assigned to him within the story by the close of his tale, that of Gelosy. And in so doing Spenser not only illustrates Malbecco's humanity and suffering, making him at once both a contemptible and pitiable figure, but also makes Malbecco an admirable figure to some degree. Someone who very nearly rises to the level of being worthy of emulation, only to fall short.

The first thing which distinguishes Malbecco from the rest of Spenser's expansive cast of characters is that, while he appears in the Book of Chastity, he has very little to do with Britomart, the subject of emulation for that book, save for one brief encounter alongside her ally, the pagan knight Satyrane. His purpose within the context of the story, then, is not to help Britomart grow into a more exemplary figure worth of emulation, whether by serving as an antagonist to her or as an innocent bystander whose aid Britomart could come to. Instead, his purpose within the story is primarily shaped by his experience with a knight accompanying Britomart and Satyrane, Paridell. A knight who, as Paridell himself puts it, is descended from the Trojan figure Paris. The contrast with Paridell lends credence to the argument that Malbecco is intended to serve the role of an exemplary character, as Spenser removes the exemplar of that book from view to focus his attention on Malbecco. Through his experience with Paridell, Malbecco demonstrates why he could be viewed as more than just an exemplar of greed or jealousy, but as Spenser's exemplar of error.

What makes Malbecco an exemplar of error is his flawed humanity, such as his discourtesy, which helps drives the events which lead to his metamorphosis into Gelosy. Unlike the allegorical beings whose company he would come to eventually join, his humanity allows for a great breadth of flaws and vices, discourtesy among them. Malbecco's flawed nature is initially revealed through the Squire of Dames who tells Satyrane and Paridell how "Therein a cancred crabbed Carle does dwell,/That has no skill of Court nor courtesie" (III.IX.3.5-6). In violation of all the laws of courtesy, Malbecco refuses to take in guests, even when those guests are beset by "a bitter stormy blast", and are buffeted "With showre and hayle so horrible and dred,/That this faire many were compeld at last,/To fly to succor to a little shed" (III.IX.11.5-8) where the swine were kept. Even after another

visitor, Britomart, appears during the storm, Malbecco would still refuse to open his gates. It is only after the knights threaten to burn his gates that Malbecco finally relents and grants them safe lodging. To the modern reader the concept of giving refuge to travelers may be unfamiliar, but the fact that even Satyrane and Britomart joined with Paridell in a plan to assault Malbecco's castle gives a hint to just how grievously Malbecco's behavior was viewed. Malbecco's discourteous behavior, however, was ultimately just another out-growth of his jealousy over Hellenore (Who, like Paridell, is also based on a figure from Homer's *Iliad*. Specifically, Helen of Troy). He barred guests from entering his home for fear that one would steal her away, and because of that fear, he hid her away even when his guests asked after her. "Then they Malbecco prayd of courtesy,/That of his lady they might haue the sight,/And company at meat, to doe them more delight" (III.IX.25.7-9). It is only after he is pressed on the matter that Malbecco finally acquiesces and produces Hellenore, allowing her to join their company.

Malbecco's jealousy and his possessiveness of Hellenore is most certainly an even greater flaw than his lack of courtesy. Malbecco's jealousy is so great that "he him selfe sate looking still askaunce,/Gainst Britomart" (III.IX.27.3-4). As the footnotes point out, "in his jealous desire to possess his wife he fears a woman as much as he does a man" (Spenser 374), and suspects that even Britomart poses as much of a threat of seducing his wife away from him as any man. Malbecco's guilt due to his possessiveness of Hellenore is a position which Helen Cheney Gilde takes in her article titled "Spenser's Hellenore and Some Ovidian Associations", where she argues Malbecco is deserving of everything which happens to him due to his maltreatment of Hellenore. Despite Hellenore's later cuckolding of Malbecco, Gilde argues that Spenser "is understanding of, even compassionate towards,

erring Hellenore. He insists that she has provocation, even justification, for her actions" (234). Gilde's arguments find easy textual support early in Canto IX, when Spenser writes the following:

> Yet is he lincked to a louely lasse,
> Whose beauty doth her bounty far surpasse,
> The which to him both far vnequall yeares,
> And also far vnlike conditions has;
> For she does ioy to play emongst her peares,
> And to be free from hard restraint and gealous feares (III.IX.4.4-9)

According to Harry Berger, Jr. in his journal piece titled "The Discarding of Malbecco: Conspicuous Illusion and Cultural Exhaustion in "*The Faerie Queene* III." IX-X.," it is among the community of satyrs where Hellenore "finds her proper place and realizes her ideal of domestic bliss by withdrawing from civilization to the primitive and innocent pastoral world of the satyr community" (144). There not only is she no longer "denied the sexual fulfillment which Spenser regards as natural" (Gilde 235) but, as a wife held in common by the entire community of satyrs, she is free from the hand of jealousy, whether Malbecco's or anyone else's.

But while Malbecco is a man riddled with flaws, that is not to say that he is lacking in qualities which make him sympathetic, either. Gilde would dispute that notion, saying that "Malbecco is clearly right in loathing himself" (239), but as Louise Gilbert Freeman suggests in her article titled "The Metamorphosis of Malbecco: Allegorical Violence and Ovidian Change", "The poet's lucid moral condemnation of Malbecco is mingled with a kind of pathos and understanding of his injured psyche. We can detect a wry compassion

for the cuckold in the text, a compassion not unmixed with the grotesque" (318). Malbecco's paranoia that his wealth would be stolen and that a guest would run off with Hellenore clearly was not an unfounded fear, since all of his fears ultimately came to pass within the poem with the exception of his death. If Paridell and Hellenore are another Paris and Helen of Troy, then "the association makes the husband in the old worn-out triangle an old worn-out Menelaus" (Berger 138), so despite claims that Malbecco suffers from a "tropological stupidity" (Freeman 312), he shrewdly recognizes himself as being the inheritor to Menelaus. He realizes that "his sexual poverty before his wife" (Freeman 311-2) will eventually drive her into the arms of another man, or even into the arms of a woman, so he fearfully guards against that. So, it seems that there were still things which even the half-blind Malbecco could clearly see. That may not be a commendable trait, as he "hoards and hides his treasure, his household, his wife, himself in desperate efforts to hold on to things he never truly experiences as his own" (Freeman 310), but it is something which makes him pitiable.

Malbecco, it could be argued, is even possessed of some admirable, even exemplary, qualities. Suttie rightfully points out that Malbecco "is progressively reduced to being nothing but the jealousy of which he then functions as an allegorical sign" (319), illustrating how Malbecco's quest worsens his inner corruption until it eventually proves to be his downfall. And yet there is still a level of courage involved in his ill-fated quest to rescue Hellenore who, as far as he knew, had been carried off violently against her will by an armed knight. As Spenser writes, "At last when sorrow he saw booted nought,/Ne griefe might not his loue to him restore,/he gan deuise, how her he reskew mought" (III.X.18.6-8). For an old man who preferred his solitude, it should not go unremarked that he left the

safe confines of his castle and his servants and went out alone in search of Hellenore. "When the "cancred crabbed Carle," is forced to leave the "priuitie" of his castle to search for Hellenore, he encounters the larger world, a world from which he feels radically alienated" (Freeman 316). It is a world which Malbecco has no contact with and does not interact with in any way, and one in which villains like Paridell and heroes like Britomart alike view him with disdain, and yet he set out "both by sea and lond" in search of Hellenore, and "Long he her sought, he sought her far and nere" (III.X.19.5-6). And no sign of her would he find until after encountering Braggadochio and Trompart, who he convinced to help him, although their motives were not altogether altruistic.

His pursuit of Hellenore as being noble on some level is supported by the text when the reader is reminded of Malbecco's belief that Hellenore was an unwilling victim and not an active participant in her own abduction. Malbecco recounts to his companions how Paridell "By treacherous deceipt did me depriue;/Through open outrage he her bore away,/And with fowle force vnto his will did driue" (III.X.27.5-7), reiterating Malbecco's belief that Hellenore was a victim in the whole affair and not an accomplice. And yet despite his belief that Paridell was a criminal who had abducted and raped his wife, when they encountered him on their journey his response to Braggadochio's apparent desire to challenge Paridell was "Perdy nay (said Malbecco) shall ye not:/But let him passé as lightly, as he came;/For little good of him is to be got,/And mickle peril to bee put to shame" (III.X.39.1-4), before urging his companions on to continue their search for his wife. His concern clearly was not with avenging any stain on his honor, but rather, finding Hellenore. An objective which might be imperiled if his traveling companion came to injury during a duel with Paridell. Malbecco was particularly concerned with continuing with the quest

since Paridell reported that, after "hauing filcht her bells, her vp he cast/To the wide world, and let her fly alone" (III.X.35.7-8), leaving her stranded in the woods. Malbecco is given cause to believe that Paridell has left Hellenore in mortal danger and, placing her well-being before all other concerns, urges his companions to continue their search.

Malbecco would further demonstrate his bravery, as well as an ability to forgive wrongs done to him, when he and his companions came upon the satyr camp. They had not even seen the satyrs, and only "heard a noyse of many bagpipes shirll,/And shrieking Hububs them approching nere,/Which all the forest did with horrour fill" (III.X.43.2-4), but the sound terrified Braggadochio so much that he immediately fled away with Trompart close behind him. Malbecco was afraid, too, as "The old man could not fly, but fell to ground half dedd" (III.X.47.9). Unlike the braggart knight and his squire, however, Malbecco chose to press on rather than retreat, arriving at the satyr camp just in time to witness Hellenore's debauchery with the satyrs. The scene which played out before him made it plain that Hellenore was a willing participant in the activities and not a prisoner, and yet Spenser wrote the following passage:

> Tho gan he her perswade, to leaue that lewd
> And loathsom life, of God and man abhord,
> And home returne, where all should be renewd
> With perfect peace, and bandes of fresh accord,
> And she receiud againe to bed and bord,
> As if no trespas euer had beene donne (III.X.51.1-6)

Despite his anger at her cuckolding him, and his previously upbraiding her for it when he awoke her, he was fully willing to leave all that behind and renew their prior relationship as it had been before.

His reaction to that encounter, it could be said, shows a capacity for forgiveness on the part of Malbecco. He had gone through a great deal to rescue a wife he believed to have been abducted, only to find that she had been complicit in events the entire time, and yet he was willing to set that knowledge aside just the same. She quickly rejected him, though, and Malbecco was soon discovered by the satyrs, beaten, and driven away. "Husband and wife are sent along different paths in their regression from complexity to simplicity, from human to sub- or pre-human lives" (Berger 144), as Hellenore remains to explore her simplified pastoral existence with the satyrs while Malbecco rushes headlong along the final steps which would lead to his horrific metamorphosis from complex human into the simplified allegorical form of Gelosy.

On balance, though, while there are some things in Malbecco's character which could elicit compassion or sympathy, he is still a vile person overall. As Freeman writes, "The goatish Malbecco could be seen to serve the poem as ritual scapegoat, a figure who bears on his head all the collective sins of the poem (329). Those points of empathy, however, raise the question of whether he was deserving of bearing all the sins of those two cantos on his head. Freeman believes otherwise, as she writes that when Malbecco's final punishment is meted out and he is transfigured into the form of Gelosy, "it is with a chilling and inexorable logic of punishment close to the contrapasso of Dante. Despite the apparent symmetry of crime and penalty, however, Spenser's treatment of him seems excessively harsh, even sadistic" (Freeman 318). By that point Malbecco had lost everything which

mattered to him. He had lost his wealth, he had lost his wife, and he was made a cuckold, which to him was itself like death, and ultimately driven mad and suicidal. And still the punishment did not end there as he was denied even the release of death itself before being transformed and made immortal in a form in which he would suffer endlessly on a diet of poison, sorrow, and pain. Malbecco's punishment does indeed seem to have been excessively harsh.

While Malbecco's metamorphosis into Gelosy occurs towards the end of Canto X of the Book of Chastity, Malbecco further complicates the relationship between the exemplars and allegorical personifications within Spenser's text, as it is arguable that his final form as an allegorical being was not fixed. Freeman makes the suggestion about Malbecco that "The moment before his leap, he is full of centrifugal directions for his final incarnation: he could become a scorned goat, an Ovidian bird-creature, or an emblem of one of the psychological states that pursue him: 'Griefe, and despight, and gealosie, and scorne'" (321). Malbecco still remains a man prior to his leap, and as such, he is fueled by many different passions. Freeman takes note of the emotions running through Malbecco in the text, but forgets one of his greatest passions of all, his greed. As Spenser says of Malbecco, "Two things he feared, but the third was death;/That fiers youngmans vnruly mastery;/His money, which he lou'd liuing breath;/And his faire wife, whom honest long he kept vneath" (III.X.2.6-9). So while Malbecco was pursued at that moment by "griefe, despight, gealosie, and scorne", those were not the only emotions driving Malbecco forward. A key part of Malbecco's psyche is his overriding greed.

Malbecco's greed could just as easily have led to his taking a wholly different form than the one which he ultimately took. As evidenced by the above quote, Malbecco fears

Paridell's sexual prowess, the loss of his wealth, and the loss of his wife, the last of which would be like death to him. It could be argued, though, that his greed on occasion holds an even more powerful sway over him than his jealousy over Hellenore. The power which Malbecco's greed has over him is depicted when Hellenore, in her attempt to escape with her newfound lover Paridell, sets fire to Malbecco's wealth. As Spenser writes, she "call alowd for helpe, ere helpe were past,/For lo that Guest did beare her forcibly,/And meant to rauish her" (III.X.13.7-9). Malbecco was placed in a position to choose between his wife who, as far as he knew, was being abducted by a man intent on violating her, or his wealth, and he ultimately chose his wealth. As Spenser writes:

> But when he marked, how his money burnd,
> He left his wife; money did loue disclame:
> Both was he loth to loose his loued Dame,
> And loth to leaue his liefest pelfe behind,
> Yet sith he n'ote saue both, he sau'd that same,
> Which was the dearest to his dounghill minde,
> The God of his desire, the ioy of misers blinde (III.X.15.3-9)

As that passage makes clear, in that moment, Malbecco placed more importance on the preservation of his wealth than the safety and well-being of his wife.

The possibility that Malbecco could have become something other than the personification of jealousy is later reinforced towards the end of the Canto, when he begins his transformation. The incident which finally pushes him over the edge into madness is not witnessing his wife's debasement with the satyrs, but the loss of his wealth. Malbecco "came vnto the place,/where late his treasure he entombed had,/Where when he found it

not (for Trompart bace/Had it purloyned for his maister bad:)/With extreme fury he became quite mad" (III.X.54.1-5). In the space of a single line of verse Malbecco crosses over from sanity to stark raving madness, and it was the loss of his wealth, not the loss of Hellenore, which ultimately pushed him over the edge.

Although he had many other forces pushing against his psyche, greed foremost among them, it is for good reason that he becomes the personification of jealousy. As Freeman points out, "the descriptions of the voyeur's anguish register real empathy with his grief. The strategic connection of Malbecco to pathos is what grants his terminal form of Gealosie the power to signify so forcefully" (Freeman 319). In a sense, it could be said that the reason why Malbecco would become Gelosy is because his jealousy over his lost wife is what drove all his other losses. While it could be argued that his wealth is more important to him than Hellenore, Hellenore's loss led to his suffering a double loss, both of her as well as his wealth, and for this reason he became the personification of jealousy and not greed, grief, or scorn.

The transformation itself seems to involve a kind of division of Malbecco, a reduction of his being. The idea of reduction seems to be a recurring theme throughout the pages of Cantos IX and X. Berger comments on how the Paridell and Hellenore relationship evokes that of Paris and Helen of Troy of *The Iliad* who, according to him, "are lesser versions of their ancient literary prototypes" (138). So, while they are imitations, they are lesser imitations, greatly reduced in stature. Berger continues by writing that "Paris and Helen are spent and finished in these lovers; their images reproduced and preserved in shrunken stereotypes have reached a cultural dead end. Deprived of its functional if accidental value as the cause of a momentous event, the rape of Helen reappears as a tired

courtly cliché in the diminished world of the medieval fabliau" (138). The Paridell and Hellenore episode, then, is indicative of a thematic process of reduction underpinning both cantos.

That sense of reduction, of being "less than", is likewise evinced in the comparisons which can be drawn between Malbecco and others. The Malbecco which Spenser crafts his tale around is already "less than" even the common man, as he keeps watch over his wife "with his other blincked eye" (III.IX.5.5), indicating that he is blind in one eye, which is in contrast to the claim by the Squires of Dames, who says "that womans subtiltyes/Can guylen Argus" (III.IX.7.2-3), suggesting that if even the mythological Argus, a giant with a hundred eyes, cannot foresee a woman's betrayal, then the one-eyed Malbecco stands no chance at all. Malbecco's diminished being is contrasted again when it is said of him that "he is old, and withered like hay,/Vnfit faire Ladies seruise to supply" (III.IX.5.1-2). While Malbecco was incapable of satisfying his wife, Paridell had no such issues, nor did one of the woodland satyrs who Hellenore cavorts with later on. Malbecco witnesses Hellenore "Embraced of a Satyre rough and rude,/Who all the night did minde his ioyous play:/Nine times he heard him come aloft ere day" (III.X.48.3-5). Malbecco is utterly shamed in comparison to the satyr, which is not even human. All those examples serve to illustrate how "Spenser emphasizes the idea of the triumph of the new order over the old" (Berger 142), and how Malbecco is reduced in stature by comparison.

Even Malbecco's own name suggests the reduction of his being as his name, which means "wicked he-goat/cuckold", foreshadows his final end. As Berger writes, "the prefix mal-, which here and in Malecasta yokes male together with evil, also suggests defective" (Berger 143), which reiterates Malbecco's frailties, whether it is his age, his blindness in

one eye or, most notably, his defect which makes him unable to perform his duties to Hellenore as a husband. Berger continues by pointing out how "Becco means not only cuckold, but also burner (of a lamp), he-goat, beak, and prow of a ship – a series which compactly identifies the source of his lust, of his jealousy and of his pre-determined betrayal" (Berger 142-143). His name evokes all those things which would be his downfall, including one of his last few moments of humanity, when "Vpon his hands and feete he crept full light,/And like a Gote emongst the Gotes did rush" (III.X.47.2-3), in an attempt to infiltrate the satyr camp. Again, Malbecco is portrayed as a lesser being, reduced in stature to those he is competing against, in that he is only "like" a goat, but he is not truly one in the same way that the satyrs are. Whether it is as man or as a goat, Malbecco is proven to be a pale shadow of the satyrs at every turn.

Those comparisons, while thematic, set the stage for the ultimate element of reduction involved in Malbecco's transformation, as he transforms from exemplar to a much simpler allegorical personification. As he makes his mad dash, Spenser writes that Malbecco "ran away, ran with him selfe away" (III.X.54.6), and that "he himself himself loath'd so forlorne" (III.X.55.7). It is as if a process of division had begun to occur within Malbecco, and "he has become other to himself ("him selfe")" (Freeman 325). A human psyche is made up of many different elements, such as jealousy, greed, grief, despite, scorn, and so on, but to become an allegorical personification means that he can only be made of a single element. "As Spenser's allegory makes Gealosie from Malbecco, we observe how the symbol appropriates his substance, empties him out" (Freeman 324). The transfigurative process of emptying out can be taken quite literally within the poem. As Spenser writes:

But through long anguish, and selfe-murdring thought

He was so wasted and forpined quight,

That all his substance was consum'd to nought,

And nothing left, but like an aery Spright,

That on the rockes he fell so flit and light,

That he thereby receiu'd no hurt at all (III.X.57.1-6)

Malbecco has changed from a being of substance to a being of symbolism and allegory and has no more substance to him than a thought or an idea.

His transformation complete, Malbecco is no longer strictly speaking a being of flesh and blood and is instead consigned to an eternal torment as an allegorical being, the personification of the concept of jealousy. “Malbecco has mutated from an old man “who could not fly” (43) to a “nimble”-footed, goat-like, practically airborne creature… rushing through these stanzas in a reeling blur” (Freeman 320). In his transition from man to allegory, he has been cut in two, shedding all that made him a man in the process, leaving nothing but Gelosy in its place. The splitting of Malbecco’s being also mirrors the metaphorical death which Malbecco has suffered. As noted earlier, the loss of Hellenore was like death to Malbecco, and “Yet can he neuer dye” (III.X.60.1), as Spenser writes. He is denied a final literal death when he is transformed to allegory, because his humanity has already died. As a result, he suffers a kind of perpetual death as he must continually bear the pain which has led to his current state.

But while his fate is horrific, the reader never forgets that Malbecco’s fate is rooted in his own humanity. As Freeman points out, “If Malbecco “Forgot he was a man,” his readers do not, and as we re-member him, his affect is raised to a higher plane. Gealosie,

like so many figures in *The Faerie Queene*, is an allegorical personification that dissipates its own mode by reminding us of the cost of its creation" (Freeman 327). As his story progresses, Spenser continually reminds the reader of the costs which Malbecco has had to pay as a man, in his transfiguration, and the fate which he has suffered. A doom which some would say he brought upon himself. That theory is supported in the text from almost the very first moments in which the reader is introduced to Malbecco.

The Malbecco episode in the Book of Chastity occupies only two of the twelve cantos in the book, but it raises interesting questions about the role which Malbecco plays within the text, and more specifically, what was Spenser's intent by introducing the character of Malbecco and giving him such a unique narrative. As Berger notes, "Malbecco's metamorphosis had been presented in the mode of literary wish-fulfillment: the evil was artificially isolated, condensed in a clear and distinct personification, and then discarded as if the poet could do away with it by sticking a pin in its image" (148), but Malbecco is not so easily discarded. In his story we are given an abstract, Gelosy, who not only did not spring into the world fully formed as a being of allegory, but once bore a human face. Malbecco became Gelosy through a transformative process in which whole parts of his humanity were sheared away, splitting him in two, until all that was left was his conscious will and his jealousy, all bound up within a reshaped body which was no longer human or even mortal. And unlike other allegorical personifications, he is not challenged by any of the knights within the poem, much less defeated. Malbecco cannot be discarded by the reader because he was not discarded by Spenser. He remains in Faerie Land, ever in the shadows, reminding the reader that he holds a unique place within Spenser's poem. As Spenser writes, Gelosy may have "woxen so deform'd that he has quight/Forgot he was a

man" (III.X.60.8-9), but we cannot forget that he was not just a man, but as much of an exemplar as any of Spenser's protagonists. Malbecco was a man who was deeply flawed and corrupted, consumed by his greed and jealousy, and served as an exemplar of those baser instincts, but he was also a man who was capable of selflessness and courage, and for a time served as an exemplar of those higher virtues. In his frailty and his pitiful quest to rescue Hellenore, Spenser gives his reader the image of a man who is, for a short time, worthy of emulation as he is possessed of a noble purpose, but whose nobility of purpose was ultimately undone by his corrupted heart, forcing him to become yet another kind of exemplar. An exemplar of error.

Amphialus

Whereas Edmund Spenser's epic poem, *The Faerie Queene*, is centered around a fantastical world built on a foundation of Barthesian philosophy in which heroic exemplars of virtue combat allegorical creatures personifying sin and vice, Sir Philip Sidney's *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia* instead finds itself rooted in a much more realistic, albeit anachronistic, world of a medieval society set against the backdrop of ancient Greece. Spenser's work also differs from Sidney's text in that it is classified as an epic poem, while Sidney's text is a far more difficult work to categorize than Spenser's, as it shares some of the characteristics of the pastoral, the novel, the renaissance romance, the renaissance epic, and so on. Attempts to classify the work are made even more difficult by Sidney's incomplete revisions from the *Old Arcadia* to the *New Arcadia*. Maurice Evans points out Sidney's intentions in making those revisions in his introduction to *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, where he writes that the changes "emphasize the serious didactic purpose of the Arcadia, because Sidney's revisions suggest that this was his prime intention" (Evans 40). Sidney's incomplete revisions leave us with an uneven work, as the *Old Arcadia* was written simply as an entertaining exercise by Sidney, while the *New Arcadia* came about from an attempt to rewrite that text into a more serious work with deeper themes and meanings contained within it. Themes and meanings which reflected the philosophy which Sidney espoused in *The Defence of Poesy*, which Evans highlights, when he says about Sidney that "It should be remembered, however, that he praises poetry not only for its 'teaching' but for its 'delightful teaching', and argues that the delight is what gives poetry its special power to penetrate, where the soberer precepts

of the philosopher merely bounce off" (Sidney 40). Like Spenser, who believed that poetry could be used as a tool for instruction, Sidney likewise believed that it is the poet, not the historian or philosopher, who is best suited to teach moral lessons. Not through pondering historical examples or philosophical examination, but by embedding moral messages into fictional narratives which draw the attention of an audience. As Evans explains in his introduction, the additions which Sidney made to his text were about making it a more serious work and using the opportunity presented by his revisions to put the theories which he espoused in *The Defence of Poesy* into practice and presenting heroes worthy of serving as exemplars of emulation.

Of all the additions which Sidney made to his text, one of the most noteworthy is that of the character of Amphialus, whose narrative dominates the greater portion of the changes made to the *Old Arcadia*. Unlike Malbecco in the pages of *The Faerie Queene*, Sidney immediately depicts Amphialus as a figure worthy of emulation, placing him on equal footing to the protagonists of his *New Arcadia*, Pyrocles and Musidorus. One of the earliest mentions of Amphialus within the text comes from the lips of Helen, the queen of Corinth. Speaking of Amphialus, she asks "What ear is so barbarous but hath heard of Amphialus? Who follows deeds of arms, but everywhere finds monuments of Amphialus? Who is courteous, noble, liberal, but he that hath the example before his eyes of Amphialus? Where are all the heroical parts but in Amphialus?" (Sidney 122). Amphialus is described by Helen in the terms which one would find the protagonist of a heroic tale to be described in. Helen further describes him by saying that "he was commonly called the courteous Amphialus. An endless thing it were for me to tell how many adventures, terri-

ble to be spoken of, he achieved; what monsters, what giants, what conquests of countries, sometimes using policy, sometimes force, but always virtue well followed" (Sidney 123). Straightaway Sidney paints a character who, like Prince Arthur from *The Faerie Queene*, exemplifies numerous virtuous traits. Amphialus is known for his courtesy, his bravery, his statesmanship, and his virtue.

The first crack in the facade that is the noble exterior of Amphialus, however, appears in the courtship episode involving his friend Philoxenus and Queen Helen of Corinth. In that incident, Helen speaks of the friendship between Amphialus and Philoxenus, and how "between whom and him so fast a friendship by education was knit that at last Philoxenus, having no greater matter to employ his friendship in than to win me, therein desired and had his uttermost furtherance" (Sidney 123). Having been fostered from childhood in the household of Timotheus when his mother, Cecropia, "either disdaining or fearing that her son should live under the power of Basilius, sent him to that lord Timotheus, between whom and her dead husband there had passed straight bands of mutual hospitality, to be brought up in company with his son Philoxenus" (Sidney 123), Amphialus and Philoxenus grew up to be very close, and were more like brothers than friends. Relying on that close relationship with Amphialus, Philoxenus entreated his friend to help him win over the heart of Helen of Corinth. According to Wendy Olmsted in her article titled "The Politics of Emotion in Hospitality, Rivalry, and Erotic Love: Sidney's New Arcadia", that scene serves to illustrate how "Amphialus is Sidney's most poignant flatterer because he once served as an exemplar of noble friendship, wooing Helen for Philoxenus" (Olmsted 93). In acceding to his friends request, Amphialus proved himself

to be someone devoted to the bonds of friendship, a quality which would normally be worthy of observation and emulation.

Amphialus's time as an exemplar of noble friendship, however, would be a short lived one. As Helen recounts, "while he [Amphialus] pleaded for another, he won me for himself" (Sidney 124). In attempting to persuade Helen to pursue a romance with his friend, Philoxenus, Amphialus inadvertently ruined his friend's chances of ever winning Helen over. Helen continues, explaining how "when he found that his presence did far more persuade for himself than his speech could do for his friend, he left my court, hoping that forgetfulness (which commonly waits upon absence) would make room for his friend" (Sidney 124). Being an honorable friend and realizing that he was doing his friend more harm than good, Amphialus pursues the only honorable course of action available to him and withdraws from Helen's court and the entire situation. Unfortunately, the damage had been done by that point, as Helen now curses Philoxenus for driving Amphialus away from her, which even causes her to taunt Philoxenus, saying to him that "I would hear him more willingly if he would speak for Amphialus as well as Amphialus had done for him" (Sidney 125). Helen behaves venomously towards Philoxenus, and in so doing Philoxenus is so enraged that he seeks out Amphialus to challenge him to a duel, "and by and by called him to fight with him, protesting that one of them two should die" (Sidney 125), with the inevitable occurring, as Philoxenus is slain when Amphialus is repeatedly forced to defend himself.

As an exemplar of noble friendship, Amphialus's failure was complete. However, the corrupting path which Amphialus would later find himself treading was one which initially was not of his own choosing, but one which he was initially placed on by his own

mother, Cecropia. The sister-in-law to Basilius and widow to his older brother, the former king, Cecropia long held out hope that her son, Amphialus, would come to succeed the formerly childless Basilius on the throne of Arcadia. But as Barbara Brumbaugh explains in her article titled “Cecropia and the Church of Antichrist in Sir Philip Sidney’s New Arcadia”, “When, however, Basilius in his old age married Gynecia, and the two (in what Cecropia labels "'the grief of grieves'") produced immediate heirs to the throne (Pamela and Philoclea), "all hope of" Amphialus's succession was "'cut off" and with it his mother's sway over the Arcadian people” (23). Cecropia’s ambitions for her son were stymied when Basilius’s two children were born, so she opted to find a new means to place her son on the throne. Clare R. Kinney explains in her journal article titled “Chivalry Unmasked: Courtly Spectacle and the Abuses of Romance in Sidney’s New Arcadia” by what means Cecropia would respond to her thwarted ambitions, stating that “Amphialus's unrequited desires are exploited by his ambitious mother, Cecropia, who, at the start of book 3, kidnaps both princesses, hoping to marry her son to one of the Arcadian heiresses” (36). In that event we see the first instance in which Amphialus, once a character who could be held up as someone worthy of emulation, and who up until that point had faltered unintentionally, instead becomes an inversion of Pyrocles, an exemplar of error.

Like Pyrocles, Amphialus is also in love with Philoclea, the youngest daughter of Basilius. Sidney provides the reader evidence of this in an early encounter with Pyrocles, when he was still disguised as Zelmane, after Amphialus acquired a glove belonging to Philoclea. As Sidney writes:

> But for the glove,’ said he, ‘since it is my lady Philoclea’s, give me leave to keep it, since my heart cannot persuade itself to part from it. And I pray

> you tell the lady (lady indeed of all my desires) that owns it, that I will direct my life to honour this glove with serving her' (292)

His "love", however, is possessive and controlling. Olmstead notes that "Amphialus finds himself entangled self-contradictorily in such emotions when 'by a hunger-starved affection,' he is 'compelled to offer... injury' to Philoclea in order to satisfy his desire" (Olmsted 87). With Philoclea within his power, he is unwilling to let her go, putting his desires over hers. And by holding on to her against her will, Amphialus chooses to continue causing injury to Philoclea. As it is explained by Evans in his introduction, Amphialus does not understand "rational love, which is to give rather than to take, to bear patiently rather than to rebel, to accept whatever comes as the will of God" (Evans 29). What he calls his love for Philoclea is anything but, as it is selfish and possessive.

Amphialus's behavior once again proves to be diametrically opposed to that of Pyrocles. As Olmsted writes:

> Service, on the other hand, denotes the voluntary subordination of oneself to others, following a chivalric and Christian model. As Pyrocles says of Daiphantus (Zelmane), 'There is no service like his that serves because he loves'. Unlike those who make themselves master of others' minds, servants base their actions on self-command (96)

Despite his earlier claims of service when he came into the possession of Philoclea's glove, Amphialus demonstrates that he doesn't truly understand the concept of service in relation to love. Of subordinating one's desires and mastering self-command, while Pyrocles does. In the moment that Amphialus makes the choice to keep the daughters of Basilius imprisoned, he comes to a fork in the road and chooses incorrectly, pursuing irrational

love over rational love, taking what he wants rather than giving, choosing the quickest, most expedient route rather than bear patiently and accept God's will. And in so doing, he upsets the natural order by pursuing a course of action which leads to him rebelling against his lawful king, Basilius, not because Basilius represents tyranny, but because Amphialus wishes to unlawfully keep Philoclea in his possession.

Amphialus's action again illustrates the ways in which he is very much like Pyrocles, except inverted. While Pyrocles invariably makes the correct choices, Amphialus, due to his corrupt purpose, inevitably makes the incorrect choice. Not only is Amphialus making the immoral choice, he is also making the choice which is contrary to the natural order. That stark contrast can most keenly be illustrated by comparing the rebellion championed by Pyrocles to the later insurrection led by Basilius. In his article titled "Sidney's "Arcadia": The Ending of the Three Versions", Peter Lindenbaum makes the case that "the New Arcadia as a whole is much more obviously concerned with the education of a prince" (Lindenbaum 214), and we see the difference between Pyrocles and Amphialus depicted early in the text when Pyrocles is in the country of Lacedaemon. A new addition to the *Old Arcadia*, Sidney's desire to weave a more complex story led to the insertion of what Irving Ribner, author of "Machiavelli and Sidney: The "Arcadia" of 1590", believes is "the most significant of the episodes in the revised Arcadia… the account of the war between the Helots and the Lacedemonians" (Ribner 160). There the reader is introduced to the Helots and their bloody uprising against their Lacedaemonian masters. The reasons for that uprising, and the civil war that follows, are explained to Musidorus when he is told of how the Helots are:

> a kind of people who, having been of old freemen and possessioners, the Lacedaemonians had conquered them and laid not only tribute, but bondage upon them; which they had long borne, till of late, the Lacedaemonians through greediness growing more heavy than they could bear, and through contempt less careful how to make them bear, they had with a general consent... set themselves in arms, and whetting their courage with revenge, and grounding their resolution upon despair, they had proceeded with unlooked for success (Sidney 94)

The Helots, according to Sidney, had originally enjoyed a degree of rights, personal freedom, as well as being entitled to land ownership. The Lacedaemonian invasion, however, changed all of that as the former freemen became the slaves of their conquerors, during which time they ostensibly suffered the worst kinds of suffering and degradation. Their condition, according to the text, seemingly only becomes worse with time as the Lacedaemonians would not only try to wring as much labor out of their slave population as possible to maximize their profits, but also become accustomed to doling out casual cruelty to the Helot population. The Helots, no longer willing to bear the lash, ultimately choose to revolt.

Opposition to a tyrant is not enough to justify rebellion, however, as Sidney makes clear several times in his work. While William Briggs points out in his article titled "Political Ideas in Sidney's Arcadia" that "experience had made it dreadfully evident that every king was a potential tyrant" (Briggs 141), rebellion requires a final element to make it a just action, what Ribner calls the "lawgiver." According to him, "only the great man or "lawgiver" can arrest the decline of a government and he must do so by bringing it back to its original principles" (Ribner 165). The necessity of a lawgiver, a guiding force amongst

the rebellion, can be seen early on as the Helots, at the onset of their uprising, are responsible for "the slaughter of many of the gentry, for whom no sex nor age could be accepted for an excuse" (Sidney 95). Without a guiding hand they easily gave in to the worst impulses brought on by their desire to revenge themselves upon the Lacedaemonians, indiscriminately slaughtering any who came in their power, including women and children. A captain behind whom the people can rally behind, someone who will take on the role of lawgiver, then, is vital to the success of any revolt against any tyranny. Otherwise, the result of the rebellion is not much better than it would have been had there never been a leader at all.

This is the case with the Helots when they come under the sway of Demagoras. Through Demagoras the Helots gained unit of purpose and direction, becoming a much more skilled and effective fighting force under his command. Demagoras, however, was no true lawgiver in the sense which Ribner intended, as he joined the Helots not out of a desire to help them win their freedom but out of a desire for revenge, as he "was upon pain of death banished [from] the country" (Sidney 90) of Laconia. His corrupt intentions found an outlet during his time among the Helots who, after placing "a man of such authority among them, made him their general, and under him have committed divers the most outrageous villanies that a base multitude full of desperate revenge can imagine" (Sidney 90). Without a leader, the Helot revolt was unfocused and indiscriminate in the expression of its rage, while under the command of Demagoras, it was disciplined and focused, but cruel. The Helots could never have forged a peace with the Lacedaemonians with Demagoras at the helm, as his purpose in the conflict was to sow further chaos rather than reestablish order with more favorable terms for the Helots.

A captain who does not play the role of the lawgiver, however, is one who will ultimately prove destructive to the cause which he is supposed to be championing. The Arcadian rebellion under the leadership of Amphialus was no less corrupt in purpose than that of the Helots under the leadership of Demagoras, as Amphialus, too, acted as an agent of chaos rather than as a champion of the laws of nations. Amphialus's manifesto, which is filled with spurious lies and obvious distortions, is proof of that. Amphialus understood:

> how violent rumours do blow the sails of popular judgements, and how few there can be that can discern between truth and truth-likeness, between shows and substance, he caused a justification of this his action to be written, whereof were sowed abroad many copies which, with some glosses of probability, might hide indeed the foulness of his treason, and from true common-places fetch down most false applications (Sidney 452)

As Briggs notes, "the common-places are true, the principles, the doctrine, sound, but the particular application false" (Briggs 150), and Amphialus knows they are false. He makes the argument in his manifesto that there is a difference between a crown and a king, and that the crown must be respected and obeyed while the king, when necessary, can and must be deposed for the good of the nation. That there are times when the king betrays his crown, and so must be relieved of it, but Amphialus bases his rebellion on fabrications and half-truths, as it ultimately has nothing to do with righting a wrong, but perpetuating the wrong which his mother, Cecropia, committed on the daughters of Basilius. Olmsted comments on his rebellion, arguing that:

> the basically virtuous Amphialus becomes caught up in his mother's desire to be first and seeks to gain power over Philoclea by defeating her father. If

> Cecropia uses tyrannical compulsion to obtain precedence, Amphialus flatters in order to lead a rebellion (92)

The rebellion just becomes an extension of Amphialus's irrational love for Philoclea, as he seeks to further cement his possession of Philoclea and force her into marrying him.

Moreover, while the laws of nations permit a people to overthrow a tyrant, Basilius is no tyrant. He may be an absentee king who has deferred his responsibilities to others, but that alone does not justify rebellion. Briggs summarizes his position as being that "arms should be taken up only as the last resort; all other means should first be tried of preventing the king from ruling badly, or of controlling him if he does. If taken in time the task may not be difficult" (Briggs 146). Even had Amphialus had just cause to rebel against Basilius, he was obligated to first pursue other avenues of redress before resorting to the violence of rebellion. Amphialus had no just cause, however, and so initiated an unjustified rebellion.

For the rebellion to maintain its moral authority it must be led by someone who fills the role of the lawgiver. By placing Pyrocles in place as the Helot captain, Sidney provides a stark contrast to the sort of leader which Amphialus would be in the same position. Pyrocles's turn as captain of the Helot revolt, for one, would see a dramatic change in the methods employed by the Helots in comparison to what they had been under Demagoras. As Sidney writes, Pyrocles had "brought down their fury to such a mean of good government, and withal led them so valorously that… they had the better in some great conflicts: in such wise that the estate of Lacedaemon had sent unto them, offering peace with most reasonable and honorable conditions" (Sidney 95). Pyrocles successfully tempers their rage towards their oppressors, turning it away from blind vengeance and transforming it into a more productive force. And in so doing he not only brings the Helots victory in battle but

is also able to secure terms for peace on their behalf from the Lacedaemonians. Pyrocles's swift victory over the Lacedaemonians may again be taken as a tacit endorsement by Sidney himself that this is the proper resolution of such a conflict.

Amphialus, though, is clearly no lawgiver. As Kinney puts it:

> Sidney's representation of the ensuing hostilities includes a lengthy description of the first encounter between the forces of Basilius and Amphialus. His narration initially stylizes and aestheticizes the battle, but eventually lays bare its material consequences: "at the first, though [the battle] were terrible, yet terror was decked so bravely with rich furniture, gilt swords, shining armours . . . that the eye with delight had scarce leisure to be afraid; but now all universally defiled with dust, blood, broken armours, mangled bodies, took away the mask and set forth horror in his own horrible manner (36)

Here Sidney paints an image of warfare in all its horror. It is not glorified. It is not depicted as an orderly event. It is chaotic. It is bloody. It is gory. And more than that, it represents a disruption of the natural order, which Amphialus is violating. Or as Evans puts it, "the monstrous disharmony of Sidney's battle symphony serves, therefore, to set the episode in a metaphysical context by which it is condemned" (Evans 27). The disharmony of the battle reflects the disharmony which Amphialus has brought to Arcadia.

The disharmony which Amphialus has brought does not solely affect Arcadia and its people, though. He has brought disharmony to himself, as Kinney notes:

> Yet although Sidney unveils the terrible face of war for his readers, another mask remains in place for lovelorn and self-deceiving Amphialus,

> who surveys the "mangled bodies" of the battlefield undismayed: the horrors of his surroundings cannot "seem ugly to him whose truly affected mind did still paint it over with the beauty of Philoclea." Amphialus's "painting" of his beloved continues to occlude the reality of the dismembered body politic (36)

As debased as that first image is, however, it is not as unnatural as the image of Amphialus himself, who has blinded himself to the horrors which he has wrought. Amphialus has only brought chaos and disorder to Arcadia, but he has blinded himself to it through his choice to pursue his irrational love for Philoclea.

Amphialus's choice of irrational love over rational love is further supported by his interactions with Argalus and Parthenia, two characters whose story had previously been introduced to the reader within the pages of Sidney's text. As Sidney describes them in his text, Argalus and Parthenia are "a happy couple: he joying in her, she joying in herself, but in herself, because she enjoyed him: both increasing their riches by giving to each other… where desire never wanted satisfaction, nor satisfaction ever bred satiety; he ruling, because she would obey, or rather because she would obey, she therein ruling" (Sidney 501). In those two characters Sidney provides an image of what he would consider to be rational love, as both Argalus and Parthenia give of themselves to each other, rather than taking, in order to make the other happy, placing the happiness and wellbeing of their partner before their own, and in doing so serving the needs of the other. Evans agrees with that viewpoint, saying of the couple that the imagery of them together:

> has the same archetypal quality as Blake's little illustrations of nurses and children or children and old folks in his Songs of Innocence... but again

> Sidney defines the implications of the scene in a way which turns the visual image into one which articulates. It is in line with Sidney's own theory, for example, that Argalus shall be reading of the exploits of Hercules whose heroic deeds, described in poetry, will move him to a like heroism. It is fitting, too, that Parthenia shall look up to her husband and learn of nobility through him... the Elizabethans had a keen sense of the hierarchy of the sexes... Sidney's description, however, involves in addition to that of hierarchy, a further image of the circle of love, where each gives and takes and grows the richer by giving (25)

Kinney would add to that notion, as she comments that "Argalus and Parthenia… [are] representatives of the noblest kind of love, whose moral integrity, perfect fidelity, and exemplary public and private conduct. are not only utterly distinct from any notion of "bold bawdry" but also constitute a standard against which the behavior of all the other lovers and questers in Arcadia may be measured (Kinney 37)." Argalus and Parthenia, then, serve as that perfect ensample of rational love, the counterpoint to Amphialus's irrational love for Philoclea, and against which Amphialus's irrational love for Philoclea would be measured against.

The grotesque irrationality of Amphialus's love for Philoclea is laid bare when the perfect, rational love of Argalus and Parthenia is thrust up against the irrationality of Amphialus's possessive, irrational love, when Argalus takes to the field to challenge Amphialus, despite the protestations of Parthenia. Of the contest between Argalus and Amphialus, there is no need to recount the details, save to say that, by the end, Amphialus:

> forgat all ceremonies, and with cruel blows made more of his best blood succeed the rest: till his hand being stayed by his ear, his ear filled with a pitiful cry, the cry guided his sight to an excellent fair lady who came running as fast as she could, and yet because she could not as fast as she would, she sent her lamentable voice before her: and being come, and being known to them both to be the beautiful Parthenia (Sidney 506)

Amphialus, in his bloodlust, forgets his honor and proceeds to brutalize Argalus, stopping only when he hears the plaintive crises of Parthenia, who risks her own life to run into the midst of the combat and stop both combatants from continuing their battle. Parthenia arrives on the scene too late, however, and Argalus ultimately dies of his wounds. And with that act, Amphialus severs the rational, perfect love which existed between Argalus and Parthenia.

Sidney, however, is not content to stop there, as he further illustrates just how irrational and contemptible is Amphialus's "love" when he is later confronted in combat by a mystery knight known as the Knight of the Tomb. In the ensuing combat Amphialus mortally wounds the Knight of the Tomb, and it is only then, when Amphialus removes the mystery knights' helmet to strike off his head, that the horrible truth is revealed. As Sidney writes:

> the headpiece was no sooner off but that there fell about the shoulders of the overcome knight the treasure of fair golden hair which, with the face (soon known by the badge of excellency) witnessed that it was Parthenia, the unfortunately virtuous wife of Argalus... so as Amphialus was astonished with grief, compassion and shame (528)

In Sidney's description of Parthenia, the reader is given a sense of the tragedy. Parthenia is more than just a woman, but an ornamental figure. The violence which Amphialus has perpetrated against the body of Parthenia shatters Amphialus's false image of the conflict he is engaged in. Gone is the romantic justification that it is all for his love of Philoclea, as those justifications are shattered by the grief, the compassion, and the shame which he feels in his moment. In his defense of his irrational love, Amphialus destroyed the one perfect example of rational love within Sidney's text, and he knows it. In that moment, as Amphialus holds the dying Parthenia in his arms, what remains of Amphialus's noble heart shines through, revealing to him how shameful his behavior has been.

Amphialus's tragic fall is one of the reasons why he became such a significant figure in Sidney's revision of the *Old Arcadia* and casts such a large shadow over the narrative. Amphialus is more than just another antagonist for Pyrocles to overcome and dispose of in his pursuit of his own growth as a virtuous character. Instead, he is a mirror to be held up to Pyrocles, to show all the ways that someone as noble and as virtuous could lose their way and, having lost it, be unable to find their way back to a virtuous state. The unfortunate truth of Amphialus is that, by the time the dying Parthenia is laying in his arms, it is far too late for him. What follows afterwards does not matter. Not his final defeat, not his near death, nor Queen Helen taking his comatose body away to be healed. By acting in defense of his irrational love, Amphialus committed one grievous error after another, and by that point he is wholly committed to his course. Amphialus begins the text an exemplary figure worthy of emulation, but by the end he has become a litany of failure. He killed his best friend in a needless duel, imprisoned the woman he considered his truest love, raised up an army in rebellion against his lawful king, and destroyed the most

perfect example of rational love within the land of Arcadia. Through the pursuit of his corrupted purpose, Amphialus taints and tarnishes his once noble and virtuous heart, ending his part of the story not as an exemplar of noble friendship, courtesy, bravery, statesmanship, or virtue, but as an exemplar of error.

Conclusion

In the characters of Malbecco and Amphialus, readers are presented with two characters which, arguably, serve as exemplars of error within their respective narratives. Spenser introduces us to Malbecco, a frail, weak old man who nonetheless pursues a noble purpose in his attempt to rescue his wife, Hellenore. In undertaking that quest he evinces a degree of courage when he shows himself willing to venture out into the wilderness in search of his wife, he demonstrates a merciful nature when he wishes for no harm to come to Paridell, and he displays an ability to forgive when he discovers that his wife has willfully betrayed him. The nobility of his purpose, however, is ultimately undone by his own corrupted heart. On the other end of the spectrum, Sidney introduces us to Amphialus, a man who carries a noble heart beating within his chest. Amphialus is a man who carries himself with a regal air, constantly proves himself to be a puissant warrior, and is renowned throughout the land as a courteous knight. And yet the nobility of his heart could not endure the harm done to it by his pursuit of a corrupted purpose.

Through the examples of both Malbecco and Amphialus, the reader learns that it is not enough to pursue a noble purpose, or to possess a noble heart. For an individual to achieve true greatness, they must possess both nobility of spirit and nobility of purpose. One without the other is always doomed to failure, as a corrupted heart always mars a noble end, while a noble heart is always undone by pursuing a tainted purpose. And yet it is possible that is not the only role which both characters could serve within their respective narratives. While we will never truly know how Spenser and Sidney envisioned the story arcs for Malbecco and Amphialus to come to an end, as both poets died before they could complete their respective works, both men left the door open for a ray of hope. One

would not think it so from reading Spenser's final words on Malbecco, in which he writes:

> Yet can he neuer dye, but dying liues,
> And doth himselfe with sorrow new sustaine,
> That death and life attonce vnto him giues.
> And painefull pleasure turnes to pleasing paine.
> There dwels he euer, miserable swaine,
> Hatefull both to him selfe, and euery wight;
> Where he through priuy griefe, and horrour vaine,
> Is woxen so deform'd that he has quight
> Forgot he was a man, and Gelosy is hight. (III.X.60.1-9)

Gelosy has forgotten his humanity and that he was ever a man named Malbecco, and is seemingly consigned for all time to dwell in that cave which he has found himself in. And yet, Gelosy survived. Whereas every other allegorical creature introduced in Spenser's work was defeated or destroyed, Gelosy was never confronted by any hero nor was he killed.

Sidney, likewise, left Amphialus in dire straits and seemingly dead as Helen mourned over him. It is then that "the body [began] moving somewhat, and [gave] a groan full of death's music", and Helen was told that "it was fitter to show her love in carrying the body to her excellent surgeon, …rather than only show herself a woman-lover in fruit-less lamentations" (Sidney 578). Despite being seemingly near-death, Amphialus survives, and the possibility remains open that through the care provided for him by Helen and her

surgeon, he might recover to full health in the arms of a woman who well and truly loves him, and whose rational love for him may ultimately redeem him.

While both Malbecco and Amphialus pay dearly for their errors, whether it be through Malbecco spending a lifetime cultivating the corruption in his heart, or Amphialus giving in to outward temptations and pursuing a corrupted purpose, both Spenser and Sidney leave open the possibility that perhaps both men could grow and evolve beyond the place where they last left them. Spenser and Sidney may have indeed intended for both characters to serve as exemplars of error, as warning signs of how one could be led astray by faults in their character or poor choices, but in the end, they may very well have also played another role, and become exemplars of redemption, and in their own way potentially become figures worthy of emulation.

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