

## ABSTRACT

Spenser's Golden Chain of Concord

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This thesis examines the virtue of concord as it appears in the *Faerie Queene* and how it links together the various titular virtues in a “golden chain of concord”. Before discussing the image of the golden chain as it appears in the text, Chapter One articulates the nature of concord itself through a close textual examination of Cambina, a figure Spenser establishes as a persona of concord, as she functions in founding the various friendships of Book Four. Studying Cambina allows for an articulation of the importance of the concept of *concordia discors*, the idea that harmony can arise even out of conflict, to the virtue of concord. Chapter Two examines how this notion of *concordia discors* proves crucial in understanding how the initially competing virtues, and the knights which represent them, interact and eventually come to harmonize. Lastly, Chapter Three examines how Prince Arthur, like Cambina, acts as a catalyst for concord through demonstrating to the knights how they might come to love one another even with their differences. The knights all recognize God’s providence in their lives and thus shape their lives towards seeking His will. Arthur, recognizing the mutuality of the knights’ aims, encourages them to love one another. Through loving one another, the knights can come to better understand God’s love and His grace. In discussing concord through the image of the golden chain and its linking of the virtues, this thesis establishes the importance of a holistic approach to understanding *The Faerie Queene* rather than relying on a book by book analysis of them.

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SPENSER'S GOLDEN CHAIN OF CONCORD

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## INTRODUCTION

### A Brief Discussion of Concord

Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene* provides a unique problem for readers and scholars. Spenser originally intended his great epic poem to include twenty-four books, with twelve books concentrating on twelve private virtues and twelve concentrating on twelve public virtues. However, he was only able to publish six books before his death in 1599. Thus scholars are left with the problem of analyzing an incomplete work. In a letter to his friend Sir Walter Raleigh, Spenser reveals that Prince Arthur is supposed to be the thread which stitches together all the books. However, he also implies that much of Arthur's development does not occur until the last twelve books, which deal with the public virtues. It is difficult to view Arthur alone as the unifying figure of *The Faerie Queene* because his story is incomplete; he has not yet reached his full maturity as a character. In turning to the image of the golden chaine of concord, an image which Spenser uses early on in Book One and refers to again in various ways in Books Two and Three, I wanted to provide a means of examining the first three books and their respective virtues without relying solely on the figure of Arthur. The six books of *The Faerie Queene* are extraordinarily self-contained; they would each be able to stand on their own, and, indeed, many scholars will focus their attention on only one virtue in one book. While this does have its merit, I also think it is important to view the work holistically. I believe that in looking at the Faerie Queene through the golden chain of concord,

scholars have a means through which they can put the virtues into conversation with one another without comprising the individuality of each unique virtue.

Before discussing the specific image of the golden chain of concord, I give a contextualized definition of concord through examining how concord functions in Book Four, the Book of Friendship. Book Four is the culmination of Books One, Two, and Three; the concord which subtly weaves itself through the first three books in the image of the “golden chaine” is actually examined and personified in Book Four. Thus I dedicate my first chapter to examining the character of Lady Cambina, a constant catalyst for concord in Book Four, and the more abstract figure of Lady *Concord* in order to give a fuller definition of Spenser’s understanding of concord, a definition which the image of the golden chain alone could not give. In examining Lady Cambina and her role in bringing the warring knights Triamond and Cambel together in friendship and Lady *Concord* in bringing about harmony between her warring sons *Hate* and *Love*, I demonstrate the most unique aspect of concord, the aspect which allows a scholar to use it to link together the virtues while allowing for the sometimes contrary differences among the virtues. After examining Cambina and Lady *Concord* and their roles within Book Four, I come to define the concept of *concordia discors*, the idea that contrary and conflicting ideas can exist in concord.

Building on this idea of *concordia discors*, Chapter Two discusses how the knights of the first three books of *The Faerie Queene*, Redcrosse, Guyon, and Britomart, each represent a virtue which often seems contradictory with the other two, yet the knights are able to overcome these differences and come together in friendship. Indeed, in examining the first rocky meeting between each of these three knights, I reveal that the

initial discord between the knights actually reveals that there are deep similarities between them. They war with one another because they each try to act according to a guiding virtue. Although the actualization of these virtues appears differently in each knight, the knights are similar in that they all work to achieve their virtue in order to comply with God's will for them. Thus Spenser brings each of the knights together in scenes which all evoke the image of the "golden chaine of concord". The knights are able to come together in friendship because they recognize that they each seek the divine love and will of God, even if they each seek to follow this will in different ways. Thus the next section of Chapter Two examines how Spenser's golden chain points to a social ordering which is founded in God's love and providence. I expound upon this section with an examination of different chain images in *The Faerie Queene*: the chains of ambitions and necessity. These chains demonstrate a more Homeric social and moral ordering. In this ordering, individuals are ruled by fate, not providence. These individuals are bound to a static existence by their own willfulness. However, the three knights of the virtues, through putting aside their warring wills to come together in concord in recognition of God's divine will, free themselves to a higher state of being and open themselves up to receive God's grace.

The third chapter of my thesis continues this theme of grace by bringing the conversation to Prince Arthur and the golden chain of concord. While Arthur is still an unfinished character at this point in *The Faerie Queene*, he has an intrinsic understanding for the necessity of concord. Thus I examine how Arthur, like Cambina, acts as a catalyst for concord. He reminds the knights of their imperfect understandings of their own virtues, and thus encourages them to seek understanding in one another. The love born of

their concord allows them to come and better understand God's divine love. Rather than seeking eternalness in name or honor, the knights of the virtues come to find eternity with God. Arthur reminds them that this journey towards eternity cannot be achieved without God's love. Thus, the image of Spenser's golden chain of concord does so much more than simply provide a lens through which the virtues of *The Faerie Queene* can be viewed. It implies a whole Christianized world ordering, in which perfecting and unifying the virtues is only the first step in ascending towards God.



## CHAPTER ONE

### Concord in Book Four of *The Faerie Queene*

Before considering the ways in which concord links together the various virtues of the *Faerie Queene* in a “golden chaine”, I must first discuss the nature of this concord. The “golden chain” is a useful tool for portraying the bonds which concord creates, but to understand the nature of concord itself one must turn to the fleshly personification of concord: Lady Cambina. I shall argue that Cambina is the true heroine of Book Four, The Legend of Friendship; she alone provides the key to understanding the virtue of friendship and the bonds it creates: the bond of concord. To further understand this bond of concord, this chapter will examine how Cambina acts as a bridge between love and hate and order and strife through the friendships she preserves and encourages. I will first examine how Cambina functions as a champion of concord in the titular legend of Book Four. Next I shall examine how the concord which Cambina represents is further developed and brought from a social to a cosmological level in the figure of Lady Concord of canto ten, Book Four of the *Faerie Queene*. Lastly, I will examine how the harmonious balance between hate and love which Lady Concord brings about is achievable in Book Four through the spirit of competition. In examining these personifications of concord and how they are carried out in Book Four, the reader can come to a better understanding of how concord functions in the meta-narrative of the *Faerie Queene*.

### *The Legend of Cambel and Triamond*

Book Four of Edmund Spenser's *Faerie Queene* is unusual in that it is the only one of his finished books to lack a true titular hero. While it does have a title, "The Legend of Cambel and Telemond OR OF FRIENDSHIP", the two knights named are seemingly periphery to the Book when compared to the striking protagonists in Books One, Two, and Three. Redcrosse, Guyon, and Britomart undergo dynamic transformations and thus grow as characters; they dominate their respective Books. Cambel and Telemond, or "Triamond" as he is called in the actual legend, occupy only four cantos of Book Four. Their legend appears as merely episodic; it does not dictate the Book as the previous legends have done. Indeed, the characters of Cambel and Triamond are so secondary to the legend as a whole that the scholar Jefferson Fletcher, in his work "*The Legend of Cambel and Triamond in the Faerie Queene*," called Book Four, "a story without a hero" (197). Similarly, Richard Mallette, in his work *Spenser and the Discourse of Reformation England*, sees Cambina as an inactive and passive character. In response, I argue that Cambina is the true hero of Book Four and Ate, whom I shall address in the section entitled *Competition and Concord*, is the true villain. Through Cambina, and her contrast to the figure of Ate, the reader has a lens through which to can examine the virtue of friendship on a spiritual and cosmic level instead of a merely social one. Through this study I hope to persuade the reader of the binding and harmonizing nature of concord.

Before I address the character of Cambina, I must first discuss why the title of Book Four, "The Legend of Cambel and Telemond OR OF FRIENDSHIP," is both

fitting and representative of the virtue which it illustrates: friendship. With Book Four, Spenser deviates from his previous pattern by widening his scope from the interior life of the characters to the interpersonal. Books One, Two, and Three focus on personal virtues which can only be perfected through and in the individual alone. Thus the heroes of these books are, for the most part, solitary figures. While they are assisted at different points by various companions such as Una, the Palmer, and Arthur, theirs is ultimately a private journey. They can only perfect their virtues through their own endeavors. However, the virtue of friendship introduces the first relational or public virtue. Of this relational nature of friendship, Charles Smith, in "Spenser's Theory of Friendship," states, "In the first three books of the Faerie Queene Spenser is primarily interested in the virtue of the individual as such: his holiness, his temperance, his chastity -- the harmony of the whole nature controlled by reason. Beginning with the Fourth Book he turns to a more definite study of the individual in relation to other individuals" (490). Thus it follows that the title of Book Four would contain two figures instead of one; the emphasis is neither on Triamond or Cambel but rather on the nature of the bond between the two.

Yet the problem still remains that these two figures represent such a small fraction of Book Four as a whole. Why does Spenser place them in such a representative position as the title characters when they appear to be such secondary characters? First of all, it is important to note that these two characters are not original to Spenser; Spenser adopted them from Chaucer's unfinished story "The Squire's Tale" in his *Canterbury Tales*. In adopting Chaucer's tale unfinished work, Spenser articulates his wish to continue it, stating, "Dan *Chaucer*, well of English vndefyld,/ On Fames eternall beadroll worthie to

be fyled.../ That I thy labors lost may thus reuiue,/ And steale from thee the meede of thy due merit.../I follow here the footing of thy feete,/ That with thy meaning so I may thee rather meete” (IV.3.33 & 34). Quotations of the *Faerie Queene* are from the second Hamilton edition of *The Faerie Queene* and are cited parenthetically in the text by book, canto, and line numbers. Through finishing Chaucer’s tale, Spenser strives both to preserve Chaucer’s original sense of the tale while simultaneously making it his own. However, even in making it his own, he is still left with Chaucer’s original framework. In Chaucer’s Squire’s Tale, the two protagonists are not Cambel and Triamond, but rather Cambel and his sister Canacee. Triamond is a character of Spenser’s own invention; he strives for the love of Canacee, a character original to Chaucer’s tale, along with his brothers Priamond and Diamond. In turn, the brothers each fight Canacee’s brother Cambel for the right to marry Canacee. Cambel defeats Priamond and Diamond, but the brothers’ mother, Agape, has made a deal with the Fates to ensure that, even if two of her sons die, the souls of her two dead sons will live on in the third and surviving son. Triamond outlives his two brothers and, unbeknownst to him, absorbs the souls and lifespans of his two brothers, allowing him to finally have the strength to equal Cambel.

Through the episode of Triamond taking the souls of his brothers Priamond and Diamond into his own, Spenser constructs a scenario in which fate intervenes to ensure that Cambel has someone worthy enough to be his equal. However, the equality between Triamond and Cambel does not immediately lead to friendship. They are equals, but they are first equal simply in their fighting over the fate of Cambel’s sister Canacee. Thus the beginning of Triamond and Cambel’s tale is not of friendship but of strife. A fourth

character must be added in order to transform this fractured and warring triad into a united and amicable tetrad. This fourth individual, again an invention of Spenser's figure Cambina. Thus, the true legend of Triamond and Cambel is not a story of the creation of a friendship between Triamond and Cambel alone but rather the creation of community forged through friendship, a community which includes Cambina and Canacee.

The legend of Triamond and Cambel, while only comprising a portion of Book Four, is significant for it introduces the character of Cambina and her ability to counter strife with love and thus bring about harmony or concord. Indeed, some scholars have interpreted Cambina as an allegory of love. Richard A. McCabe compares her with Boethius' love, stating:

Only love can impose an order and meaning upon their operations, however puzzling this meaning may appear to those involved. According to Boethius, "all this harmonious order of things is achieved by loves which rules the earth and the seas, and commands the heavens." Not Agape (brotherly love) but Cambina who 'seemed borne of Angels brood' (IV.3.39) resolves the issue, functioning as a symbol of heavenly love and reconciliation, of the universal principal of concord. (183)

Cambina, the sister of Triamond and eventual beloved of Cambel, has the unique ability to bring harmony where before only strife existed. While I, like McCabe, believe that Cambina accomplishes this through the ordering power of her love, some scholars wish to attribute this ability not to any innate talents of her own, but to the wand and cup of nepenthe which Cambina possesses. Richard Mallette, in his work *Spenser and the Discourse of Reformation England*, states, "The resolution is achieved not by any action of the contestants, whether by force or negotiation, but by the instrument of Cambina's pacific wand and cup of nepenthe" (126). Fletcher intensifies this viewpoint by implying

that Cambina's own efforts towards reconciliation between Triamond and Cambel were useless until she makes use of her divine and magical tools. In speaking of the fight between Triamond and Cambel, he states, "they continued implacably hostile even after Cambina's appearance, and in spite of her tears, 'reasons,' and entreaties. They yield only to her potent charms, which must be gifts of the gods, for her 'rod of peace' is a replica of Mercury's caduceus, and her 'Nepenthe is a drink of souerayne grace,/ Deuized by the Gods'" (196-197). However, I argue that a reconciliation between Triamond and Cambel would not have come about without Cambina's innate ability to recognize the potential for understanding and friendship in others, her active desire to bring about and encourage such sympathy, and her ability to bring about such sympathy through the ordering power of her love.

While her ability to turn strife into harmony is certainly amplified and assisted by her magical and divine tools, her ability to bring together others in friendship has its roots beyond her tools. Just as the knight Artegall from Book Five learns his "lore" of administrating justice from the goddess Astraea in stanza five of canto one, Cambina receives her lore from her mother Agape: "Hauing therein bene trained many a yeare,/ And well instructed by the Fay her mother,/ That in the same she farre eceld all other" (IV.3.40). This skill which she inherits from her mother is the ability to "bind each living creature,/ Through a secret understanding of their feature" (IV.2.44). Indeed, her ability to bind is more than simply an innate skill; it is an "understanding" which can only be gained through instruction. It is her understanding of the working of human nature which brings her to assist her brother Triamond as he fights Cambel: "Who understanding by

her mightie art,/ Of th' euill plight, in which her dearest brother/ Now stood, came forth  
in hast to take his part/ And pacifie the strife, which causd so deadly smart" (IV.3.40).

This quality of discernment and understanding in Cambina is significant for not everyone has the potential for such a true and firm friendship as the one which develops between Triamond, Cambina, Canacee, and Cambel. Again, as McCabe has argued, Cambina's ability to love and understand the potential for love in others is what truly gives her the ability to achieve order within strife. This tetrad of friendship is a superior one for, ultimately, these friends are not bound by Cambina's wand or nepenthe but by their potential for and achievement of love with one another. Thus, Cambina's ability to turn strife into concord and antagonism into friendship is not limited to magical tools. This is too passive of an interpretation. Rather, Cambina's capacity to bring about concord is closely knit to her cosmological understanding of love and its workings.

This theme of love, introduced and in many ways personified by Cambina, continues a discussion begun by Spenser in Book. In *The Poetry of Edmund Spenser*, William Nelson states, "The Legend of Chastitie has for its subject the power of love; the Legend of Friendship is an anatomy of the relationship which love creates" (236). Britomart, the titular knight of Book Three and the champion of chastity, is in many ways similar to Cambina. Both are strong woman who are above the influence of the chaotic and fallen world around them, and both woman try to make sense of this chaotic world through seeking out love. Thus Britomart spends Book Three seeking out her beloved Artegall, and Cambina strives to bring about love between herself, Cambel, Canacee, and Triamond. However while Spenser, through the title "The Legend of Britomartis OR Of

Chastity”, names Britomart as the hero of Book Three and the champion of its virtue, Triamond and Cambel are the titular figures of Book Four instead of Cambina. Considering the crucial role she plays in bringing about the friendship between Triamond and Cambel, why does Spenser not name her as the Book’s hero? Fletcher suggests the following: “But chastity is by its nature a militant, defiant virtue... Cambina conquers too, -but ‘with perswasions myld,’ or by the soothing and healing power of her charms, or, if you please, the grace of her divinely winning personality. Her virtue of Friendship is gentle, pacific-- the antithesis of a fighting spirit” (199). While this is an important distinction to make, the differences should be drawn even further. It is important to again note the public and interpersonal nature of the virtue of friendship versus the introspective nature of the previous virtues of chastity, temperance, and holiness. This is why Spenser names two knights, Cambel and Triamond, as the titular knights of Book Four. By naming two knights, Spenser encapsulates the idea that friendships require at least two. Individually Triamond and Cambel would make poor knights of friendship, but the bond they share together makes them perfect for the role of title characters. Thus, while I do not think Cambina could be called the hero of friendship, this role belongs to Triamond and Cambel together, I do think she is the hero of Book Four. This is because she represents a virtue far more encompassing than friendship alone. She is the hero of the bond which binds together individuals in friendship; she is the hero of concord.

In order to examine further this concord, this ability to bring about peace and bind individuals together in friendship, it is helpful to turn away from Cambina for a moment and examine other figures of concord which appear in Book Four of the *Faerie Queene*.



Nelson details such symbols of concord, or the “ability to bind”, which appear in Book

Four:

The key ideas of his moral teaching are expressed by as many different symbols as the poet can imagine: the power which binds the disparate or antagonistic is represented by the figure of Concord flanked by Love and Hate; by the hermaphrodite Venus and the snake about her legs whose head and tail are joined together; by the lady Cambina, her team of angry lions, her Aesculapian rod, and her cup of nepenthe. (140)

These possessions of Cambina, which Nelson mentions, likewise symbolize the soothing power of the concord which Cambina possess. The team of angry lion which pull Cambina’s chariot “forget their former cruell mood” when in Cambina’s presence. Her rod Spenser likens to “the rod which Maias sonne doth wield,/ Wherewith the hellish fiends he doth confound” (IV.3.39 & 42). Lastly, Cambina’s Nepenthe was devised by the Gods “for to asswage harts grief, and bitter gall away to chace,/ Which stirs vp anguish and contentious rage” (IV.3.43). This cup of Nepenthe and Aesculapian rod aid her in bringing about peace, although it is ultimately her ability to inspire love in others which creates the bonds of concord between Triamond and Cambel.

Some scholars differ from Nelson by failing to place the “hermaphrodite Venus” in the same category as the concord which is addressed in the legend of Triamond and Cambel through the figure of Cambina and which is further illustrated in the figure of Lady *Concord* with her sons *Love* and *Hate*. In speaking of what the “Venus hermaphrodite” represents, Thomas Roche, in his work *The Kindly Flame*, states, “There can be no doubt that Spenser was using the simile to illustrate the mystical significance of Christian marriage and in using it he grants to his lovers a unity akin to that Venus which is the source and end of their love” (134-135). Thus, though Venus does represent a

“binding”, Roche sees her as representing a binding of lovers. This is appropriate considering that the figure Venus appears in the episode where the knight Scudamour first fights for Amoret, the woman who will eventually become his wife, in the Temple of Venus. While Cambina likewise binds together lovers, as she does with herself and Cambel and with Triamond and Canacee, her unifying abilities are not confined to nuptials. She also encourages friendship between Triamond and Cambel and herself and Canacee. Cambina represents a universal type of concord, one which binds together individuals in love, kinship, and friendship. In order to better address the nature of this concord, I will turn to canto ten of Book Four. Here, in the Temple of Venus, Spenser’s illustration of concord moves from a social and literal representation to a universal and abstract one through the figure of Lady *Concord*.

### *The Temple of Venus*

Before discussing Lady *Concord* as she appears in the Temple of Venus, I shall briefly address the literary influences and the situational importance of the Temple. Spenser’s Temple is based on a variety of sources. McCabe suggests that Spenser draws many of his various dichotomies presented in the Temple, specifically *Concord*’s two sons *Hate* and *Love*, from Plutarch’s *Isis and Osiris* (183). In “Spenser, Homer and the Mythography of Strife,” Jessica Wolfe suggests that while Giovanni Boccaccio’s *Teseida* most likely is Spenser’s most direct influence for the Temple itself, the Greek concepts of *eris* (discord) and *philia* (love) detailed in the Temple are drawn from Homeric texts and Hesiod’s *Theogony* (1275). McCabe also states that *Isis and Osiris* likewise draws heavily from Homeric texts. Wolfe also suggests that some medieval

influences for the ideals of love and concord which Temple illustrates might come from Alain de Lille's *Complaint of Nature* and Boethius's figure of Lady Philosophy (1276). John Hankins, in *Source and Meaning in Spenser's Allegory*, gives another suggestion of Spenser's influences and states that Spenser is indebted to the *Emblemata* of Andreas Alciatus for the motto of Emblem 40 speaks of 'Insuperabilis Concordia', and its picture emphasizes an idea of three individuals combined into one (144). Spenser turns conventional images to a unique portrait of concord in the *Faerie Queene*.

While I will be looking into one specific aspect of the Temple, its portrayal of Lady *Concord*, the Temple of Venus plays crucial role to overarching narrative of Book Four and indeed Book Three. It is the location where the figure Scudamour first seeks out his love Amoret. The love between Scudamour and Amoret in many ways mirrors the love of Artegal and Britomart. Britomart and Artegal cannot yet marry, for as knights of the respective virtues of chastity and justice, they still have a duty to their virtues. Thus when Britomart and Artegal finally meet in canto six, they must soon leave one another. Of Artegall, Spenser states, "Sir Artegall, who all this while was bound/ Fit time for him thence to depart it found/ To follow that, which he did long propound" (IV.4.42). Just as Artegall has a duty to Queen Gloriana to perform her justice, Britomart, as the knight of chastity, has an obligation to the virgin Amoret: "...she went to seeke faire Amoret,/ Her second care, though in another kind;/ For vertues onely sake, which doth beget/ True loue and friendship, she by her did set" (IV.4.46). Appropriately for Book Four, Britomart's duty to Amoret is a duty not only of virtue but of friendship. While these respective obligations keep Britomart and Artegal from being with one

another, Scudamour and Amoret are able to come together in marriage after their experiences in the Temple of Venus. However, theirs is not a perfect love; it lacks the understanding of love and concord which belongs to Britomart's and Artegal's relationship. Thus, the Temple of Venus provides a crucial scene for the Scudamour and Amoret story for it illustrates the beginning of Scudamour coming to learn how to rightly love Amoret.

In the Temple of Venus, Spenser makes use of dichotomies and seeming paradoxes to give a comprehensive and enriched illustration of the concept of concord. On the very porch of the Temple, Spenser presents the first and greatest of such paradoxical figures, the Lady *Concord* flanked by her sons *Love* and *Hate*. Of these two sons, Spenser states, "On either side of her, two young men stood,/ Both strongly arm'd, as fearing one another;/ Yet were they brethren both of half blood,/ Begotten by two fathers of one mother,/ Though of contrarie natures each to other" (IV.10.32). At first, it seems odd that two such contradictory elements as "love" and "hate" would stand in such proximity to one another without chaos ensuing. However, Lady *Concord* proves strong enough to bind even the most polar and warring states of being: "...that Dame so well them tempred both,/ That she them forced hand to ioyne in hand" (IV 10.33). Just as Cambina has an ability "to bind each living creature" in friendship, Spenser cleverly has Lady *Concord* bring together *Love* and *Hate* with a literal joining of hands. Indeed, in speaking of *Love* and *Hate*'s joined hands, Spenser emphasizes the importance of both concord's and Lady *Concord*'s "binding" and unifying ability. He states, "*Hatred* was thereto full loth,/ And turn'd his face away, as he did stand,/ Vnwilling to behold

*that lovely band,/ Yet she was of such grace and virtuous might, That her* commaundment he could not withstand” (IV. 10.33). *Concord*’s “lovely band”, her ability to bind other individuals in friendship, gets its power from her virtue and her grace. This strengthens the argument that Cambina’s power of binding others in friendship is not due simply to her magical instruments, but is due to her understanding, her virtue, and her love. Nelson states, “To find Concord assisted by Love is no surprise, but it is at first sight disconcerting to discover that Hate is also part of her train. The paradox disappears when it is realized that Concord is not a passive state but an active, resolving force” (239). While the virtue of friendship, especially as portrayed in the legend of Triamond and Cambel, appears to be the most passive virtue yet shown, the achievement of true and virtuous friendship through concord is an active process.

In examining *Concord* herself, one must also come to examine her sons, *Love* and *Hate*, and the relationship which exists between the two. Nelson makes the observation that the figure of “Love” which appears in the Temple of Venus can be compared to the concept of love as illustrated in another of Spenser’s works, the *Fowre Hymnes*. He states, “If concord subdues strife and turmoil she is related to the Love which is described in the first of the *Fowre Hymnes* as forming the world out of chaos. Indeed, she has a similar function- similar but not identical, for the Love of the hymn is primarily a creator, while *Concord*’s task is the preservation of that which is created” (240). This concept of love as a creator and concord as a preserver is especially apt when applied once again to the episode of Triamond and Cambel. Fletcher, in disagreeing with John Erksine’s idea that Cambina’s concord is merely a catalyst for affection, states,

“Moreover, if Cambina were the symbol of the reconciliation, she should logically disappear as soon as it is effected. She effects it, -- at least the charms she carries do. But she does not disappear. She remains as a third person, filling an objective role in the action, --that of sister and sweetheart and wife” (197). Passing over the implication he makes that Cambina’s magical tools, not her lore or understand, brings about concord and reconciliation, Fletcher’s understanding of Cambina’s function within the tetrad of friends aligns with the functions of love and concord suggested by Nelson. Cambina, a personification of concord, does not simply catalyze the reconciliation between Triamond and Cambel, she becomes an active participant of the reconciliation. The potential for love was already there; Cambina’s real ability lies in her preserving the harmony and balance of that love. Without her, Triamond and Cambel would return to warring over the fate of Canacee. With the addition of Cambina, the unequal threesome is transformed into a foursome, with each individual being bonded both in kinship and in couplement. Fletcher states, “In realizing this threefold fullness of love, however, Cambina is no different from the other three of her group- Cambel, Triamond, and Canacee. They too are held by this triple tie of blood, of sex, of soul.” (198). Cambina does not create or engender friendship. She simply recognizes that the four of them already have the potential for love, helps them to recognize and act upon that love, and acts as a crucial element in preserving it. Thus, in the Temple of Venus, one can view *Concord*’s son *Love* as a creator of friendship and affinity and *Concord* herself as the preserver of that affinity.

While it is hard to reconcile the other son, *Hate*, to harmonious duo of *Concord* and *Love*, hate is indeed crucial to Spenser's cosmological understanding of love and concord. Spenser hints at this importance when he describes the age of the two brothers. He states, "The one of them hight *Love*, the other *Hate*,/ *Hate* was the elder, *Love* the younger brother/ Yet was the younger stronger in his state/ Then th' ekder, and him maystred still in all debate" (IV.10.32). While *Love* is still the more powerful of the two, *Hate* is the elder. Why did Spenser create a world in which hate was born first? Nelson suggests Spenser's placement of *Hate* before *Love* is not odd, but indeed necessary. He states:

Since human affairs obey the same laws that apply to the universe as a whole, it follows that the union of man and woman or of friend and friends implies the overcoming of an initial antagonism. Before there is a resolution there must have been a conflict. That conflict is represented by Hate, who is therefore the elder, and the mastering power is his half-brother Love. But the victory of Love does not mean the end of Hate, for conflict is the essence of the elements. Concord therefore joins the two hand in hand... and strives to keep firm the state which results. (240)

In Spenser's understanding, neither concord nor love conquers strife. Indeed, without hate and chaos there would be no need of concord. Concord rather brings about a harmony between love and hate, peace and strife. Of the relationship between hate and love, John Quitslund, in his work *Spenser's Supreme Fiction*, states, "While he devalues strife, Spenser is obliged to admit that it is intrinsic to the dynamics of its antithesis, love. The Faerie Queene offers a bifurcated account of love: idealized, love transcends strife more effectively than pure reason can" (157). Thus love does not defeat hate, it transcends it while concord keeps a balance between the two. This harmonious balance

between extreme and seemingly paradoxical dichotomies is crucial to Spenser's portrayal of concord.

Spenser's idea of strife and hate being crucial to a cosmological understanding of concord is not unique; he adopts this idea from many sources, two of the greatest being Homer and Empedocles. Wolfe discusses Spenser's Homeric influences in detail in her work "Spenser, Homer and the Mythography of Strife." While qualifying that almost every Renaissance text addressed the theme of love and strife in some manner, her article makes a compelling argument that Homeric texts provide a significant and indeed crucial influence on the discussion of this theme. She states, "Spenser's adaptation of the Homeric-Empedoclean interplay between *Philia* and *Eris* manifests itself in the cosmic principles of self-contrariety that animate locales such as the Garden of Adonis and the Temple of Venus, both of which refract upon the emblematic landscape of *The Faerie Queene* the *concordia discors*" (1268). The concept of *concordia discors* is, simply put, the idea that "the numerous conflicts between the four elements in nature (air, earth, fire and water) paradoxically create an overall harmony in the world" (Gordon). This idea of conflict which leads to harmony exists not only on the elemental and cosmological level, but on a relational one as well. Taking this concept of *concordia discors*, the idea that harmony can arise even out of conflict, I will once again turn to the figures of Triamond and Cambel and demonstrate how *concordia discors* can appear on a social level through a spirit of competition.



### *Competition and Concord*

As stressed previously, the friendship between the knights Triamond and Cambel does not come about as easily as one would think considering that theirs is a friendship which is supposedly ideal. However, the very fact that they are able to come together in harmony, even with the initial discord which exists between them, further illustrates this concept of *concordia discors*, that harmony can arise even within strife. Their relationship begins over them warring for Cambel's sister Canacee in a spirit of fierce and brutal competition. The violence and ruthlessness of their fighting at first appears extravagant. However, it is important to take note of their motivations for fighting. The tournament which both men participate in is for the fate of Canacee, but there is more at stake in this battle than simply Canacee's life. Canacee refuses to love any man, and this stubbornness in her causes her land to be thrown into war and strife: "So much the more as she refusd to loue,/ So much the more she loued was and sought,/ That oftentimes vnquiet strife did moue/ Amongst her louers, and great quarrels wrought,/ ... Which whenas Cambell, that was stout and wise,/ Perceiu'd would breede great great mischief, he bethought/ How to preuent the peril" (IV.2.37). Cambel, in setting up the tournament, creates a way to channel the strife which plagues his lands. However, in order to channel this strife, he must sacrifice his sister to fate. Thus to ensure she has a husband worthy of her, Cambel enters into the fight so as he might "turne both him and her to honour in this wise" (IV.2.37). Thus, Cambel fights for not only Canacee's honor but also for his own honor and, in a certain way, the honor of his land.

Triamond as well has more to fight for than Canacee alone. He enters the fight with his two brothers Priamond and Diamond. Of these three brothers, Spenser states, “These three did loue each other dearely well,/ And with so firme affection were allyde,/ As if but one soule in them all did dwell” (IV.2.43). This Trinitarian view of the brothers, three and one and one in three, emphasizes again that concord exists not only in lovers. Familiar incidents of concord can be just as strong as the bonds of nuptial love. The mother of the brothers, Agape, worries over her sons and visits the three Fates to see how long each son will live. Seeing that all of their life spans are short, Agape requests that the Fates bind together the lives of her sons: “...when ye shred with fatall knife/ His line, which is the eldest of the three,/ Which is of them the shortest as I see, Eftsoones his life may passé into the next; And when the next shall likewise ended bee,/ That both their liues may likewise be annex/ Vnto the third, that his may so be trebly wext” (IV.2.52). Triamond, being the third brother and having the largest lifeline, is fated to receive the souls of his two brothers into his own. While he is unaware of this deal his mother has made, he is still extraordinarily close to his brothers and thus when Cambel kills them in the competition for Canacee, Triamond’s fight represents a fight for revenge just as much as it does for love. And indeed, although he is unbeknownst to it, in fighting to keep himself alive he is also fighting to keep his brothers’ souls alive. Thus Triamond too has more to fight for than simply for Cancee alone.

Considering what both men had at stake in their fighting, it is not surprising that their fight was so furious nor that it did not end immediately upon Cambina’s entreaties. Indeed, the dire motivations of their fighting make the fact that they eventually ceased

and became friends all the more significant. How though could such mortal foes come together in friendship? Of course there is once again the Cambina's tools to consider. After drinking from her golden cup of nepenthe, the liquid which can chase away "harts grief" and "bitter gall", the sudden change between them comes about and "instead of strokes, each other kissed glad/ And louely haulst from feare or treason free,/ And plighted hands for euer friends to be" (IV.3.43 & 49). Yet, as I stressed before, their friendship is due less to Cambina's magic and more to Cambina's recognition that the two men already have the potential for love and friendship. Indeed the respective sisters of Cambel and Triamond, Canacee and Cambina, whom they love so dearly, have no need of magic to become friends. In speaking of Cambina's first approaching Canacee, Spenser states, "In louely wise she gan that Lady greet,/ Which had so great dismay so well amended,/ And entertaining her with curt'sies meet,/ Profest to her true friendship and affection sweet" (IV.3.50). Thus, together with the sincere love and affection which already existed between the two sets of siblings, three-fourths of the tetrad came together completely naturally. It is not extraordinarily surprising that Cambel and Triamond eventually came together in friendship when the potential for such an environment of amicability was already so likely. Even with the initial discord, Cambel and Triamond have a great potential for a relationship built on concord because their sisters respective friendship demonstrates how easily gestures of love work to placate and balance discord. When Canacee and Cambina so easily come together and friendship, their brothers, Cambel and Triamond, have a reason to stop fighting one another: they would spoil the friendship of their sisters.

However, even apart from the tetrad, the potential for friendship between Cambel and Triamond was extraordinarily strong simply through merit of the great similarities between the two. Neither men fight for selfish aims, but rather for the deep and sincere love they held for their kin. Both men have a strong sense of honor. And, on perhaps a seemingly superficial level, they both have a love for a good fight. Turning once again to the concept of *concordia discors*, to the idea that strife can often at times contribute to harmony, Wolfe suggests that Cambina's concord did not banish the strife between the two but rather transformed it into something else:

After their Nepenthe-induced reconciliation, Cambell and Triamond do not simply turn away from strife but rather turn away from one form of strife in favor of another, namely emulation. Book 4's paired heroes do not seek concord by shunning competition but by pursuing it towards worthy ends. They form one of a number of emulous partnerships in *The Faerie Queene* — such as that of Britomart and Artegall, and of Calidore and Coridon — that are bound together through competition. (1278)

Thus the scene of Triamond and Cambel coming together in friendship is immediately followed by their competing in Satyrane's tournament. Like with Triamond and his brothers, Cambel and Triamond fight almost as if they were one entity, one soul. Leonard R. N. Ashley, in "Spenser and the Ideal of the Gentleman," notes the friendship portrayed between Triamond and Cambel in Satyrane's tournament is comparable to the great friendship of Achilles and Patroclus in *The Iliad*. Ashley states that they "extol the value and beauty of true friendship, the Roman virtue of *amicitia*. It was a completely selfless friendship, for when the wounded Triamond could not fight, Cambel donned his friend's armor to do battle in his name (IV, iv, 27), and each wanted the other to have the glory of the victory. To some extent we are reminded of... Achilles and Patroclus in *The Iliad*."

(121). Just as Cambel and Triamond deeply cared for and fought for the honor of their kin, so too they fight for one another's honor. Indeed, at the end of the day's fighting, both insist on conferring glory onto the other: "Then all with one consent did yeeld the prize/ To Triamond and Cambell as the best./ But Triamond to Cambell is relest./ And Cambell it to Triamond transferd;/ Each laboring I'aduance the others gest,/ And make his praise before his owne preferd" (IV.4.36). Cambell and Triamond share their goals, their aspirations, and their honor. They are linked to one another in friendship, kinship, and love. In many respects, just as with Triamond and his brothers, they share a life and a soul. Their friendship is neither selfish nor situational, but rather is based on the virtue of love and concord. They seek the same virtuous goods and ends and help one another in achieving them. Thus Spenser chooses Cambell and Triamond to be the titular figures of Book Four. Their friendship does not eliminate strife, but rather transforms it so that their actions and aims serve to bring about concord and not chaos.

While the spirit of competition ultimately allows Cambel and Triamond to transcend their strife through a bond of concord, such competition can also act to increase strife and hate when turned towards selfish ends. This is best seen in the characters of Blandamour and Paridell. The friendship between Cambel Triamond is increased for they are evenly matched in fighting, but the fighting between Blandamour and Paridell is increased because they too are equal in arms. Nelson addresses the negative spirit of competition and equality in arms between Blandamour and Paridell when he states:

But the pacification of a quarrel does not itself guarantee the formation of a true bond between erstwhile foes. Spenser draws the reader's attention directly to this when he compares the relationship of Cambel and Triamond with that of Blandamour and Paridell. The latter knights, like

the former, fight bitterly with each other over a lady, or rather the appearance of a lady (for she is the snowy Florimell), and they are so evenly matched that they might be fighting to this day were it not for the intercession of the Squire of Dames. (241-242)

Cambel and Triamond are selfless in that they fight for one another's honor and the honor of their kin instead of for selfish means. Thus when Cambina calls them to rise above their initial strife and approach one another in love, this concord which forms between them is able to last. However any peace between Blandamour and Paridell can only be transitory for their selfishness will eventually lead them to hate and strife. Spenser states, "So mortal was their malice and so sore,/ Become of fayned friendship they vow'd afore" (IV.2.18). True friendship can never come about when it rests on a foundation of hate and selfishness. Such friendships can only be "fayned" and temporary; they are bound to die. The opposite of friendship, strife, also illustrates aspects of concord through demonstrating what happens when the balance which concord creates is thrown, when hate and its discord overpowers all else.

While Blandamour and Paridell's very nature prevents them from achieving true friendship, their hate and strife is kindled even more so through the character of Ate, representative of discord and the antithesis to Cambina and her concord. Mark Heberle, in his work "The Limitations of Friendship", comments on the divisive nature of Ate: "While Spenser's Squire's Tale had moved from potentially tragic conflict to the comic triple resolution provided almost magically by Cambina's nepenthe, the tournament of Florimell's girdle moves from chivalric disorder and quarreling, its presiding genius not Cambina but Ate" (104). Cambina works to harmonize the strife between of Canacee, Cambel, and Triamond by transforming their uneven triad into a harmonious tetrad; she

diverts Cambel's hate by giving herself to him to love and encouraging the love between Canacee and Triamond. Contrary to Cambina, who works through love, Ate works through encouraging base attraction between the tetrad of false Florimell, Paridell, and Blandimour instead of encouraging them toward the fulfillment of love. She recognizes the lust which both Paridell and Blandamour have for snowy Florimell and encourages them to act on it: "But Ate soone discovering his desire,/ And finding now fit opportunity/ To stir up strife , twixt loue and spight and ire,/ Did priuily put coles vnto his secret fire" (IV.2.11). Like Cambina, Ate has an understanding of people, but Ate uses this knowledge to create unquestionable longing while Cambina uses her knowledge to fulfill. Ate's actions works against the bonds of concord and any hope of love, and instead feeds into an endless cyclical of hate.

At the beginning of this chapter, I named Cambina as the true hero of Book Four, the hero of concord. Cambel and Triamond are fit titular figures for Book Four's examination of friendship for each, through their selflessness and equality and love, embody the ideal of virtuous friendship. Yet the virtue of friendship exists not in the individuals alone but in the resulting bond between the individuals. This bond allows them to transform and transcend strife, to maintain harmony, and to unite their souls and their goals into one. Without Cambina and the concord which she represents, Triamond and Cambel would have continued their fighting until one of them died because their strife would have fueled them on. Yet Cambina, through seeing the love they had for their kin and their equality in fighting, understood that they each had the capacity to love one another and actively used this understanding to transform their strife into

reconciliation and concord. Virtuous friendship is analogous with love, but such love cannot survive in a fallen world filled with hate without concord bringing a balance between this love and hate. While Ate is the villain of Book Four through her always striving to destroy any bonds of love through hate, Cambina is the hero for her actions allows for the creation of friendships for maintaining an environment suitable for love to thrive in. Triamond and Cambel might be the heroes of the virtue of friendship, but concord is the mother of such friendship. Without Cambina, this friendship would not have been able to thrive.

*The Universality of Concord: A Conclusion and Summary*

While I name Cambina as the hero of Book Four, I do not think the concord she represents is at all limited to Book Four. The legend of Cambel and Triamond provides a fitting social snapshot of how concord acts in balancing strife and love. The result of such concord is the creation of a virtuous, true friendship through love. Canacee, Triamond, Cambel, and Cambina are thus transformed from independent entities, at war and conflicting in interests, into a unified whole working together for similar virtuous ends. Indeed, these individuals, through their tetrad of friendship, form a virtuous community. The episodes entailing Ate, Paridell, and Blandamour demonstrate the antithesis to this community of concord through portraying a group living in warring and hateful anarchy. These two groups represent the dichotomy intrinsic to the nature of concord: love and hate. The virtue of concord is beautiful in that it takes this dichotomy and turns it into a paradoxical unity. This unity is applicable not only to the friendships enumerated in Book Four but to all of creation.



Thus far the scope of my discussion of concord, through my examination of personifications of concord in Book Four, has been narrow and extraordinarily specific. While the Lady *Concord* of Canto Ten's Temple of Venus allowed for some widening of this scope into a Homeric and cosmological examination of concord, my discussion has still remained, for the most part, at the social and relational level. However, Spenser's examination and portrayal of the binding, unifying, and harmonious nature of concord transcends Book Four and the social virtue of friendship. Just as Spenser uses concord to bind individuals in friendship, he likewise uses the concept of concord to bind together the virtues and the knights they represent. Rather than doing this through a personification of concord, as he does in Book Four through the figure of Cambina, he conceptually illustrates concord through the image of a "golden chain of concord". This chain is first mentioned in Book One: "O Goodly golden chain, wherewith yfere/ The vertues linked are in louely wize:/ And noble minds of yore allyed were,/ In braue persuits of cheulrous emprise" (I.9.1). In the next chapter, I will examine the device of the golden chain and how it works in binding together virtues of Book One, Two, and Three in "louely wize".

## CHAPTER TWO

### The Image of the Golden Chain of Concord

In this Chapter, I shall examine the nature of concord through studying the image of the golden chain of concord as it appears in the three books proceeding Book Four. First, I will articulate how the concept of *concordia discors* applies to the friendships of three of the virtuous of knights, Redcrosse, Guyon, and Britomart, the heroic knights of Books One, Two, and Three respectively, in similar ways to how it applies to the friendship formed between Cambell and Triamond of Book Four. I shall do so by studying the individual meetings between these knights and noting how the knights must overcome initial discord, discord born through the knight's misapplication of how best to achieve their virtue, in order to come together into a virtuous community. Next, I shall use this examination of the knights' interactions as a platform for discussing the spiritual and moral implications of the golden chain of concord. I shall note how Spenser's Christianized understanding of concord's chain indicates a moral and social hierarchy which is freeing rather than constricting because concord emphasizes providence rather than fate. I will then expand this discussion by examining two other images of chains in *The Faerie Queene*: the chain of necessity and the chain of ambition. I will demonstrate how both of these chains refer to the golden chain mentioned by Zeus in Book Eight of Homer's *Iliad*. In examining how these chains place emphasis on the individual and fate, rather than on God and providence, I will demonstrate how these chains, unlike the chain of concord, prove constricting rather than freeing. Thus, I shall demonstrate the true importance of the chain of concord: it allows individuals to progress towards a higher

state of being by freeing them from their shallow and earthly ambitions and pointing them towards a divine providence.

### *Concord Forging Friendships Out of Discord*

In Chapter One, I examined the role that *concordia discors*, the paradoxical idea that conflict can contribute to harmony, plays in friendships, specifically the friendship between the knights Triamond and Cambel. I believe that this concept of *concordia discors* also applies to the unifying of the virtues. Like Cambel and Triamond, the knights of the first three books of the *Faerie Queene* do not immediately come together in friendship. However, these conflicts actually point to deep-set similarities among the virtues. In this section, I will concentrate specifically on the conflicts which exist in the various first meetings of the virtuous knights, Redcrosse, and Guyon, and Britomart. These three knights are the titular heroes of Books One, Two, and Three respectively, and the friendships which form between them act as precursors to the friendship which arises between Cambel and Triamond in Book Four. The knight Redcrosse represents the virtue of holiness, the knight Guyon represents the virtue of temperance, and the lady knight Britomart represents the virtue of chastity. While initially tense, the encounters between these three knights eventually end in them forming firm friendships and swearing oaths of fidelity. I will examine how these conflicts eventually lead to concord by discussing how, despite their differences, the knights come together because they come to base their friendships on the commonality of their virtues, which are grounded in love and a striving for goodness.

First, I wish to examine the encounter between Prince Arthur, future king of Briton, and Redcrosse as they are the first knights in *The Faerie Queene* to forge a

friendship. While still needing discussion, I think the friendships which Arthur instigates differ from the friendships which form among the titular knights. Firstly, Arthur himself differs from Redcrosse, Guyon, and Britomart in that he does not have his own book; he is not a traditional knight of the virtue as they are. Secondly, none of Arthur's encounters with the knights begin with discord. When Arthur first meets with Redcrosse, he acts to save him from the hands of the giant Orgoglio and the false temptress Duessa. After saving Redcrosse, the text states, "Then those two knights, fast frendship for to bynd,/ And loue establish each to other trew,/ Gaue goodly gifts, the signs of gratefull mynd,/ And eke as pledges firme, right hands together ioynd" (I.9.6) Arthur, more perfected in the virtues than the still uncertain knights, recognizes immediately that the virtuous knights have more to gain if they immediately come together in friendship instead turning to competition and suspiciousness. In this way, Arthur is like Cambina. He does not need to balance hate with his love because his encounters already begin in love. He has an understanding of concord, thus he knows that the best way to prevent discord and hate is to act with love. In this first encounter, both Redcrosse and Arthur literally gain something from their newly made friendship through a gift exchange. As James Nohnberg notes in *The Analogy of the Faerie Queene*, "Redcrosse makes the major friendship of the legend, linking with his benefactor Arthur in the golden chain of concord. In exchange for a golden box of precious liquor, Redcrosse gives Arthur a Gospel written in golden letters" (717). Arthur, realizing Redcrosse's need for both physical healing from his encounter with the giant and spiritual healing after his encounter with Duessa, gives him the precious liquid with healing properties. To repay this, Redcrosse shares with Arthur his understanding of holiness by providing him with a

holy book. Each can provide the other with something he lacks. However, they would not have been able to come to such a mutually beneficial standing had they not let “loue establish each to other trew” and sworn pledges to one another with “pledges firme, right hands together ioynd.” They are able to come together immediately in friendship because Arthur, unlike the other knights, already understands the necessity of concord in human interaction.

Thus Arthur serves as the template for how true friendships should form among the titular knights. He comes to them wishing to create bonds of concord rather than attempting to view them as competitors or as someone to be suspected. Redcrosse and Guyon embrace Arthur as a savior since he saves both of them from peril, while the lady knight Britomart regards him with respect after he comes to reconcile her and Guyon upon their first encounter. Arthur immediately sees the virtues within these three knights and forms friendships with the knights based on his admiration for their virtuous natures. Arthur brings peace and concord to all his encounters with the titular knights rather than discord and thus acts as a harmonious link between all the knights. He truly embodies the idea of the “goodly golden chayne” which Spenser addresses fairly early in book one: “Goodly golden chayne, wherewith yfere/ The vertues linked are in louely wize:/ And noble mindes of yore allyed were,/ In braue poursuitt of cheualrous emprize,/ That none did others safety despize,/ Nor aid enuy to him, in need that stands,/ But friendly each did others praise deuize,/ How to aduaunce with fauourable hands...” (I.9.1). Here Spenser seems to say that, in a perfect world, the knights of the virtues should come together to form a community in which they serve to help one another as they seek out goodness and truth. In such a community, no envy or hatred exists, only cooperation and love. Jessica

Wolfe, in her work “Spenser, Homer and the Mythography of Strife”, comments on the image of the “goodly chain” and notes its value as a tool of cooperation when she states, “The image celebrates neither divine Providence nor the correspondence between celestial and terrestrial worlds (as the passage is often interpreted), but rather the concatenation of virtue and, by extension, the triumph of cooperative over competitive values that Spenser identifies as the essence of true chivalry” (1251). Yet the titular knights do not initially come together in such a harmonious way. Nohnberg likewise observes the difficulty of establishing friendships, even among the virtuous, by turning to Aristotle: “Aristotle remarks that firm friendships are not necessarily easily formed” (623). Although Spenser implies from the beginning that his titular knights will come together in concord, the knight’s first encounters prove tense and antagonistic. Beginning in the chronological order of their various meetings, I will examine how the titular knights manage to overcome their initial tendencies towards competition and suspicion in order to come together into a virtuous and mutually beneficial community founded in concord.

Guyon, perhaps even more than the other titular knights of the first three books, must strive to overcome a propensity towards violence and wrathful indignation before he can establish friendships, as his first encounter with Redcrosse demonstrates. Archimago, an evil wizard, angry at his defeat at the hands of Redcrosse in Book One, seeks revenge on Redcrosse and decides to use the gullible Guyon as his means of revenge. Encountering Guyon, Archimago informs him that a young virgin has recently been attacked by a wicked knight and points Guyon in the direction of Redcrosse. The text states, “He staid not lenger talke, but with fierce ire/ And zealous hast away is

quickly gone/ To seeke that knight, where him that craftie Squire/ Supposed to be”

(II.1.13). In the heat of his indignation, Guyon temporarily loses hold of his temperance, the virtue he is supposed to represent, and succumbs to wrath. Granted, Guyon does have doubts upon hearing from false Duessa, who pretends to be the ravished virgin of Archimago’s deceitful tale, that the knight he seeks vengeance upon bears a red cross on his shield. He believes that the cross is a sign that knight surely is “a right good knight, and true of word ywis” (II.1.19). However, Duessa easily diverts him from this line of thought and once again leaves him “inflam’d with wrathfulnesse,/ That streight against that knight his speare he did adresse” (II.1.25). Guyon’s actions are not wholly contemptible for he fights for what he believes is a chivalrous cause. Yet his susceptibility to wrath causes him to abandon reason and an openness to love. He walks a thin line for, in fighting for the supposedly wronged virgin, Guyon feels that he fights for the right reasons when in reality he mistakes rash actions for just ones.

Luckily for Guyon and Redcrosse, the shields which they bear remind each other of the goodness they both seek, and they are able to turn from battle towards friendship in recognition of their shared values. Thus, like Cambel and Triamond of Book Four, they are able to replace initial discord for concord through the recognition of their similarities. Upon first seeing one another, both Guyon and Redcrosse prepare to battle one another, Guyon with the intent of avenging the supposed virgin and Redcrosse with the purpose of meeting the attacks of the wrathful knight before him blade for blade. In the last second however, Guyon sees Redcrosse’s shield and cries out, “Mercie Sir knight, and mercie Lord,/ For mine offence and heedlesse hardiment,/ That had almost committed crime abhord,/ And with reprochfull shame mine honour shent/ Whiles cursed steele against

that badge I bent,/ The sacred badge of my Redeemers death,/ Which on your shield is set for ornament” (II.1.27). The cross which Redcrosse bears on his shield, representative of Christ’s death and sacrifice, recalls Guyon from his wrath by reminding him of his faith and the love it embodies. Thus he hastily puts an end to their fighting and seeks to befriend Redcrosse. Redcrosse likewise recalls himself from the error of rashly answering Guyon’s attack when he sees the image of Gloriana, “that faire image of that heavenly Mayd”, on Guyon’s shield. Gloriana, Queene of Faerie, is a direct allegory of Queen Elizabeth I (II.1.28). The knights realize from their shields that they both serve a higher goodness and authority; they both recognize that they serve the same temporal ruler, Gloriana, and the same spiritual ruler. This recognition allows them to turn instantly from battle to comradeship. Commenting on this need for mutuality of values in true friendships, Mark Heberle, in his work “The Limitations of Friendship”, states that “ultimately, friendship is a desire for the beautiful and good in human nature” (110). In recognizing that the other strives for goodness rather than evil, the knights are both reminded of their own purer values and thus can drown their wrath in love for the goodness of the fellow human standing before them. Just like Cambel and Triamond in Book Four, Guyon and Redcrosse establish their friendship on a certain likeness they see in one another. They are able to overcome initial discord and come together in concord through recognizing their shared values.

Yet this likeness, as demonstrated by the first meeting of Guyon and Britomat, does not always prove so readily recognizable nor does the trust and comradeship always prove as easily attainable as in the case of Guyon and Redcrosse. Guyon first spots the lady knight Britomart in the distance, as he and Arthur travel together, and he



immediately aims to challenge this unknown knight to a duel, unaware the Britomart is a woman. He turns first though to Arthur for his approval and, interestingly, Arthur gives it, seeming to not see any harm in Guyon's competitive tendency. Again, Arthur, understanding concord's ability to turn strife into love, does not see their competitiveness as an unsurpassable barrier to their friendship. Yet Guyon takes his competitiveness too far after the new knight, Britomart, throws him brutally to the ground during the fight. Never having been defeated or thrown before, Guyon finds his pride greatly wounded and turns from healthy competition to wrathful vengeance. The text states, "Full of disdainfull wrath, he fierce vprose,/ For to reuenge that foule reprochfull shame,/ And snatching his bright sword began to close/ With her on foot, and stoutly forward came;/ Die rather would he, then endure that same" (II.8.53). His confrontation with Britomart turns from a competition, in which all that is at stake is his pride, into a desperate endeavor for revenge, even at the cost of his own life. Nothing fruitful could come from such an encounter, only discord and perhaps death. In this way, Guyon is similar to Triamond who likewise fights partially for revenge in fighting to give meeting to his brothers' deaths.

Nevertheless, Britomart and Guyon, being virtuous individuals both seeking to achieve goodness in the world, still have the potential for friendship and concord, although it takes an outside source, Arthur, to help them see it. Arthur soothes Guyon's wrath and helps him turn to the situation reasonably: "By such good meanes he him discourseled,/ From prosecuting his reuenging rage;/ And eke the Prince like treaty handeled,/ His wrathfull will with reason to asswage" (II.8.55). Once again, Guyon must overcome his tendency to rash wrath in order to attain the calmness of mind to recognize

in Britomart a knight equal to and worthy of friendship. Yet the blame does not lie with Guyon alone. Spenser constantly refers to Britomart, the knight of chastity, as a “martial knight”. She is warlike and aggressive because she actively seeks to preserve her chastity. The wariness and aggressiveness which her chastity naturally demands of her allows her to succeed in the perseverance of her quest to seek Artegall, her destined true love, while still preserving her chaste intentions. In trying to preserve her chastity actively in a world where men and women both do not always prove to be as they initially appear, she cannot afford to let down her guard in front of Guyon; Guyon must make the first moves towards friendship. Thus, Arthur moves to placate Guyon first in attempting to bring the two warring knights together in concord.

When Britomart and Guyon finally do come together in friendship, they achieve this friendship based not on Arthur’s recommendation alone but on their virtuous natures and mutual striving for goodness. Indeed, the text states, “Thus reconcilment was betweene them knit,/ Through goodly temperance, and affection chaste” (II.8.56). While Arthur acts as a catalyst for concord, just as Cambina did in Book Four, Spenser states that the reconciling between Guyon and Britomart was brought about through their “temperance” and “affection chaste”, the very two virtues which respectively describe the knights’ identities and purposes in life. The text goes on to state, “And either vowd with all their power and wit,/ To let not others honour be defaste,/ Of friend or foe, who euer it embaste/ And with that golden chaine of concord tyde” (II.8.56). Thus, once again, the image of the golden or goodly chain of concord appears, acting as a symbol of harmony being created out of disharmony. Wolfe comments about this specific mention of the golden chain and its implication: “That the golden chain binding Guyon to Britomart

must be actively forged out of their primal instinct for discord suggests that temperance and chastity, while ultimately reconcilable, must engage in some ethical wrestling before the two virtues achieve full cooperation” (1278). Yet once they achieve this level of full cooperation, Guyon and Britomart recognize one another’s virtues and swear an oath to protect those virtues in one another. Nelson comments on the necessity of virtue for concord to form. He states, “Without virtue, no true bond can be formed. But there is a positive condition as well. Between those who can be united there must exist an equality or matchableness of some kind; their natures must be alike or complementary” (243). Despite their initial discord, due to the dissimilarities in their natures, Guyon and Britomart come together for they both seek similar goals, much like Triamond and Cambel do in Book Four; they both seek to live a virtuous life and will often turn to defend that virtuous life with upraised sword.

Lastly, I will examine the forming of friendship between Redcrosse and Britomart which, while seeming to differ from the other friendships at first, likewise demonstrates a pattern of the knights overcoming discord so that they might come to pledge friendship and form bonds of concord. Redcrosse and Britomart’s first meeting appears to differ from the meetings between the other knights for, initially, they seem to immediately get along. When they first meet, Britomart, in her journeying, runs into Redcrosse singlehandedly fighting six knights. Upon asking why the knights so choose to attack Redcrosse, Redcrosse replies, “These sixe would me enforce by oddes of might,/ To chaunge my lief, and loue another Dame” (III.1.24). His loyalty to his own dame, Una, impresses Britomart, who replies, “Certes... then bene ye sixe to blame,/ To weene your wrong by force to iustifie:/ For knight to leaue his Ladie were great shame,/ That faithfull

is, and better were to die.” (III.1.25). His love and dedication to Una resembles her own love for Artegall so she has no qualms in fighting for his cause; she sees a likeness in Redcrosse to herself. Britomart thus proceeds to fight alongside Redcrosse against the six knights. Redcrosse later returns the favor in assisting Britomart when these same six knights attack her in her room at the castle of Malecasta, the lady the six knights were trying to force Redcrosse to love. Malecasta, believing that Britomart is a man since Britomart had refused to remove her helmet and armor, enters Britomart’s room at night with the intent to seduce her and, seeing Britomart without her armor, realizes that Britomart is in fact a woman. She screams and faints which brings her six knights running, and they begin to attack Britomart. Redcrosse likewise hears the noise and, seeing a lady in need, proceeds to assist her in the fight. Just as Britomart helped Redcrosse defend his virtuous desire to remain loyal to Una, Redcrosse helps her defend her own virtue of chastity in assisting her when she is most exposed as she is missing the armor which she dons in order to actively preserve her chasteness.

What not might not be as obvious is that the very fact that Redcrosse sees Britomart at her most vulnerable and exposed moment causes Britomart to act warily and distrustfully towards Redcrosse, leading to a subtle discord between them which must be overcome before they actually swear oaths of friendship and come together in true concord. Britomart wears her armor almost as one would wear a wedding band, to protect herself from men who might seek to claim her. Only Artegall, her intended, holds the right to see her without it, yet Redcrosse sees her without it first. Throughout all of Book Three, Britomart has been emotionless and stoic. However, soon after the scene in Malecasta’s castle, after Redcrosse questions her about her quest, not knowing her quest

is to seek out her destined love Artegall, Britomart shows her first signs of weakness and vulnerability. The text states, "Thereat she sighing softly, had no power,/ To speake a while, ne ready answere make, But with hart-thrilling throbs and bitter stowre,/ As if she had a feuer fitt, did quake" (III.2.5). Reminded of her true love Artegall, Britomart feels awkward and emotional in speaking to this knight who has so recently seen her in such an exposed situation. Still wary of his intentions, she lies to him, by making out Artegall to be her enemy rather than her intended lover. She states, "But mote I weet of you, right courteous knight,/ Tydings of one, that hath vnto me donne,/ Late foule dishonor and reprochfull spight,/ The which I seeke to wreak, and Arthegall he hight." (III.2.8). Feeling she needs to protect her chastity, she allows her virtue to stand in the way of engaging immediately in an open friendship and dialogue with Redcrosse, and rather tries to gain information and help from him through duplicity.

Upon realizing that Redcrosse can actually assist her in her quest, Britomart finally opens up to him, allowing them to overcome that subtle discord in order that they may finally join together in friendship and concord. Despite Britomart's negative portrayal of Artegall, Redcrosse honestly and enthusiastically praises Artegall as the virtuous knight that he is. This thrills Britomart who, having not yet met Artegall, has been uncertain whether or not she was acting rightly in searching for him as her intended. The text states, "The royall Maid woxe inly wondrous glad,/ To heare her Loue so highly magnifyde,/ And ioyd that euer she affixed had,/ Her hart on knight so goodly glorifyde" (III.2.11). Redcrosse confirms the rightness of Britomart's quest in affirming Artegall's virtues. Whereas before, in seeing her exposed before Artegall had, Redcrosse came between Britomart and Artegall, now he works to bring them that much closer in further

inspiring Britomart to seek Artegall out. To repay him for his honesty, Britomart proceeds to finally open up to Redcrosse by telling him of her history. With this vein of honesty in place, they finally can part as friends as the text relates: “Where meeting with this Redcrosse knight, she fond/ Of diuerse thinges discourses to dilate,/ But most of Artegall, and his estate./ At last their ways so fell, that they mote part:/ Then each to other well affectionate,/ Friendship professed with vnfained hart” (III.3.62). The fact that Britomart can befriend Redcrosse “with vnfained hart” proves that she has finally has recognized Redcrosse’s virtues and has learned to trust him. In recognizing Redcrosse’s virtues, Britomart can put aside her distrust, which can only lead to discord, in order to open herself up in a way that concord can exist between them.

Like in the incident of Cambel and Triamond in Book Four, Redcrosse, Britomart, and Guyon all join together in friendship despite their initial discord because they recognize in one another the same goal to live a virtuous life and seek out goodness. Their friendships are based upon their virtues although their virtues initially keep them from immediately entering into friendships. Immediate friendships between the knights prove difficult, for although all of these titular knights are virtuous, they live in a fallen world and thus are always wary in protecting and maintaining their virtuousness. Heberle speaks of this depravity in the world and the difficulty it presents when he states, “True friendship would establish a community of the virtuous, but friends must exist within a fallen social order whose representations in Book IV include Ate, Discord, and the antitypes of friendship...” (112). However, despite this discord in the world, the knight do indeed come together to establish “a community of the virtuous”. They recognize that, in turning to one another in friendship, they can help one another preserve virtue and

goodness in their lives. Their friendships allow for harmony and progress. Charles G. Smith comments about this unifying quality of friendship in his work “Spenser’s Theory of Friendship”. He states, “Spenser conceives of friendship as the operation in the world of man of a harmonizing and unifying cosmic principal” (492). The forming of friendships between the titular knights demonstrates the active workings of concord. Concord allows harmony and disharmony, love and hate, to exist side by side in the world in a kind of balancing tension. The knights approach one another with disharmonious wariness and distrust, but this very disharmonious guardedness points at the potential for love and harmony within the knights. Their relationships prove initially disharmonious for they work to protect the virtues dearest to them. Yet these very virtues allow them to come together harmoniously into a community in which they can work towards the mutual end of goodness.

### *The Image of the Goodly Chain*

It is important to note though there is something more at play here than simply the mere creating of friendships between knights. The knights exemplify virtues, and these virtues represent only one side of a dichotomy. On one side there exist virtue, order, love, reason, and harmony, and on the other side exist sinfulness, chaos, hate, confusion, and disharmony. Both orders have a very set hierarchy, and, in order to give a symbolic understanding for this hierarchy and ordering, Spenser turns to the image of the chain. The “goodly chain” or the “golden chain of concord” links together the virtues harmoniously in order that an individual may turn their will towards God, while he uses the image of the “chain of necessity”, or the chain of ambition, to demonstrate how an individual can come to rip virtues apart in trying to bend the world to their own will. I

have examined certain instances in which the image of this chain has been used by Spenser to link together virtuous knights in friendships. In this section, I shall discuss the implications of this chain by articulating the functional repercussions of this chain. I will demonstrate how the chain of concord is freeing rather than constricting in that it allows those bound to it to work together in order to climb into a higher order of being, in this case, to come closer to dwelling in the glories of God. Then, in the next section, I will supplement this discussion by examining another chain image which appears in the *Faerie Queene*, the chain of necessity or ambition, and discuss how this chain works to constrict those bound to it by keeping them bound by their own blind misunderstandings. This chain of necessity contrasts with Spenser's golden chain and further highlights the necessity for a recognition of God's providence by demonstrating the limitedness of a world bound by fate.

First, I believe it is crucial to look holistically at how the virtues work together, instead of solely focusing on the dynamics of each individual virtue. Rather than keeping the knights of the various virtues confined to their individual books, Spenser weaves the knights' lives together and binds them together in friendships. The knights need one another; for they remind each other of the mission they all share towards goodness and help each other further realize their own virtue. In uniting the knights in friendship, Spenser wishes also to imply that the virtues prove likewise dependent on one another. Wolfe seems also to hold this notion, and even gives a plausible influence of this idea for Spenser. She states, "Spenser's text appeals over and over again to the idea that the virtues are 'knit together and depend one of another,' a moral principle he may have encountered in Pierre de la Primaudaye's (b. ca. 1545) *French Academie*, which was



translated into English one year before the publication of the first three books of *The Faerie Queene*” (1279). As obvious from the example of the titular knights, Spenser seems to believe that the virtues prove most effective in achieving goodness when they work together rather than when they are viewed on their own. Why though does he believe this? Does he believe that the blame lies in the virtues themselves or in something else? I believe that Spenser stresses that the virtues must work together because he recognizes the great potential for human error in a fallen world. While the virtues themselves are not flawed, the humans who try to attain these virtues are; their understanding of the virtues proves imperfect. Thus the virtues must be put into conversation with one another so that the virtues may be understood on an individual level. Thus Spenser stresses the image of the golden chain of concord. The golden chain allows the virtues to come together in harmony while still allowing them to preserve their intrinsic idiosyncrasies, idiosyncrasies which, as demonstrated from the first meetings of the knights, might initially lead to discord.

Trying to achieve a virtuous lifestyle in a fallen world proves problematic; in order to understand the virtues in such a world, one must also come to understand human limits when it comes to specific virtues. Heberle discusses such limits and what these limits implicate towards the actual structuring of the *Faerie Queen*. He states:

In presenting his 'speaking pictures' of the virtues, Spenser reminds us of what our souls are capable, but also of the limitations of human virtue. These limits are examined within individual books; they are also implied in the overall structure of the poem, which makes each book and each virtue a temporary resolution that requires what follows to correct, complete, or transcend it. (114)

While it's true that each sequential book and the virtue therein comes to transcend and resolve the one which came before it, I also believe that these transcendings and

resolutions exist in a more simplistic and allegorical level in the interactions of the knights themselves. The knights of the virtues, being ultimately human, sometimes lose sight of their virtue in aiming to achieve it. Thus it often takes another knight, representing another virtue, to correct them. Redcrosse's shield, bearing the red cross symbolic of his holiness, rebukes Guyon when he loses hold of his temperance. In turn, Guyon's shield, bearing the image of the sovereign queen Gloriana, reminds Redcrosse that his battles should be spiritual, not physical. Britomart and Guyon, through their dealings with one another, learn to balance their more martial natures with their more sensitive and openly loving side. Lastly, Redcrosse, with his sometimes overly trusting nature, teaches Britomart not to let her suspicious nature keep her from the openness she will eventually need to come together with her true love Artegall. The titular knights actually benefit in some ways from the oppositions which originally exist between them. The oppositions allow the knights to recognize their limits and the errors they make in attempting to fully realize and achieve their virtues. In coming together in a virtuous community, the knights help one another better understand themselves and their own virtues. Again, the differences between their virtues, while initially seeming to lead to discord, allows them in the end to come together in concord. For even though they are different, the virtues and the knights which represent them are all alike in that they all represent a striving for goodness.

In speaking of this virtuous community, I must once again come to the image of the golden chain and examine the many ways in which the concord which it represents makes this community and comradeship possible despite the initial antagonism. Although Spenser does not use the image of the golden chain of concord in every scene in which

the knights of the virtues come together in friendship, I believe he nevertheless still implies the idea of the chain in every scene. The first time he mentions the chain, he does not call it the golden chain nor does he mention concord; he calls it “the goodly chain”. He first describes this goodly chain early in Book One in a scene which I have quoted earlier in the chapter. He states, “Goodly golden chayne, wherewith yfere/ The vertues linked are in louely wize:/ And noble mindes of yore allyed were,/ In braue poursuitt of cheualrous emprise” (I.9.1). This image of a chain is mentioned again in the scene in which Arthur assists Guyon and Britomart to lay aside their wrath and come together in friendship. The text states that their friendship was “with that golden chaine of concord tyde” (III.1.12). These two chains, the “goodly chaine” and the “golden chaine”, are one in the same. The mention of the “noble minds of yore” being “allyd” in a goodly chain becomes epitomized by the noble minds of Guyon and Britomart being linked in friendship by the golden chain of concord. The same applies for the forging of friendships between Guyon and Redcrosse and between Redcrosse and Britomart. Although no imagery of chains appears in either of these two episodes, all three episodes do represent instances of virtues being linked in “louely wize”, of “noble minds of yore allyed”, and of knights choosing to share in “braue poursuitt of cheualrous emprise.” They all represent instances of originally warring virtues coming together harmoniously; they all represent instances of concord.

However, the golden chain means nothing unless one takes into account what it signifies about Spenser’s worldview; it points to the idea that there is a definite ordering in this world, and this particular ordering, which comes about through concord, signifies the involvement of a higher authority. For, ultimately, all the knights come together for

they relinquish their will to an acknowledgement of a higher power. They all have a sense of a higher providence. John Quitslund, in his work *Spenser's Supreme Fiction*, likewise proposes that Spenser marries his concept of ideal concord with the idea of providence. He states, "Spenser never contradicts a belief that human events are driven toward concord by benevolent agents of a comprehensive providential design" (155). He goes on to say that this providence only becomes problematic in terms of interpretation for, as he states, "there is so much scope in the poem for discord and delay" (155). To contextualize this recognition of providence in terms of the knights of the virtues, one can turn again to the very first meeting between any of the titular knights, the meeting between Guyon and Redcrosse. Guyon attacks Redcrosse because he has become consumed by the desire to bring about his own idea of justice on behalf of the supposedly accosted virgin. The cross on Redcrosse's shield, the symbol of holiness and Christ, immediately recalls Guyon's from his wrath. He puts aside his own will in recognition of the fact that both he and Redcrosse follow the same higher and divine will. While the other meetings of the knights do not so explicitly illustrate the laying down of wills to divine providence, they do all show instances of the knights putting aside their willful perusal of their virtue in order to recognize the virtues of the knight they face, virtues which are governed by the recognition of a guiding providence in all things. In other words, Spenser's definition of concord grounds itself in a recognition of God's providence.

This laying down of human willfulness in the face of God's divine will is not a constrictive thing; it does not mean that the knights "chain" themselves to God's will. Indeed, Spenser only speaks of his knights chaining or linking themselves to one another, not to a higher being. What does this reveal about Spenser's view of providence and

concord? The knights all seek the same higher good yet they cannot more fully come to this goodness until they come together in concord. In chaining themselves to one another, they simultaneously free themselves to come closer to God's purpose for them. The bonds of concord which they forge between one another allow them to open themselves up more to the possibility of love. Whereas before they approached one another in distrust and wariness, with the bonds of concord in place they can turn to one another in love. Indeed, in the end, the knights are not moved by a sense of fate to befriend one another but by a genuine outpouring of love. Here again, McCabe's comparison with Boethius is apt. He states:

...it gradually emerges that the fortune of love, no less than the fortune of combat, is guided by the power which 'binds the actions and fortunes of men in an unbreakable chain of causes, and since these causes have their origins in unchangeable Providence, they too must be necessarily unchangeable.' [Boethius Book 4, Prose 6]. Boethius's conclusion that all fortune is food might be specifically directed to Spenser's suffering heroes: 'therefore, even though things may seem confused and discordant to you, because you cannot discern the order that governs them, nevertheless everything is governed by its own proper order directing all things towards the good'. In the final analysis divine love distinguishes Providence from Fate. (183)

The titular knights are unsure; they wander and digress throughout all of the first three Books. Yet through the love they forge between one another, they achieve a higher sense of purpose, and come one step closer to understanding of God's will through coming to better understand their own individual virtues and the virtues of one another. In binding themselves to one another in a virtuous community, they free themselves to journey towards God.

In conclusion, the "goodly chain" or the "chain of concord" represents not a hierarchy itself but a way of ascending that hierarchy and thus a means to come closer to God. Rather than present a connotation of imprisonment, this image of the chain

invokes the idea of freedom and release. In binding virtuous individuals together, the chain of concord creates channels of communication through which the virtuous knights can better understand their virtue and likewise come to recognize their own vice. The initial discord apparent in the virtues really points to the limitations of the individuals trying to achieve those virtues. When put into conversation, one virtue will provide answers where another seems to lack. In coming to understand all the virtues as they work together, the individual comes to recognize the vices which come from a wayward will and thus, in recognizing those vices, can come to hope to escape them. Thus the golden chain of concord provides a means through which virtuous individuals can escape the bonds of a sinful world and thus begin their journey towards salvation and towards dwelling in the glory of God.

### *The Images of the Chains of Necessity and Ambition*

While Spenser's golden chain of concord allows individuals to direct their wills towards God through the creation of a virtuous community, the contrary image of the chain, the "chain of necessity" or the chain of ambition, demonstrates an ordering in which an individual can come to rip virtues apart and set themselves against all true forms of friendships in trying to bend the world to their own will. The chain of necessity, like the chain of concord, likewise points to the existence of a ruling hierarchy. In this hierarchy though, the individual, instead of turning to turn their will to God's, attempts to bend the entire world to their own will. Basing the conversation largely around Jessica Wolfe's discussion of the Homeric influences on Spenser in "Spenser, Homer and the Mythography of Strife," I will examine first the two mentions in the *Faerie Queene* of this more earthly type of chain or ordering and illustrate their connection to Homer's

*Iliad*. In examining these two appearances, I will demonstrate how this more ambitious chain binds the individual into a perpetually stagnant existence instead of freeing them to progress to a higher state of being. I will lastly articulate the dangers of the chains of ambition and necessity in examining how closely they can seem to resemble to goodly chain of Book One. Ultimately, I wish to establish how the chain of ambition works to tear apart the virtues in attempting to place the individual's will above all else whereas the golden chain of concord works to bind the virtues through aligning the individual's will with God's. The chain of ambition, in showing how willfulness corrupts, emphasizes the need for communication among the virtues and the need for a virtuous society in which individuals can help one another understand these virtues. For in coming to understand the virtues, one frees oneself to God's grace and love, but by forsaking them, one chains oneself to an earthly existence and thus keeps oneself from ever making any true progress in life. The so-called necessity of ambition, while seeming to point towards definite progress, only keeps the individual chained by their own base limited, and misunderstood desires. Just as Cambina and Ate are antitheses to one another, the chain of concord is the antithesis to the chains of necessity and ambition.

The first appearance of this darker and more terrestrial chain of ambition occurs in Book One in, appropriately enough, Lucifera's House of Pride. The knight Redcrosse has just defeated the evil knight Sansjoy, and Sansjoy is close to dying. To save him, Duessa calls upon the creature Night to bring Sansjoy back to life. Although he eventually does help revive Sansjoy, Night first proves hesitant, stating to Duessa, "But who can turne the streame of destinee,/ Or breake the chayne of strong necessitee,/ Which fast is tyde to Ioues eternall seat?" (I.5.25). This image of the chain directly recalls the

chain mentioned in Book Eight of Homer's *Iliad*. In this scene, Zeus speaks to all of the gods on Mount Olympus and tells them how fruitless it would be for them to ever try and defy him. He states, "...let a golden chain hang down from heaven while all you gods and goddesses grab hold and see if you can bring down Zeus from heaven to earth... But if I should give only one good heave I could haul you up... and tie the chain to some Olympian peak so everything would dangle in midair. I am that much stronger than gods and mortals" (Homer 142). In many ways, this distinctly pagan portrayal of the golden chain almost seems to resemble Spenser's goodly golden chain. Both chains provide a connection of sorts between divine and human and both point at a sort of hierarchy. However, the fate of Zeus's chain does not allow for the existence of man's free will; Zeus alone has the power to bring men or gods to him. Only the providence of Spenser's golden chain allows for the existence of free will in a world still bound by divine authority. The knights of the virtues, in acknowledging God's providence at work in their journeys to achieve their virtues, are able to approach God of their own free will. Thus exists the greatest difference between the golden chain of concord and Night's chain of necessity; the chain of concord allows virtuous individuals to freely chose to come to God whereas the chain of necessity allows for no such freely made upward movement because only Zeus can pull others up to his level. Left to their own devices, individuals of Zeus's world have no hope of progressing to a higher state of being.

The second mention of a less virtuous chain, which I believe is analogous to Night's chain of necessity, appears in the episode with Mammon's daughter Philotime. In this episode, Mammon brings Guyon to his lair and tries to tempt Guyon towards feelings of greed and ambition by offering him various enticements. One of these potential allures



proves to be Mammon's own daughter Philotime. The text describes Philotime as follows, "She held a great gold chaine ylincked well,/ Whose vpper end to highest heauen was knit,/ And lower part did reach to lowest Hell;/ And all that preace did round about her swell,/ To catchen hold of that long chaine, thereby/ To clime aloft, and others to excell:/ That was Ambition, rash desire to sty,/ And euey lincke thereof a step of dignity."

(II.7.46). While Spenser does not directly state that Night's chain and Philotime's chain are one in the same, I believe that they are same based upon their similar resemblance to Zeus's, or Jove's, golden chain mentioned in *The Iliad*. As I have stated previously, Night's chain of necessity is directly reminiscent of the chain mentioned in *The Iliad*. Indeed, Night even directly states that the chain of necessity "is tyde to Ioues eternall seat" (I.5.25). While Spenser makes no direct references to the Greek epic in the episode with Philotime, one can still argue that Philotime and her chain are greatly reminiscent of Zeus and his chain. Wolfe notes of this resemblance when she states, "Of the various incarnations of the golden chain in *The Faerie Queene*, the one which most eerily resembles its Homeric source is the "great gold chaine ylincked well" that Philotime dangles, Zeus-like, from her throne in book 2." (1225). In the episode in *The Iliad* where the chain is mentioned, Zeus has just called all the gods to Mount Olympus to chastise them for assisting both the Trojans and the Greeks in the Trojan War. He directly dares them to defy him by continuing to assist the mortals, yet immediately follows this challenge with the comment involving the golden chain, saying that not even all the gods together could pull him down from Olympus with a golden chain. Thus, like Philotime, Zeus uses the image of the chain to attract the ambitions of others while, at the same time, entrapping them with this very same chain. In other words, he pushes them to attempt to

exert their own will against him only so that he might prove the futility of their ever escaping his will. Night's chain of necessity and Philotime's chain of ambition both indicate a very Homeric world, one in which free will has no real meaning.

While in fact stifling free will, the chains of necessity and ambition are dangerous for often they can give the appearance of free will when in fact they tie the individual to a stagnant existence for they do not allow for the progression available only through providence. They do not link individuals together, but rather set them against each other by making the individual fruitlessly strive to exert their own wills above all else. Suzanne Lindgren Wofford, in her work *The Choice of Achilles: The Ideology of Figure in the Epic*, comments on the ambition of this chain by comparing it to the ambitious nature of the Elizabethan court:

In this satirical representation of courtly ambition, the chain both tempts the lowly to rise and represents the closed ranks of the social order it helps to guarantee. The force behind the monarchy's rule is explicitly linked with the desire of the ambitious to rise in social standing: the stanzas make a moral point (such ambition turns each against all others), but also indicate that maintaining the social order was conceived in terms of bondage and compulsion, not freedom. (237-238)

As Wofford suggests, the chain of ambition gives a representation of social ordering which proves constrictive. The individuals of this social hierarchy have no real hope of gaining upward movement, but their ambition makes them feel as if they can. Thus they are eternally trapped in a static state of being through eternally trying to progress to a higher state of being.

Ambition likewise proves dangerous for it greatly resembles concord; it often seems to be founded upon genuine love. In Book Two, in the house of three beautiful sisters, Guyon encounters an instance of this very sort of ambition. He meets two knights, Huddibras and Sansloy, supposedly battling each other for the love of two of these

beautiful sisters, Elissa and Perissa. He tries to mediate their fighting but instead gets pulled into the battle. The text states of their battle, “Straunge sort of fight, three valiaunt knights to see/ Three combats ioyne in one, and to darraine/ A triple warre with triple enmitee,/ All for their Ladies froward loue to gaine,/ Which gotten was but hate”

(II.2.26). In many ways, the battle between Guyon, Huddibras, and Sansloy resembles the fights between Guyon, Britomart, and Redcrosse. However, the battles between the titular knights lead to genuine expressions of love, whereas this battle, although it seems to be based on love, begins and ends in hate. Their capacity for genuine and selfless love distinguishes the virtuous knights from Huddibras and Sansloy. The titular knights, in recognizing that they all share a higher divine purpose, come together to achieve this love. Quitslund discusses this connection between the knights’ sense of love and sense of higher purpose. He states, “Love links the highest principle, 'diuine foresight,' with 'th'Heroes high intents' so that character not only determines its own fate but achieves a grander 'fatall purpose.'... Love personified is linked with the concept of fate, and in the process both are reconciled with individual freedom and self-fulfillment” (151). I would qualify his assertion by stating that love is linked with the concept of providence, not fate. Ambition keeps willful knights bound by fate whereas providence frees the wills of virtuous knights so that they can choose of their own accord to turn towards the divine.

Yet even the knights of the virtues need outside forces to help them recognize their capacity to love one another; in an imperfect world, concord must be taught. Thus Huddibras, Sansloy, and Guyon can only come together peacefully through the efforts of Lady Medina. Medina, sister to the two sisters Elissa and Perissa, the lovers of Huddibras and Sansloy, resembles Arthur and Lady Cambina in that she understands the lore of

concord. Whereas Guyon tries to end the fighting through strength of arms, Medina acts through pacifying words and keen evaluation. She states to the knights, “louely concord, and most sacred peace/ Doth nourish vertue, and fast friendship breeds;/ Weake she makes strong & strong thing does increace,/... Braue be her warres, and honorable deeds,/ By which she triumphes ouer ire and pride,/ ... Be therefore, O my deare Lords, pacifide/ And this misseeming discord meekely lay aside.” (II.2.31). She tells them to “meekly” lay aside their discord for she recognizes that the men fight not through a sense of love for their ladies but through their “ire and pride”. Their discord proves “misseeming” for, while appearing at first to be founded on the virtuous grounds of defending their love, she recognizes the fight as really one of a battle of wills. However, she does more than simply address the knights with wise words; her words are followed by action. The text states, “Then she began a treaty to procure,/ And stablsh termes betwixt both their requests,/ That as a law for euer should endure/ Which to obserue in word of knight they did assure.” (II.2.32). Unlike the virtuous knights, Huddibras and Sansloy lack the capacity for genuine love. However, this does not preclude them from coming together harmoniously. Through the creation of a chivalrous code of law, concord can come about even in a fallen world.

However, the concord forged between Guyon, Huddibras, and Sansloy still differs from the concord which more naturally exists between the virtuous knights. In a perfect world and among a virtuous community, concord forms through love, yet concord must be forged through law among the willful and selfish. In stressing that justice and law is only necessary for those incapable of forming a community based off of genuine friendship, Spenser echoes Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics*. In Book eight of his *Ethics*,

Aristotle states, “when men are friends they have no need of justice” (Aristotle). Law is only necessary in a fallen world where love and harmony have been made difficult to achieve through the presence of discord. Yet, with his virtuous knights, Spenser works to create a world in which love, virtue, and a striving to achieve God’s will represent the driving structure and order of society. Spenser takes Aristotle’s classical understanding of a perfect friendship, one which is based off of the “good”, and Christianizes it by defining the “good” as a striving to align one’s will with God’s divine will. Thus, under this Christian understanding of friendship, those bound to one another in such a friendship work together to mutually align their wills with God’s. Heberle notes on this Christian transformation of classical understanding of friendship when he states, “Christian domestication of classical friendship, appears in Renaissance dialogues like Tilney's *Flower of Friendship*. It combines Lucretian and Aristotelian components of friendship and, by establishing the family, extends the end of virtuous actions beyond individual integrity or individual desire into history and community” (108-109). Thus the Christian idea of concord, the type represented by Spenser’s golden chain of concord, implies that harmony, or in this case friendship, is brought about through the divine workings of love, while the earthly idea of concord implies that harmony is brought about through the manmade creation of law.

While concord is not limited to the virtuous, as demonstrated by the concord which Medina brings about between the warring knights, only the virtuous, bound together by a golden chain of concord, have the opportunity of upward movement and progress towards a higher spiritual existence. This is because the love which they feel between one another and the love they share for God opens them up to receive the grace

necessary for coming closer to dwelling with God. In putting their virtues into conversation with one another, the knights come to have a better understanding of themselves and their failings. Only in recognizing these failings and acknowledging the necessity of divine grace can the knights ever hope to progress towards a more perfect state of being, one in which they align their wills with God's. While God's grace is always there for the taking, they must willfully make themselves available to receive it. On the other hand, those who only strive for their own selfish ends never can hope to receive that grace for they will never act to take it themselves. Grace is a gift which must be asked for in order to be received.

*Concord: Bridging Heaven and Earth through Love*

In conclusion, the image of Spenser's chain of concord and his contrary image of the chain of necessity and ambition provide useful lenses through which one can come to look at the *Faerie Queene* holistically, rather than simply through looking at each virtue or each knight on a book by book basis. In putting the virtues and their knights into conversation with one another, and likewise showing the harmfulness of letting ambition stand in the way of such conversations, Spenser demonstrates the necessity of virtuous communities and likewise demonstrates the dangers of putting too much concentration on the individual alone. Spenser's golden chain of concord, especially when contrasted to the constricting chain of Homer, articulates the hope inherent in Christianity, the hope born of love. Rather than constricting the individual to an earthly and static existence, such as what occurs when one strives only for ambitious goals, it frees them to progress upward towards a heavenly existence. The love born of concord helps virtuous individuals recognize the futility of seeking salvation alone.

Yet the virtuous individual needs not only earthly love, but divine love; they need grace. While I have emphasized that the golden chain of concord frees up the virtuous individual to actively work to receive God's grace through the help of a loving community on earth, I have not thus far discussed what the grace itself looks like. The golden chain of concord, in linking the virtues together and linking together virtuous individuals in friendship, helps virtuous individuals know how to willfully come to seek God. However, because of human imperfection, they can only come so far; eventually they must come to rely on God's grace. Concord frees the individuals from their earthly tethers, through the example of virtuous and divine love, so that they can take that they can bridge that first step from an earthly existence to a heavenly one. Ultimately though, those steps can only be taken through the assistance of grace. Thus in the following chapter, I will demonstrate how putting Arthur, in many ways a symbol of God's grace, in conversation with the image of concord can illustrate the necessity of divine love in all things.

## CHAPTER THREE

### Arthur and the Golden Chain of Concord

While the golden chain of concord provides an interesting and arguably crucial lens through which the reader can come to view Spenser's virtues, I believe that it is also necessary to put this understanding of concord in dialogue with the figure of Arthur and also the idea of the necessity of God's grace. In Chapter Two, I establish that the concord between the knights better allows them to orient themselves towards God's heavenly will. In coming together in friendship and putting aside their willfulness, they free themselves up for progressing from a purely terrestrial existence to a higher heavenly existence in God's glory. However, this freeing up for progression could not have occurred without Arthur having helped the knights to overcome their misapprehension of their own virtues. Like Cambina and Medina, Arthur is a catalyst for concord for he understands the lore of concord. Arthur, in pointing out the knights' misapprehensions, allows the knights to better perfect their virtues and thus better prepare themselves for concord and friendship later on. However, even after coming together in friendship, the knights are unable to progress towards God without the assistance of God's grace. In order to understand the mobility made able through the golden chain of concord, one must first examine the workings of the virtues on an individualist level and on a divine level. Allowing for grace and the figure of Arthur in the conversation of concord allows such an examination of the virtues to take place.

Thus in my first section I will examine how Arthur is related to concord through his understanding of the necessity of both human love and divine love for the creation of



a virtuous community bound in Christian concord. My second section will have a closer textual analysis of *The Faerie Queene* and will examine specific episodes in which Arthur brings the knights to the point where they can recognize the need for human and divine love. I will demonstrate how Arthur achieves this by leading the knights to recognize their own inability to single-handedly achieve and understand their respective virtues. My last section will examine the role of grace in bringing the virtuous community of knights, brought together by the actions of Arthur, closer to God's eternal glory. In connecting the Christian understanding of concord with the figure of Arthur and the workings of God's grace, I wish to demonstrate a more holistic method of examining Spenser's virtues, rather than simply examining them on a book by books basis.

#### *Arthur and Concord*

In this section, I will examine how Arthur both fails and succeeds to act as a unifying figure throughout *The Faerie Queene*. When viewed as a solitary narrative figure, he fails to unify the books adequately. However, when viewed in context of his relationships with the other knights, he suddenly succeeds in binding both the books and the knights together. He is able to succeed in this because he is different than the other knights; he is the emblem of magnanimity, the emblem of all the virtues working together. In understanding the benefits of a multiplicity of virtues, he is better able to recognize the necessity for concord and thus immediately comes to turn to his fellow knights with genuine love, whereas the other knights have to struggle with their own willful ways before recognizing the benefits of turning to others, and especially to God, in love. Thus, in this section, I will discuss the success of Arthur's unifying ability by illustrating how he relates to the golden chain of concord. Arthur interacts with the image of the golden

chain through giving the reader an image of how a knight perfected in his understanding of concord and of the virtues appears. He provides the knights with a model for how they should act; he gives them a sort of Christianized version of a chivalric code, a code based on divine honor and love of others, not earthly honor and love of self. Essentially, Arthur, in linking together the knights in a virtuous community, teaches them how to better understand God through helping them better understand His love. In teaching them to love one another, he simultaneously teaches them to love God.

In his letter to Sir Walter Raleigh, Spenser actually suggests that his portrayal of Arthur as a magnanimous knight as being one of main overarching theme of *The Faerie Queene*.

Indeed in this letter, here quoted from a version of it printed in the back of A.C

Hamilton's second edition of *The Faerie Queene*, Spenser states that his purpose in writing the *Faerie Queene* is "to fashion a gentleman or noble person in vertuous and gentle discipline" (Hamilton 715). Spenser presents the legendary Prince Arthur as a paradigm for such a noble person of "vertuous and gentle discipline". He states, "I labour to pourtraict in Arthure, before he was king, the image of a braue knight, perfected in the twelue priuate morall vertues, as Aristole hath deuised, the which is the purpose of these first twelue books: which if I finde to be well accepted, I may be perhaps encouraged, to frame the other part of polliticke vertues in his person" (Hamilton 715).

Spenser thus presents his framework for a noble and virtuous man and also his framework for the whole of the *Faerie Queene*. He goes on to state, "So in Prince Arthure I sette forth magnificence in particular, which vertue for that (according to Aristotle and the rest) it is the perfection of all the rest, and conteineth in it them all" (Hamilton 715).

Spenser, in thus addressing his framework for the *Faerie Queene*, identifies Arthur as one

of the main unifying figures of the book. James Nohrnberg, in his work *The Analogy of the Faerie Queene*, comments on how Arthur comes to unify the books through his various cameo appearances in each book. He states, "The multiple unity of *The Faerie Queene* has Arthur for its emblem. His resemblance to the other knights turns up often ... As Spenser promised, the Prince regularly appears in each book engaged in behalf of the titular virtue..." (36). Thus he is the connecting thread between all the books; he makes a significant appearance in Books One through Four through aiding the knights therein by helping them better come to fulfill their titular virtue.

However, for some scholars, Arthur does not adequately fulfill his role as a connecting and unifying thread of *The Faerie Queene*; they believe he falls short of that role. W. J. B. Owen, in his work "The Structure of the *Faerie Queene*", articulates why he believes Arthur fails to act as a strong enough link between the various books. He states:

The introduction of Arthur into the poem, seemingly an attempt to impose unity on the whole and subordination on minor motifs (that is, on the stories of the defenders of particular virtues), contributes little or nothing towards this end, as the critics have noticed; .... Arthur has no continuous narrative thread and is usually confined to a mere two or three cantos out of twelve in each book. (1087-1988)

To this end, I believe Owen is right; narratively speaking, Arthur proves problematic. Spenser gives very little fleshed out story for Arthur. It is hard to view him as the main unifying figure of *The Faerie Queene* when his own story is left with so many loose ends. Granted, Spenser never completed *The Faerie Queene*. He only wrote six out of the twelve books discussing the "twelve private morall vertues", and, presumably, his last twelve books, concerning the twelve public virtues, would have given resolution to

Arthur's story. Arthur's personal narrative is incomplete, and thus he serves as a poor unifier of the other seemingly disjoint narratives of the titular knights.

However, I do not believe that the incompleteness of Arthur's own narrative prevents him from acting as a unifying figure among the books. While the incompleteness of *The Faerie Queene* makes Arthur's own story a poor meta-narrative, Arthur himself still acts to unify the books through his role as the magnanimous man. In his work "Spenser and the Ideal of the Gentleman", Leonard R. N. Ashley articulates how Arthur fulfills the role of the magnanimous man. He states, "The sum of all the virtues is Magnanimity, of which Arthur is the embodiment. It is both a sense of one's worth and dignity and of one's high calling and duty therefor. It is both the directing force that marshals all the other virtues, and prompts a man to seek his destiny, and that crowning virtue which enables the very few who have it to achieve their destinies" (129). Again, as I have stated previously, Spenser himself directly attributes the virtue of magnanimity to Arthur. He states, "So in Prince Arthure I sette forth magnificence in particular, which vertue for that... it is the perfection of all the rest" (Hamilton 715). While it's all well and good to give Arthur the title of magnanimous man, I wish to examine how he actually comes to fulfill it. I believe that Arthur already begins to fulfill his role as a magnanimous knight simply through his interactions between the virtuous knights of the first three books.

As I briefly hinted at in the second chapter of this thesis, I believe Arthur fulfills his role of magnanimous knight through using his understanding of the lore of concord as a means of helping the knights come to better understand their own virtues. As I outlined in chapter two, the golden chain of concord allows the knights of the virtues to seek out

God's providence in an active manner through assisting one another in a virtuous community. Yet none of these virtuous knights immediately understands the difficulty of seeking out God's will. Arthur, however, does. Very early on in Book One, Arthur states, "Full hard it is...to read aright/ The course of heauenly cause, or vnderstand/ The secret meaning of th' eternall might,/ That rules mens waies, and rules the thoughts of liuing wights." (I.9.6). Arthur, like Medina and Cambina, recognizes that, while men have their own free wills, there exists a greater divine providence at work in the world, a providence that proves near impossible for one individual alone to comprehend. Jessica Wolfe relates this idea back to the chain when she states, "Rather than assert or refute the existence of a "fatal chain" binding men's minds and their actions, Arthur instead dwells upon on the human incapacity to understand that chain..." (1232). Thus, rather than placing influence on the vertical chains of necessity or ambition, Arthur works to link the knights with the more lateral chain of concord. He recognizes that there is a great necessity for friendship, love, and communities which represent these two ideals. He understands that to come to understand God, one needs to come to understand love. 1 John 4:8 states, "Whoever does not love does not know God at all, for God in his very nature is love" (*Zondervan NIV* 1101). Arthur realizes that concord, in linking together knights in friendships, helps the knights come close to an understanding of God's providence through giving them a better understanding of love.

Thus Spenser's chain of concord intensifies the concept of chivalry by making love its driving force. For indeed, the virtuous knights, chained as they are in concord, do in many respects resemble the traditional knight bound by chivalry. The virtuous knights have their own codes and oaths, and they are hesitant to ever go against these codes and

oaths. Thus, upon their departures from one another, all the knights of the virtues swear oaths of fidelity to one another, much as they would with a fief lord. Indeed, after Arthur saves Guyon, Guyon tries to swear fidelity to Arthur and calls him “liege”. The greatest difference between Arthur and a traditional chivalrous knight though is that Arthur recognizes that men should be governed not by honor, but by a wish to bring about love and goodness. Thus he addresses Guyon, “Fayre Sir, what need Good turnes be counted, as a seruite bond,/ To bind their doers, to receiue their meede?/ Are not all knights by oath bound, to withstond Oppressours powre by armes and puissant hond?/ Suffise, that I haue done my dew in place./ So goodly purpose they together fond,/ Of kindnesse and of curteous aggrace” (II.8.56). Arthur, with his understanding of concord, recognizes that love and grace should be a knight’s true motivations.

How though does the love and grace of the virtuous knights prove better than the honor of a typical chivalric knight? I think this can be answered by paralleling the two knights Guyon and Redcrosse and their understandings of death. Guyon, in many ways, embodies a more traditional sort of knight in that his sense of honor drives almost all his actions. He is so quick to believe Archimago’s false tale of the accosted virgin because his sense of honor and revenge goads him into impetuous action. However, this sort of vengeful lifestyle leads only to death. Thus, immediately after the episode with Archimago, Guyon encounters the dying Amavia and her slain husband Mordant. Amavia has been wronged by her husband’s seduction at the hands of the evil dame Arcasia, and this seduction leads to both her and her husband’s death. After hearing their tale, Guyon states to his Palmer, “Behold the ymage of mortalitie.” (II.1.57). Shortly after stating this of the couple, Guyon notices that couple’s young son, Ruddymane, has hands

stained by the blood of his parents. In her dying breath, Amavia says, ‘But let them still be bloody, as befell/ That they his mother’s innocence may tell/... That as a sacred Symbole it may dwell/ in her sonnes flesh, to mind reuengement/ And be for all chaste Dames an endlesse moniment” (II.2.10). The death and bloodshed could have ended with Amavia and her husband, but, in her need to preserve her honor even after death, Amavia transfers the symbol of her and her husband’s mortality onto their son through cursing his hands to be ever bloody. She likewise binds Guyon, through his sense of honor, to try and cleanse these hands by clearing the good name of Ruddymane’s parents. In this instance, Guyon and Amavia’s sense of chivalric honor further perpetuates bloodshed, rather than giving the individuals the peace they really desire. Amavia’s curse upon her son reveals her inability to deal with her own mortality. She is dying, but refuses to meet death without first ensuring her good name. In a sense, she seeks a perverted sort of eternity in trying to preserve the honor of her name. To end this cycle of revenge, she should have sought eternity in God. The knights of the virtues, after coming together in concord, come to realize that eternity lies not in the honors of one’s earthly name, but through divine love. They find semblance of this love in their own friendships.

Redcrosse likewise initially concerns himself with a sort a sense of honor and eternity, but his honor is based not on the willful and mortal desire to preserve one’s own name, but on the heavenly desire to love one’s fellow man. Michael West, in his work “Spenser and the Renaissance Ideal of Christian Heroism”, comments on Spenser’s use of love as a means to come to deal with mortality. He states, “Spenser cannot decide whether the fact of death invalidates chivalry as a way of life, and he tends to find consolation for mortality not so much in chivalric honor as in human love” (1022). Indeed,

I would go one step further and state that Spenser seems to find consolation for mortality not only in human love but also in divine love. Turning back to the example of Redcrosse, Redcrosse realizes from the figure of heavenly Contemplation that true consolation for mortality comes through a participation of the divine. Thus aged Contemplation brings Redcrosse to gaze upon the New Jerusalem, his eventual heavenly resting place. Upon seeing this heavenly abode, Redcrosse does not wish to return back to his earthly existence, begging "O let me not... then turne again/ Backe to the world, whose ioyes so fruitlesse are,/ But let me heare for aie in peace remaine." (I.10.62). However, Contemplation reminds him that he has an honor and a duty to Una, and thus he must return back to the fallen and imperfect world. Like Guyon, Redcrosse is driven by a sense of honor, but his honor is founded in his divine love for God's will and human love for Una. In order to receive God's loving gift of grace, Redcrosse must come to share God's divine love with his fellow man. Returning back to the image of the golden chain of concord, the knights, in coming to love one another, come to achieve the semblance of divine love on earth. Through learning to love one another, and the virtues which each embody, they gain a better understanding of God and His providence through more fully realizing the workings of divine love.

Arthur, in understanding the workings of concord, recognizes the need for earthly love among virtuous individuals. He understands that pure and virtuous earthly love reflects the divine love which God holds for man. To understand God, one must understand the workings of His love. Through coming to love one's fellow man, can learn of God's divine love and thus of God Himself. Thus Arthur works to create a virtuous community, bound by concord. This community bases itself not on chivalrous



values of the earthly honor but on Christian values of God's divine love and grace. In linking together the virtuous knights so that they might turn together towards God's providence, Arthur likewise provides a structural unity between the books. Arthur's ability to unify the books of the *Faerie Queene* only proves achievable when he is juxtaposed with the idea of concord and its golden chain.

### *Arthur and the Knights of the Virtues*

I have fleshed out how Arthur and the golden chain are connected, but I have not yet fully articulated how Arthur brings his understanding of the necessity of concord to the knights of the virtues. In this next section, I will briefly examine Arthur's interactions with the various knights in order to demonstrate how he brings them to understand the necessity for concord. Firstly, Arthur encounters these knights of the virtues through saving them from their own misunderstanding of their virtue. In helping them realize how they misapply their respective virtues, Arthur works to help the knights to better understand those virtues. Through helping them understand their own virtues and their own nature more fully, Arthur then opens them up to the possibility of love and friendship, for man can only come to love his neighbor after he has learned to love himself.

Arthur, in both saving and befriending Redcrosse, helps Redcrosse more fully realize the magnitude and meaning of the holiness he seeks to embody. Arthur first encounters Redcrosse after having acted as Redcrosse's champion against the giant Orgoglio who had taken him prisoner. Orgoglio would not have captured Redcrosse though if Redcrosse had not let his own mistakenness lead him to seek sexual intimacy and openness with Duessa rather than spiritual intimacy with God. His encounter with

Duessa weakens him, leaving him open to attack by Orgoglio. He allows himself to be tempted by Duessa, for, in a fit of jealousy, he abandons his Lady Una. Una reminded him of the greater truth he sought through seeking to achieve holiness. However, in abandoning that truth, he abandons his one true defense against duplicity. Thus his armor of holiness is useless against the tempting whiles of Duessa. Arthur though, after saving Redcrosse, reminds Redcrosse once again of the holiness he seeks through exchanging gifts with him.

At first, this gift exchange seems rather obscure; however, the gifts which Redcrosse and Arthur exchange indicate a reaffirmation of the holiness Redcrosse had temporarily lost sight of in his escapades with Duessa. Arthur provides Redcrosse the gift of a “boxe of Diamond sure... closd few drops of liquor pure,/ Of wondrous worth, and vertue excellent/, That and wovnd could could heal incontinent” while Redcrosse gives to Arthur a “booke, wherein his Saueours/ testament Was writt with golden letters rich and braue;/ A wirk of wondrous grace, and hable soules to saue” (I.9.18-19). At first appearance, these items seem non-sequitor. However, in his work “Theme and Emblem in Spenser's Faerie Queene”, Humphrey Tonkins contextualizes the exchange with the rest of the book by connecting it to a scene which occurs later on in the House of Holiness. He compares Arthur’s diamond box and Redcrosse’s holy book to the cup of liquid and book which Fidelity, a resident of the House of Holiness, holds in her left and right hands respectively. Spenser states of Fidelity, “ in her right hand bore a cup of gold,/ With wine and water fild up to the high... And in her other hand she fast did hold/ A booke, that was both signd and seald with blood;/ Wherein darke things were writt, hard

to be understood” (I.10.13). Humphrey Tonkin, in “The and Emblem in Spenser’s *Faerie Queene*,” comments on this particular text by saying:

Fidelia's cup and book are representative of the grace bestowed by the sacraments, and the example of Christ's birth, death, and resurrection on behalf of mankind. Now clearly the gifts exchanged by Arthur and Redcrosse are similar to the objects Fidelia holds in her hands. Arthur renders up the heavenly aspects of faith, the water of grace, the water of the "living well"; Redcrosse reciprocates with the earthly aspects of faith, the story of the incarnation. (222)

Arthur, in providing Redcrosse with the heavenly aspects of faith, reminds Redcrosse that the intimacies he seeks on earth must be reminiscent and parallel of the divine intimacy he seeks with God through trying to achieve holiness of earth. Redcrosse indicates his understanding through providing Arthur with the earthly aspects of faith found in the gospels. Thus, Redcrosse reasserts the truth he had previously forsaken when he had rejected Una. Now having regained this truth, Redcrosse can once again return to his journey towards holiness.

Just as Arthur reminds Redcrosse of his holiness, Arthur likewise reminds Guyon of his need for temperance and reminds Britomart that, even when trying to preserve her chastity, sometimes she needs to lay aside her armor to let others get close to her. After Guyon wrathfully seeks vengeance on Britomart after she throws him down, the text states that Arthur “By such good meanes he him discourselled,/ From prosecuting his reuenging rage;/ And eke the Prince like treaty handeled,/ His wrathfull will with reason...” (III.1.11). Thus he quells Guyon’s tendency to defend honor above all else by reminding him that the best form of temperance exists not in a preservation of honor but in the faculty of reason. Arthur also helps Britomart take the first step towards coming to be ready for Artegall’s love. For almost the whole of Book Three, Britomart will attack unknown entities before even considering opening up to them. While this proves

effective in preserving her chastity against unknown men, she must relinquish her martial nature in order to truly become close to Artegall. She must learn to make herself vulnerable. Thus Arthur shows Britomart that not all men are worth fighting against, some are worth opening up to in love and friendship. However, to reach the level of trust necessary, she must lower her guard to allow others to prove themselves worthy of her friendship and love.

Arthur assists the knights through helping them more fully realize their own virtues. These virtues are what allow the knights to come together in friendship and concord. Just as Cambel and Triamond of Book Four came together in friendship through recognizing their similar capacities and values, the knights of the virtues become friends based upon their shared valuing of a virtuous lifestyle. Yet they cannot enter into such friendships until they learn to stay true to who they are. Nohrnberg comments on this necessity for steadfastness when he states, “All the heroes are heroic insofar as they are faithful to their 'troth' or calling, all must exhibit steadfastness, loyalty, courage, and perseverance. The underlying prerequisite is most nearly constancy, literally ‘standing with’” (72). The knights of the virtues can only come together in love and concord after they learn to love and understand their own individual virtuous natures. They can only stand with each other after they learn to stand true to their own virtues. In recognizing the failings of their own understanding of their virtues, the knights finally realize the necessity of a community which can serve to constantly remind of and uphold those virtues.

### *Arthur, Concord, and Grace*

In this last section, I will articulate the necessity of looking at Spenser's virtues in light of Arthur's magnanimity, the binding and human love which comes about through concord, and the necessity of God's divine grace. Arthur demonstrates the necessity of looking at the virtues on an individual level. Before perfecting the virtues, the knights have to first realize the mistakes they have made in trying to actualize the virtues. In perfecting those virtues, the knights can truly come to love themselves. The golden chain of concord demonstrates the necessity of looking at the virtues on a communal level. The love the knights come to feel for one another help them come to better understand God's divine love. Lastly, the need for grace in perfecting the virtues demonstrates the necessity of looking at the virtuous from a more spiritual and moralistic level. Although the knights have to come to seek God's glory on their own, they never would have any hope of dwelling with God, no matter how perfected their virtues are, without God's generous and loving grace. In looking at these three elements together, one gets a truly enriched conversation of Spenser's portrayal of the virtues.

At the end of my second chapter, I stated that Arthur is in many ways reminiscent of God's grace. This last section served in many ways to illustrate how Arthur acts as a figure of grace. He meets the knights when they are at their lowest points, incapable of pulling themselves out of their slowly downward spiral, and he reveals to them the nature of their flaws. However, instead of leaving them in despair in light of these revelations, Arthur uses those revelations as a means to help the knights recover from those flaws. Arthur humbles them in order to reveal their inability to progress upwards on their own, especially due to their inherent sin. Yet he counters this by offering them a means to rise

above their sinful states through teaching them to better love themselves and others. In his letter to Sir Walter Raleigh, Spenser describes Arthur's magnanimity in Aristotelian terms, making him the perfection of all the virtues in one man. However, through Arthur's interactions with the virtuous knights, Spenser reveals the necessity of grace and love in bringing those virtues together. D. Douglas Waters, in his work "Prince Arthur as Christian Magnanimity in Book One of The Faerie Queene", comments on how, ultimately, Spenser's understanding of magnanimity is more Christian than Aristotelian for it allows for the workings of God's grace. In regard to Spenser's understanding of magnanimity Waters states, "Therefore his un-Aristotelian conclusion: man should be humble because of his weaknesses resulting from original sin and magnanimous because of his potential perfections stemming from God's grace" (56). Waters goes on to give some probable inspirations for Spenser's understanding of magnanimity. He states, "Spenser himself could have been acquainted with this "christianized" concept from any number of writers, all the way from the time of St. Thomas to his own day-including such figures as Patrizi, Pontano, Cinthio (and other Italians), Sir Thomas Elyot, La Primaudaye, and many others" (56). Whatever his influences, the important thing to note is the importance of grace in Spenser's understanding of the interactions of the virtues. Without this element of grace, the chain of concord remains constrictive rather than freeing, for only through God's grace can the Christian progress towards a higher state of being with God.

Spenser likewise intensifies Arthur's magnanimous nature by linking it with a Christian understanding of concord. For though Arthur, like Cambina and Medina, is the catalyst behind which brings the knights of the virtues together, he is not the link which

actually binds together the virtues. The friendships and love which the knights learn to value on their own link together the knights and their virtues. Thus, in coming to examine the interactions of the virtues and their knights in *The Faerie Queene*, one must first come to recognize the importance of the golden chain of concord. The golden chain represents the common recognition among the knights that they all serve the common end; they all seek to follow God's will. While Arthur might in many ways remind the knights of their purpose and of God's grace, ultimately the knights must come together of their own accord to form a virtuous community. Thus Arthur is only important when viewed from a communal light. Wolfe stresses the futility of looking at Arthur in isolated terms by connecting him to the faith inherent in Redcrosse. She states:

While on one level of Spenser's text Arthur appears to be the chief link in the chain uniting Spensers' titular virtues — inasmuch as each of their narratives is interlaced with his own — the Redcrosse Knight possesses a similar binding power, his role as the allegorical instantiation of faith confirming the idea (found in Clement's *Stromateis*, among other places) that all the virtues are connected to each other through faith. (1252)

This faith need not only be attributed to Redcrosse alone. Arthur proves, through the grace which he demonstrates to his fellow knights, that his virtue of magnanimity is likewise grounded in a strong faith.

In conclusion, through looking at how Arthur's magnanimity, the concord between the knights, and God's divine grace work together, the reader gets a sense of how truly connected Spenser meant his virtues to be. Even though Arthur might fail to connect the virtues and their books in a meaningful way in terms of narration, his roles in the golden chain of concord and in helping the knights realize God's grace prove that is indeed a unifying figure between the books. While Arthur is more perfected in the virtues than the other knights and thus can more immediately recognize the need for concord and

grace, Arthur is not perfect; he too makes mistakes. Thus I do not believe that Arthur represents magnanimity in the sense that he is the perfection of all the virtues in one man. While he is more perfected in his virtues, he is still imperfect. Rather, Arthur represents magnanimity in that he helps perfect the virtues in others by bringing others into a virtuous community and teaching them to all turn their virtues towards the serving of God's will.



## CONCLUSION

In examining Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene* through the image of the golden chain of concord, the reader comes to see how the virtues can be unified without losing their distinct uniqueness. Spenser's conception of concord allows for a world where contrary entities can exist in harmony. Indeed, sometimes these differences actually point to deep-set similarities. In applying the image of the golden chain of concord, Spenser illustrates that, although the virtues and knights of Books One, Two, and Three differ, their differences can actually prove beneficial. Like Triamond and Cambel of Book Four, the knights realize they can accomplish so much more through human love than through human ambition. Although both groups need a little help, from Cambina and Arthur respectively, to realize this, they can come together in concord because they all ultimately seek the same ends. In applying the image of the golden chain of concord to the virtues, Spenser illustrates that, in his understanding, the greatest end of all is to seek eternity with God. While the human love born of concord helps free the knights from their willfulness and thus frees them to seek God's will, Arthur serves as a reminder that this human love is nothing without divine love. Without God's grace, individuals can never reach a higher state of being but rather become entrapped by their own willful ambition.

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