

**NARRATIVE TIME-OUT: ANAGNORISIS IN BOOK VI OF
*THE FAERIE QUEENE***

Jorge Casanova

Universidad de Huelva

Words like ‘humanity’, ‘courtesy’, ‘virtu’ and ‘pastoral’ have traditionally been acknowledged in studies of Book VI of *The Faerie Queene* as banners, or pre-ordained guidelines. For the reader of Spenser’s long narrative poem, to come out of the barren world of Book V and find that, all of a sudden, the effort of interpretation is re-directed toward pastoral expectations supposes somehow a critical relief. In this vein, the assurance about the mechanics of the pastoral world offers an opportunity to re-organize historical materials—the court, Irish world, patronage—but fails to consider the textuality of Book VI beyond the limits of a world of shepherds. Spenser’s atavistic return to such world, almost at the end of his literary career, and the discourteous nature of some of the episodes in the so-called ‘Book of Courtesy’ might, perhaps, indicate that author and work seek to re-define their connections with their circle of readers. The intersection of narrative recognition with the wish for authorial recognition in Book VI dismantles the pretence of harmonious pastoral while showing Spenser’s discontent with the transference of his literary merits into the tangible circle of the court.

Recognition scenes in literary works are by their nature ‘problem’ moments rather than moments of satisfaction and completion. Anagnorisis seems at first sight to be the paradigm of narrative satisfaction: it answers questions, restores identity and symmetry, and makes a whole hidden structure of relations intelligible. (Cave 1988: 489)

It has been almost forty years since Harry Berger Jr. published his views on the complexities to be faced by the reader of Book VI of *The Faerie Queene* (FQ hereafter). The narrative breach visible at the surface of the book has at times drawn fractured critical attention, since the departure from the quest after canto iii, and the retaking of it at the end of the Legend of Courtesy, leaves Calidore’s pastoral excursus detached, as it were, from the main thread of the work. Studies like Berger’s apply a comprehensive and flexible approach to what has been seen as Spenser’s vain attempt to solve extra-textual problems as if they were text:

The contrivance of the narrative, the inconclusiveness of the adventures, the gradual flawing of the romance world, the failure of chivalric action—these dramatise the claims imposed by actuality on the life of imagination. They also reveal the poet's awareness that the problems of life cannot be solved by poetry, cannot even be adequately represented in the simplified forms of Faerie. (1988: 219)

The long pastoral interlude between cantos iii and ix presents the reader with a difficult task: to find persuasive ways in which to read the whole book integrating a world of shepherds, where Calepine rapidly moves, with its textual beginning and end, that is, with the figure of Calidore abandoning and resuming his chivalric quest. The narrative effort of the poet is no less an effort for the reader, and the narrative demands coalesce, as Berger points out, with the progressive realisation that the codes at play are insufficient to fulfill the expectations generated by the diversity of events in Book VI.

More recent publications convincingly deal with some of the issues already identified by Berger, and study the governing ideas in the initial and final cantos: "his departure [Calidore's] from the narrative precipitates various degrees of social disorder [and] his reappearance at the book's end represents a truancy rather than a resumption of it" (Danner 1998: 1). However the central issue of repairing the narrative fracture in the book, the attempt to replace its traditionally accepted view as "autonomous 'green world' of poetic self-reflexivity and virtuous resolution" (1998: 1), is still at work. Though successful in bringing into play political theory by the hand of Machivelli in order to illustrate a concept of *virtu* as "precept of civil order", Danner's essay does not approach the unravelling of the narrative as priority but as a result of the extrapolation of literary codes into politics, reading the Legend of Courtesy against the background of a theory of political pragmatism. But not only theoretical practice offers illustrative interpretations of Book VI, Robert E. Stillman also 'orders' the pastoral world by resorting to the complex historical context in an attempt "to explain rather than to submit to the idealised autonomy of Spenser's work" (1992: 301). These contributions to Spenserian studies proceed to regulate, as it were, the text from the established positions of analysed social practices or historical events inflicting, thus, upon a complex narrative structure the double burden of disclosing itself at the same time as its mechanisms are persuasively linked to extra-textual parameters. Interestingly enough, the most recent criticism confirms Berger's position in that the intersection between literature and life is in Book VI, precisely because of its contrived structure, the central issue. Perhaps this view also contains the suggestion that an approach to Book VI might very well start from that textual contrivance and, then, move out of the page: to first disentangle the narrative and identify some of its governing mechanisms in order to consider the poet's place in his/the world.

Marred by numberless conflicts, the world of the sixth book of Spenser's *The Faerie Queene* displays a problematic structure. The resolution of those conflicts finds its way by resorting to identifiable narrative operations like the use of recognition and relocation of some of the characters as artifice of repair. Naturally,

where there are recognitions there are encounters among characters. Coincidence appears as the norm for those reunions which, far from seeming to conform to a compact narrative block, spring disorderly in different directions, developing hastily into short movements of unresolved crisis within societal order: squires in distress, “unknightly” knights, capricious ladies, knights and ladies “in ioyous iolliment ... in covert glade”, fights between unequals, etc. In the first three cantos, the presence of Calidore could be taken as a thread of continuity, but his disappearance in the next canto leaves one with no point of reference. Usually, the reader must wait for solutions and follow the “weary steps” of the narrator, steps which are reflected in the wanderings of the knights and ladies. The reception of this waiting is the picture of disorder hinted above, a result of Spenser’s Ariostesque technique of linear suspension, which leaves inside narratives unfinished to begin new ones or continue others, or puts an end to those started earlier and abandoned. The episodes that compose the book represent, by themselves and together, a seemingly unattainable state of order. The truncated linearity of each episode must usually find its source in conjunction with previous episodes. Thus, the courteous knight of Book VI (Calidore, Calepine or Arthur) must first restore order in the encounter that nurtures a crisis in order to resolve a state of disorder. These narrative movements at times force the reader backward through interdependent conflicts. And, perhaps, this is precisely why those more simplified patterns of the previous books of FQ seem extremely entangled in Book VI. The attempt to write away from the barren world of Book V will find that “actuality, with its dangers, requires a movement out of the virtuous centre to the circumference of the self where others meet” (Berger 1988: 225). This “virtuous centre” is the fair portrait of reality which Spenser takes pains to present alongside an edifying model of courtesy as virtue; the virtuous centre in combination with the model of courtesy as virtue result in a subtle ideological clash that is obvious from the very first cantos.

This apparent chaos contrasts with the nature of Calidore’s quest and his temporary disappearance from the scene. Calidore is subjected to a mission that motivates his wanderings: to find the Blatant Beast. The stability of his figure connects with his quest, the openness with which he enunciates his *raison d’être*, and his willingness to overcome every obstacle in full view. The idea of courtesy, then, seems to hinge on this configured illusion of offered rectitude. Perhaps, because of this sharp contrast with the other unfortunate knights, who linger in an endless discourse of reparation, Calidore’s disappearance could for a moment be seen as his distancing from a world to which he does not belong. However, it would be too simplistic to forget that in Book VI one finds “the fundamental problem of a world in which appearances diverge from reality”, and it is from that distancing that the reader has to start reading ahead—to end up reading backwards, as I will try to show (Miller 1979: 190). In one reading, it might be considered that the quester is engaged in too high an enterprise to waste his time among minute socially inadequate situations. But one could read inadequacy in the opposite direction, and regard Calidore’s activity as too idealised in relation to the problems of Calepine, Timias, Serena, etc. Spenser’s choice of reading, however, seems to be a mixture of both. Calidore returns to the quest, but first undergoes a process of abandonment of

duty and questioning of the self. This process takes place in a pastoral environment where the champion of courtesy is seemingly bound to change his codes. Thus, he first re-enters the narrative without resuming the quest. Like Aeneas, Calidore takes time out and finds his Dido, Pastorella. The knight enters a world of harmony and forgets about his quest, but he will find that there is a need for order also in the pastoral world. A restoration of order by relocation of a subject, Pastorella, to her actual noble stratum will be unknowingly accomplished by Calidore. This last small job serves as a springboard to launch Calidore into a very swift completion of the quest and “yet Book VI, for all its happy endings, recovered origins, and miraculous coincidences, seems to admit some radical doubt, a doubt which involves the question of its most central images” (Parker 1979: 106).

The return of Calidore to his task does not originate in a simple continuation of an abandoned narrative, but rather in a detour from it. An analysis of the events immediately preceding that return could demonstrate that the final movement of Book VI (that for the purpose of this paper starts with Pastorella’s recognition scene) has a twofold function. On the one hand, it ties the reappearance of Calidore to the narrative of chaos in search of order. Pastorella’s relocation is not only successfully accomplished by putting her back in the right cradle, but also reassures the societal order that seemed so radically threatened in the first cantos. On the other hand, it ties the self-recognition and reinsertion of the authorial figure at the textual level to a desire of relocation of the author in the socio-cultural frame that nurtures FQ. The scene in Mount Acidale, which actually appears to take the narrative so far from a sense of ending, actually pushes the poem towards closure. I propose to consider the pastoral interlude as a way of propitiating the ties referred to above, making the former (Pastorella’s relocation) hinge on the latter (authorial reinsertion). The suitability of the pastoral setting for such tasks must be seen in the light of that note of atavism in Spenser’s own literary career embodied in the re-enacting of the world of the *Calendar*, the only option for a Laureate poet to state how essential his task was. My suggestion is, then, that to analyse some of those central images Patricia Parker referred to above, it is necessary to focus upon two scenes: one is Pastorella’s recognition scene, as a sign of social order, and the other the vision on Mount Acidale, as a friendly reminder that the order depends on poetic achievement.

The recognition of Pastorella in canto xii has drawn sparse attention in the criticism of Book VI. Parker has identified one of the reasons for such a lack of attention in the orthodoxy with which the episode stays within the boundaries of the genre it represents: “The revelation of Pastorella’s birthmark is the romance tale of recognition in its purest form” (1979: 106). For the attentive reader of pastoral romance, the scene of recognition itself starts earlier, in the entrance of Pastorella in the narrative. In an act of public showing, she is elevated to a central position, which offers the possibility of reading cataphorically, considering the scene a glimpse of the future scene of recognition that sheds light on the past that precedes her pastoral elevation. Thus, that first appearance provides the necessary degree of predictability that is characteristic of many tales of recognition. Already upon entering the narrative in canto ix, Pastorella appears as on a pedestal,

Upon a little hillocke she was placed
Higher then all the rest, and round about. (ix.8.1-2)

This staging unmistakably sets a kind of distance, at a physical level, between her and the rest of the characters. It is still early to determine the signification of that distance. Leaving no room for speculation, the following stanzas take the reader beyond the mere object of gaze guided by the name of Calidore, who stares as though immobilised by a vision along with the shepherds who, closer to her, surround Pastorella in some kind of ritualistic fashion:

Her whyles Sir Calidore there vewed well,
And markt her rare demenure, which him seemed
So farre the meane of shepheards to excell,
As that he in his mind her worthy deemed,
To be a Princes Paragone esteemed. (ix.11.1-5)

By defining her in comparison with a social parameter without disclosing any information, Spenser conforms with the tale that will see completion three cantos later by using “the conventions of pastoral romance [to] transpose [the social] marker into those refinements of carriage and complexion that manifest the natural superiority of rusticated aristocrats to the coarse and sunburnt rustics” (Montrose 1983: 428).

Pastorella’s story begins then in *medias res*, as it were. Eventually, it will make possible the long awaited closure of Bellamour and Claribell’s circle whose description, in an effort to illustrate the “filed” wrongdoings of the past meeting a “repaired” present, appears hand in hand in the same canto where Calidore retakes his quest and captures the Blatant Beast. Claribell and Bellamour represent the last of a list of situations that started in the realm of privacy and, more importantly, of secrecy. The nature of their relationship was established counter to the standards of the order in which it appeared. In an excursus that follows Pastorella’s rescue from the Brigands, Spenser describes how

Bellamour againe so well her pleased,
With dayly service and attendance dew,
That of her love he was entyrelly seized,
And closely did her wed, but knowne to few.
Which when her father understood, he grew
In so great rage, that them in dongeon deepe
Without compassion cruelly he threw. (xii.5.1-7)

In order to overcome the opposition of Claribell’s father, Claribell and Bellamour had to resort to “closely wed” in a union only “knowne to a few”. The secrecy with which they had conducted their union seems to be the reason why Claribell’s father “grew/ in so great rage” One might read stanza 5 of canto xii as one more demonstration that secrecy could never lead to a successful end.

Aladine and Priscilla, for instance, are the protagonists of another example where seeking secrecy ends in both physical and ideological conflict. The two lovers

... chaunst to come foreby a covert glade
 Within a wood, whereas a Ladie gent
 Sate with a Knight in ioyous iolliment
 Of their frank loves, free from all gealous spyes:
 Faire was the Ladie sure, that mote content
 And hart, not carried with too curious eyes,
 And unto him did shew all lovely courtesies. (ii.16.3-9)

The private encounter is followed by the intrusion of a knight who wounds Aladine. Calidore praises Tristram for having slain the knight, and takes the wounded Aladine and Priscilla to Aldus' castle. While the physical conflict appears obvious to Aldus, Aladine's father, in the wounds of the knight, the ideological one is veiled. Priscilla is in serious distress because of the potential danger of confronting the public knowledge of her little sojourn with Aladine. It is a problem: "For which the onely helpe now left them last/ Seem'd to be Calidore: all other helpes are past" (iii.12.8-9). Thus, the social image of Priscilla is in Calidore's hands, but since he is "A courteous Knight, and full of faithfull trust" (iii.13.2), "Sith his own thought he knew most cleare from wite/ ... He can devise this counter-cast of slight,/ To give faire colour to that Ladies cause in sight" (iii.16.6-9). Calidore goes to take the head of the vanquished knight and presents her to the rest of the people. Once he has diverted the possible questioning which Priscilla so much feared,

There he boldly, did present
 The fearfull Lady to her father deare,
 Most perfect pure, and guiltlesse innocent
 Of blame, as he did on his Knighthood sweare. (iii.18.1-4)

By saving Priscilla from scandal, Calidore shows how a conflict based on shame is a matter of outward shows. If he had disclosed the truth about Priscilla and Aladine, Calidore could be equated to those "few" that in Claribell and Bellamour's episode knew about their "closely" wedding. However, while the romanticism of Calidore does do away with a potential tragedy (unlike the one caused by the confidants of Claribell and Bellamour), it sets into motion an underlying mechanism of questioning. The courtesy of a knight "full of faithfull trust" surfaces in the poem through deceit. Only Calidore's lie separates Aladine and Priscilla from Bellamour and Claribell. Both couples resorted to secrecy in order to avoid the dangerous "publication" of their private encounters. There seems to be a complete re-evaluation of the private throughout Book VI. The episode of Claribell and Bellamour completes this rethinking with the sad beginning, that haunts them from the past, and the happily "repaired" ending, that links them to a mediated present. That mediation takes form in the scene of recognition of Pastorella.

Pastorella's recognition by Melissa is more than a reworking of Odysseus's scar scene. While in Odysseus's case the washing of the feet is part of a social tradition, a hospitality rule that happens in open view, Pastorella's anagnorisis arises from an act of covering, of dressing:

Who in a morning, when this Mayden faire
Was dighting her, having her snowy brest
As yet not laced, nor her golden haire
Into their comely tresses dewly drest,
Chaunst to espy upon her yvory chest
The rosie marke, which she remembered well
That little Infant had, which forth she kest,
The daughter of her Lady Claribell,
The which she bore, the whiles in prison she did dwell. (xii.16.1-9)

During an intimate act, with the morning light, "The rosie marke" of Pastorella reveals to Melissa the true identity of the shepherdess, and Melissa's viewing of that mark could not have taken place unless she had shared that private moment of dressing with Pastorella. Unlike the knight that disturbs Aladine and Priscilla, or those few that unveil the secrecy of Bellamour and Claribell, Melissa does not intrude, she helps Pastorella dress. The sort of privacy depicted in this recognition scene contrasts with the episodes above offering, thus, two different approaches to intimacy: one that unavoidably moves from the open to the private, like the many cases of irruption in "covert glades", and another one in the opposite direction, from the private to the open, as in Pastorella's recognition scene. In the former cases, the subjects are "caught", as it were; their audience is not freely chosen. In the latter case, exiting from the private realm without exterior pressure allows the choice of an audience, Claribell. Consequently, this duality furthers the narrative in different ways. While the resolution of many of the encounters referred to above must take a narrow and winding path where deceit might be needed, Pastorella's story ends with her relocation, a return to her originating social sphere.

Recognition, though, becomes problematized and the social codes dictate an origin that is inextricably gendered. Unlike other literary recognitions, Pastorella's finds no obstacle. There is not any hint of a possible imposture, no possible gain of social power or property. Two implications may be inferred from the rapidity of the relocation. One is obviously, as has already been suggested, a certain anxiety for closure, which happens (at least textually in Book VI) a few stanzas later. The other one, which also embodies anxiety, depends on extra-textual parameters. The generic purity represented in the fulfilment of all the steps of the pastoral romance of recognition clearly communicates a desire of conformity that translates itself into a neat picture of a specific social group:

As Barthes and others repeatedly argue, through a kind of rhetoric trick language can create a 'reality effect' that seems to legitimate as natural and inevitable what is in fact a representation reflecting the interests of a particular segment of society. Hence, just as Cave suggests that we must

speaking of 'recognitions', we are now more likely to speak of 'representations,' the plural indicating in both cases that these terms are not anchored in an independent, unmediated reality (Rendall 1989: 385).

The progression from disorder to recognition and relocation in Book VI of FQ seems in many ways to confirm my initial quotation from Terence Cave's *Anagnorisis*. However, the swiftness of that progression, the neatness of the restored order, and the orthodox literariness that both exude would render any conclusion at this point somewhat suspicious. To make the picture complete one has to add a few more lines to the opening of this study: "Yet the satisfaction is also somehow excessive, the reassurance too easy; the structure is visibly prone to collapse" (Cave 1988: 489).

Faerie reaches a make-believe point of no return at the end of Book VI. Spenser has started to leap among genres, and to force the narrative into vaulting movements for several cantos, showing how the architectural patterns of previous books in the poem resemble more derelict buildings than a model to emulate. Richard Helgerson has said that "for the Laureate poet, writing was a way of saying something about himself" (1979: 196). Undoubtedly, one can sense and read in Book VI a clear authorial hand, a hand that—to follow Helgerson—is more concerned with its own depiction in order to finish the poem, than with consistency of the narrative to facilitate the end of the poem itself. However, the representation of that authorial hand, sought and accomplished by Spenser in canto x, inflicts a kind of violence to the text and to the genre of pastoral. Book VI is the pastoral, and "in pastoral forms, ambitions might be advanced in a kind consecrated to the rejection of ambition; dangerous and impolitic opinions might be voiced obscurely or obliquely in a style manifestly simple and direct; alienation from the court might be expressed in a such a way as to reaffirm the writer's own virtue and gentility" (Montrose 1983: 452). However suitable the pastoral was for the situation of a writer that had fallen in disgrace, as Montrose points out, Spenser's intention seems to be closer to gaining a power of naming rather than to a power gained through being named. It is perhaps because of this reason that Spenser decides to make that breach in the pastoral, inserting himself in the poem by means of the persona of Colin Clout. Montrose has suggested that what is important "to stress in relation to Spenser is the appropriation of the author function by the signifying subject whose class position excludes him from the direct exercise of other modes of socio-political authority" (1986: 319). It is difficult to assimilate that pretence of a clean social image that closes Book VI without considering the way in which Spenser claims authority in the poem. The best instance of this claim is another scene of recognition and relocation.

Not to break the pattern, Calidore's vision at Mount Acidale takes place in a secluded environment:

It was an hill plaste in an open plaine
That round about was bordered with a wood
Of machtlesse hight, that seemd th'earth to disdaine. (x.6.1-3)

Calidore reaches this 'disdaining' earth in an attempt to "far from all people troad" (x.5.3). Through an apparent ideological transition that should have hinged upon his conversation with Meliboe but, in fact, depends on Cupid's pressure on the knight, Calidore has decided

That from henceforth he meanes no more to sew
His former quest, so full of toile and paine;
Another quest, another game in vew
He hath ... (1-4)

Rather than hunt still after shadowes vaine
Of courtly favour, fed with light report
Of every blaste, and sayling alwaies in the port. (x.2.7-9)

David Lee Miller, in his article "Abandoning the Quest", focuses extensively on the implications that the relinquishing of Calidore has on the structural imagery of Book VI. For Miller, "Calidore's progress is now an approach not to the periphery of things but to a different kind of centre: ... Mount Acidale is what the court should be" (Miller 1979: 186). The displacement of the court as legitimate centre finds its way through images of solitude and inwardness. Calidore, the champion of courtly virtue, describes in a less than oblique manner his critique to the court:

Would never more delight in painted show
Of such false bliss, as there is set for tales,
T'entrap unwary fooles in their eternal bales. (x.3.7-9)

While, as Montrose points out, "Renaissance pastoral takes the court as its cynosure" producing "an authorised mode of discontent", Calidore's discontent reaches the reader with glimpses that appear to be deprived of the allegorical armour which makes possible that safe critique from the woods (1983: 426). The "authorised mode" to which Montrose refers to becomes subverted by the increasing straightforwardness of Calidore's merely rhetorical abandonment of duty, jettisoning the unused allegorical possibilities to the realm where "th'earth" is disdained, to the episode of Mount Acidale.

As he walks, Calidore sees "a troupe of Ladies dauncing.../ And in the midst a Shepheard piping" (x.10.7-9). His first reaction, in contrast with previous encounters in the woods where an apologetic speech balances the disturbance created by determined intrusion, is to hesitate:

He durst not enter into th'open green
For dread of them unwares to be descryde,
For breaking their daunce, if he were seene;
But in the covert of the wood did byde,
Beholding all, yet of them unspyde.
There he did see, that pleased much his sight,

That even he him selfe his eyes envyde,
 An hundred naked maidens lilly white,
 All raunged in a ring, and dauncing in delight. (x.11.1-9)

The “covert glade” of previous episodes turns into a “covert wood”, but with an “open greene”. The author starts qualifying the locus as centre, as a place that embodies a certain degree of purity reinforced by the “lilly white” maidens. Here might lie the reason to make Calidore vacillate about whether or not to employ his usual intrusive behaviour. By envying “him selfe” his eyes, he anticipates a conflict between view and desire, between mind and body, a fracture that Book VI will not mend. It is crucial to see how the knight, though unable to resume the use of his code in order to decode what he sees, seeks a location which provides him with a paramount view so that he can be “beholding all”:

All they without were raunged in a ring,
 And daunced round; but in the midst of them
 Three other Ladies did both daunce and sing,
 The whilest the rest them round about did hemme,
 And like a girlond did in compasse stemme:
 And in the middest of those same three, was placed
 Another Damzell, as a precious gemme,
 Amidst a ring most richly well enhanced,
 That with her goodly presence all the rest much graced. (x.12.1-9)

... unto the starres an ornament,
 Which round about her move in order excellent. (x.13.8-9)

Those were the Graces, daughters of delight
 ... But that faire one,
 That in the midst was placed parauaunt,
 Was she to whom the shepheard pypt alone,
 That made him pipe so merrily, as never none. (x.15.1-9)

It seems inevitable to relate this geometrical concentricity to episodes in previous cantos, namely Serena’s and Pastorella’s. Berger has pointed out the recurrence of this motif and its gendered construction that springs from a female centre (Berger 1988: 225). The cosmogonic representation of the vision proper affords a margin for the philological twist of the Greek word for woman, *γυνή*, that is semantically related to *γη*, earth. However, touches of physicality and the presence of words like “ornament”, in conjunction with the revolving stars, do connect this episode, and its female centrality, to the preceding ones. Centrality dissolves in a hyperbolic employment of Petrarchan conventions. Montrose states that “the use of Petrarchan conventions in pastorals ... is clearly related to the critical fact that the prince was a woman” (1983: 441). But in opposition to Serena’s and Pastorella’s scenes, the present one has, in fact, a male centre, moving closer to “Tudor somatic symbolism [that] was culture-specific in two fundamental and

interrelated ways: if dominant structures of thought and belief privileged the body of the prince in relation to the body of the subject, they also privileged the male body in relation to the female body" (Montrose 1986: 307). The shepherd is, then, just "iolly". He does not have a body (he does not need it for his task), only a bag-pipe with which he can orchestrate the vision and place himself in a paramount position as well, a position that allows him to dominate a clearly feminized environment.

Although they are in opposite ends of field of vision, Calidore and the shepherd share the same quality of perspective. Despite this common terrain, the image of cynosure that Calidore views has more to do with "the cannibals staring at the nakedness of Serena, ... the merchants 'greedy' gaze, ... Calidore's 'hungry eye' as he gazes upon Pastorella, ... cynosure [that] is always at least potentially a visual gluttony or embowered fix" (Parker 1979: 104). The resistance to abandon the eagerness to devour physicality through the eye makes evident that the supposed ideological transition of Calidore never materializes. On the other side, the shepherd seems to attempt the illusion of a kind of harmony which should lead him toward an absorption of a different sort: "The 'prospective'—a mountain view or telescopic vision—is almost invariably associated with the wide-ranging political survey. Landscape, with its wide scope and mastery of distance, suggests a vision of transcendent truth" (Turner 1979: 43). Thus gazing, as action, seeks legitimation, and the two differentiated ways of fulfilling this action that occur in Mount Acidale start their process of separation by no longer corresponding to two ends of the same line. The shepherd's access to a name will dilute and restructure any possible hint of contact with the knight, showing how "proper use of the landscape establishes the poet's authority" (Turner 1979: 44).

Naming, as said before, can be taken to be a goal that will enable Spenser to close his narrative. Calidore's failure to identify Colin Clout, who participated in some of the pastoral games of previous stanzas, forces the author to take part in the recognition in a daring extra-textual movement:

That iolly shepheard, which there piped, was
Poore Colin Clout (who knowes not Colin Clout?)
He pypt apace, whilest they him daunst about.
Pype iolly shepheard, pype thou now apace (x.16.3-6)

Calidore sees Colin Clout. But, who is Colin Clout? Spenser chooses a moment of lyrical quality to re-inscribe himself into the text. The recognition of the shepherd who "pypt" is placed right before the intrusion of Calidore: "Poore Colin Clout (who knowes not Colin Clout?)". The second part of the line is a question; since it is the narrator who speaks, this question cannot be addressed to any other but the reader. Recognition becomes self-recognition, forcing representation into the desired self-representation that Helgerson posits as the Laureate's main obsession (1979: 193-220). Spenser, though, distinguishes the realm in which he desires to be represented. His reinsertion in the text takes place in a pastoral scene with the presence of the graces, a description that coincides with the one given in *The Shepheardes Calendar* as Sawtelle has shown (Sawtelle 1896: 57-59). Spenser's

personal rejection of the world of “outward shows” seems to be a movement of return to the beginnings of a literary career as he is gazed upon by the champion of courtesy. It is undoubtedly crucial to read that rejection as scepticism that is translated in an unusual authorial insertion. Following Montrose, “it is precisely by calling attention to its own process of representation that Spenser’s art calls into question the status of the authority it represents” (1986: 331).

Thus, Calidore’s intrusion leads him to confront an authorial figure. Unable to deal with the contrast between the “painted show” he has just abandoned and the “enchanted show” he sees, Calidore moves from the hesitation felt at the beginning of the vision to the initiation of his return to the *vita activa*:

But soone as he appeared to their vew,
 They vanisht all away out of sight,
 And cleane were gone, which way he never knew;
 All save the shepheard, who fell for despight
 Of that displeasure, broke his bag-pipe quight,
 And made great mone for that unhappy turne.
 But Calidore, though no lesse sory wight,
 For that mishap, yet seeing him to mourne,
 Drew neare, that he the truth of all by him mote learne. (x.18.1-9)

To bring to view the “ob-scene”, what is out of sight, through an act of intrusion questions not so much the act itself but the principles upon which that interruption operates. To stage what is usually not staged is obviously a matter of culling. However, if staging itself embodies previous analysis of certain principles which select the elements that will be in view, staging the “ob-scene” displays either a re-evaluation or a disregard of those principles for new ones. What is important is not what the author brings into view, nor why it is brought, but how. In Book VI, the method is intrusion, intrusion meaning alteration and that alteration provokes a de-centering. This de-centring wrought by the author carefully equates Calidore with the reader. One could interpret here the vanishing of the vision as an exhaustion of the text, for an encounter between reader and author would displace the text to relocate the producer of the text. That sort of encounter could only leave space for a commentary on the text, which is what actually follows, transforming the relation author/reader into authority/subject. And yet, though the attempt at renewal directed towards the reader/Calidore is explicit, it fails to accomplish its goal. “To fashion a gentleman”, Spenser has finally taken a path that goes upward rather than forward. Neuse points out how Calidore is a reader whose lack of reading fitness shows that he “may have not been fashioned in all virtues” (1972: 367). And the exam which he fails in front of Colin Clout may indicate, as John Huntington suggests, “that there is a whole level of knowledge that Colin understands and Calidore does not” (1997: 317).

Full of predictability, the knight’s next step is the apology:

Sayd Calidore; Now sure it yrketh mee,

That to thy blisse I made this lucklesse breach, (2-3)
 But gentle Shepheard pardon thou my shame,
 Who rashly sought that, which I mote not see.
 Thus did the courteous Knight excuse his blame,
 And to recomfort him, all comely meanes did frame. (x.29.6-9)

The flaw created by intrusion is once more covered by words. However, this time the recipient of the apologies possesses a kind of authority that is beyond Calidore's code. The end result of the breach inside the breach, represented by Calidore's intrusion in Spenser's authorial insertion, is, as David Lee Miller has proposed, another breach: "where Spenser had once imagined opportunities for meditation he now sees only an essential discontinuity between poetic vision and civil conversation" (1979: 190).

Once more Calidore destroys an order, but in this case the destruction nurtures the display of the literary power of the author. The knight will move swiftly, first ideologically backward and then forward in the narrative, once the authorial bridge makes it possible for the protagonist to serve the reader with a story that has left behind eccentricity. And the yarn dives completely into the genre which best represents the illusory societal order absent in the first cantos. Calidore's complete return to the active life is performed in the rescue of Pastorella from the Brigands. Calidore's complete return to the quest is supported by the securely organized society that he leaves behind. Only after repairing the social picture is it possible for the knight to resume his journey to the official centre, the court, a place reached solely by the fulfilment of duty in an outwardly manner.

The anti-climactic nature of what should have been an epic climax in the narrative—the capture of the Blatant Beast— may hinge upon the fact that the capture and subsequent escape offer a clear picture of a different kind of continuity; it is one that, rather than required by the poem, threatens it from the outside. The hurry one can sense in the last stanzas could be read as resignation about that continuity—the climax is not necessary. The lack of closure that the escape of the beast represents may be read in relation to the bitter tone of the very last stanza where the *author*, descending from Mount Acidale, points out the uselessness of any completion of his/the quest.

Whereas Pastorella's recognition restores the poem to a sense of structure, the self-recognition at Mount Acidale creates the poem's stricture. The former could not have taken place without the latter. Back and forth, the narrative fixes itself and disentangles the chaotic network of encounters that initiated it. At the end, only the right reunions take place: Pastorella and her parents, Calidore and the Blatant Beast. The propriety of these encounters lies in the fact that they are susceptible to being publicized without provoking any social rupture. Other encounters, though buried in the narration, must be seen as improper since they always end up seeking to be repaired: Serena and Aladine, for instance. Richard Neuse has concluded that "what is radically threatened in this particular society...is the element of the personal, the individual, the contemplative-reflective, in a word, the element of privacy in the

fullest sense" (1972: 388). Private loci, covert glades, shades, woods, are incessantly displayed throughout Book VI in an array of situations that involve disjuncture from a certain kind of morality. A woman's presence permeates every occasion, conflating woman with nature and violability. The array of situations above has a common denominator, intrusion. Spenser's Book VI seems to defend the realm of the private. His reinsertion in the text takes place in a private place; Calidore's invasion not only breaks the boundaries of this privacy but it also disrupts the continuation of Colin Clout's activity. The rounding of Colin Clout's self is interrupted since "in order to become a self, persons need private space, a sense of their inviolability" (Schneider 1977: 74). Spenser projects his self-representation from a scene of violation. By doing so, he frames his inability to deal with this social event that affects his production to the extent of being forced to use a heavy artifice to complete his ambitious picture.

Ambition necessitates speculation, and Spenser was well aware of this. The representation of a speculative scenario where the hero surrenders to hesitation, the poem defies structure and the poet faces the patron, was too challenging a project to be just the unannounced consequence of a narrative and/or a generic detour. Spenser's well-wrought plan for Book VI makes him realize early, in the proem, that what he is about to undertake might only be completed with the best tool he possesses, poetry:

Guyde ye my footing, and conduct me well
In these strange waies, where never foote did use
Ne none can find, but who was taught them by the Muse. (Proem. 2.7-9)

"These strange waies" are translated into a textual world where the representation of privacy depends largely on the presence of intruders. However, beyond the page, they are the reflection of a court where, as Pierre Bourdieu says, the economic lack of the poet, despite the protection of the muses, would never be erased by his cultural capital (1984: 18-22). It is, thus, in the conviction that the only solutions within his reach were those operated inside the poem that Spenser sets out to relocate himself with respect to Courtesy.

In the end Spenser's textual self-recognition and insertion in the text is successful and does restore a literary order, but social relocation leads to a loss of control. The extra-textual pressure generated by the last line of Book VI—"And seeke to please, that now is counted wisemens threasure"—dissolves the desire for social recognition. Unlike Pastorella, Spenser did not enjoy the unaware help of a Calidore. The poet had to claim his own right to relocate himself. Perhaps, since social boundaries confined him, he decided to break the textual ones. Maybe, since he could not bring Calidore out of the text, he was determined to place himself in it.

WORKS CITED

- Berger, Harry, Jr. 1988: "A Secret Discipline: *The Faerie Queene*, Book VI". *Revisionary Play: Studies in Spenserian Dynamics*. Ed. H. Berger. Berkeley: University of California Press. 215-42. [This article was originally published in *Forms and Convention in the Poetry of Edmund Spenser*. Nelson, William (ed.). New York: Columbia University Press, 1961]
- Bourdieu, Pierre 1984: *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*. Transl. Richard Nice. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Cave, Terence 1988: *Recognitions: A Study in Poetics*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Danner, Bruce 1998: "Courteous Virtu in Spenser's Book VI of *The Faerie Queene*". *SEL* 38.1: 1-18.
- Helgerson, Richard 1979: "The Elizabethan Laureate: Self-Presentation and the Literary System". *English Literary History* 46: 193-220.
- Huntington, John 1997: "Furious Insolence: The Social Meaning of Poetic Inspiration in the 1590s". *Modern Philology* 94.3: 305-27.
- Miller, David Lee 1979: "Abandoning the Quest". *English Literary History* 46: 173-92.
- Montrose, Louis Adrian 1983: "Of Gentlemen and Shepherds: The Politics of Elizabethan Pastoral Form". *English Literary History* 50: 415-59.
- Montrose, Louis Adrian 1986: "The Elizabethan Subject and the Spenserian Text". *Literary Theory/Renaissance Texts*. Eds. Patricia Parker & David Quint. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press. 303-40.
- Neuse, Richard 1972: "Book VI as Conclusion to *The Faerie Queene*". *Essential Articles for the Study of Edmund Spenser*. Ed. A.C. Hamilton. Hamden: Archon Books. 222-46.
- Parker, Patricia A. 1979: *Inescapable Romance: Studies in the Poetics of a Mode*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Rendall, Steven 1989: "Reading Backwards: Recognitions and Representations". *Comparative Literature* 41. 4: 378-86.
- Sawtelle, Alice Elizabeth 1896: *The Sources of Spenser's Classical Mythology*. Boston: Silver, Burdett and Company.
- Schneider, Carl 1977: *Shame, Exposure and Privacy*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Spenser, Edmund 1980: *The Faerie Queene*. Ed. A.C. Hamilton. New York: Longman.
- Stillman, Robert E. 1992: "Spenserian Autonomy and the Trial of New Historicism: Book Six of *The Faerie Queene*". *ELR* 35.3: 299-314.

- Tompkins, Jane P. 1980: "The Reader in History: The Changing Shape of Literary Response". *Reader-Response Criticism*. Ed. Jane P. Tompkins. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press. 201-32.
- Turner, James 1979: *The Politics of Landscape*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Whigham, Frank 1984: *Ambition and Privilege*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

