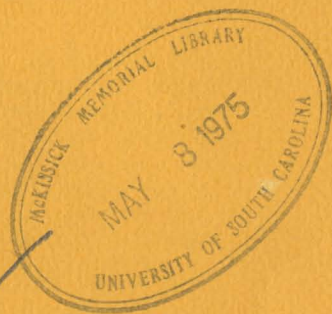


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BOOKS: REVIEWS AND NOTICES

ARTICLES: ABSTRACTS AND NOTICES

SPENSER AT MLA

FROM THEROUANNE TO TERWIN?

WORK PUBLISHED, FORTHCOMING, AND IN PROGRESS

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TO OUR READERS

That belated snowstorm which we idly promised in our last issue, as a justification for this "Winter" issue's appearing in April, came just as we had finished preparing our copy for final typing, and with poetic justice left Cheney snowbound in Montpelier, Vermont, en route to a NEMLA convention in Montreal where he was to read a paper on a program chaired by Hieatt. Awed and chastened by this proof of our editorial powers -- or of the jealousy of a superior *Editor pluvius* -- we promise that *SpN* will publish no more weather predictions.

One minor innovation appears with this issue: book reviews will contain an indication of the publisher's price, in U.S. dollars and/or local currency. These prices are necessarily tentative; for an increasing number of books arrive with no price on the dust jacket, or with an accumulation of sticky labels; and it's by no means uncommon to see publishers simultaneously raising the list price of a book and offering it in a "warehouse sale". But we shall try to provide at least a notional price for the books we review, and leave it to our readers to decide whether to buy them early or late, at home or abroad or at a convention discount.

BOOKS: REVIEWS AND NOTICES

Georgia Ronan Crampton. *The Condition of Creatures: Suffering and Action in Chaucer and Spenser*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1974. x + 207 pp. \$US 10.00.

Patrick Cullen. *Infernal Triad: The Flesh, the World, and the Devil in Spenser and Milton*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974. xxxvi + 267 pp. \$US 13.50.

Professor Crampton sets out to treat the motif of action (the agent's role of doing, inflicting) and suffering (the undergoer's role of endurance, patience, and contrariwise passion) in some works of her two authors. On the whole she accomplishes her purpose competently. For her Spenser's characters are more completely actors than Chaucer's, and committedly so to such a degree that when frustrated they are more earnestly subject to despair. This is no doubt a sound perception. She is excellent on the theme of the impropriety of a man or woman's coercing a partner in love, no matter how tyrannical and fated the coercion of the lover by the Love God himself may be, as in *FQ* III and IV.

Many of her other perceptions are astoundingly good, but some of her book is in the nature of a frivolous romp, which I believe she knows so well that she will not mind my saying it -- except perhaps when I go on to say that the book is never more frivolous than when failing to distinguish the serious, Boethian resolution of the Knight's Tale from the preoccupations of its less far-seeing

characters with the arbitrariness of what are finally only planetary gods. Theseus, Chaucer's actor among many sufferers and undergoers, is not finally an ironical portrait. Some will disagree with me here, but Theseus, it seems to me, is right, and Professor Crampton is wrong about the efficacy of his action and the depth of his patience and passion throughout the tale. The Prime Mover still rules.

She is very good on the suffering (i.e., passion) entailed in unreflective action in the case of Pyrochles, but how could she have missed the large discovery that lay in the path of an investigator of the *agere et pati* theme in the context of FQ II: Amavia's impatience and Mordant's impotence, and Impatience and Impotence, hag-lieutenants of Maleger? She touches on none of these.

A conclusion of Patrick Cullen's book is that to the end of his career Milton was profoundly influenced by Spenser's work. Even though Milton transformed and classicized the central tradition of medieval allegory and romance that he found in this Elizabethan, Spenser is in a central sense his "original".

Cullen understands this to work in terms of a triadic structure which he finds in FQ I and II: the drift of his interpretation is in fact structuralist in the looser sense that relation and counterpoint of images, actions, and themes in those Books are the important points to watch.

The meanings which he properly finds that he can assign to the components of his triadic pattern are notably various and adaptable to his purposes. Principally, the Flesh is the temptation to fleshly intemperance but also, for some Protestants, to doubt, distrust, and despair. The World is the temptation to avarice, but avarice may be directed not only at money but also at high station, and consequently may be prideful. The Devil is the temptation to vainglory, pride, and high estate. Cullen depends on an intuition for these things, which sometimes works; it is also true, however, that while these three elements often arise in medieval exegesis and allegory, they are not as often in control as the argument seems to require. The Seven Deadly Sins are indeed often organized triadically: pride, envy, wrath (the Devil); covetousness (the World); gluttony, lechery, sloth (the Flesh). But at least as often they are organized binarily: the first three in one class, the next three in a second class, and the last assigned to either the first or the second class. Or the Seven Deadly Sins and the triad may be in practice interchangeable, which introduces some doubt into Cullen's interpretation of FQ I.

Here Redcross is said to be defeated by the Flesh (Duessa: lust and religious doubt), the World (Lucifera: worldly pride), and the Devil (Orgoglio: Satanic pride, but also the flesh); he is said to be victorious in terms of the Flesh (Despaire), the World (the House of Holiness), and the Devil (the dragon).

In *FQ* II triads are not claimed to be dominant; they are said to appear, however, in the episodes connected with the House of Mammon and the Bower of Bliss. To discover the triad in the conversation with Mammon before Guyon descends into the earth is, I think, to fall into over-reading: the Flesh is said to turn up, not in a temptation extended by Mammon but only in one of Guyon's replies: "through fowle intemperance, / Frayle men are oft captiu'd to couetise." But intemperance here does not mean merely intemperance in the fleshly sense (although Cullen himself thus invariably uses the term); it means the whole array of departures from the norm of Temperance, as appears plainly from the context. Furthermore that context as Cullen quotes it (vii.16-17) refers to many forms of intemperance, among which the single phrase "licentious lust" is the only, doubtful candidate for Cullen's meaning of the Flesh; yet this expression may mean no more than "unlawful desires".

The Flesh does indeed appear in the Garden of Proserpina in what Cullen claims is a further instance of the triad mated with the one just mentioned and accommodated to Guyon's whole journey through the House of Mammon; but the attempt to identify such double triads, or triads within triads, often brings the argument into doubt. The old and well-founded distinction, for instance, between Eve's aspiring above her station and Adam's falling below his is granted a certain vestigial significance in *Paradise Lost*, but we are told to recognize within the processes of the falls of each of these characters an instance of the triad, making their initial failures to follow God's command more similar than we had supposed. The notion that Milton followed Spenser's "double triadic pattern" *an sich* in cases where the pattern itself is fleshed out with narrative material quite different from Spenser's seems in need of more defence than Cullen gives it.

One inconspicuous but important point is that Cullen has, I believe, sometimes misused the term "irascible appetite", for he occasionally applies it to instances of wrath alone; what it means more usually is the appetite for, or rather the drive towards, invidious competitiveness by whatever means, of which the symptoms are pride, envy, wrath, and self-pitying despair, but never sensuality, which is a symptom of the concupiscible appetite.

I should not be reviewing these books if I did not have one of my own in galley proof on Chaucer, Spenser, and Milton. I am in hearty agreement with Professor Cullen's general conclusions about the relation of *FQ* to Milton's imagination, and it will be interesting to see whether in reviewing my book he will make as many detailed strictures as I have expressed here, and whether he will agree that my interpretations coincide with and illuminate the texts more frequently than do his. On occasion, in fact, we are so close that we seem to be quoting each other. This is all to the good, I believe, since we have read nothing of each other's except our published, preparatory essays to our more extensive works. [A. K. H.]

Haruhiko Fujii. *Time, Landscape and the Ideal Life: Studies in the Pastoral Poetry of Spenser and Milton*. Kyoto: Apollon-sha, 1974. iv + 272 pp. ¥ 3,000; \$US 17.00.

Roughly three-fourths of this book is devoted to Spenser's poetry; *Lycidas*, and Warton's criticism of it, are introduced as illustrations of later transformations and finally distortions of the emphases of Renaissance pastoral seen in *The Shepheardes Calender*, *Colin Clouts Come Home Againe*, and *Faerie Queene* VI. The first three chapters are devoted to *The Shepheardes Calender*: each of E.K.'s three categories is examined and a distinct idea of time associated with it. The recreative eclogues are characterized by a tension between their visions of momentary bliss and the awareness that such moments are inevitably brief. The "moral" eclogues show a common view of time that is related to ethical and ecclesiastical hierarchies. The shepherds in these eclogues believe that their world has decayed from an earlier, golden age; but they believe that happiness will return in the future. Believing in the rotation of time, and feeling themselves now at the nadir, they look forward to a Sabbath that is still to come. "The pastoral *otium* in the recreative eclogues of the *Calender* is sublimated to the religious vision of magnificent eternal holiday in *The Faerie Queene*" (p.65). Finally, the plaintive eclogues show Colin Clout meditating on inner time: Elizabethan attitudes toward melancholy are advanced as a basis for arguing that the vision of death in "December" is a metaphor for the end of one phase of life. "Colin Clout, the melancholy shepherd meditating on the past flux of his inner time, is a universal figure representing man at the end of his youth" (p.104).

By the time Colin reappears in *CCCHA*, he is ready to comment on the flow of time in the external world as well as in his own private, interior self. An examination of this later poem along with *Astrophel* shows Spenser confronting the traditional choice among the three states of action, contemplation, and love. The last state, especially when seen through the selective filter of pastoral, appears as a higher synthesis of the other two; accordingly, the development of Calidore in Book VI of *The Faerie Queene* may similarly be seen as a process of self-discovery comparable to that of Redcross in Book I: "The interlude of Calidore's sojourn in the pastoral world is a story of this knight's discovery of the essential meaning of the virtue he should embody. It is in a sense the story of his search for his own spiritual identity. Through the experience of this self-discovery Calidore attains to that state of perfection which is the synthesis of action, contemplation, and love" (p.176).

Professor Fujii has developed an original and interesting thesis which serves him well in examining the pastoral works of Spenser; and he writes with a lucidity and grace that many western Spenserians might envy. At the same time, however, a reader who finds himself

engaged by the thesis summarized above must regret that so much of this book is devoted to a rather discursive summary of much Spenserian material that is not directly related to the central question of time and pastoral. Fujii seems to be directing his book partly to an audience of Japanese students who require a general introduction to Spenser and the English renaissance, partly to the international community of scholars. But even in its somewhat divided identity, the book stands as an impressive indication of the high level of English studies in Japan today. [D. C.]

A. Bartlett Giamatti. *Play of Double Senses: Spenser's Faerie Queene*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1975. xii + 140 pp. \$US 6.50 (clothbound); 2.95 (paperback).

This is an attractive, highly readable introduction to the *FQ*. Prentice-Hall have shrewdly chosen to bring out a paperback edition immediately, recognizing its appeal for classroom adoption, not simply for semester-long courses in Spenser, but perhaps even more for the course in major poets which is likely to give teachers only a month to interest their class in the intricacies of Spenser's poem. Giamatti provides a zestful, vigorous, highly quotable overview of the entire *FQ*; in fact, he is so adroit at pungent, one-line remarks which invite further elaboration that he is likely to be an oft-quoted anonymous critic on examinations of the future.

It should be stressed at once, however, that this book is not in direct competition with another introductory study of Spenser currently available in paperback, William Nelson's *The Poetry of Edmund Spenser*. In fact, the two books are radically different in concept, though equally desirable in my opinion. Where Nelson provides a thorough, mature, trustworthy survey of Spenser's background and poetry, working chapter by chapter, book by book through the *FQ*, following the sequence of Spenser's chronology and the narrative or thematic sequence of the poem, Giamatti addresses himself to large topics which consider the poem as a digestible (in fact, digested) whole. It is true that the first half of his book is concerned with "background"; but aside from a first chapter on the life which is necessarily chronological, the other chapters deal with such broad questions as the nature of epic, with continental backgrounds, with Chaucer and Hawes, with Arthur in history and myth. The second half of the book, surveying the poem, is similarly topical, and to a degree that defies summary: "patterns in the poem" are surveyed in some ten pages which comment on the full variety of repetitions, echoes, thematic balances which an attentive reader might collect in tranquility.

If one looks, then, for an example of the kind of book this is, I would suggest that one might think of Lewis's *Preface to Paradise Lost*, or perhaps of the kind of book Lewis's lectures on Spenser might have produced had he lived to give them final form. This is

not to suggest that Giamatti is a Lewis *redivivus*, or that his comments can claim any full measure of the authority that Lewis enjoyed by right. But this book does share a topical introductory approach to a major poem, along with some of the sense of published lectures -- the remarks that are tossed off for their affective, heuristic value, and now appear in cold print, to be studied, probed, and perhaps scorned. In effect, the book is offered to scholars as a collection of abstracts of arguments advanced (or hopefully, to be advanced) elsewhere: the chapter on Proteus is a Spenserian excursus related to a longer study in the *Wellek Festschrift*; part of chapter ix revises a MLA talk published elsewhere; chapters ii and iii implicitly derive their authority from Giamatti's earlier book on Renaissance epic.

In short, Giamatti's book shares certain strengths and weaknesses with the other volumes in this "Landmarks in Literature" series. Like Anderson's *Art of the Aeneid* (to name only one, distinguished example), it is an original, thoughtful overview of a major poem by a distinguished younger scholar; it must be read with care by professionals in the field, for at every turning it offers new interpretations. At the same time, it has some of the weaknesses of the hastily produced (and admirably inexpensive) commercial book: of the twenty-five authors in its brief bibliography, three are misspelled. An equally minor error, though one more clearly to be attributed to the author rather than publisher or proof-reader, is the assertion (p.10) that Harvey was referring to Bernardo Accolti when he lamented that over many at Cambridge were acquainted with *Vnico Aretino*: though it is true that Accolti possessed that title by right, for Englishmen like Harvey, Harington, or Nashe, there was only one Aretine, the scandalous Pietro.

More generally, one can be grateful to the book for its suggestive insights while still longing for a further development of them. Giamatti calls our attention to the marvelous list of creatures portrayed in Phantastes' chamber (II.ix.50):

Such as in idle fantasies doe flit:

Infernall hags, centaurs, feendes, hippodames,

Apes, lyons, aegles, owles, fooles, lovers, children, dames.

But although he remarks justly that "This is the Vulcan cave of the poet's psyche, where he forges the monsters he must contain" (p.109), this reader wishes he had gone on to discuss the line of influence and response which has led from Virgil through Ariosto and Spenser, to Milton and finally to Belinda's dressing table. Until Giamatti provides such a discussion, in some future article or book, perhaps we shall have to be satisfied with asking our students to take a stab at questions like this and many others that his book leaves so stimulatingly raised and unresolved. [D. C.]

Paula Johnson. *Form and Transformation in Music and Poetry of the English Renaissance*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1972. 170 pp. \$US 8.50.

The primary focus in this book is upon the theory that the serial arts, those "whose perception is serially fixed," must be received in two phases — the "progressive", the actual process of reading, listening, watching, performing, and the "retrospective", the detached apprehension of the work as a complete (and completed) form. Most of the specific references to poetry and music are chosen and set forth, quite successfully, to serve the theory.

The carefully established vocabulary here may prove to have pedagogic value: it should help students who feel the need of such "handles" to cope with such structural principles as recurrences, rhythms, and analogies in more than one way.

To ask how useful the book may be, specifically, in understanding the poetry of Spenser is simply to serve the specialized purposes of *SpN*, with no intention of cavilling — the author's purposes are general and aesthetic. One section (pp.125-31) is devoted to the *Fowre Hymnes*: it argues that certain difficulties encountered in a "progressive" reading are resolved in the realization that "the symmetrical retrospective pattern is basic," a judgment not hard to accept with or without the present vocabulary. All other references to Spenser are incidental. [E. B.]

Michael Murrin. "The Rhetoric of Faeryland," in *The Rhetoric of Renaissance Poetry from Wyatt to Milton*, T. O. Sloan and R. B. Waddington, eds. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974, pp.73-95. \$US 10.00.
John M. Steadman. *The Lamb and the Elephant: Ideal Imitation and the Context of Renaissance Allegory*. San Marino, California: Huntington Library, 1974. xlvi + 254 pp. \$US 17.50.

In commenting on the intent of the *FQ*, Steadman writes that "Like the dream time of Australian aborigines, Spenser's chivalric age lies in a mythical past that exists outside of time and can only be recapitulated symbolically and through ritual participation in the present" (p.41). Murrin, too, sees Spenser's achievement in terms of a reader experiencing through the poem an essentially visionary or mystical perception of the world and his relation to it. Where Steadman sees the achievement as the result of a radical handling of allegory, Murrin attributes the poet's success to an equally radical series of rhetorical techniques which little by little wean the reader from reliance on the logic of reason and lead him to trust the logic of imagination (or vision). Augustine rather than Plato serves as Murrin's model for what he sees as Spenser's Christian -- specifically Protestant -- teleology. Yet both commentators see Spenser's goal as a forcing of the reader out of "the temporal order in which we live" and into a perspective which permits us to view our personalities from the other

world (Murrin, pp.94-95; Steadman, p.40).

Steadman comments that Spenser's allegorical vision operates as a solvent to fuse his allusions and sources "into a moral pageant that is simultaneously within and beyond time, like the realm of ideas itself" (p.40). Steadman's encyclopedic reexamination of the Renaissance tradition of imitation (prototypes and ectypes) emphasizes the need of the Renaissance artist to assert the useful and/or honorable nature of his art as a "divine science," as hortatory, or as a social corrective. Murrin, too, recognizes the depth of Spenser's concern with his art. Rather than illustrate, as Steadman does, the topoi which Renaissance readers might recognize, Murrin assumes that even the more erudite members of Spenser's audience were meant to be confused by the polysemous nature of the poem's texture and imagery. The reader would consequently be forced to depend on Spenser's rhetorical clues and to discover in the process that his role as reader demands an active attempt to create unity out of the variety with which the poet confronts him. His only hope of satisfying his own demand for unity lies in the "rhetorical set of relationships" (p.89) the Narrator provides. Where Steadman offers his reader a survey of what a poet of the Renaissance might and did do in order to produce *maraviglia*, Murrin traces the techniques Spenser did use, specifically in Book II, to astonish his reader.

Murrin likens the *FQ* prologues to those of Roman comedy in which the poet-persona not only explains his story, praises his own work, or praises his patron, but also (as Terence does) raises serious questions about his own art. Spenser's adaptation of a comic device to an epic is the first of many rhetorical devices which cause the reader to question his own expectations and more importantly his own ability to unearth the structural and/or thematic unity of the poem. The very traditional, hierarchic structure that Steadman traces in the Renaissance as a whole is what Murrin contends is toppled in the *FQ*. The process begins with the Narrator's claiming of objective status for his fairyland in II.Prol. He expects the reader to seek it out, not as an imaginary but as an actual place. The Narrator claims to share his reader's distrust of the imaginary ("th'abundance of an idle braine"). Unlike his probable source, Jean of Arras' *Melusine*, the Narrator attempts no logical defence of his position. Instead, by purely rhetorical means (paralleling Colin's retort to Cuddy in *CCCHA* 290-95), he reduces the doubter to the status of naive, parochial ignoramus.

The times, explains the Narrator, have produced a new principle of discovery. Columbus sailed West to go East, and Orellana discovered the Amazon (thereby validating an old myth) by sailing East to go West. That principle of reversal -- mirror vision -- teaches the reader the "perceptual process" (p.86) through which he must approach the poem and understand fairyland as the mirror of Elizabeth's realm. Rather than identify with the allegory (although the complexity of the allegory so well demonstrated in Steadman's book is directly related to the process)

or with the action, the reader is to recognize in both "the shadowy personifications and half-developed [historical] characters" (p.95), the limitations of his own and his guide's sensual and rational perceptions.

As fairyland encroaches upon the time and space occupied by the reader, its deserted landscapes become more powerful. They recall Malory's landscapes but are unrelieved by the specificity and familiarity of events in Malory. What will strike the reader as incoherent in retrospect seems, in the reading of the poem, action and character natural to that landscape. Anachronisms such as the simultaneous appearance of Arthur and Redcross only strike with their true force as the poem is put aside and the reader tries to understand what he has experienced. Finally then Murrin suggests that Spenser's aim is to challenge the reader to discover why "the contrast between mental and eternal time" (p.89), which he accepted while reading the poem, cannot be dealt with outside of the landscape of the poem. "Perhaps," writes Murrin, "no epic or romance poet ever grounded his plot on such a radical principle. Spenser made poetic license the focus of his epic." (p.88)

For the Renaissance man such license, essentially a denial of the adequacy of reason, reaches beyond the new perception of self or the new sense of the relativity of time which would occur to a modern reader. It has teleological implications as Murrin states. It is here in particular that an appreciation of the varieties of traditional meanings Steadman outlines becomes valuable. Separation of eternal and temporal time exists only in the imagination. In the real world of the Renaissance they are inseparable, and it is impossible to view an individual as either mortal or immortal (human or fairy). He is always one or the other existing in a landscape that reflects the image not claimed. As Murrin suggests, his world must have seemed to a Renaissance man like a prologue to a never-to-be-finished work.

Although Steadman deals only peripherally with the *FQ*, he comments that Spenser's "poem differs from earlier romances...not because he held a different conception of allegory from the majority of Renaissance theorists, but because, unlike the majority of romancers, he apparently took the theory seriously -- and acted upon it... Credibility, verisimilitude, and probability are to be found rather in the correspondences between allegorical and literal levels than on the literal plane" (pp.116-17). Steadman further notes that a reader would have been struck by the irregularity of the poem and by the frequency with which it violates those classical ideals elucidated in *The Lamb and the Elephant*. The point of the study is to emphasize the distance between theory and practice in most Renaissance works. Spenser is atypical, then, in striving to test both poetic and religious/philosophic theories within the poem.

The Lamb and the Elephant reviews an impressive number of the theorists and critics whose writings may have influenced the practice

of Renaissance writers and painters. Steadman's concern is with the visual or quasi-visual art of allegory and he equates plot with design and the colors of rhetoric with the colors of paint. The same "heightened subjectivity" that led Baroque painters to develop a "style capable of portraying the dynamic process of thought" (p.163) is supposed to characterize Renaissance writers. Murrin, too, sees the mood of the *FQ* in what Steadman defines as "the tension between the marvelous and the probable" (p.165).

Steadman is valuable for the warnings he offers to modern critics who may tend to overstress the influence on a given poet of a particular theory, a particular sister art like the painting he himself stresses. Finally, he summarizes, Renaissance poetry is less an imitation of nature than a reorganization of reality by which the poet intended to "condition the percepts and concepts of his spectators" (p.199). Our comfortable assumptions about the goal of that reorganization make it impossible, as both Murrin and Steadman demonstrate, for us to respond to the "variables" (Steadman, p.232) of each individual poem as we should. Murrin's essay provides an example of a reader allowing the poem to condition or guide him. It is not entirely free of the effort to create unity nor entirely free of assumptions about the poet's intention, but it none the less offers an exciting, fresh reading. Steadman provides a formidable companion piece, rich in suggestions as to how Spenser's contemporaries might have responded to the logic of his imagination. [M. W. C.]

Catherine Rodgers. *Time in the Narrative of The Faerie Queene*. (Salzburg Studies in English Literature; Eliz.Studies ed. Dr. James Hogg.) Salzburg, Institut für englische Sprache und Literatur, 1973. vi + 128 pp. \$US 12.12; Austr. shillings 280.

Rodgers examines Spenser's narrative technique in order to demonstrate that time is a major theme in the poem. Spenser draws upon three traditions: the timelessness of Prudentius' *Psychomachia*, the unity of time in the *Odyssey*, *Aeneid*, *Orlando Furioso*, and *Jerusalem Delivered*, and finally the subordination of temporal sequence to associative process in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. The narrative works simultaneously in at least the three modes of these sources, making Spenser's poem necessarily complex. That complexity is seen as exceeding the order of any single narrative line and emerging from an interlacing of narrative methods. Fairyland is treated as a midpoint -- hence the frequent reference to action "in the midst" locates the reader in time and space. It is the locus of the unfamiliar and mysterious; against it the reader contrasts the realm of human activity as he himself understands it, thereby preparing himself (as the heroes themselves cannot be prepared) to return to the realm of human action.

Essentially, Rodgers makes a case for the poem as a primer teaching the reader how to read the poem itself. The characters within the poem represent the reader's own limited vision and need for order and sense

of immanent significance. Time, as it affects the human mind, forces men to reach for perspectives that lend reason to what seems unreasonable. In accomplishing his goal, Spenser makes more use of the sequential aspect of fiction than many recent critics have recognized. The problem, as Rodgers sees it, seems to be in how to focus on the events. She sees the *Mutabilitie Cantos* as a summation of the possible ways a reader may mediate between the points of view which she sees as the main "teaching" of the *FQ*. *Mutabilitie* is the temporal as it appears to human vision; Jove is the providential (including predestination and divine grace); Nature is the mysterious process attested to in the Garden of Adonis. Books V and VI are, in retrospect, seen as part of the process by which decay and renewal reveal Nature's power as Jove's is revealed in Books I and II and *Mutabilitie's* in Books III and IV. Naturally, the neatness which this synopsis suggests is misleading, since all three points of view function throughout the poem and force the individual reader to mediate for himself in the debate. Thus, for the reader who is a committed Christian, the narrative can be interpreted as an unfinished but hopeful elaboration toward a Sabbath rest. For the humanist, the psychomachia contained within the fictional events enforces the values of a life of action in which love and war are meaningful. For the reader who can abide with unresolved mystery, the poem provides a means to descend further into the realms of faery. Consequently, historicity (genealogy), apocalypse (God's order working itself out within time), and evolution (the cycles of nature) all provide contexts in which the fictional events of the poem may be seen. As the reader becomes aware of these multiple levels of time, his assessment of the meaning of the action changes. To see the poem as a whole remains frustratingly beyond the logical powers of the reader's mind, a reminder of the potentials and limitations of human vision. [M. W. C.]

ARTICLES: ABSTRACTS AND NOTICES

- James Neil Brown, "Form and Spenser's Venus," in "Forum", *PMLA*, 90 (1975), 123-24; a response to Humphrey Tonkin, "Spenser's Garden of Adonis and Britomart's Quest," *PMLA*, 88 (1973), 408-17 [*SpN*, 4.2].
 Humphrey Tonkin, "Spenser's Poetic Strategy," in "Forum", *PMLA*, 90 (1975), 293-94.

In order to understand the relevant parallels among Spenser's pairings of Venus and Adonis, Britomart and Artegall, and Florimell and Marinell, Brown contends that Spenser's reader must appreciate the degree to which each member of each pair participates in the qualities of his/her opposite. To see Venus, as he claims Tonkin does, as only "the principle of form" is to ignore a portion of Spenser's sources and thereby to oversimplify the poet's intent. Brown claims that Tonkin should have consulted J. E. Hankins' *Source and Meaning in Spenser's Allegory* (1971) as well as Kermode, and Ficino as well as Plato; had he done so, he might have recognized that Spenser's Venus is an essen-

tially androgynous figure, exhibiting various attributes as occasion demands, and in this she is closer to traditional Neoplatonic sources than Tonkin (or earlier, Ellrodt) would imply. Tonkin concedes that it is unfortunate he had no opportunity to cite Hankins' book, which appeared during the five years elapsing between submission and publication of his article. Although Tonkin feels Hankins overemphasizes the Neoplatonic element in Spenser, he agrees with Brown that Ficino's Venus Urania and Venus Pandemos provide a pattern for the shifting relations between matter and form, chaos and order, so central to Spenser's poem, and are therefore an important source.

Tonkin denies that he had narrowly defined Venus as *only* the female principle or the principle of form. He counters by denying Brown's assertion that Spenser's Venus is androgynous throughout. "There is no such thing as Spenser's Venus; there are only Spenser's Venuses...The Venus of the Garden needs, indeed seeks out Adonis." [Brown might possibly reply that she can always find him embedded in the *mons Veneris* of her Garden.] Brown concludes his remarks with a reminder of the variety of masks subsumed in Spenser's single figure, Britomart, emphasizing that she is both different from and the same as Venus. Tonkin's reply concludes with a reassertion that he feels Spenser's treatment of his female figures represents a break, not from the traditional complexities of the Venus figure, but from traditional expectations about sexual and social roles. He implies that such deviation forces the reader to confront the poem with less comfortable or automatic interpretations than the priests of Isis offer Britomart or Colin offers Calidore. It becomes possible, then, for the reader to sense the workings of a generative principle which, though neither male nor female, tends to consume the former and symbolize itself through the latter. The aspects of that figure commented on by Brown and Tonkin are (as each states) both Christian and Neoplatonic. Both parties to this exchange suggest the essential harmony in disharmony which is basic to Spenser's own pairings.

Robert Ferdinand Fleissner, "Spenser's Serpent Cup," *University of Dayton Review*, 10 (1974), 7-13.

Taking a theological rather than aesthetic approach, this article argues that the serpent in Fidelia's cup (I.x.13) should be understood as venomous, and thus not representative of Christ as Upton had claimed. The three main pieces of evidence pointing in this direction are Spenser's use of the term "horror" (a theologically anomalous expression in this context); the fact that goblets traditionally associated with saints and their emblems (particularly with St. George) have linked their serpents with venom, and finally that Edward Topsell (in his *History of Four-Footed Beasts and Serpents*, 1608, a major source of the intellectual history of the Renaissance, and one possibly influenced by Spenser) represented the traditional hatred of men for serpents in a manner which seems characteristically Spenserian. Redcross's abstention

supports this view. [But is there any indication in the text that he is offered a drink from the cup? Would Fidelia be offering him poison, like a Duessa or an Acrasia? Since the cup is an attribute of Fidelia, perhaps it suggests the ability of faith to neutralize the serpent's venom as well as to hold fast to the "darke things" of the New Testament which she holds in her other hand. -- D. C.]

J. C. Gray, "Bondage and Deliverance in the 'Faerie Queene': Varieties of a Moral Imperative," *MLR*, 70 (1975), 1-11.

All of Spenser's protagonist knights and many of his minor ones are involved in the releasing of prisoners. This article proposes that the episodes of bondage and deliverance in the *FQ* exemplify one of the significant moral imperatives of the entire poem and comment on the major theme of heroic love. Each of the protagonist knights seeks a greater perfection than he possesses at the outset of his quest and each is bound by oaths to seek Gloriana and his beloved and, at the same time, to release prisoners. There is a fourfold pattern of binding and of releasing prisoners: releasing virtuous prisoners, freely binding oneself to virtuous service, binding evil, and avoiding bondage by evil. Within this pattern of bondage and deliverance Spenser continually explores the limitations and possibilities of human freedom. Thus, bondage is sometimes represented not only as a restricted state, but as a physically active state. A movement away from love and virtue may result in deserved and undeserved captivity. And, movement toward virtue and love results in the releasing of those wrongly bound, in binding oneself freely to a higher will, and in taking captive those internal and external forces that threaten spiritual health. The freedom of human fulfillment is told in terms of love that both binds and liberates. Characters like Marinell may refuse to make any commitment to love, or like Britomart they may begin to suffer when a commitment to love is initiated. As the world of the *FQ* unfolds, Spenser's metaphors of bondage are controlled by his conception of both heavenly and earthly love.

Walter M. Kendrick, "Earth of Flesh, Flesh of Earth: Mother Earth in the *Faerie Queene*," *RQ*, 27 (1974), 533-48.

Mother Earth exists in the *FQ* as a kind of vast amoral potential, a barely sentient but powerfully living source of flesh. Though Spenser's portrayal of the earth's interior structure is consistent in many ways with the tenets of sixteenth-century science -- and not least in its generally anthropomorphic characterization -- Guyon's objections to mining (II.vii) are more immediately significant of the poem's sense of the earth as an emblem of a vast and mindless body: by seeking treasure within the bosom of Earth, or finding refuge there, men not only imitate the evil beings who dwell underground, and not only perform thereby a grisly mutilation of a body yet alive; they also make themselves more like the creature they violate. No governance of mind, finally, can halt the heavy gravitation of man's flesh

toward the slime which shares its substance. Yet, during the brief term of its residence in flesh, man's spirit can reach redemption: it is man's ultimate task, and the problem with which the *FQ* is most deeply concerned, to rule and vanquish the earth in his flesh before the earth reclaims it.

Gregory Marshall, "Completeness in Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*," *Emporia State Research Studies*, 23 (1974); No. 2. 30 pp.

The *FQ*, in its 1596 form, is considered as completed in the sense that Spenser is felt to have intended it at that time to represent his complete poem rather than an installment of a larger work. Two arguments are advanced: first, that the poem is complete as an epic, to the degree that "epic" can be usefully defined. Tillyard's four epic characteristics are used as criteria, and Spenser's poem is found to fit all these. Secondly, evidence from Book VI is found that Spenser had grown pessimistic concerning his ability to achieve either court preferment or the full plan for his poem outlined in the letter to Raleigh. Although *Amoretti 80* does seem to suggest that Spenser is still thinking in terms of twelve books, this evidence is rejected as ambiguous. The conclusion is that the *FQ* in its present six books is a complete poem, and that Spenser intended it so in 1596.

John Mulryan, "Venus, Cupid and the Italian Mythographers," *Humanistica Lovaniensia: Journal of Neo-Latin Studies*, 23 (1974), 31-41.

The four major Italian mythographers are considered with respect to their treatment of the myths of Venus and Cupid, as a guide to their relative usefulness to Renaissance writers. All are seen as responding to a paradoxical view of love resulting from the conflict between courtly and neoplatonic attitudes. Courtly love is extravagant in its praise of womankind, but basically antifeminist in that physical passion is the beginning and end of love; the enjoyment of the mistress puts an end to her attractiveness. Neoplatonism by contrast sees the lady as the source of inspiration for the lover; she enables him to develop himself as a person and ultimately, like all beautiful creatures, leads him back to God, full circle through all the marvels of creation. Thus love for the Renaissance was both positive and negative, ennobling and degrading, wise and foolish, a source of both life and death. All of these paradoxes are expressed through the Venus-Cupid myth, and elaborated by the Italian mythographers. Boccaccio mingles narrative and interpretation: he discusses Venus as procreator, as prostitute, and as astrological or cosmic figure. He is less interested in historical interpretations than in moral or psychological aspects of the myths. He adopts no systematic plan to distinguish between kinds and levels of interpretation, but expresses his own views freely. Giraldi, by contrast, elects to be an historian of the gods, providing a comprehensive, even interminable narrative of the cognomens and sacrifices of Venus. He offers the reader a mass of material but no guide to its relative importance; and

his refusal to multiply interpretations of pagan literature renders his work less useful to the Renaissance artist or writer seeking themes or approaches from pagan mythology. It remains for Cartari to address himself almost wholly to the explanation of ancient works of art, as a guide to sculptors and artists as well as poets. Emphasizing the emotional or passionate nature of love over its spiritual qualities, Cartari analyzes specific statues of Venus or Cupid, explaining how one or another attribute illustrates a facet of love. Conti, finally, makes a clear distinction between narration and interpretation, giving space to each in his commentary. He strikes a balance between Cartari and Giraldi in the amount of information he chooses to present, and he produces more symbolic meanings and different kinds of symbolic meanings than any of the other mythographers. He often combines ethical and natural or "scientific" meanings in one facet of a myth, as Spenser does in his mutability cantos. Conti's skill in drawing a moral or philosophical point from almost any myth made him the overwhelming choice as a source for English humanist poets like Chapman or Spenser.

Carol Schreier Rupprecht, "The Martial Maid and the Challenge of Androgyny (Notes on an Unbefriended Archetype)," *Spring 1974: An Annual of Archetypal Psychology and Jungian Thought* (Spring Publications, Postfach 190, 8024 Zurich), 269-93.

This article, addressed to a Jungian audience, is itself an abstract of one part of a dissertation in progress, "The Distaff and the Lance: The Martial Maid Convention in Renaissance Poetry." The author argues here that figures such as Penthesilea, Camilla, Bradamante, and Britomart represent forms of an archetype which she calls "unbefriended" in the sense that all the terms traditionally applied to it (virago, amazon, etc.) carry pejorative connotations. Only in certain fictional contexts are such characters presented so as to engage the reader's imagination sympathetically. She names the archetype "martial maid" in an attempt to find a neutral term, and she analyzes passages from the *FQ* to show the operation of fantasy work behind the surface contradictions in Britomart's behavior. Of particular interest to Spenserians may be the description of Conti's treatment of an alternative Narcissus myth (derived probably from Pausanias) in which the youth falls in love not with his reflection but with a twin sister; behind his celebrated mirror-gazing lies an androgynous longing which Conti castigates as incest. Such a mythological variant may suggest further links to the Renaissance fascination with Narcissus and comedies of sexual disguise. Similarly, the work of Bachelard (*Poetics of Reverie*), in which the rivalry between masculine and feminine gender in the French language is made the basis for "genosanalysis", analysis of the limitless wordplay this permits, may provide an approach to some of Spenser's ambiguities of syntax.

SPENSER AT MLA

At the annual convention of the Modern Language Association of America, meeting in New York from 26-29 December 1974, papers on Spenser were read at two group meetings. The Comparative Literature 4 Group, discussing the topic of "The Myth of Egypt in the Renaissance," heard A. Kent Hieatt on "Spenser and the Egyptian Pantheon":

On the basis of materials in Herodotus, Diodorus Siculus, Apollodorus, Plutarch, Hyginus, Macrobius, Horapollo, Boccaccio, Natalis Comes, Alciati, Cartari, and R. Stephanus, it is possible to reconstruct what Spenser would have learned of the myths of Osiris, Isis, Horus, Typhon, and Busiris. His treatment of the ideal relations of Isis-Osiris, moon-sun, equity-law, and Britomart-Artegal in *Isis Church* in *FQ V* includes an original relating of lawful Osiris, through Osiris as Bacchus, to the Osiris-destroyer Typhon disguised as a crocodile embodying a partly Dionysiac, partly male-libidinal principle. The conception of Osiris as a Priapic fertility god in Renaissance sources is, as well, part of Spenser's amalgamated myth, which extends from *Isis Church* in Book V back to the brother and sister Sun-Moon preceding the Garden of Adonis in Book III. A conversion from male-libidinal violence to concordant sexual love is signified in Spenser's episode of the crocodile, and also in the House of Busirane in III. The name Busiris, as the burial city of Osiris and also as a cruel king otherwise named Typhon, is a key in showing how Scudamor's libidinous thoughtlessness, embodied in Busirane, has to be modified by Britomart's considerate art of friendship before Amoret can be saved from the temptations to the loose courtly unchastity of the Masque of Cupid, temptations to which her husband's unthinking compulsion of her had opened the way. In the same Book, Malecasta, Paridell, and Hellenore had all in their different ways succumbed to mastery of unchastity of the courtly kind, orchestrated with strikingly parallel symbolism. [A. K. H.]

The English 4 Group, chaired by Paul J. Alpers, offered "A Symposium on *The Faerie Queene*," with papers by Angus Fletcher and A. Bartlett Giamatti, followed by discussion. Speaking first, Giamatti provided a witty and widely ranging summary of recent criticism, commenting on the essential conservatism of Spenser studies by comparison with the inter-cine partisanship familiar to Miltonists or Shakespeareans. Whether the reason for such conservatism is to be found in the syncretic and nostalgic nature of the poet and his poem, the invisibility of his God (by contrast with Milton's), or the monumental positivism of the *Variorum*, the result has been a continuity in Spenserian studies, with debate focussing on the manner of approach to the poem rather than on the value of the thing approached. "Only with Alpers' provocative book on Spenser in 1967 does the calm break; but that ripple was nothing, for instance, compared to the waves made in the burning lake [of Milton studies] by that great Leviathan, Fish." In the absence of any atheistic or even

heretical voices raised against the sacred text of the poem, Giamatti proposes tentatively that Spenser criticism be seen as a contrast between the "liturgy of the *Variorum Moralisé*" and that of the "*Variorum Verified*" -- a contrast roughly comparable to Fletcher's between templar and labyrinthine critics of Spenser. The former would descend from Coleridge and Dowden to such recent critics as Berger, Hamilton, Roche, Nelson, Hankins; the latter, from Hazlitt and Lowell to Whitaker, Chang, Ellrodt, Hough, Fowler -- providing "thematically descriptive studies seeking the whole through some historically defined part." But with the application of "New Critical" approaches by Berger and others, and far more radically with the rhetorical approach of Alpers, the various divergent strands of post-*Variorum* criticism are combined again, with a corrective emphasis on the role of the reader as protagonist. Giamatti concludes that the time has now come not merely to see the poem as a whole, but to see it in its tradition, and he notes the striking number of such books now being published or announced for publication.

Fletcher's paper, entitled "The Gift, the Giver, and the Friend," was less a discussion of critical trends than an adumbration of emergent themes in *The Faerie Queene*. Fletcher calls attention to the episode in VI.ix in which Calidore gives Coridon the garland that Pastorella has awarded to him, and thereby for the moment courteously soothes the rancor felt by a losing suitor. Invoking the spirit of Christmas presents and exchanges that traditionally coincides with (or counterpoints) MLA conventions, and borrowing the concept of a "tyranny of reciprocity" from the anthropologist Marcel Mauss, he invites Spenserians to approach a study of the anthropology of *The Faerie Queene*, to consider the ways the poem seeks to provide its audience with a program for escaping this tyranny. Writing at a time of highly structured exchanges of gifts in the Elizabethan court, Spenser illustrates the flow of gifts in the dance of the Graces in VI.x, summarizing the dilemma of reciprocity in the familiar verbal crux of Colin's formula, "That good should from vs goe, then come in greater store" -- should we rather give more *than* get more; or should we give, and *then* get more? Spenser's answer, Fletcher suggests, is that the "one original gift" which serves as the model for acts of giving in human relationships is simultaneously the grace of God, the parent's original gift of life to his offspring, and the poet's comparable gift of inspiration. As Mauss would explain the situation in an anthropological context, the spirit of the gift must be aligned with the spirit of fertility, if there is to be a benign, non-threatening reciprocity. Hence the spirit which informs the world of Spenser's poem is one in which Gloriana/Elizabeth, at once the donor and the argument of the poem, serves as a kind of poetic fertility spirit.

A certain benign reciprocity characterized the rest of the symposium as well, despite efforts made to persuade the speakers that there were fundamental differences in their approaches to Spenser. Both Giamatti and Fletcher were prepared to speak to the anxieties and even despair which afflict the poem in Book V (as with the figure of Malfont); Fletcher

suggested that the "oddly peripheral stance" of Spenser in relation to the Elizabethan social context might be related to his having spent so much of his time in Ireland that he was not prepared to write wholly in the traditional epic manner of assuming its audience's social context and using it as the poem's frame. But not even the efforts of so eminent a controversialist as Stanley Fish, rising from the floor, could provoke the speakers to break lances with one another or with their poet. It seemed that for the day, at least, Spenser criticism was destined to continue as Giamatti had described it, less self-consuming artifact than self-fulfilling prophecy. [D. C.]

FROM THÉROUANNE TO TERWIN?

[A reply to C. A. Hebert's query (*SpN*, 5.3) concerning the names of Terwin and Trevisan, *FQ* I.ix.]

Sir Trevisan's name, it seems to me, could simply signify the knight's "three visions" of despair: Terwin's despair and suicide; the Redcrosse Knight's despair and recovery; and Despair's despair and unsuccessful attempt at suicide. Terwin, however, presents a more interesting case. In the first sentence of Thomas Nashe's *The Unfortunate Traveller* there is a reference to "Turwin":

About that time that the terror of the world and fever quartan of the French, Henry the Eighth, the only true subject of chronicles, advanced his standard against the two hundred and fifty towers of Turney and Turwin, and had the emperor and all the nobility of Flanders, Holland, and Brabant as mercenary attendants on his full-sailed fortune, I, Jack Wilton . . . (Ed. M. Lawlis, *Eliz. Prose Fiction* [1967], p.444)

"Turwin," as Lawlis points out, is an anglicization of Thérouanne, the site of Henry VIII's Battle of the Spurs, so called "because of the speed with which the French knights fled from the field" (Hall and Albion, *Hist. of England and the British Empire* [1946], p.253). A brief account of the battle is to be found in Maurice Pollet's *John Skelton: Poet of Tudor England* [1971], pp.68-69:

Henry left Calais for the front on 21st July [1513]. On 4th August he encamped beneath the walls of Thérouanne. Six days later the Emperor Maximilian came in person to place himself under the orders of this twenty-two-year-old prince. Next evening, 11th August, a Scottish herald of arms arrived from James IV, in a final effort to deter Henry from his enterprise--by giving him to understand that if he persisted in his resolution to attack the French, the armies of Scotland would attack his kingdom in his absence. But Henry, more determined than ever, treated this summons with lofty disdain and went ahead. In a written answer, which was fated never to reach its destination, he emphasized his rights as overlord of Scotland and reminded James IV of the example of the King of Navarre, who had just lost his kingdom on account of his decision to ally with France.

On 13th August the French cavalry executed a diversionary manoeuvre, an attempt to make possible the revictualling of the besieged town. It failed, leaving the Chevalier Bayard, the Comte de Longueville and the Comte de Clermont prisoners of the English. On 22nd Théroouanne capitulated. The garrison withdrew next day, and on 24th Henry made his triumphal entry into the city. Then, on the evening of 25th, although clemency had been expected, he suddenly decided, at the request of Maximilian, to raze the fortifications, which was done the following day.

Trevisan, in his flight from Despair, may represent the flight of the French knights from the Battle of the Spurs, a representation which becomes more clear once the reader learns the name of his late companion, Terwin. The Redcrosse Knight, in his refusal to submit to Despair, may represent Henry in his refusal to submit to the demands of James IV. The correspondences are not, of course, complete in every detail, but such correspondences are rarely complete in the *FQ*.

A further correspondence between the text and the Battle of the Spurs may give more credence to such an interpretation of the episode. If we may take stanza 21, when Redcrosse first meets Trevisan, as correspondent to July 21, when Henry set out for Théroouanne, then stanza 35 would correspond to August 4. In stanza 35 Redcrosse and his companions arrive at the Cave of Despair; on August 4 Henry arrived at Théroouanne. The final stanza of the canto, 54, would correspond to August 23, the day the French garrison withdrew. In this stanza Despair, having failed in his battle against Redcrosse, attempts suicide.

Such an interpretation of the Despair episode may seem a bit far-fetched, yet we have the evidence of Professor Heatt's *Short Time's Endless Monument* to indicate that Spenser was indeed capable of developing close correspondences between his text and an event.

I hope that my comments may help shed some light on this puzzling question.

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[Ed. note: Nashe's work, dated 1593, is too late to serve as a source for Spenser; and readers may balk at too systematic a historical parallel here. But the suggestion of an association between Terwin and Théroouanne does receive support from a possible source for both Nashe and Spenser: Lanquet's *Chronicle* (Cooper, 1565, fol.275; quoted by McKerrow, *Nashe*, IV.256): "King Henry of England ... conquered Terwine & the great city of Turney, which is said to haue in it as manye toures as there be daies in the yere." Here the spelling of the town's name is closer to that of Spenser's character. And even if the calendrically conscious Spenser did not devise the stanzaic parallels suggested above, he may well have been struck by this remark; perhaps its reverberations of tower-winning may echo in Redcross's question:

How may a man (said he) with idle speach
 Be wonne, to spoyle the Castle of his health? (I.ix.31)
 -- and may look forward to the further development of this image of man
 as castle in Book II of *The Faerie Queene*. --D. C.]

WORK PUBLISHED, FORTHCOMING, AND IN PROGRESS

Cornell University Press plans to publish a translation of Natale Conti's *Mythologiae* by John Mulryan of the St. Bonaventure University English Department, and Steven Brown of the Bonaventure classics department.

A seminar entitled "Shorter Poetical Works of the English Renaissance: Spenser's *Colin Clouts Come Home Againe*" will be held at the 1975 MLA Annual Convention. Papers are being accepted by Abbot Jay Mendelson, English Department, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, Pa. 15260.

The first issue has appeared of an annual *Renaissance Bulletin*, published by The Renaissance Institute, Sophia University, 7 Kioi-cho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 102. It contains a bibliography of English Renaissance Studies in Japan for 1961-63; subsequent bibliographies are projected for future issues. The *Bulletin* and an annual monograph (also in English) are included in the annual membership fee of ¥ 2,000 or \$US 7.00.

And finally, a report from A. C. Hamilton that properly belongs under the heading of

AGIT-PROP

Comrade Hamilton describes a Spenser Read-In at King's College, Cambridge: a reading of Book II complete, cantos i-vi by Hamilton at the first session, cantos vii-xii by Kermode at the second. Some twenty-five students attended this historic event. Who will be next?

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