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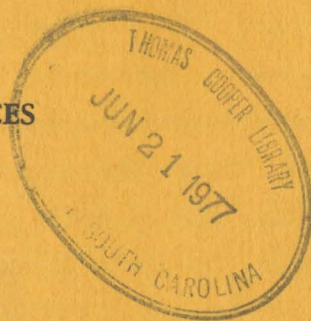
Number 2

ARTICLES: ABSTRACTS AND NOTICES

SPENSER AT KALAMAZOO

ANNOUNCEMENTS

DISSERTATION ABSTRACTS



Co-editors: Donald Cheney, M. W. Copeland

Corresponding Editors: Elizabeth Bieman, James Neil Brown, C. Roger Davis, A. Kent Hieatt, Peter Houle, Waldo F. McNeir, Richard Schell

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ARTICLES: ABSTRACTS AND NOTICES

Paul Alpers, "Narration in *The Faerie Queene*," *ELH*, 44 (1977), 19-39.

On the evidence of Spenser's poem (in its 1590 version), the narrator's role cannot be investigated apart from the process of narration. Whatever irony abounds in its sententiae must be seen as evidence of his wit, not of his obtuseness. "The hallmark of Spenserian narration is confidence in locutions which are at the same time understood to be provisional." A consequence of these premises is the necessity of reading the poem as unfolding in time, labyrinthine in its choreography rather than visionary or "templar" like *The Divine Comedy*.

Like the rhetoric of the poem (discussed in the author's *Poetry of 'The Faerie Queene'*), the narration as characterized above is seen to slip badly in the later books: Spenser's confidence is badly shaken at times in the 1596 sequel, and so he gives evidence of a narrator who is unusually separate from his tale. Responding to the strains he felt in his enterprise, Spenser turns at the end from the mode of heroic narration towards lyricism, and to the prayer which concludes the Mutability Cantos.

John C. Bean, "Cosmic Order in *The Faerie Queene*: From Temperance to Chastity," *SEL*, 17 (1977), 67-79.

The motion from Book II to Book III of *The Faerie Queene* is from a man's to a woman's world: from rational temperance to a fundamentally magical chastity; from a view of the spontaneity of the flesh as shamefully priapic to a view of it as wonderfully generative; from the Bower of Bliss to the Garden of Adonis. "Married Chastity," for Spenser as for Shakespeare, transcends the Greek view in which temperance escapes the burning of bodily appetites: when the "right time" comes (in Northrop Frye's phrase), passion will be fulfilled, not repressed.

Calvin R. Edwards, "The Narcissus Myth in Spenser's Poetry," *SP*, 74 (1977), 63-88.

For Spenser, as for Ficino, the energy of the Narcissus myth resides precisely in its ambiguity: the reflection is both an image of Narcissus' self and at the same time an other that lures him away from his real self -- his soul. Amoretti 35 shows the influence of Ficino's reading of the Narcissus myth: the lady tends to be a reflection of the lover's self and is thence, by definition, unattainable as an object of love. Sonnet 88 represents a conflict of Platonic and anti-platonic desires: both the appearance and the reality are sought. Often Narcissus takes on thematically appropriate associations with Tantalus.

In *The Faerie Queene*, Britomart compares herself with Narcissus, dreaming of her lover first as a mirror image; and Glauce's Ovidian lore gives the identification additional resonances. (From the *Romance of the Rose* onwards, Narcissus is seen to have been a convention in the literary treatment of love). But Britomart goes out in search for her

love, turning away from the mirror. Marinell (love as threat to the self) is, then, the true Narcissus of Book III. Britomart's victory over Marinell thus represents an internal victory against the temptation to withdraw into self.

An overshadowing irony in Spenser is that Narcissus, the image of sterile self-love, is himself located in the Garden of Adonis, the source of all life.

Lawrence Goldstein, "Immortal Longings and 'The Ruines of Time,'" *JEGP*, 75 (1976), 337-351.

Spenser and Browne are examined as Renaissance writers who treat human dreams of immortality. In *Urne Buriall*, Browne expresses a degenerationist philosophy which considers all forms of "mummification" both futile and impious. Though he has an antiquary's regard for the seductive charm of pagan monuments, he casts a coldly ironic eye on all superfluous mourning over ruins. By contrast, Spenser's *Ruines of Time* is a prime example of the "mummy-making sensibility": he celebrates not only the immortality provided by offspring but also that offered by the poet. And although butterflies (beautiful heroes, beautiful poems) awaken anxiety in a poet who is constantly aware of envy in his surroundings, they remain the subject of his songs. Even in his *Vewe of Ireland*, Spenser is ready to opt for violent, tyrannical action as a necessary price for lasting glory. Finally, however, Spenser joins with Browne (in the *Mutability Cantos*) when he sees the inevitable brevity of all forms in this life; only art can provide lasting memorials.

Hugh MacLachlan, "'In the Person of Prince Arthur': Spenserian Magnificence and the Christian Tradition," *UTQ*, 46 (1976/7), 125-146.

Aquinas is argued not to be a Spenserian 'source' for the concept of magnificence because he rejects a general definition (not unlike Spenser's) for a more special one. The relation of magnificence and magnanimity is then traced, and three strains are identified: Aristotelian, Ciceronian, and 'remedial virtue.' (Aquinas is seen to synthesize the first two; and works like Chaucer's *Parson's Tale*, the latter two.)

For Cicero the two terms are seen to be more nearly interchangeable: magnificence giving some emphasis to the great public deed; magnanimity to the facilitating mental set. In the sixteenth century both Aristotelian and Ciceronian traditions of magnificence are popular; but Stoic organization of virtues is most popular, and this necessitated accommodation to the Ciceronian definition of magnificence. Spenser's concept of magnificence is shown to stand in this Ciceronian tradition, with its Stoic (as opposed to Aristotelian) origins, and its insistence on the execution of great deeds.

Richard Mallette, "Poet and Hero in Book VI of 'The Faerie Queene'," *MLR*, 72 (1977), 257-267.

Considered as Spenser's fullest treatment of the poetic imagination, Book VI of *The Faerie Queene* derives its harmony from discrete particulars of language and incident rather than from a larger and more comfortable architectonics. The flower metaphor in the proem entails an association between the flourishing of virtue in Antiquity and the flourishing imagination of the poet; in both cases the visible flowering is the bursting-forth of an inner richness. For Calidore, the use of sight is a prime preoccupation: the act of seeing is mentioned some twenty-four times in the Tristram episode alone. And for the climactic vision on Acidale, physical sight must be informed by in-sight. Similarly, other images like 'mind' or 'heart' are spatially developed, with an emphasis on hidden, inner truth. The pastoral cantos, and especially the vision on Acidale, move toward a glimpse of the union of inner and outer beauties. Colin's maid is a 'patterne' of the Gloriana who has directed the poem, as Colin himself is a pattern of the poet who celebrates her. The attempt to discover the hidden nursery of virtue within oneself and in the past of the race, the awkward process of making virtue a part of fallen experience, is the aim of the courteous man and the mission of the responsible poet.

William Nelson, "From 'Listen Lordings' to 'Dear Reader'," *UTQ*, 46 (1976/7), 110-125.

The easy separation of oral and written traditions of composition is complicated by the tradition of reading aloud. The history of this tradition in Classical and Medieval times is traced briefly and some observations follow on its continuance well into the Renaissance. The needs of oral performance is argued to be germane to understanding Sidney's *Arcadia* revisions, and implications for study of *The Faerie Queene* are suggested: readings dependent on close comparisons and embedded numerologies that a listening public (here hinted to be normative) would not be able to follow must be considered valuable primarily as curiosities.

David R. Pichaske, "The Faerie Queene IV.ii and iii: Spenser and the Genesis of Friendship," *SEL*, 17 (1977), 81-93.

"Cantos two and three of Book IV show not so much how true men become friends but how friendship itself comes into being...." Elements of Pauline, Aristotelian, and Platonic ideas of friendship are all shown to be present, and no one strain alone can provide a full reading. The three brothers represent the three kinds of Aristotelian love (of kin, of women, of friend), but the progression through the three is more Platonic. Agape stands as a kind of static 'ur' principle of love, which is transformed by Cambell's Christianity into something active and particular. Two interlocking allegories are

traced, the attendant ambiguities preventing overly schematic correspondences: on one level Agape and her children allegorize love of parent and kin; on another, the progression of types.

Peter L. Stambler, "The Development of Guyon's Christian Temperance," *ELR*, 7 (1977), 51-89.

In Book II of *The Faerie Queene*, Spenser presents an Aristotelian "classical" hero who develops into a Christian champion. Consequently, neither Aristotelian analysis nor Christian interpretation can provide an exclusive, thorough reading of the poem. When Guyon begins his quest, he is imbued with moral qualities -- an innate inclination towards temperance, courtesy, reasonableness, and self-reliance -- which define his adherence to Aristotle. The poem tests and repudiates these qualities, replacing them with faith, humility, a recognition of his common frailty, and dependence on God. Before Guyon learns Christian temperance (virtue engaged in radical action on behalf of the absolute principle of God's word), he flounders in his attempt to apply Aristotle's sliding rational principle of establishing a mean between deficient and excessive behavior. Only after his reconstruction can he approach the Bower of Bliss with a thoroughly justified and non-Aristotelian "rigour pittlesse." [P. L. S.]

Matthew Tosello, I.M.C., "Spenser's Silence About Dante," *SEL*, 17 (1977), 59-66.

Although Spenser never mentions Dante by name, he seems almost certain to have been familiar with the *Commedia* and with the literary "quarrel over Dante." A survey of contemporary English references to Dante, along with a consideration of possible Spenserian parallels to Dantesque phrases or contexts, illustrates the high probability of Spenser's awareness of the Italian. Furthermore, a possible explanation for his silence about Dante emerges from the fact that the Puritans, especially in the Marprelate tracts, had claimed Dante as a kindred spirit. As a poet defending the establishment, Spenser may have decided to avoid any overt identification with his great allegorical predecessor.

SPENSER AT KALAMAZOO (1977)

For the second year in a row David A. Richardson (Cleveland State) has organized a successful special session on Spenser at the Medieval Institute's annual meeting held 6-8 May 1977 at Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo. As the title of the program, *Spenser: Classical, Medieval, Renaissance, and Modern*, suggests the papers cover a wide range; but upon closer examination the diversity is less radical than one might expect. Once again *FQ* is the focal point for most of the papers, with the emphasis this year on Books I, V, VI. Some of Spenser's minor works are treated (D'Orsay W. Pearson's "MHT: Spenser's

Myth of the Golden Age in a Fallen World" is notable here), but on the whole they are the works that generally receive scholarly attention: Spenser's more neglected works remain neglected. Several topics present themselves over and over again, although in diverse contexts. Concern with the definition of terms, especially as they apply to Spenser, is evident in more than one paper. Those all too slippery terms, allegory and neoplatonism, receive special attention; one emerging interest seems to be the role of the reader or viewer in relation to the allegory. The relationship of myth to society and to Spenser's allegorical poem can be seen as one aspect of this problem; Humphrey Tonkin's "FQ as an Attitude of Mind: Some Thoughts on Myth in Elizabethan Literature and Society" is particularly enlightening on the subject. The related problems, how Spenser uses his source material and what constitutes source and what analogue, form on several occasions the basis of the exchange between author and commentator, for example that between Carol Barthel and Walter R. Davis and that between John C. Ulreich, Jr., and John Webster. Perhaps one of the most thought provoking papers is Rawdon Wilson's on characterization in *FQ* and the most perverse (in an entirely delightful sort of way) Michael Holahan's on the endings of Chaucer's and Spenser's unfinished poems.

The general co-ordinator, David A. Richardson (Cleveland State), and the program co-ordinator, Russell Meyer (Univ. of Missouri), as well as the chairmen of the four sessions -- Mark Rose (Univ. of Illinois), Alice Miskimin (Yale Univ.), Anne Shaver (Denison Univ.), Roger Kuin (York Univ.) -- are all to be congratulated for their efforts in bringing about this exciting Spenserian Academy. The proceedings will be published on microfiche as *Spenser: Classical, Medieval, Renaissance, and Modern (1977)*, and will be ready for distribution by the middle of June. This is indeed a volume that should interest readers of *SpN*, as an addition either to their own or their institution's library. The following summaries, based as much as possible on the author's own words, touch only on main points and do not begin to reflect the wealth of scholarly material to be found in the twelve papers and their corresponding commentaries.

1. D'Orsay W. Pearson (Univ. of Akron) opened the proceedings with "MHT: Spenser's Myth of the Golden Age in a Fallen World." She argues that criticism of *MHT* has not properly assessed the impact the myth of Astraea, the virgin goddess of justice connected in pageant and poem with Queen Elizabeth I, has upon both the poem's meaning and movement. The Golden Age myth is as central to an understanding of *MHT* as it is to *FQ* V. Spenser uses two techniques in developing his social criticism in *MHT*: 1. a series of implicit and explicit definitions of the Golden Age, which fall short of the ethical ideal of a halcyon period *in illo tempore*; 2. manipulation of tone, which ranges from elegiac to eulogistic to satiric and finally to vatic. The world of *MHT* is a world of iron and even the yeoman and courtier have their limitations. The courtier is a golden world in himself, but the poet gives no indication that he can transform either court or commonwealth

into a contemporary Golden Age. In order to restore order the symbol of royal rule, the lion, must be awakened; but the lion is a king of beasts in a kingdom of beasts: an iron-age monarch in an iron-age world, not a goddess of justice returned. In his reply, "Aesthetic Values in *MHT*," Gerald J. Gross (Penn State) poses five questions: 1. whether every reference to the world not being as it should be must be linked to the image of "Golden Age/Iron Age"; 2. whether in *MHT* the Golden Age *topos* exists only as a metaphor for Eden; 3. whether Spenser is indeed satirizing the courtier; 4. whether the absence of a reference to Astraea or the Golden Age at the end of the poem undercuts the importance of that theme for the poem; 5. whether our attitude toward the manner of the lion's reform at the end of the poem supports the assertion that the poem ends on a satiric note. Gross answers no to questions 1, 3, 5; possibly to question 2; and yes to question 4. He then discusses the poem's aesthetic value, especially Spenser's use of irony and paradox.

2. "The Concept of 'Character' in *FQ*" by Rawdon Wilson (Univ. of Melbourne) argues that characterization in Spenser is a more complex issue than most of his readers have perceived. On the one hand, Spenser's characters embody thought in especially clear ways and there is a precise correspondence between the description of characters and the ideas for which they stand. On the other hand, they may be analyzed by using methods derived from the study of the novel but applicable to all narrative. The latter approach clarifies both Spenser's concept of narrative method and his conscious relationship to Renaissance literary tradition. The analysis of character in other than allegorical terms indicates that Spenser stands within a long tradition of narrative method that stems from the Ovidian method of "split awareness" by which a character is defined in terms of intense moments of interior conflict between opposed values. In Spenser "split awareness" defines the type of experience his characters undergo, but it is adapted to meet the needs of his narrative form. The conflict of values is externalized, latent in the experience rather than in the mind of the character. James Fitzmaurice (Northern Arizona Univ.) in "Non-continuous Experience..." agrees that Spenser's methods of characterization are not so very far from preceding techniques and ties Spenser to later practitioners of the art. He contends that at the heart of this connection is the idea of blocks of experience, i.e. characterization is largely a matter of the presentation of significant moments in the fictional life of a fictional being. If the prerequisites simply include that a character be consistent and be examined in depth within blocks, then Spenser can be connected with more recent methods of characterization.

3. In "*FQ* as an Attitude of Mind: Some Thoughts on Myth in Elizabethan Literature and Society," Humphrey Tonkin (Univ. of Pennsylvania) considers the cultural context of Spenser's poem, why it embodied the myths it did, and how these myths reflected back on the

society from which they derived. The Elizabethan age was permeated with myth, presided over by a monarch who was herself the focal point of its myth-making, fascinated with the relationship between its own fictions and the realities they masked. Exploring the "interface" between political action and fiction as this manifests itself in the Elizabethan pageant, Tonkin discusses in detail the progress of Elizabeth I on 14 January 1559 and notes that Elizabeth's participation in the action (her acceptance of the English Bible) demonstrates her willingness to act out her mythic role. He also observes that the movement of the pageant is reminiscent of the players' movement from scaffold to scaffold in the medieval playing place, the heroes' progress in the *FQ*, or the reader's progress through the rhetorical structures of *SC*. Built into all is the active participation of the reader or onlooker as interpreter. The pageant reinforces ideology by reminding the viewer of the myths that underlie that ideology, but the relationship between present and past is reciprocal. It is as much the expression of a wish as it is the expression of a perceived reality. This can be found in the 16th century's great allegorical poems. In *FQ*, Spenser elevated myth to the level of structural principle and made the reading of *FQ* a process of acculturation and socialization for the Elizabethan courtier. Waldo F. McNeir (Univ. of Oregon) in "Spenser and the Myth of Queen Elizabeth" agrees that Elizabeth I was both the subject of her own myth and an active participant in its furtherance. He notes that the myth of Queen Elizabeth had its origins in the carefully cultivated myth of the union of the red rose of Lancaster and the white rose of York; and that, as is characteristic in the growth of myth, one system of thought evolves from and develops those which precede it. Elizabeth's summer progresses also furthered her personal cult. In this context, McNeir discusses the entertainments at Kenilworth 9-27 July 1575 and at Woodstock later that summer. According to Renaissance humanism, art and letters had an important role to play in the service of the state; this explains the labors of humanists, poets, historians, and artists throughout Europe to create rulers as an image or myth to draw allegiance. Spenser did more than any other writer of the age to idealize Elizabeth.

4, Carol Barthel (Univ. of Wisconsin) in "Prince Arthur and Bottom the Weaver: The Renaissance Dream of the Fairy Queen" observes that the knight-fairy mistress motif was well-worn when Chaucer chose it for *Sir Thopas* and that Shakespeare gives the dream of the fairy queen to an Elizabethan *Sir Thopas*, Bottom the weaver in *MND*. She questions how Spenser, a contemporary of Shakespeare and a disciple of Chaucer, could title his most serious work *FQ* and give the ludicrous *Sir Thopas*'s hackneyed dream to Prince Arthur. The answer she frames suggests that in *FQ* Spenser tries to recapture something of the original, undebased idea of human intercourse with a world of the spirit. This renewed seriousness is achieved by various poetic means: using the longer lines of the Spenserian stanza, refining and intellectualizing the experience, focusing on the experiencer rather than on the

experienced, modernizing the literary idea of the romance quest. Yet all this is embodied in a fiction that is self-consciously medieval. Put to poetic use this medieval world embodies an imagined era of simplicity and innocence. Spenser must have been aware of the absurdity of dealing seriously with the knight-fairy mistress motif, but Spenser can smile at the romance material whose resources he is seriously exploiting. Walter R. Davis (Univ. of Notre Dame) in his "Commentary..." begins by stating that Arthur's dream is neither source nor allusion for *FQ* I.ix. Davis then goes on to cite E. D. Hirsch's distinction between meaning and significance and observes that allegory for some is a matter of finding meaning, for others a matter of laying out significance. Spenser's Reformation context would indicate that he conceives of allegorical reading as a matter of drawing out significances rather than discovering meaning. Spenser, in using the outmoded Arthurian and other romance material, is calling attention to his lowly materials in order to make the reader seek the significance he gave them. This is what Spenser is doing in his most direct borrowing from Chaucer, the completion of *SqT* in *FQ* IV.

5. The purpose of John C. Ulreich, Jr. (Univ. of Arizona) in "'For Profite of the Ensamble': Spenser Moralizing his Song" is two-fold: to analyze Spenser's use of medieval (and other) materials in order to suggest a working definition of his allegorical method. Toward that end he examines two Spenserian ensamples: the Fradubio story as an adaptation of Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* VI.27 ff and the pageant of the Seven Sins as a rearrangement of Dante's ordering of the seven sins. He concludes that in both ensamples a given matter has been digested into a new form; therefore, Spenser's allegory is characterized by a certain formal activity, which can be distinguished as *synthetic*. Spenser makes his meanings allegorically, giving resonance to images by making them speak. Ulreich characterizes this speaking as primarily psychic rather than ethical or moral. In his reply, "The Beast of Comparison: Analogue and Source," John Webster (Univ. of Washington) agrees with Ulreich that Spenser tends to rework the traditions from which he borrows and that part of this reworking is to make the text such that the reader is brought to interact with the poem in a more immediate way than is likely in earlier poetry. He also agrees with Ulreich's treatment of the Fradubio episode; but he has reservations about Ulreich's treatment of the Seven Sins, mainly because Dante is an analogue, not a source.

6. In "'Swich fyn. . .Swich fyn'" Senses of Ending in Chaucer and Spenser," Michael Holahan (Southern Methodist Univ.) discusses four well-known "places": in Chaucer, the conclusion to *Troilus and Criseyde* and the retraction at the close of *The Canterbury Tales*; in Spenser, the envoi to *SC* and the fragmentary canto viii of *The Mutability Cantos*. Beginning with the issue of literary influence as a special instance of both continuity and change in time, Holahan progresses to a discussion of the spatial distinction between a lower world of time and a higher world of eternity. The two matters illumi-

nate a trait common to both writers, the qualified or unresolved ending. In the last stage of his argument Holahan discriminates between the imaginative humility of Chaucer and that of Spenser and offers this in turn as a model of larger distinctions between Chaucer's late medieval and Spenser's high renaissance imagination. Doctrine is seen as the outer limit of Chaucer's work, the hope of absolute vision as the outer limit of Spenser's work. Georgia Ronan Crampton (Portland State Univ.) believes that Holahan makes valuable observations and that his paper constitutes a tactful opposition to Harold Bloom's treatment of influence. Her own interest in endings is more conventional. Spenser and Chaucer both compose subtle, complex closures, spreading out before the audience several endings, like sections of a fan. Endings are probably most rewarding when they are poem-specific; however, many medieval poems ended more or less interchangeably in a formulaic prayer for salvation. When used by a fictional teller, this conventionalized ending captures for the fictional world the audience's real fears and hopes about death and salvation.

7. In "Luther's Warriors and Spenser's Knights" William A. Sessions (Georgia State Univ.) concentrates on one term in Luther's theology, *Billichkeit* or equity, and shows how its structuring of ambiguity of action leads to a concept of heroism that can be generally demonstrated in Spenser's knights. Luther's term helps illuminate the meaning of labor in time by showing how the trivial event allows for that equity enveloping all justice and works for the Christian redemption of time. In Spenser's "polyphonic narrative" each event, no matter how trivial, is open to the possibilities of redemption. To be a hero is to endure, survive, and transform triviality. The medieval concept of trial has a new focus and the new knight has another perspective toward his time of labor and the heroic act. Gregory J. Wilkin (Univ. of Toronto) finds the notion of *Billichkeit* strictly applicable only to the knights and adventures of *FQ V* and *VI*. He also maintains that pains must be taken not to confuse imagistic triviality with true triviality of incident. There are as many cases of heroes being tested on their ability to endure trials of great import and urgency as there are examples of their sufferance of the trivial. Wilkin then discusses the Knights Templar as background to the careful justice Spenser does equity in *FQ V* and *VI*. He parallels Red Cross's career with the history of the Templars and finds in *FQ II* a fugitive and-after picture which is balanced in *FQ V* where the Elizabethan lawyer-knights distinguish themselves.

8. In "Parameters of Courtesy" Alice Fox (Miami Univ.) attempts to define courtesy by reducing the discussion of that virtue in *FQ VI* to four elements: gentility of birth, society's assessments, sex, and mystery. She tests each to determine which of them Spenser saw as a parameter and finds neither birth nor society's assessments are parameters of courtesy. Sex and mystery are, however, parameters of courtesy. Courtesy consists of men and women acting in accord with their

human limitations. Lorna Irvine (American Univ.) agrees that neither birth nor the assessments of society can be considered as parameters of courtesy, but disagrees that sexual determinism is a parameter of courtesy. Spenser, she asserts, questions sexual determinism. Society, however, does tend to assess men and women according to sex; but frequently such assessments prove faulty, largely because they obscure the judging of those virtues important to men and women alike. In *FQ* VI, anyone who disavows humility and generosity becomes an unkind human being. Recognition of a common humanity responsible to a supreme being overrides sexual distinction, because the limits of human power in general are established in terms of the parameter of mystery.

9. Elizabeth H. Hageman (Univ. of New Hampshire) in "In Praise of Poet's Wit: Spenser and the Sister Arts" states that Spenser is concerned to show how his art overgoes the art of the painter or sculptor. His reference to the *paragone*, or dispute between the sister arts, in the Proem to *FQ* III is probably one of the earliest English examples of a *topos* that derives from the art theory of the Italian Renaissance. In the Proem to *FQ* III, Spenser addresses the problem of the artist who fears no art can portray Elizabeth's excellence and proves he can outdo the painter not by painting a picture, but by using the trick of his own trade -- verbal wit. In his reply, Michael L. Donnelly (Kansas State Univ.) indicates that Hageman's paper evokes for him several questions of two different sorts, one largely historical, fictional and the other aesthetic, theoretical. First, how did the *paragone* get into England; what evidence is there that Spenser read theoretical justifications of the painter's art? Second, just how aware was Spenser of what the visual arts in his time could do in expressing emotion and thought purely through *visibilia*? In *FQ* III Proem, 2, was Spenser merely defending his art conventionally? Furthermore, the *paragone* is not clearly a genre; it appears more like a *topos*, imbedded in various kinds of works. Spenser's most convincing contributions to the *paragone* are in the ekphrastic passages where he is not participating formally in the debate, but where he is implicitly challenging comparison with the visual arts.

10. In "Spenser's Anti-Neoplatonism" Jerome S. Dees (Kansas State Univ.) argues that Spenser's Neoplatonic ideas and images are presented so as to convey a negative, at best ambivalent, attitude toward them. Not only does the development of the singer's voice in 4 *Hymnes* embody an ambivalent rejection of Neoplatonic love which is consistent with that of the controversial dedicatory epistle, but a corresponding ambivalence also exists in Spenser's treatment of Florimell in *FQ* III-IV. In each case the narrative rhetorical thrust of the poem is toward effects which the image of beauty has on its beholders, and these effects consistently lead us to reject some fundamental premises underlying the Neoplatonic philosophy of love. Elizabeth Bieman (Univ. of Western Ontario) in "Neoplatonism: The Ghost in Spenser's Fictions" finds problems

with Dees's use of the term "Neoplatonism" and believes that what Dees finds Spenser rejecting is not "Neoplatonism," but rather a courtly, Petrarchan "Bemboism". She argues for a fuller understanding of the breadth of the Neoplatonic tradition in the Renaissance and sketches out what she would range under the label "Neoplatonism." She concludes: 1. Spenser is not repudiating Neoplatonism when he makes the conventional gesture of retraction in the third of the 4 *Hymnes*; 2. Dees in discussing *Amor* suffers from the tendency of those who look too long at vertical ladders to see things polarized in terms of upper and lower, and not as they truly are -- a dynamic circuitry in which each can participate in the pattern of the All; 3. Spenser in his tales of the two Florimells is not parodying or satirizing Neoplatonism, but rather is making use of Platonic commonplaces in satirizing the lust that mistakes the appearance of beauty for the Reality.

11. In "Spenser's *Epith* as Verbal Charm" Suzanne H. MacRae (Univ. of Arkansas) argues that analysis of the diction patterns of *Epith* reveals that Spenser constructed the work as a complex magical charm, similar in magical function to OE charms. Spenser's role as priest and prophet accords with the ancient function of poets as divine intermediators. To create the incantatory tone of the poem, Spenser uses a majority of imperative verbs. Spenser's last technique of magical imitation lies in symmetrical yet progressive structure. Working outward from the two center stanzas (12, 13), Spenser creates symmetrical halves by linking stanzas 11-14, 10-15, and so on to 1-24. A. Kent Hiatt (Univ. of Western Ontario) in his "Commentary..." states that *Epith* is profoundly unlike OE charms. An OE charm exists to affect our world; Spenser assumes the rhetorical role of a creator of a new earth and a new heaven for various purposes, none of which is literally concerned with the actual material creation of anything but a wishful artifact. Spenser does not function as a magus in creating *Epith*; he functions only as if he were a magus. Furthermore, one cannot conclude that simply because Spenser used imperatives he saw himself as a divine creator. Most epithalamia all the way back to Catullus contain large proportions of imperatives. Later writers of epithalamia do much the same. Finally, on the matter of matching stanzas by beginning in the middle and proceeding seriatim to beginning and end, Hiatt sees this as a possibility but prefers his own arrangement in which stanzas 1-12 are matched in direct numerical sequence with stanzas 13-24.

12. Elizabeth W. Pomeroy (Huntington Library) in "Intense Ray of Poetry: Virginia Woolf's Reading of Spenser" observes that Woolf's interest in *FQ* is the affective experience of reading the poem. As a novelist Woolf raises particular questions of characterization and style and regrets that Spenser's characters are never really embodied and hence never quite rise to the surface. Woolf finds Spenser's language refreshing and any weariness in the reading redeemed by the final impression of a unified poetic world filled with intense and revealing light. She also responds to the qualities which set apart her own fiction: a lyric vein, power of suggestion, diffuse but strong

illumination of human experience, etc. In her response, "Allegory: The Missing Link" Susan R. Gorsky (Cleveland State Univ.) feels that Pomeroy has glossed over an important connection between Woolf and Spenser, i.e. allegory. Woolf is not only aware of allegory; she delights in it. At the very least, her extensive symbolism approaches allegory. This is especially apparent in *The Years* and *Between the Acts*.

Cherie Ann Haeger
Gannon College

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

The 1977 MLA Convention in Chicago will contain a Special Session on the teaching of Spenser to undergraduates, chaired by Paul L. Gaston, Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville, Edwardsville Illinois 62026. Professor Gaston is planning a panel discussion, with the following panelists: Judith H. Anderson, Donald Cheney, A. Kent Hieatt, Robert Kellogg, Thomas P. Roche.

* * *

Among the new books scheduled for review in the Fall issue of *SpN* is James Nohrnberg's *The Analogy of The Faerie Queene* (Princeton). Mr. Nohrnberg is preparing a list of substantive errors, and would appreciate any suggestions for his list, to be sent to him at Dept. of English, University of Virginia, Wilson Hall, Charlottesville, Va. 22903. We shall publish this list in the Fall issue.

DISSERTATION ABSTRACTS

Fuller descriptions of these dissertations may be found in *DAI*; *SpN* provides here only portions of the authors' abstracts. Copies of the dissertations themselves may be purchased through University Microfilms; see a recent issue of *DAI* for current prices and ordering information. When dissertations are reported prior to their publication by University Microfilms, their order numbers and *DAI* citation will appear in a subsequent issue of *SpN*.

Chi Shen, Jane Elizabeth, *Spenser's 'Modest Merimake': Aspects of the Comedy in The Faerie Queene*. University of Toronto, 1976. "This study explores the workings of Spenserian comedy: its stylistic modes, and its reflections on epic themes. The comic qualities in *FQ* belong to an overall humanist vision of life and art. This larger scheme of things, with its humanist emphasis on man's perfectability, provides a perspective on Spenser's commitment to delightful comedy. In order to examine fairly neglected material, I have not only approached these elements from a historical-critical perspective, but I have also studied the material within the structure of the whole of *FQ*. The episodes discussed are patterned according to the movement from the more abstract nature of Books I and II toward the less theoretical, and more exemplary, later books. Separate chapters emphasize the contribution of popular folklore and the issue of decorum in language. Together, the chapters indicate that no matter which critical approaches one pursues, the comic qualities of Spenser's verses are of major significance. The middle chapter, on the comic mother motif, emphasizes the central importance of this figure in the romance-epic."

Freake, Douglas. *Speech in The Faerie Queene: 'Faire Feeling Words.'* University of Toronto, 1977. "This dissertation has three aims: to discuss Spenser's attitudes, as revealed in *FQ*, towards the proper use of speech in society, and, conversely, towards the misuses of which it is susceptible; to look at the actual use of dialogue in the poem in order to determine its characteristics and judge its suitability to character and situation; and to discuss the poem as a "Defence of Poetry" that by containing representations of false poets and by implying the nature of the true poet, shows the value of poetry as the highest form of speech. Both speech and poetry are discussed as thematic concerns in *FQ*. The opening chapter of the thesis deals with Spenser's view of the nature of words and finds that he most often describes them in terms of magic and medicine. It is the "feeling" quality of words, their ability to touch the heart and establish bonds of sympathy among men, that Spenser values most. The conversation of the knights and the ability of figures such as Arthur and Guyon to aid others with gracious speech are means by which speech operates to bind together the society of the virtuous, which comprises not only the heroes of the poem but the narrator and the reader as well. Flanking the central section of the thesis, which traces the theme of speech through individual books, there are chapters on Arthur, who not only demonstrates most consistently the use of speech as a tool of social harmony but also operates throughout the poem, in Books II and V as well as in Book I, as the symbol and defender of God's Word, and on poetry. The latter chapter is concerned to show that the proems to each book constitute a continuing argument about the nature, and particularly the reality, of poetry and to indicate how the narrator uses speech, in a manner analogous to Arthur's use of speech, to express sympathy with various characters and to address his *Faerie Queene*. The central section of the dissertation explores the themes of speech and poetry in

each book of *FQ* ... The last chapter of the thesis attempts to deal with two general questions about the nature of speech as used in *FQ*: the place of vision in a construction made of words and the particular qualities of words that allegory draws upon."

- Gandy, Thomas Jack. *A Study of Theme and Style in Edmund Spenser's Shepherdes Calender*. Texas Christian University, 1976. *DAI*, 37:3641A. Order No. 76-26,972, 120 pages. "This work focuses on the artistic aspects of *SC* by examining prosody, diction, metaphor, and structure in terms of the Renaissance concept of decorum. In his introductory letter to the work, E.K. praises Spenser for his "dewe observing of Decorum." In Spenser's hands, however, the traditional concept of decorum is modified by the additional principle of experimental variety. Within the context of the structural and thematic framework of the poem, the prosodic and verbal complexities are quite in keeping with the principle of decorum."
- Gupta, Ashis. *The Ironies of Moral Experience in Spenser's Faerie Queene*. Boston University, 1976. *DAI*, 37:1563-64A. Order No. 76-21,283, 210 pages. "*FQ* sets forth Spenser's moral universe. It represents an elusive vision whose apparently benign and dependable solidity vanishes as one moves closer to it. As soon as one begins to enjoy a presence within this universe, one realizes its countless dangers and challenges. The solidity is illusory. The particular approach of this study treats Spenser's poetry not as the result of an interaction between the poet and the real world, but as a process of interaction between the two from which emerges a continually changing, rather than a stable and acquired, reality...Spenser's reiterative narrative pattern has often been recognized as simple. But the simplicity is deceptive. The difficulties grow in number and complexity as one crisis after the other is faced and resolved. Even the outcomes of progressive episodes tend to be increasingly perplexing and ambivalent. Each crisis is subjected to a searching analysis, at every phase of which the poet appears deeply and personally involved. And yet, it is not enough merely to recognize the Narrator's presence in *FQ*. This study attempts to examine some of the implications of this presence."
- Hannay, Margaret Patterson. *Rehabilitations: C.S. Lewis' Contribution to the Understanding of Spenser and Milton*. State University of New York at Albany, 1976. *DAI*, 37:1564A. Order No. 76-19,665, 400 pages. "At a time when allegory was scorned as 'medieval,' Spenser was dismissed as 'charming,' and studies of Milton were largely relegated to the 'sonorous organ music' of his proper names, C.S. Lewis began a rehabilitation of their critical reputations. His pronouncements on allegory, symbol and myth have generated a controversy which has redefined and given new value to the whole genre of allegory. In *The Allegory of Love* Lewis set up the Art/Nature distinction between the Bower of Bliss and the Garden of Adonis which provoked serious reevaluation of Spenser's philosophic and moral purpose. Most critics (including Lewis himself in his later years) now find the primary correspondence between the Bower and the Temple of Venus as illustrating a concordant versus a discordant relationship of Art and Nature. However, Lewis undeniably provided the impetus which led to a gradual reawakening

to this larger relationship, and also established the Sterility/Fertility contrast as the operative distinction between Bower and Garden. On the larger question of Neoplatonic content in *FQ*, Lewis changed his position from an original agreement with Stirling that any seemingly philosophic content was actually an Elizabethan commonplace, to agreement with Ellrodt that Platonism (carefully defined) informs the spirit of the poem. In his final years, Lewis found the study of Spenser's iconography immensely rewarding. Though he was primarily dependent upon written work rather than on actual paintings, Lewis was among the first to apply the emblematic tradition to detailed study of a single image in *FQ*. Lewis' most significant contribution to Spenser studies was to provoke other scholars into a close study of a poem which had been long patronized for its 'prettiness'. Lewis was among the first to restore to us the teacher whom Milton found to be as 'sage and serious' as Aquinas."

Jackson, Richard Paul. *The Approach in Time: A Study of the Romance Epics of Ariosto, Spenser and Byron*. Yale University, 1976. DAI: 37:4337A. Order No. 76-30,243, 213 pages. "The focus of this dissertation is upon the way the romance epic world functions in *OF*, *FQ* and *Don Juan* with respect to the process through which series of rapidly occurring incidents are assimilated into evolving patterns of history...My point of departure in each poem is a central approach episode: Bradamante's journey towards Ruggiero (*OF* 32-36); Britomart's journey towards Artegall (*FQ* V.iv-vii); and Lambro's journey towards Juan and Haidee (*DJ* II-IV). The character or characters being approached have attempted to isolate themselves in temporally suspended states. The approach itself describes that central movement in an epic where local events and standards are revaluated gradually in terms of the large world of consequences, the larger perspective that is the continually developing history of the poem."

Jordan, Constance. *Enchanted Ground: Vision and Perspective in Renaissance Romance*. Yale University, 1976. DAI, 37:4337-38A. Order No. 76-30,246, 329 pages. "For knights who quest in the great forests of romance, vision is generally problematic; they pass over 'enchanted ground' where they must distinguish the apparent from the true...In *FQ*, the quest for the discovery of a veiled truth (and the unmasking of falsehood) becomes an analogue to the poet's quest for a perfectly truthful language for his 'history.' And in fact, this quest ends the poem: while in Book I an essentially timeless truth (of Una, of the New Jerusalem) is faithfully mirrored in the glass of poetry of the romance, in Books VI and VII it is increasingly incapable of such representation..."

McElroy, James Campbell. "Natures fruitfull progenyes": A Study of Generation in The Faerie Queene. Emory University, 1976. DAI, 37:4372A. Order No. 77-973, 162 pages. "The present study investigates the various aspects of procreation that appear in *FQ* and attempts to explain their individual functions within the natural order. Spenser presents procreation, or generation, on three related levels of complexity: generation in terms of elemental biology, generation refined by concepts of human love, and generation as a divine force in mortal history. Following a chapter of intro-

duction, these three levels of generation, as well as their corresponding passages in the poem, are discussed and explained in individual chapters. A final chapter on *MutC* reveals the effect of Spenser's late pessimism upon his vision of natural generation."

Pendergrast, John. *England as the City of God and the Third Troy in FQ I-III*. University of Toronto, 1976. "The concern of *FQ* with history and with nationalism is not episodic but pervasive; Spenser intends his poem to be to England what *The Aeneid* had been to Rome. At the same time, he wished to picture the virtues as universals, not as peculiarities of the British temperament. One consequence of this dual concern was an attempt to establish in the first three books of the poem a historical-nationalistic perspective on the virtues described in subsequent books. Virtue was seen to have a special British relevance, if not an exclusively British content. The general moral and historical framework of *FQ* is best elucidated by St. Augustine. His *City of God* is shown not to be, as popularly believed, doctrinally opposed to earthly glory; there is abundant evidence that Englishmen in Spenser's time saw no difficulty in imagining Gloriana's realm as a potential earthly embodiment of the heavenly city. Spenser's poem is also informed by Augustine's conception of Rome (and of Roman virtue) as glorious, good, but radically incomplete. England, as a Third Troy, was not simply to succeed Rome, but was to perfect it, fulfilling its promise by transmuting its virtue into a Christian form, much as the New Testament perfected the Old. Book I is an allegory of universal spiritual history; Book II is one of Roman virtue, and Book III one of British virtue. Britomart is compared with Guyon and found simultaneously to fulfill and transcend his virtue."

Purvis, Tomsye Dale. *A Study of Spenser's Fowre Hymnes*. University of Tennessee, 1976. *DAI*, 37:2900A. Order No. 76-24,853, 185 pages. "Spenser explores one of the great commonplaces of Renaissance poets and philosophers, the redeeming power of love and beauty. In his *Fowre Hymnes*, he develops this theme in yet another form, that of the classical hymn, which he both imitates and adapts for his own purposes. This fact of imitation, which offers a key to both the meaning and the artistry of the *Hymnes*, provides the perspective from which to study the individual poems and offers an approach to the problem of their unity...their uniformity of purpose and plan suggests a conscious attempt on the part of the poet to maintain a symmetry of form throughout the entire work, which is thus unified by design."

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