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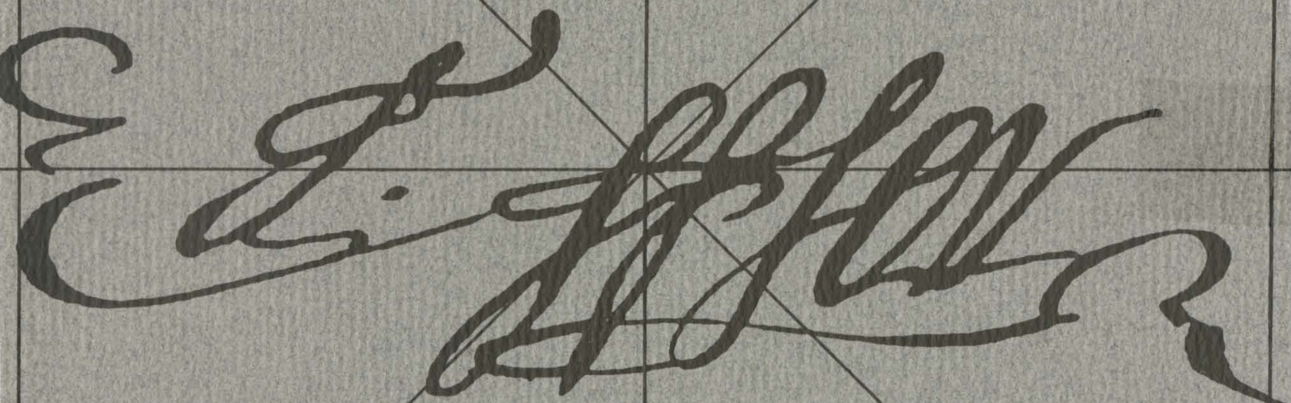

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The *Spenser Newsletter* is published three times a year, Winter, Spring-Summer, and Fall, by the Department of English at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. Please address all communications to: *Spenser Newsletter*, Department of English, CB# 3520 Greenlaw Hall, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC 27599.

The editor solicits letters containing news of any sort which would be of interest to Spenserians, and will make an effort to print any legitimate query. He also solicits abstracts and/or offprints of articles (with full publication data, please), the receipt of which may reduce the time between the publication of the article and the report on it.

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TO OUR READERS

89.26 ATTENTION, SPECIAL NEWS BULLETIN. Those going to the MLA convention in December will want to know that the Spenser Society will NOT convene at 1 o'clock on Friday, December 29, as announced in the MLA program. That time conflicts with too many sessions important to the membership. As President S. K. Heninger, Jr., has informed me, and as Secretary-Treasurer John Ulreich has written to members of the Spenser Society, we shall meet instead for brunch, from 9:30 until 11:30 AM, on December 29. This event, which begins with a reception (9:30-10:00), will occur at Mrs. Simpson's, 2915 Connecticut Avenue, NW, just one block from the Sheraton. Bloody Marys, I'm told, will be on the house. And Elizabeth Bieman will be the featured speaker.

So revise your MLA schedule, and be sure to send your check for $23.50 to Professor John Ulreich, Department of English, University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ, 85721, by DECEMBER 10th. Reservations are limited.

89.27 With characteristic generosity of spirit, Don Cheney has called my attention to an error in transcription, one that much altered the sense of an important statement in his review of David Lee Miller's *The Poem's Two Bodies: The Poetics of the 1590 Faerie Queene* (item 89.03). The key word "all" dropped out of the following sentence: "Yet, Miller is at all times an incisive commentator on Spenser's poem, and he is ingenious in finding ways of applying the image of mirroring to a wide range of contexts." I deeply regret this error, and I thank David for his characteristically gracious and good-humored acceptance of my earlier apology.

89.28 With this issue, the editor is glad to welcome an excellent new editorial assistant, Kevin Farley, to the *Newsletter* staff. Kevin has often worked for us *gratis*, and we look forward to benefiting (ourselves and our readers) from his devotion to duty, and to Spenser and Renaissance literature. We also take pleasure in Mary Sturgill's return to handle subscriptions and mailings for a second year.

BOOKS: REVIEWS AND NOTICES

89.29 Bieman, Elizabeth. *Plato Baptized: Towards the Interpretation of Spenser's Mimetic Fictions*. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1988. x + 325 pp. $40.00.

Let me begin by noting what the book's readers will see from its acknowledgements: that having been asked by the Press to read the text submitted for publication, I am now enjoying my second "go" at Elizabeth Bieman's work. While she may feel that my review involves double jeopardy, I hope that these comments are helpful to prospective readers of *Plato Baptized*. Some scholarly projects suffer distention and dilation in response to readers' suggestions, but Bieman's argument has gained clarity and economy as well as range of reference in the course of her long labors: the book is dense with learning, various in the

perspectives it offers, suggestive in its observations on Spenser's poetry and other texts representative of a complex tradition in philosophy and religion.

I follow Bieman in referring to a singular "tradition," noting also as she does that it consists, and consisted for Spenser, of several tributary streams or strands, each of which can be traced separately in early and late antiquity, then in several post-classical centuries. The concept or heuristic of "Tradition" was often misused earlier in our century, both reductively and to mystify meaning and authorial status; the inevitable reaction in recent criticism, which regards continuities and consensus with suspicion, has been such that Una as well as Duessa may be sought wandering in the wilderness. One of the salutary and unfashionable characteristics of Bieman's work is her effort to reestablish the bearings of a complex intellectual tradition upon Spenser's poetry. In doing so, she discriminates deftly between historically and culturally distinct contributions: the Platonic *per se* and its predecessors; the Judaic, biblical and post-biblical; each of the post-Platonic schools in antiquity, including distinct stages in the development of pagan Neoplatonism; gnosticism, both light and dark, and the cults or movements which produced and interpreted Orphic, hermetic, and kabbalistic texts; several Christian responses to Neoplatonism; assimilation and development of ideas from ancient texts by Ficino and other devotees of the "ancient theology" during the Renaissance.

In a middle-sized book, nearly half of it devoted to readings in Spenser's poetry, Bieman's weaving together of the strands of history in her tradition requires compression and many omissions. The book is about the Christianization of Platonism, but it does not attempt comprehensive coverage of early Christian writers. Clement, Origen, and Boethius are deftly mentioned, but Augustine is rightly represented as the founding father of Christian philosophy, as Pseudo-Dionysius is of Christian mysticism. As compensation for the omission or near-omission of several historically important Church Fathers, we are told a little about Synesius of Cyrene and Maximus the Confessor. Also notable, and unusual in a book of this kind, is the attention given to the Book of Job and several books of the New Testament, focusing on the biases of Paul, Jesus as represented in the gospels, and John's philosophically grounded vision.

Through a combination of narrative ordering and textual analyses tending toward a synchronic account of elements, Bieman constructs a coherent "backdrop (and matrix)" against which the inquisitive reader can place Spenser's poetry (134). In its devotion to a thesis and its selective approach to a mind-boggling array of texts, Bieman's argument carries its limitations up front, but it may provide and promote a truer response to Spenser than many more eclectic and diversified accounts of his learning: explainers sometimes act as if the poet had inhabited and digested a Borgesian library, and his ideal reader would know everything he knew and nothing else. Much of what Bieman knows remains "tacit" (a word she is fond of); she knows (and shows) much more about some things than Spenser could have known, and she makes no attempt to account for all the lines of transmission that brought Plato "baptized" into the poet's hands. To readers of Spenser (more numerous now than they used to be) who come to the poetry without much awareness of extra-literary traditions, Bieman offers a useful *vademecum*.

The author's biases are evident, though seldom foregrounded: she is leery of the "Calvinist" temperament whether it is found in Plato, St. Paul, or Lord Burleigh, and she responds skeptically to historical analysis founded on sharp distinctions or polarities. She observes that Spenser was "a questioning poet in a questioning age" (31), yet she applies to his poetry the observation that "for the religious writer (and Platonism as I understand it is as much a religion as a philosophy) language itself is numinous" (142). Her intention as an interpreter is both modest and bold: not to trace Spenser's texts to their sources (her caution in this regard threatens to divide the chapters on Spenser from much of the substance in her first half), but to offer "a participatory mimesis in the tradition" which prepares readers "to empathize imaginatively with the assumption of Renaissance Platonists that 'the ancient theology' conveyed one body of transcendent truth, variously understood and developed" (137).

The phrase "participatory mimesis" illustrates a tendency in the argument which may cause some readers to founder, despite the helpful Glossary of her technical terms (293-7). Bieman finds a number of concepts native to Neoplatonism and early Christianity essential to her reading of Spenser. Separated from their original metaphysical contexts, such terms as *methexis* ("Greek for participation"), *metanoia* ("conversion"), and *aporia* (understood in the light of Plotinus' verb, *aporreo*, for emanation from the One) are less than numinous, but they have some heuristic value as tributes to the compelling strangeness of Spenserian discourse, which too much of our criticism easily assimilates to this or that modern idiom and ideology. Believing with the Neoplatonists that all the levels of creation participate in the creator's being, and that language used creatively is similarly mimetic (see 105-15), Bieman goes on to claim, "For Spenser, a poet who writes 'well' draws from the divine font whose streams renew the cosmos through all its levels" (210).

While I am grateful for such eloquence as this, I confess with Claudius in *Hamlet* that "my thoughts remain below": it is difficult to redeem Spenser's language from the curse placed during the Renaissance on self-conscious uses of rhetoric, under which words can at best only gesture toward things; they cannot effectively imitate "the supra-order of noetic being" (214). (I would suggest that Spenser found himself in a predicament which was the inverse of Claudius': "My thoughts fly up; my words remain below.") But Bieman's argument doesn't depend on wholehearted acceptance of a Neoplatonic cosmology in its full extent; she herself couples faith with skepticism, and represents the ancients as more seekers than seers, even in their systems (see ch. 3). Her readings in Spenser's poetry stay close to her chosen texts and illuminate them at many points, large and small.

Several of the shorter poems and many passages in *The Faerie Queene* are dealt with in Chapters 7 through 10, three substantial sections and a brief "Afterword." Bieman's selection of topics and the conduct of her argument are loosely organized by a schema explained in earlier chapters: the tripartite division of the soul's activity into appetites, the more rational impulses involved in civilized society, and *noesis* (knowledge extending to the transcendental order of being, but including the lower levels derived from it). Love in its various forms is, of course, fundamental to this world-view, and Bieman has made an important contribution to our understanding of love in Spenser's poetry and the tradition which informs it.

Taking issue with Robert Ellrodt and the still influential work of Anders Nygren (*Agape and Eros*, 1957) on which his account of Spenser and Neoplatonism drew, she stresses continuities in love, and in thinking about love, across the classical and Christian centuries and in Spenser's poetry. Desirous *eros* and generous *agape* are aspects of a continuous circuit or spectrum, and both are opposed to perversions such as lust and jealousy, which belong in another spectrum associated with death rather than life.

As she proceeds through her three-fold schema and the poetry, the argument gathers complexity and range of reference; like Spenser, Bieman leaves nothing behind as she moves onward, and even as the transcendental tendency of her argument becomes more pronounced she retains bearings in the world of phenomenal flux. For example, although she takes issue with critics "who interpret the absence of closure in Spenser as evidence of defeat and despair" (213), Bieman also remarks mildly, "I question the view that Mutabilitie is ever, equivocally or unequivocally, 'defeated' by Spenser. Like Nature, the poet confirms Mutabilitie, finding her fully kin, and ultimately kind" (228). To a large extent the book's entire scope was motivated by a prolonged meditation on the *Mutabilitie Cantos*, and that enigmatic coda to the *Workes* attracts Bieman's most comprehensive and wise hermeneutic efforts. Along the way, however, she gives expert attention to many other matters, both as "accidents" and "intendments." Her account of *Fowre Hymnes* in Chapter 7 (153-62) balances that of the *Cantos* and the pastoral "corona" of Book VI in Chapters 9 and 10. In Chapter 8, I particularly liked the essay on "mimeses of mourning" (191-200), which weaves together observations on *The Ruines of Time*, Marinell and Liagore, and *Muiopotmos*; reflections on Marinell (with Florimell) are carried over to the next section (200-06) on Timias and Belphoebe.

Readers who open a new book first to its Acknowledgements and then go directly to the back to see the range of its author's scholarship will find an impressive and helpful Bibliography (299-310), by means of which the book's many byways in intellectual history can be explored further. There and in the Notes (247-92), Bieman's scholarship is syncretic and up-to-date. Unfortunately, however, I found that some of the recent scholarship cited in short-hand form in the Notes had no corresponding entry in the Bibliography; this will serve as a test of some readers' curiosity.

Jon A. Quitslund
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89.30 Fowler, Alastair. *A History of English Literature*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard UP, 1987. xi + 395 pp. $30.00.

Although neither Spenser nor the cultural contexts of his age are central subjects of this learned and readable book, it warrants notice in the *Spenser Newsletter*. So I am happy to find space to mention it in this issue. As *Newsletter* readers well know, Alastair Fowler has throughout his distinguished career remained a Spenserian who, despite extensive forays into fields adjacent and remote -- Milton studies, the Eighteenth Century, the modern era, and genre theory -- periodically returns to the fold. His *History of English Literature* bears witness both

to the persistence of his Spenserian interests and to the extraordinarily wide and careful reading evident in his other works.

In the *History*, Fowler brings off an enormous task few would undertake. Specialists in the earliest periods of English literature will, I think, find his brisk treatment of familiar terrain impressive in its capacity to say much in short space, and assertive as well as judicious in its evaluations of works it describes. Read against the background of recent attention to the oppressive ideological functions of canonical Renaissance literature, there is an appealingly optimistic humanism about a book which informs its readers that "If you enter into [the *New Arcadia's*] emotions and join in the searching debates that focus its issues, you will not remain the same. For its 'passionately delighted' moral fervour is infectious" (47). It is refreshing, too, to be able unhesitatingly to credit the authority with which still more laconic judgments are uttered: "Edward Fairfax's Tasso . . . was the greatest verse translation from a vernacular original until Sir Richard Fanshawe's Camoens" (61). One can trust Fowler to have read closely enough to know such things at first hand.

Such economical and authoritative evaluations also, of course, characterize the *History*'s pages on Spenser. Two of Fowler's persistent scholarly interests, numerology and genre studies, are usefully and modestly in evidence here. The *Epithalamion* is an ode, we are told, a form Drayton naturalized; its numerological structure is "only one of the ways in which Spenser's visionary imagination brings all into accord" (57-58). The *Shepheardes Calender*, though "epoch-making" in its capacity to display "easy mastery of the pastoral genre up to his own time, and . . . to finesse on it by blending in features of the contrasting georgic," proves "too engaged a work to have survived as a whole . . . a more lasting pastoral achievement [is] *Colin Clouts Come Home Again* . . . the greatest pastoral eclogue in the language" (59). I suspect that many of us will agree with, and be glad to see stated in a book intended for general readers, Fowler's summary judgment that "Spenser was . . . great in other ways; but formally he occupies a strategic, even a unique, position in English literature. There is a sense in which he invented fully serious English poetry. He was a model for many that came after, as the first to achieve in English a complexity and refinement previously found only in the literature of antiquity" (60). (D.J.G)

89.31 Hardison, O. B., Jr. *Prosody and Purpose in the English Renaissance*. Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins UP, 1989. xvi + 342pp. $42.50.

Defining the "metaphysical poets" in his *Life of Cowley*, Doctor Johnson remarks that, "unluckily resolving to show [learning] in rhyme, instead of writing poetry they only wrote verses, and very often such verses as stood the trial of the finger better than of the ear; for the modulation was so imperfect, that they were only found to be verses by counting the syllables." Johnson is drawing upon a common eighteenth-century view given classic formulation by Edward Bysshe in his *Art of English Poetry* (1702), whose opening sentence begins, "The Structure of our Verses, whether Blank, or in Rhyme, consists of a certain Number of Syllables; and not in Feet . . . ." This same idea has been taken up by O. B. Hardison in his important new book. Admitting that no "fully consistent theory of vernacular

prosody existed in England in the sixteenth -- or, for that matter, in the seventeenth -- century" (124), Hardison argues for "the dominance of syllabic concepts of prosody" (xiii) in the English Renaissance. This means that a blank verse line of Surrey or Marlowe should not be read as five feet of alternating weaker and stronger stresses. Rather, it should be read syllabically, as one reads French verse, with stresses determined by prose rhythm. The line will fall into a few phrases or measures, each ending with a stressed syllable. An example is this line from Surrey's *Aeneid* describing the death of Dido: "And into wynde the lyfe foorthwyth resolue," which Hardison reads as composed of a four-syllable measure plus a cesura, a two-syllable measure and another four-syllable measure.

Hardison makes his case for the romance basis of English prosody in two sections. The first five chapters offer "Contexts": a history of prosodic thought from the ancients through Campion and Daniel. The second part of the book presents "Performances": readings of English attempts to create elevated heroic narrative and dramatic poetry. These six chapters deal with Surrey's *Aeneid*; Jasper Heywood's *Seneca*; *Gorboduc* and dramatic blank verse; translations of Vergil and Homer; the high Elizabethan dramatists; and *Paradise Lost*.

The Contexts provide a rich treatment of little-read material: wide reading and sound judgment make these chapters a trove of critical lore. But the Performances will carry the burden of proof. Hardison frequently offers alternative scansions, foot-based metrical as against romance syllabic; the romance scansion is seen as a more open system that enables our performance to respond to the rhythms of the verses it helped the Renaissance authors compose. The best pages of *Prosody and Purpose* are those in which Hardison prints a passage of Virgil or Seneca, explores the texture of the original, then shows us (phrase by phrase) how Surrey or Heywood employed English verse to recreate some of the feel and force of the original. Even readers who are not fully persuaded of Hardison's central contention will find themselves reading sixteenth-century verse with greater tact and insight.

The book began as a study of Surrey's *Aeneid*, and the central sixth chapter devoted to that work stands as its strongest achievement; Hardison argues convincingly for the superiority of the obscure 1554 printing. Hardison also writes admirably about his other heroes in the story: Chapman and Milton. He shows the purport of prosodic choice: thus Milton wrote his masterwork "with a vivid sense of the burden of proof that the age placed on him. It was a burden that had to be sustained more by prosody than by themes or ideas" (266). The burden that verse forms can and do bear has rarely been explored to better purpose; Hardison's demonstration of how differently the loathed fourteener can sound when used by different authors to different effects is historical criticism at its finest.

Spenserians should not be put off by the brevity of Hardison's treatment of their author (212-19). In important respects the book implicitly puts Spenser at the center of sixteenth-century developments. In spite of his flirtation with quantitative meter, Spenser devoted his career to what Hardison calls the "return to romance" -- to romance syllabism as well as to narrative romance.

Professor Hardison has given us the best book on Elizabethan prosody since Derek Attridge's justly admired *Well-weighed Syllables* (1974). The new study shows that at the middle of the sixteenth century English verse was not quite so destitute of usable theory as Attridge suggests. A telling instance of the correction offered by Hardison comes in his reading of a passage from the title page of Surrey's 1554 Vergil proclaiming that the Roman poet has now been "translated into English and drawne into a straunge metre . . . worthy to be embraced." Attridge took "straunge" as "unfamiliar": blank verse made no sense to readers who thought in the Latin terms drilled into them in school. Hardison takes "straunge" to mean (as in Chaucer) "foreign," from overseas. And he shows that Surreyan blank verse did derive from Italian theory and Italian examples. Here as everywhere, Hardison treats English as if it were French or Italian -- and leads an initially skeptical reader to accept the contention as (at the least) an enabling fiction that has generated a fine and useful book.

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Mount Holyoke College

89.32 Parker, Patricia. *Literary Fat Ladies: Rhetoric, Gender, Property.* London and New York: Methuen, 1987. ix + 276 pp.

First, about the title. In her "Retrospective Introduction," Parker explains that the title *Literary Fat Ladies* is used, "in the terms of the Irigarayan epigraph of the title essay, 'mimetically': to 'make *visible*,' by an effect of playful repetition, what was supposed to remain invisible" (7). I honor Irigaray's aim of converting women's "subordination into an affirmation, and thus to begin to thwart it" (8). For that reason, Parker's careless scholarship in this book disturbs me deeply.

The first "fat lady" we meet is Rahab, the redeemed harlot who enables Joshua to destroy Jericho (Joshua 2: 1-21). Her name in Hebrew means "wide" or "broad." Rahab is a crucial figure in Parker's discussion, as the following passage makes clear:

> Rahab understood as dilation, expansion, and deferral, and used as a figure for the space and time of language, discourse, and history before a Master's apocalyptic return -- is the figurative fat lady who first interested me when I started to think about romance and about its characteristic association with such dilation, or potential vagrancy (or often simply its dilatory refusal to come to a "point") (9).

In beginning her analysis, Parker claims (1) that Rahab was translated by the Church Fathers into Latin as *dilatio*; (2) that St. Thomas More and others used her translated significance in the phrase "dilation of Christendome"; and (3) that John Donne refers to the "dilation of Rahab or of the Church" in Holy Sonnet 179 [sic]. Let us examine these claims.

(1) Although Parker fails to indicate in *Fat Ladies* which Church Fathers she means, she refers us to *Inescapable Romance* (Princeton, 1979), in which she

"quotes" Origen's *Homily on Joshua* as follows:

> Rahab, which means breadth, *dilatio*, increases and goes forth, until her name extends over the whole limits of the earth (251).

But according to the *Patrologiae Graeca* edited by Migne (Paris, 1862), Volume XII, Col. 839, Origen actually wrote:

> Sic ergo Raab, quae latitudo interpretatur, dilatatur et proficit, usquequo in omnem terram exeat sonus ejus.

Thus, to Origen, Rahab means *latitudo*, which Lewis & Short's *Latin Dictionary* translates as "breadth, or width." Origen's term is constant among the Western Fathers: Jerome, in his *Liber de Nominibus Hebraicis, Patrologiae Latinae*, ed. Migne (Paris, 1862), Vol. XXIII, Col. 807, writes: "Rahab, latitudo, vel fames, sine impetus"; the widely-influential *Glossa Ordinaria* of Nicholas of Lyra (Venice, 1588), Vol. II. p. 5v, concurs: "Rahab interpretatur latitudo." Even the reader with small Latin and less Greek can see that *latitudo* does not equal *dilatio*, and that Parker has substituted her term for what the sources give.

(2) Parker's note 2, p. 234, tells us to "See St. Thomas More, *Comfort against Tribulation* (1529), III, weeks 1213/2" [sic] for the "dilation of Christendome." I cannot find an edition of More's *Dialogue of Comfort against Tribulation* dated 1529; nor any such page and line number; nor can I find "dilation" used in this way. In Louis Martz's and Frank Manley's scholarly edition of the dialogue in *Complete Works of St. Thomas More*, Vol. 12 (Yale, 1976), an extensive discussion of the text (xix-lvii) indicates that the earliest published editions appeared in 1553 and 1557. Moreover, the editors' glossary indicates two senses of "dilate": to increase, as in "dilate the fayth of Mahumet" (190/5) and to tell at length, as in "Iff we should dilate . . ." (320/12). Parker specifies no edition or translation; her index entry on p. 275 refers only to St. Thomas *Moore* [sic].

(3) What Parker cites as Donne's Holy Sonnet "179" actually refers to Holy Sonnet 18. Rather than identifying Roman Catholicism as the most "open" Church, Donne in that sonnet commands God to show which (if any) contemporary church is the true spouse of Christ. In other words, Donne demurs from the identification of Rahab with the Roman Catholic Church, which was Parker's point in citing More and the Church Fathers.

Such dubious scholarship undermines the foundations of Parker's argument, and her extravagant claims erode its credibility. As the first "subtext" that a Renaissance poet would have inherited for "overcoming a female enchantress or obstacle" (11), Parker names the Bible, whose plot she summarizes as "the overcoming or stripping of a female figure, the Whore of Babylon" (12). In discussing Shakespeare's wordplay in *Merry Wives* on "Ginny's Case," which indeed puns on the Genitive Case, Parker insists: "And 'case' clearly is the code term for female genitalia, as in our contemporary slang phrase, 'the family jewels'" (28). After arguing throughout the essay that Latin is the "father tongue" which attempts to master the English "mother tongue," Parker gives her concluding section the Latin

title: "*Postscriptum*" (31). There she claims that the dilation collocating literary texts and female bodies extends to many post-Renaissance works: to *Frankenstein*, because Mary Shelley wonders how she came to "dilate upon so very hideous an idea" as the monster; to Beckett, whose spare late plays Parker says are "preoccupied with the postponing of ending" (34); to *Ulysses*, whose powerful concluding monologue by Molly Bloom Parker describes as "rambling and unpointed" (34). These explanations of "dilation" seem farfetched.

Nonetheless, much of Parker's book is informative and insightful. Falstaff emerges convincingly as a "fat lady," not simply because of his cross-dressing in *Merry Wives* but because his "corpulence in some sense embodies Prince Hal's delay" (20). The pregnant "gossip" of Titania in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* does indeed embody not only a copious fertility but a patriarchy-threatening sexuality which darkens the comedy, although this pattern has been more persuasively discussed in Lisa Jardine's *Still Harping on Daughters* (Brighton, 1983). Particularly insightful is Parker's discussion of the alternative versions of Eve's creation in *Paradise Lost*. Parker shows how Milton's initial description in Book IV shifts from the balanced creation account in Genesis 1 to the male-dominant version of Genesis 2. In Book VIII, Parker argues convincingly that Milton's narrative stress on Adam "following" Eve destabilizes a hierarchical reading of the creation accounts.

Of most interest to Spenserians is the essay, "Suspended Instruments: Lyric and Power in the Bower of Bliss," reprinted from Garber's *Cannibals, Witches, and Divorce* (Johns Hopkins, 1987). Parker's conclusion is allusively complex:

> A poem, finally, as dedicated as Spenser's to the polysemous perverse could easily encompass the psychological dynamic of the overpowering of a potentially castrating female, the covert political allegory of the overgoing of a lyricism associated with Elizabeth, and a simultaneously aesthetic and moral uneasiness about the seductiveness of lyric "charm," even if that charm is an inseparable part of the attraction of his own poetry, its own tantalizingly suspended instrument. (66)

In arguing for this uneasy overpowering, Parker stretches the evidence. As a subtext for Verdant's hanging up of "his warlike armes, the idle instruments / Of sleeping praise" (II.xii.80.1-2), Parker upholds Psalm 137: "By the rivers of Babel we sate, and there we wept, when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harpes upon the willowes in the middes thereof." In the psalm, hanging up one's instruments is a sign of resistance, a refusal to hire out one's voice, as a contemporary Reggae version makes clear, Parker remarks (55). But Verdant's hanging up of his instruments is quite the opposite of resistance: It shows that he has sacrificed his will to Acrasia's lust. His suspension of will, but not the political resistance of the psalm, accords with the sense of sexual impotence that Parker also reads in "hanging up his instruments." Parker's conclusions would be more persuasive without such dubious readings.

Finally, there is about *Literary Fat Ladies* a quality of secondhandedness. Many of Parker's arguments are admittedly indebted to other recent work, but the indebtedness often goes further than the notes suggest. For example, Parker says

that recent studies have drawn attention to an eroticized Virgin and dominating mother in both Acrasia and Spenser's ruling queen. In fact, Parker's extensive discussion of Acrasia as an Elizabethan "Virgin Mother" (57-60) borrows heavily from Louis Montrose's "Shaping Fantasies" essay from *Representations* (1983). Parker's reading of *Cymbeline* as a boasting or "blazoning" contest between men (132-38) repeats Nancy Vickers's treatment of the blazon as instrument of both rhetorical and mercantile conquest in *Shakespeare and the Question of Theory* (New York, 1985), pp. 95-101, of which Parker is co-editor. This secondhand quality also describes the preponderance of contemporary analogies over primary, historical material in the book. For example, Parker leads us through "the simultaneous use and critique of Lacan in a famous essay by Laura Mulvey on the male gaze (in cinema)" as a "suggestive supplement" to Spenser's Bower of Bliss for "undergraduates and overgraduates alike" (64). Certainly this pattern of secondariness does not invalidate Parker's findings, for the signs of misogyny during the Renaissance, as in our own age, are legion. All the same, Parker's analysis of rhetorically dilated discourse in *Literary Fat Ladies* seems caught within the logic it seeks to expose.

Richard J. DuRocher
St. Olaf College

ARTICLES: ABSTRACTS AND NOTICES

89.33 Bath, Michael. "Verse Form and Pictorial Space in Van der Noot's *Theatre for Worldlings*." *Erlanger Forschungen*, Riehe A, Bd. 43. Erlangen, 1988: 73-105.

A neglected manuscript "consisting of twelve watercolours illustrating the six stanzas which Clement Marot published in 1533 or 1534 under the title 'Visions de Petrarque'" in Glasgow University Library supplies a source for both the first six illustrations found in Jan Van de Noot's *Theatre for Worldlings* (1568-69) and for Spenser's translations of Marot in *Complaints* (1591). Spenser's close translation of Marot's verse indicates that the poet used this manuscript. Also, the portraiture of the Glasgow illustrators suggests that Spenser knew it. In the Glasgow manuscript, "The form of the poems . . . includes and reconciles the emblematic impulse of humanist poetics, the medieval topos of the poet as seer or dreamer, and the Puritan claim to direct revelation. All three elements . . . were to remain constant features of Spenser's art to the very end of his career as a poet." (Kevin Farley)

89.34 Boehrer, Bruce Thomas. "Carelesse Modestee": Chastity as Politics in Book 3 of *The Faerie Queene*." *ELH* 55, no. 3 (Fall 1988): 555-73.

Elizabeth's body "literally provides the text of book III of *The Faerie Queene*." Book III is "a series of refigurations of Elizabeth," who is not mentioned after the proem. Belphoebe is a "multiplication" of Elizabeth, accounting for the "bewildering narrative complexity" of the book. Spenser's depiction of chastity, moreover, directly challenges contemporary demands on the queen to marry: the queen's

chastity, and its fictional representation in *The Faerie Queene*, "subverts the political requirements of monarchy to reproduce itself." Spenser's Legend of Chastity "functions as a displacement of [Tudor anxiety about the succession] . . . and . . . to displace the anxiety of royal legitimacy and issue from the person of the queen, Spenser must also displace the queen herself; he must constitute the queen as absence, refigured in the infinity of his allegorical 'mirrours'." (K.F.)

89.35 Cheney, Patrick. "'And Doubted Her to Deeme an Earthly Wight': Male Neoplatonic 'Magic' and the Problem of Female Identity in Spenser's Allegory of the Two Florimells." *SP* 86, no. 3 (Summer 1989): 310-40.

In identifying the true and false Florimells with true, spiritual beauty and false, physical beauty, scholars lapse into the very habit of Neoplatonic depersonalization of women that Spenser sets out to criticize in books III and IV of *The Faerie Queene*. Such morally diverse characters as the Foster and Arthur, Guyon and the fisherman, and Timias and the witch's son perceive Florimell not as a woman but as an abstraction, as "beauty." This Platonic idea, an illusory product of the male imagination, never quite conceals an underlying Ovidian lust. The effect on Florimell of such bad male magic is to cause her to doubt her own love and sexuality, to fear that like the shapes Proteus assumes in descending from God to knight to centaur to primal storm, her love is in essence brutal and impersonal. Only her beloved Marinell can free her from this fear, by showing her the possibility of combining sexual desire and personal love in marriage. As in Britomart's ascent from loving the image of Artegall to loving the actual man -- an ascent prompted by Merlin's good magic -- Florimell and Marinell reject the false chastity offered by Neoplatonic illusion. By contrast, the witch, whose language upon her first encountering Florimell suggests a good education in Neoplatonism and Petrarchan idolatry, conjures up the false Florimell as an image of worship for her son when the genuine item is no longer available as the object of his contemplation and lust. (Anthony M. Esolen)

89.36 Crane, Mary Thomas. "'Video et Taceo': Elizabeth I and the Rhetoric of Counsel." *SEL* 28, no. 1 (Winter 1988): 1-15.

Recent criticism has provided valuable analyses of the "complex Petrarchan and pastoral paradigms" which Elizabeth and her courtier-poets used "as sources for mediating symbols through which they both asserted power and mystified its origins" in the queen. But such analyses focus only on male versions (past and modern) of Elizabeth; consequently, we see only Elizabeth's "'feminized' roles, the magical, seemingly powerless personae she assumed in order to mask her power and which her male subjects employed in order to manage the idea of a powerful woman." We should consider, instead, Elizabeth's own self-representation, through her choice of personal mottoes, those Latin tags which asserted Elizabeth's self-fashioned persona. The pastoral version of the queen contains late sixteenth-century anxieties over the "regiment of women"; Elizabeth's own mottoes, though seemingly more private spaces, restage the same tensions, anxieties, and problematics of Elizabeth's status. Two mottoes, *semper eadem* and *video et taceo*, are especially important. The first (always the same) ironically comments on the various poses Elizabeth needed to adopt; the second (I see and I am silent) "displays the delicate balancing

act between assertion and abnegation of authority upon which Elizabeth relied." Elizabeth's *video* indicates her intention to see for herself, to make her own decisions; *taceo* affirms Elizabeth's submission to the "silence thought suitable for a woman."

The opposition of *video* to *taceo*, however, does not negate Elizabeth's authority but rather increases it: the queen "used the tropes of counsel to exploit one aspect of that system against itself . . .," allowing her to "employ apparent complicity with patriarchy to mask stubborn resistance to it." Elizabeth's use of Latin mottoes is itself subversive. Humanist training provided men with classical sententiae, the vocabulary of political counsel with which to advise governors. By appropriating a male discourse denied to women, Elizabeth breaks "womanly silence." Throughout her reign, Elizabeth was careful to preserve the appearance of passivity, of her need to be counselled. Her appointment of William Cecil, paragon of "humanist statesman-advisor," affirms her obedient role. But "in practice," Elizabeth did not allow Cecil "to approach her as an authoritative advisor." In correspondence with other rulers, Elizabeth fully asserts her power. Letters to James and Edward VI make clear Elizabeth's fluent ability to prove that she has power to advise others. Always, however, in her statements to her subjects, she tempers her authority with submissive gestures.

Pastoral versions of Elizabeth "froze her in a static pose; humanist rhetoric" bestowed "a wide array of stances," giving the queen "a way to express her relation to actual decision-making . . . ." Like pastoral, rhetoric does not represent Elizabeth's "true opinion of herself," but rather provides the queen with "strategic maneuvers within the complex system of counsel." (K.F.)

89.37 Goldberg, Jonathan. "Colin to Hobbinol: Spenser's Familiar Letters." *SAQ* 88, no. 1 (Winter 1989): 107-26.

Spenser's adaptation in "Januarye" of Vergil's second eclogue (his mirroring of Corydon's frustrated desire for the boy Alexis in both Hobbinol's unrequited love for Colin and Colin's unrequited love for Rosalind), when interpreted alongside E. K.'s attempt to whisk away any hint that Hobbinol's love may be "disorderly," that is, pederastic, offers "a way to read the (no) place of homosexuality in Renaissance culture." This (no) place depends for its (non) existence upon the failure of the Renaissance to demarcate a binary relationship between homosexual and heterosexual, or even between the individual and his society; strictly speaking, there could not have been homosexuals in Renaissance England. Homosexuality is an "open secret," like the easy but ultimately slippery identification of Hobbinol and G. H. with Harvey, and of Colin and Immerito with Spenser (Harvey's admitted bedfellow at Cambridge). In the published letters, Immerito's acceptance of G. H.'s love reverses and mirrors Colin's rejection of Hobbinol.

Colin, the ambitious shepherd attempting to venture out of his pastoral rusticity into the neighboring town, fails, his failure figured by the ever-defeated male friend. By contrast, in the letters, the misogynistic G. H. and the lovestruck Immerito, by their frank admission of love for each other and their discussion of how to curry favor with the great, extend the problem posed by Vergil's eclogue: the

impossibility of love between *unequals*, that is, between members of different classes. They recognize that the trick is to learn how to place the boy/secretary to men of power. As Spenser makes his way into the "real," political world, he leaves that special friend Harvey behind (even as he has used him as an initial point of reconnaissance) with his bag of unappreciated cracknels, those rhetorical, humanist tricks that failed to move him from the margin of Elizabethan political life. (A.M.E)

89.38 Leggatt, Alexander. "Embarrassment in *The Faerie Queene*." *EIC* 38, no. 2 (April 1988): 114-30.

Throughout *The Faerie Queene* Spenser uses embarrassing situations as the means of forcing his virtuous knights, and his would-be gentleman readers, to confront their own vulnerable humanity. In books V and VI, for example, we come to expect perfection of Artegall and Calidore and then feel embarrassed for them as they move from solving easy casebook problems to grappling with the impure, more problematical world of everyday life. Artegall falls victim to Radigund, the first non-abstraction he has had to face; the stern knight of justice finds himself, along with many other heroes all in a row, dressed in women's clothing and plying his distaff to earn his keep. Calidore, meanwhile, is an obvious misfit in Melibee's pastoral haven, and everything he does there, including even his courtship of Pastorella, is tactless and embarrassing. Paradoxically, but in keeping with Spenser's Christianity, Artegall and Calidore -- as to some extent all the virtuous knights in the poem -- achieve whatever victory they can only after they come to recognize their ordinariness, their simple human weaknesses. (A.M.E)

89.39 Prescott, Anne Lake. "Spenser's Chivalric Restoration: From Bateman's *Travayled Pylgrime* to the Redcrosse Knight." *SP* 86, no. 2 (Spring 1989): 166-97.

"'*The Travayled Pylgrime*' (1596), a chivalric pilgrimage allegory by Archbishop Matthew Parker's protege and librarian, Stephen Bateman, helps us to see what Spenser's "legend of Holiness looks like if set not against Italian or medieval romance, not against classical epic, but against another Protestant allegory of knightly quest and dynastic celebration, one also troubled by the temptations of imagined sights and the risks of repose." The *Pylgrime*, which reworks "Olivier de La Marche's nostalgic 1483 allegory, *Le Chevalier delibere*," is a "Book of Holiness narrated by a victim of Mutability." Bateman incorporates in it "his own centrist Protestantism, mild anxiety about the dangers of repose and visual distractions, suspicion of history and glory, gratitude to the Tudors, and a tendency to interiorize and individualize forces that La Marche found out there in history, language, or the place abstract nouns come from."

The *Pylgrime* exhibits these effects through a narrative sequence that, like Spenser's, "follow[s] a knight from error to pride to despair to recuperative education and a final battle." The narrative often includes scenes that are comparable to major episodes of *The Faerie Queene* Book I. Bateman's "palace of disordered livers," for instance, compares in many details to Lucifera's House of Pride. "'Bedect' with gold 'like Titans gilding beames' and 'heaven Imperiall,' the place challenges the skies like Lucifera's brilliance that 'shone as Titans ray, / In

glistring gold' (iv.8)." Bateman's "Pilgrim's 'eyes were dim with looking on,' just as Lucifera can 'dim' her throne and 'all mens eyes amaze' (iv.8,16). Proud beauties sit "on high, spatially placed only a little lower than Lucifera, or together with their 'champions fierce and fell' they go 'ruffeling in their brave attire' like Spenser's courtiers who 'prancke their ruffes' and 'gay attire' (iv.14). Scrutiny of many scenes as similar as these reveals that "[w]hatever his Sabbath longings and his own fear of Archimago, Spenser was surer than this earlier Protestant allegorist that the artist may by indirections find directions out." (D.J.G.)

89.40 Purdon, Liam O. "A Reconsideration of the Ass Image in Book I of *The Faerie Queene*." *ELN* 26, no. 1 (September 1988): 18-21.

In addition to the ideas critics have long associated with it -- humility, spiritual blindness, the ministry, and so forth -- Una's ass symbolizes the flesh, and its worship by the satyrs suggests the slothful love of carnal delight as an end in itself. (A.M.E)

89.41 Rooks, John. "Art, Audience, and Performance in the Bower of Bliss." *MLS* 28, no. 2 (Spring 1988): 23-36.

The musical stanza in the Bower episode does not represent, as John Hollander insists, a grotesque and ominous mingling of incoherent instruments and musical genres, but a delicately tasteful concert. Renaissance composers (Praetorius, for example) allowed a good deal of freedom in combining indoor with outdoor music and in devising appropriate ensembles of instruments that might not normally be thought of as congruous. Moreover, literary convention from medieval courtly love poetry shows Spenser to be restrained and conservative by comparison, as such poetry usually celebrates the court of Venus or some other paradise by regaling the reader with all manner of natural and artificial music blaring away at once. Likewise, scrutiny of the other works of art in the Bower -- the golden grapes, the ivy, and the fountain -- reveal nothing morally or aesthetically suspect. Spenser's purpose is to comment upon courtly love and its extremely difficult channeling of sexual desire. Such love is, like the musical stanza, beautiful and good, but few are they who can exercise the required self-control to engage in it. Most would prefer to gather the roses of excess and listen to the vulgar, ridiculous band that accompanies Acrasia's lovemaking. (A.M.E)

89.42 Turner, Myron. a "The Imagery of Spenser's *Amoretti*." *Neophil* 72, no. 2 (April 1988): 284-99.

In the *Amoretti* Spenser uses images of hunger and fulfillment, restlessness and rest, wildness and domesticity, and mutability and constancy in order to dramatize the love between a man who fears change but who sees that it is a prerequisite for self-transcendence, and a woman who makes too great a virtue of her own stoic self-assurance. The woman's stony refusal to allow the speaker anything but Platonic contemplation of her beauty causes in him a restlessness and hunger only momentarily satisfied at the point of ecstasy; even when his thoughts feed on her ideal beauty, the speaker longs for the bower of his love's body. A compromise between the wildness of unsatisfied desire and the woman's self-

enclosure is broached by images of domesticated animals, especially that of the caged bird, whose new captivity allows him to fill the world with songs in praise of his love. Both the speaker and the woman, Spenser shows, must free themselves from the old, sinful captivity (in his case, base thoughts; in hers, pride) in order to assume the sort of liberating captivity taught to human beings by Christ's loving sacrifice and figured beautifully in Christian matrimony. (A.M.E.)

89.43 West, Michael. "Spenser's Art of War: Chivalric Allegory, Military Technology, and the Elizabethan Mock-Heroic Sensibility." *RenQ* 41, no. 4 (Winter 1988): 654-704.

Although his spokesman in the *Vewe of the Present State of Ireland* appears to be "a tough-minded observer of military affairs," Spenser may actually have been "an armchair tactician." In discussing Irish warriors' horsemanship, Spenser's spokesman Irenius "naively ignores the military function of the stirrup, which enables a knight to couch his lance under-arm and brace to absorb an enemy's impact." Moreover, Spenser's "nostalgia for the mounted knight obliquely reflects the essential backwardness of Elizabethan armies, among the last in Europe to abandon the lance." The methods and equipment that made English mounted troops overwhelming against the Irish "would have proved grotesquely out of place in the increasingly mathematical siege warfare" that became the norm, between 1534 and 1631, on the Continent.

In single combats dramatized in *The Faerie Queene*, touches of realism occur, but they are often "severely strained." In describing Calidore's rescue of Serena (*FQ* VI.xi), "Spenser seems unaware" that "troups" of enemies could easily subdue a single knight fighting on foot, or that Calidore could not hide his armor under "shepheards weeds" (VI.xi.36) without being betrayed "by an audible clank or two" or being exhausted by its weight. Similarly, Arthur's battle with Maleger and his troops (*FQ* II.xi) displays some awareness of the realities of the guerilla warfare occurring in Ireland, but some "military aspects of this episode are more bizarre." They lack, for example, "any sense of the need for military teamwork when facing multiple enemies." Likewise, Arthur implausibly issues from the front gate of Alma's castle, when "[a]ny good tactician would sally from 'the back-gate,'" and upon his appearance, "Maleger's forces," with similar implausibility, given the realities of contemporary siege warfare, "make no effort to rush the gate but concentrate upon Arthur." Other such absurdities include the puzzling grapples on the Soldan's chariot (V.viii.28); they appear there because Spenser "took" the "grotesque" fanstasies of contemporary military publications "to be descriptions of actual weapons." We must admit that there is "more unconscious self-parody in the poem than" critics so far have been willing to notice. (D.J.G.)

89.44 Wofford, Susanne Lindgren. "Gendering Allegory: Spenser's Bold Reader and the Emergence of Character in *The Faerie Queene III*." *Criticism* 30, no. 1 (Winter 1988): 1-22.

Book III concerns "the conflict created in the text by the gendered symbolization of male and female perspectives as two modes of writing." A tension exists within Spenserian characters -- the "gap between a character's fictional role

and his or her symbolic or allegorical function." In the androgynous figure of Britomart, the "dialectic between character and figure . . . shows how this dialectic opens a space within the fictionalized male power for an alternative, female authority." Significantly, the proem to Book III expresses male anxieties about the representation of the female; the narrator's later sympathies for Timias (a figure for Raleigh) "exposes his own difficulties with desire. His identification as male works against his role as allegorist by undermining the stability of the meanings he can propose for an action in which he himself is implicated."

In contrast, Britomart emerges as a "figure for the reader": "her processes of self-discovery and emotional growth are linked to the reader's methods of coming to understand the poem." In the House of Busyrane episode -- a "textual space" -- Britomart must interpret contradictory messages and misogynistic allegories. When Britomart overcomes Busyrane's "magic letters, written in blood . . . to transform women . . . into allegorical figures," Spenser underscores the limits and dangers of allegory, his own poetic method. Spenser's "self-interrogation . . . looks at Busyrane's art from the point of view of a woman and condemns it." The conflict between male and female modes of reading and writing, however, destabilizes Spenser's text (culminating in the differences between the endings of the 1590 and the 1596 *Faerie Queene*, Book III). Britomart's victory over Busyrane's allegories challenges, in turn, Spenser's own poetics of figure and character. "Britomart's wholeness as a reader, and by extension our own, is gained at the expense of a coherent allegorical and ideological structure within which she herself is a signifier." (K.F.)

SPENSER AT KALAMAZOO, 1989

This year's program was organized by Margaret Hannay (Siena College, Chair), Jerome Dees (Kansas State University), William Oram (Smith College), Anne Lake Prescott (Barnard College) and Robert Stillman (University of Tennessee, Knoxville). Roger Kuin (York University) briefly welcomed conference participants by noting that since opening remarks are seldom well noted or long remembered we should proceed to the important business at hand -- the papers, comments, and discussion.

Session I, *Courting on Margins or Figuring Belles*, was chaired by Michael L. Donnelly (Kansas State University). Its three papers, each drawing in part upon assumptions and strategies made available by the new historicism, its scheduled response, and a brisk ensuing discussion, provoked something approximating a consensus that in Book VI Spenser is wrestling mightily with a poem "in deep trouble."

89.45 In "The Courtly Figure: Spenser's Anatomy of Allegory," Jacqueline T. Miller (Rutgers University) argued that Calidore "functions as an incarnation of the figure of allegory." Through the adventures of "this dubious hero," Spenser "enacts an anatomy of his own allegory in *The Faerie Queene*, critiquing the rhetorical strategies that his 'dark conceit' embodies, and exposing its complicity in the discourse of power exemplified in 'the courtly figure.'" By "penetrating to the

equivocal core of Calidore's characteristic modes . . . exposing just how doubtfully allegories may be, and should be, construed," Spenser shows in the pastoral episode of Cantos ix-xii that "what allegory can do . . . is save its own reflection, preserve an image of itself." The Mount Acidale episode presents us with "grave discrepancies and equivocations," and the book at large shows Spenser's own "complicity in the courtly language of dissimulation and indirection."

89.46 Noting how little revision there has been of Humphrey Tonkin's 1972 study of Book VI, Anne Shaver (Denison University) asked in "Rereading Mirabella" why Spenser treats "so severely" this woman who "does no more than several sympathetic figures do." Comparing her "much harsher" punishment with that of the Squire of Dames, observing that her "refusal to love" is not unlike the Red Cross Knight's, placing her story in the context of other tales of "rescuable and forgivable women" in Book VI, and suggesting that "Spenser himself found Mirabella's crime unforgivable," Shaver wondered whether Mirabella might not embody Spenser's "response to the unfair power and unnatural independence" of Elizabeth and, from that perspective, whether she might not be "the strongest . . . independent woman in Faerie land, a whipping girl for untouchable royalty?"

89.47 The primary concern of John Webster (University of Washington) in "Making Margins Centers: Spenser's Book VI as a Document of Power" was with the limitations of poetic power to serve effectively a Ciceronian humanist ideology. Finding that the poem's structures can have meaning only if its readers make inferences to complete them, and that those meanings must therefore be provisional, he articulated two important ways in which the poem's power is "finally limited, and perhaps even incompatible with political action at all": first, "the poem's essential openness to interpretation breeds in its readers an interpretive resistance to formulating the sort of propositional discourse that action ordinarily requires"; second, as the Mount Acidale episode reveals, any poet's power is ultimately "a passive one," dependent on "a reader's willingness to give and to submit." He concluded that "even in a Book that set out to define a political poetics, the logic of his poetic vision simply overwhelms his poetic program."

89.48 In "Response: Courteous Exchange," Donald Cheney (University of Massachusetts, Amherst) found that Spenser's concern was "with a conflict between public and private sectors, and with the voodoo economics that fails to paper over that conflict." He noted the book's tendency to "treat revelation as dangerous, even shameful," and to "move away from the apocalyptic mode to is opposite," which he proposed calling the "eucalyptic." He suggested that the function of courtesy is to "cover up what is unseemly, to euphemize and dissimulate." He found in Pastorella's restoration to her home "perhaps" a figure for Rosalind, with Mirabella being a "false Rosalind, a mirror of self-regarding beauty," whose appearance in canto viii, where typically Arthur bestows grace, "demonstrates how the concept of grace has been transformed in this book of courtesy."

89.49 Bill Oram's question, "Why should Mirabella's life depend on the continuance of Disdaine's life?" sparked a lively debate which, though centered largely on that episode, touched on other issues. Anne Prescott suggested that Disdaine is similar to the Old French *Daunger*, an early version of "Just say no." For

Elizabeth Bieman he represents "Spenser's wry recognition of exactly what woman's position is in society." Oram again: "society's sanctions, a necessary evil?" Donald Stump: "internal punishments" (suggesting a close parallel with Phedon in Book II). Jacqueline Miller: "Mirabella's own disdain for her society."

John Webster, noting how the scene is divided so as to frame the Serena episode, observed that the ambiguity which prompted the foregoing disagreement fits the general "opaqueness" of Book VI. Linda Gregerson suggested that Serena represents the containment of the male gaze and that what is at issue in Mirabella's case is her "capacity to act." Elizabeth Watson demurred: "Mirabella is caught in a vicious circle which she imposes on herself." Gordon Coggin broadened the focus to include the other two papers, inquiring about the tone of the scene between Pastorella and the Brigand Captain, to which Don Cheney replied, pursuing his economic metaphor, "the Captain is a middle man." Anne Shaver allowed that Pastorella "reforms the Captain, ennobles him"; to this Oram replied, with an eye to Webster's paper, that with the Brigands Calidore "does something useful," and Miller added that Calidore's "brand of expediency" does in fact "work in the world."

The three speakers and two respondents who comprised the earlier of two Saturday afternoon programs, *Reading the Romans or Taking Wing*, were introduced by D'Orsay Pearson (University of Akron).

89.50 In "The Warbling Pipe: The Bird as Orphic Emblem in *The Shepheardes Calender*," Patrick Cheney (Pennsylvania State University) used bird emblems to propose an "alternative to the two competing views of Colin's transcendence at the end of the Calender." His argument was that bird emblems correspond to a double process whereby Colin becomes "the perfecte paterne of a poete": a four-stage "experiential process" (original identity, fall, transcendence, and incarnation) parallels the "career contour" of pastoral, epic, love lyric, and divine poem, outlined in the October Eclogue and predictive of Spenser's own career. James H. Morey (Cornell University), insisted in "Spenser's Mythic Adaptations in *Muiopotmos*" that Chaucer's *Book of the Duchess* provides the poem its structural model. In *Muiopotmos*, Spenser does not borrow directly (as he did in *Daphnaida*), but employs the Chaucerian technique of "adapting classical materials in a [diptych] structure." Spenser's changes in his Ovidian mythic materials highlight his thematic concerns: "Aragnoll is another Arachne . . . Clarion is another Astery . . . . This is another poem about human envy and the consequences thereof."

In responding, Thomas M. Cain (McMaster University) found Cheney's four-stage scheme "ingeniously observed, but unlikely as a model for any career Spenser might have had in mind," since it would mean that Spenser would be looking forward to "a far-off infidelity" at the time when (we think) he was marrying Machabyas Child; furthermore, to posit the writing of love poetry as a stage beyond epic goes counter to the Renaissance view that such poetry is adolescent. Cain found Morey's paper "persuasive," but wished for some broader recognition of "the almost obsessive concern with envy in the Spenser canon." Providing such a context would give Morey's conclusions "a relevance they don't have as stated."

89.51 The argument of Anthony DiMatteo (New York Institute of Technology) in "Thinking in Images: Spenser's Concept of Chastity and the Renaissance Virgil" was that Spenser creates a "new range of meaning" for his "quotation" of the Venus-virgo figure from *Aeneid* I in the April Eclogue and in *The Faerie Queene* III.v and vii. Situating Spenser's use of this figure within the context of various interpretations accreted in medieval and Renaissance Virgilian commentary, he found it largely "decorous" in "April," but "darker and more problematic" in the two passages in Book III: there it implies a concept of chastity which is not an "abstraction or an abstruse ideal, but a moral dimension of life that derives from our attitudes towards our own birth and the dark nurturing place from which we enter the world." In the absence of the scheduled respondent, Christopher Baswell (Barnard College), Anne Lake Prescott summarized portions of his written response, which first insisted on the "dividedness" -- between politics and erotics -- of the "many Virgilianisms" that Spenser inherited, and then traced some implications of Spenser's use of the Venus-virgo figure in the careers of Paridell and Britomart: "Paridell will disappear into an endless if unreported repetition of the Dido episode, while the female knight will continue her Aenean quest for a predestined consort and empire."

89.52 Following Carol Kaske's observation that DiMatteo had omitted discussion of two other "O dea certe" passages, including the most obvious example of Trompart and Belphoebe (Bill Sessions later suggested that this is the only "true" imitation of that Virgilian passage in the poem, all the others being "suspect") most of the discussion was directed at Cheney's paper. Asked to respond to Tom Cain's criticisms, Cheney reiterated his fourfold process by reading from "October." William Oram suggested that the passage does not propose a sequence, but rather alternatives. Someone asked "What about georgic," to which Cheney replied that georgic is covered by both pastoral and epic. Tom Roche advised associating georgic with *Complaints*. Elizabeth Bieman doubted that the first of the *Fowre Hymnes* should be called "divine poetry."

Ann Baynes Coiro of Rutgers University presided over the second Saturday afternoon session, *Keeping One's Temper Or Refusing to Read*, limited to two papers and responses because of the absence of one of the scheduled speakers, Michael O'Neill (University of Connecticut).

89.53 In "Malbecco and the Failures of Reading," Linda Gregerson (University of Michigan) yoked an Augustinian discourse of enjoyment and use to a Burkean rhetoric of exchange to interpret Malbecco's follies as a cautionary parable of the consequences of misprising signifier for signified, sign for referent. For Gregerson, Malbecco is a reader without skill, who "stifles the internal distance that governs the nature of signs, that makes money a sign of value and a medium of trade, that makes eros a sign of heavenly longing and medium of personal reformation," while his wife and her lover are "classic examples of the dangerous rhetorician . . . bound by no devotion to truth." Within this paradigm, Britomart is really a knight of Augustinian Charity, whose love is a "correct reading" conjoining like and unlike. John Bernard (University of Houston) responded by situating both O'Neill's unheard paper, "Guyon's Critical Eye," and Gregerson's heard paper within a "trend in recent Spenserian criticism" which "shifts the center of gravity away from traditional interpretive issues toward the act of interpretation itself." He applauded the "supple

materiality of Gregerson's grasp of Spenser's language," while at the same time he questioned "her confusing Augustinian with capitalist modes of appropriation." To her claim that Malbecco "disposed of [Hellenore] like property," he rejoined that the old man's "application to Hellenore of the kind of courtly exchange exhibited by the knights in circulating the 'image of the court'" would seem to be "simply another, *different* disposition."

89.54 In "Continence and Temperance in Book III of *The Faerie Queene*," Richard Malette (Millsaps College) adduced some Protestant theories of marriage to explicate Britomart's complaint at the seashore in canto iv, arguing that Britomart "becomes a model for two kinds of continence: Protestant chastity, which most often finds its fulfillment in marriage, and Spenserian temperance." Books II and III are thus not really discontinuous. Standing between Marinell's "unnatural and unhealthy continence" and Timias's "redemption into continence from the forces of lust," Britomart is like Arthur, whose complaint to Night, coming between the two episodes, shows a "hopeful spirit, purposeful suffering, and certain remedy." William A. Sessions (Georgia State University) took issue with Malette's reading of the two complaints, contending that they indicate a world of difference between "the female knight and the monologic Guyon." In the indeterminate world of Book III, "represented by a restless ocean and an enveloping black night, marriage may not resolve the 'threat of sexual incontinence' any more than celibacy." Sessions suggested that Giuliano de' Medici's defense of women in Book III of *The Courtier* offers a more apt context than does Protestant marriage theory for comprehending Spenser's notions about the two terms.

89.55 The question period began with Paul Alpers asking Gregerson to respond to Bernard's criticism that her Burkean and Augustinian models are at odds. Tom Roche applauded the "boldness" of her use of Augustinian theory, claiming that far from being a problem, it illuminates Book III greatly, to which Kent Hieatt added an "amen." Susan Burchmore pointed to the similarity between The Faerie Queene III.x and Shakespeare's Merchant of Venice, which examines the same matrices of love, money, and spirit. Carol Kaske asked for a comment on Paridell's "sacrament prophane in mistery of wine," to which Gregerson replied that both Paridell and Hellenore are "bad readers." Richard Neuse sought to connect the two papers by observing that the Malbecco episode is a critique of the institution of marriage. Jon Quitslund added that Spenser saw clearly how marriage might readily break down into jealousy and wondered if he was "anxious." Kent Hieatt called attention to parallels between Malbecco and Mirabella. Gregerson questioned Malette's reading of Arthur's lament, which she finds "grotesquely comic."

The third annual *Kathleen Williams Lecture on Spenser and His Age* was delivered by Paul Alpers (University of California, Berkeley) in a rare Sunday morning session. Alpers and his commentator, Judith Anderson (Indiana University), were introduced by William Oram (Smith College).

89.56 Alpers' argument in "Spenser's Late Pastorals" -- meaning the final cantos of Book VI -- was that they were conceived as "alternatives" to heroic poetry. His controlling assumption was that "by giving each [i.e., Melibee and Colin Clout] his own domain, by involving the hero in a significant encounter with each, and by

making these two encounters central to separate cantos of the poem, Spenser indicates that they have equivalent claims on the reader's attention." Each, deriving from a standard figure in Renaissance eclogues, is "an admirable, even elevated, example of the type." Noting that Melibee's "rejection of the court and return to the country offer a challenging version of the choice Calidore claims to want to make," just as Colin Clout "holds out to the hero an alternative attitude and role," Alpers asked: "How can the courtier-hero, who is a surrogate for the reader and the poet, take these alternatives seriously?"

The answer lies, in part, in our recognizing how Book VI differs from other books: Calidore is more fully motivated as a character, and the significance of the vision of the graces is not a matter of "allegorical narration," as in former books, but of the speech of Colin Clout. "Colin's speech about the Graces is prompted by a loss, and its function is to restore what has been lost"; in this respect it is "genuine pastoral discourse," emerging from a world of mutually dependent human beings. Moreover, at this point the poet's voice merges with Colin's in a way that tells us something about the "problems of heroic narration at the end of the poem." Between the publication of the first and second installments of *The Faerie Queene*, Spenser wrote in "large lyric forms" which comprise an "alternative body of major poetry" and which indicate that authoritative poetry might lie outside heroic narration. Both pastoral spokesmen in Book VI offer "firm alternatives to life at court" to a Calidore whose problem is precisely whether he should return to that life. And furthermore, Alpers argued, Spenser shares that dilemma. "Fully aware of the trials and discontents of the court, he imagines a world elsewhere and a different style of life in it. But he can only represent this alternative in forms that speak to the world from which he means to separate himself." His return to that world, like his knight's, is compromised.

89.57 The response of Judith Anderson (Indiana University) highlighted two theoretical differences from Alpers: for her, pastoral is basically *landscape*, whereas for Alpers it is *people*; and whereas for Alpers Book VI represents Spenser's customary mode of "allegorical narration," for her it does not. She found Spenser's late pastorals "more problematic than simply authoritative, and his lyric domain more seriously troubled." By focusing exclusively on the pastoral cantos, Alpers ignores "large themes and patterns already established." To include a familiar form in a book which is "fundamentally *about* words, *about* interpretation, *about* poetic forms," is to submit that form's authority to assessment, something that Alpers failed to do in the case of Melibee. The heart of their disagreement, however, lay in their different understanding of Book VI's allegorical narrative. She felt that Alpers was trying to deny that its lyric moments are "embedded in narrative." Concentrating then on Melibee, whose literary ancestry Alpers circumscribed too narrowly, she claimed that Melibee's praise of the pastoral landscape "blurs the mind's domain . . . with the world's, and his mistake highlights the division of mind and world that has been an urgent pressure in the poem since the outset of Book VI." Claiming that "landscape in Book VI is not simply neutral or innocent; it comes charged with meaning," she argued that Melibee's actions within that landscape "suggest his vulnerability, his imprudence, his willful misperception of related dimensions of meaning."

89.58 To Bill Oram's question, "How much does Calidore learn and does it do him any good?" Alpers answered that the question misses the point in that it simplifies what Calidore is experiencing, while Anderson claimed that the question is improperly asked because Calidore is not a "character," but rather an allegorical carrier of meaning. John Webster then asked Alpers to respond to Anderson's criticism, to which he replied: (1) one certainly *may* isolate specific cantos and concentrate on them, and (2) Anderson failed to treat Melibee and Colin equally, as he was trying to do; however, (3) he "does agree" with Anderson's larger contextualizing. Alpers then related his own paper to the three in Session 1, all of which, he said, show the poem to be in deep trouble. Anderson insisted that we should see more "coherence" in Book VI than Alpers finds there. Jacqueline Miller then asked the speakers to comment on Book VI's Hermit, to which Alpers responded that he is a "careless bird in a cage," who displays "freedom without constraint," but whose advice to "just turn away" is, nevertheless, "very troubling." Tom Cain suggested that Melibee's view of the world is "naive." And, in the final comment of Kalamazoo 1989, Anderson disagreed with Alpers about Colin: he is not a "Virgilian woodland poet."

Jerome Dees
Kansas State University

ANNOUNCEMENTS

89.59 Professor J. C. Gray (University of Waterloo) writes to bring to the attention of Spenserians who might have missed the event that:

Edmund Spenser has recently been knighted. . . . If Spenserians have been enjoying the intense Spenserian ambience in David Lodge's *Small World* (1984), then they know how much Book II influenced that novel. And they also know that British Airways Information desks at Heathrow now stock copies of *The Faerie Queene*.

If Spenserians inquire for a copy, they must be careful to specify *The Faerie Queene* by Sir Edmund Spenser. The clerks may not know who is meant if one asks only for plain Edmund Spenser. At the bottom of p. 256 of the Penguin edition of Lodge's novel, the hero asks a bookstall clerk at Heathrow for a copy of *The Faerie Queene* by Sir Edmund Spenser! . . . Although the bookstall doesn't have a copy, the British Information Airways desk has one under the counter. Comforting to know that Faerie has extended into this century and that the Prince of Poets of his Tyme has finally been knighted. Perhaps it's his connection with the Spencers of Althorp and thus the Princess of Wales.

89.60 Professor Thomas P. Roche, Jr., has sent word that he will again be offering an NEH sponsored summer seminar that is likely to interest Spenserians. This seminar for college teachers is titled *Narrative and Dramatic Romance: Sidney and Shakespeare.* It will occur at Princeton University, 24 June - August 18, 1990. The description reads as follows:

A study of Sidney's Old and New *Arcadia* in relation to the late romances of Shakespeare: *Pericles*, *Cymbeline*, *The Winter's Tale*, and *The Tempest*. Special attention will be paid to the differences of romance techniques in narrative and drama by examining Shakespeare's prose sources for his plays. Earlier examples of prose romance: Heliodorus, *Aethiopica*, Sannazaro's *Arcadia*, and Montemayor's *Diana*, will be read to show the heritage of Sidney's brilliant achievement. Current critical approaches to these texts will be examined. For more information write Professor Thomas P. Roche, Jr., Department of English, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ 08544.

89.61 The National Endowment for the Humanities has written to remind our readers that the application deadline for summer seminars is March 1, 1990. In addition to Professor Roche's, NEH also notes two other seminars that will interest Renaissance scholars.

Professor Annabel M. Patterson (Literature Program, Duke University, Durham, NC 27706) will teach a seminar at Bread Loaf School, Middlebury, Vermont, July 2 - August 10, 1990. This seminar, titled *The Theory and Practice of Cultural History: Shakespeare*, is described as follows:

The seminar will consider the plays of Shakespeare as extremely sensitive instruments for recording and mediating, to a large mixed audience, all the important issues and occurrences of the last decade of Elizabeth's reign and the first years under James I. Rather than a seminar on the theory of historicizing literature, it will be an opportunity for historical work on some of the most central literary texts. After a survey of current thought and scholarship on the Elizabethan and Jacobean theater and its audience and a summary of contemporary theories of culture, the seminar will devote a meeting each to ten plays, with sessions also devoted to broader issues involving a range of plays (possibly including other dramatists). Topics may include the rise of the Puritan critique, the Essex rebellion, official control and censorship of theater and other media, the status of women, legal theory, historiography, and the emergence of Parliament as a significant voice in the nation-state. The seminar is intended for teachers and scholars of literature and history.

NEH has also announced that Professor John N. King will teach a summer seminar titled *The Protestant Imagination: From Tyndale to Milton*. John's description reads as follows:

NEH Summer Seminar for College Teachers: Applications are invited for a seminar on "The Protestant Imagination: From Tyndale to Milton." Marlowe, Shakespeare, Spenser, Donne, Herbert, and Milton are among the authors whose writings may be considered within their immediate religious, historical, political, and social context. Applications are welcome from teachers and scholars who specialize in English Renaissance literature and from historians of British religion, society, politics, and art. Faculty in departments with PhD programs are not eligible. This eight-week seminar will meet at The Ohio State University from June 18 to August 10, 1990. Participants will receive stipends of $3,500. The deadline for application is *March 1*. For further information, write to: Professor John N. King, Department of English --

NEH Seminar, The Ohio State University, 421 Denney, 164 West 17th Avenue, Columbus, OH 43210-1370.

89.62 CALL FOR PAPERS. The Conference on Christianity and Literature invites the submission of papers for their annual Midwest meeting, to be held September 28-29, 1990, at Grand Valley State University, Grand Rapids, Michigan. Both the Conference organizers, Professors Rita Verbrugge and Ben Lockerd, are Spenserians; their announcement reads as follows:

In honor of the 400th anniversary of the publication of Edmund Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, we especially invite papers on Spenser. More generally, the conference will address the entire epic tradition in relation to Christianity. Papers are invited on any of the epic poets, from Homer and Virgil to T. S. Eliot and David Jones. Papers on other topics related to Christianity and Literature are also invited. Proposals (2-3 pages) should be submitted by February 1, 1990. Address inquiries and proposals to Dr. Rita Verbrugge or Dr. Ben Lockerd, Department of English, Grand Valley State University, Allendale, MI 49401.

89.63 SPENSER AT MLA, 1989. The following programs have been arranged for the annual MLA convention, to be held in Washington, DC, December 27-30, 1989.

The Spenser Society will sponsor two sessions, as well as the customary (and much-looked-forward-to) collation, this year a brunch. *Later Spenser: England's Arch-Poet in Elizabeth's Last Decade*, presided over by David Lee Miller (University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa), will be held in the Sheraton's Colorado room, December 29, 1:45-3:00 PM. There will be three papers, by Dorothy Stephens (University of California, Berkeley), Linda Gregerson (University of Michigan, Ann Arbor), and Gordon Tesky (Cornell University).

The annual Spenser Society luncheon will NOT be held at 1 PM, December 29. See above, item 89.26. At the brunch that has had to replace our luncheon, S. K. Heninger, Jr., University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, will preside. The speaker at this occasion will be Elizabeth Bieman, University of Western Ontario. For reservations, send $23.50 to John C. Ulreich, Jr., Department of English, University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ 85721, by December 10.

At 10:15-11:30 AM, December 30, in the Wisconsin room at the Sheraton, S. K. Heninger, Jr. will preside at the Spenser Society Open Session. Sheila T. Cavanagh (Emory University), John C. Ulreich, Jr. (University of Arizona), and William J. Kennedy (Cornell University) will present papers.

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