



THE  
*Spenser*  
REVIEW

*Eye's of the world*

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# THE Spenser

REVIEW

Fall 2006 • Volume 37, Number 3

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1 To Our Readers

**Books: Reviews and Notices**

- 2 Andrew Hadfield, *Shakespeare, Spenser and the Matter of Britain*.  
Review by Thomas Herron
- 8 Carol V. Kaske, ed., *The Faerie Queene. Book One*.  
Abraham Stoll, ed. *The Faerie Queene. Book Five*.  
Review by Daniel T. Lochman

- 10 Syrithe Pugh, *Spenser and Ovid*.  
Review by Heather James

- 12 *Spenser Studies: A Renaissance Poetry Annual*.  
Volume XX. Ed. William A. Oram, Anne  
Lake Prescott, Thomas P. Roche, Jr.  
Review by Clare R. Kinney

16 **Articles: Abstracts and Notice**

21 **Abstracts of Conference Activities**

25 **Announcements and Queries**

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TO OUR READERS

37.III

In this issue we offer the delayed abstracts from the 2006 Kalamazoo sessions. We also include details about the forthcoming MLA sessions. Quite a few books and articles on Spenser have appeared lately, so we look forward to getting news to you about those in the near future.



## BOOK REVIEWS AND NOTICES

## 37.II2

Hadfield, Andrew. *Shakespeare, Spenser and the Matter of Britain*. New York, N.Y.: Palgrave MacMillan, 2004. viii + 220 pp. ISBN 0-333-99313-6. \$69.95 cloth.

*Review by Thomas Herron*

The large wave of Spenser-and-Ireland-related studies come crashing on our critical shores at the turn of the millenium has not spent itself, only drawn back to reassert itself in four ways especially. The first is an ongoing debate among historians about how, or even whether, Spenser did indeed "set the agenda" for future colonial action and ideology in Ireland in *The Faerie Queene* and *A Verwe of the Present State of Ireland*, as Nicholas Canny says he did (*cf.* Canny, *Making Ireland British*, c. 2001), or whether he and his Protestant militant friends were a non-influential, if extreme, and an even self-contradictory, unlucky faction. The second debate centers on the extent and purpose of Spenser's co-option of Irish motifs and culture, whether or not Spenser was envious and emulative of native bardic tradition (*cf.* Richard McCabe, *Spenser's Monstrous Regiment*, c. 2001) or whether he denigrated and "ventriloquized" the culture of his adopted land, as imperialists often do (*cf.* Patricia Palmer, *Language and Conquest in Early Modern Ireland*, c. 2001). A third, skeptical faction wonders how much Ireland really influenced any of *FQ's* allegories outside a narrow section of Book V (*cf.* the review of McCabe's book by Richard Helgerson in this journal [34.3]). A fourth, related debate focuses on the role that Spenser played in formulating, reflecting and/or critiquing the nascent ideology of Britain and "Britishness" and the complicated

political threads that compose and undermine it, whether imperial, colonial, monarchical, and/or republican: to what extent does Spenser's work, written mostly in an Irish colonial *milieu*, promote or subvert any of these (*cf.* again Canny, above, and monographs by Willy Maley, Andrew Murphy, David Baker, and Christopher Highley)?

It is on these third and fourth waves of political theory especially that Andrew Hadfield has surfed to acclaim and fruitful controversy, including his first monograph, *Edmund Spenser's Irish Experience*, c. 1997, and a flood of scholarly articles; eight of these are reprinted here along with two originals, copious footnotes, and an Introduction (but no bibliography; the Index, while adequate, fails to distinguish between characters or even works in Spenser's or Shakespeare's *oeuvres*). Hadfield, like his *compagnon de voyage* Maley (*Nation, State and Empire in English Renaissance Literature*, c. 2004) and Clare Carroll (*Circe's Cup*, c. 2002) but without the Irish language, has usefully assembled over ten years' worth of provocative ideas on or related to early modern Britain and Ireland and the role of English- and some Latin-language authors therein. Hadfield is also chief co-editor of the publication series *Early Modern Literature in History*, to which this book belongs. The interdisciplinary Hadfield introduces us to the canonical and the unfamiliar in order to freshly politicize early modern prose and poetry of not only Spenser but also Shakespeare; nonetheless, the greatest strength of this collection, its exciting zig-zagging between a wide range of sources and texts, reveling in contradiction, also proves its greatest weakness, as when a casual or cursory allusion or reflection drowns for lack of

sustaining argument powered by more in-depth research and measured consideration of opposing viewpoints (grammatical mistakes are also a problem, as on pp. 114–15). But Hadfield writes here, one suspects, not for all time but for an age; not a stodgy fact-crammed monolith to burden the groaning shelves of academe but in order to introduce graduate students and other nimble-minded unfortunates to oceans of scholarly activity yet to be reconciled with itself, as well as *terra florida* to be discovered across turbulent Scottish and Irish seas.

Hadfield's basic idea is that things are more contradictory, and difficult, than they may seem, especially to those eager to identify integral and hegemonic discourses of colonialism, imperialism, and/or nationalism. But was this due to true hybridity and ambiguity or pragmatic opportunism? On the one hand, "contemporary discourses based on oppositional distinctions between England and Ireland . . . were employed rhetorically as the occasion suited" (34). On the other, Hadfield is keen in his Introduction to stress the "anxiety" (2, 4, 5, 6; *cf.* 87) felt by authors in such complex and shifting political *milieus* as was early modern "Britain" and so declares in understated terms his allegiance to the post-colonial theorizing of fatefully hybridized nationality and colonial "identity" promulgated by critics such as Homi Babha (cited on 86).

Chapter 1, "Crossing the Borders: Ireland and the Irish Between England and America," in its quick analysis of primarily New English authors, such as Sir John Dowdall, Fynes Moryson, Barnaby Rich, Sir William Herbert, Sir John Davies, John Derricke, the anonymous author of "A Discourse of Ireland" (c. 1599), as well as the New Worlder Sir George Peckham and medieval ur-apologist for Irish conquest, Giraldus Cambrensis, provides

a valuable touchstone or second introduction to self-conflicting colonial discourses that are "complicated and fractured" (25) along ideological and practical lines. The Munster planter Herbert gets the greatest treatment here as a colonial apologist whose plan to peacefully convert and educate the Irish along with ruling them by force is "simultaneously an attempt at rapprochement between Irish and English – but only on English terms—and a desire to destroy and conquer" (20). Hadfield's caveat is typical in that it leaves the reader wondering how far one really should believe in any sympathy for or ironic agency on behalf of the defeated and dispossessed in New English prose and verse, no matter how sophisticated (a question highly relevant to how we read the ethics and purpose of Spenser's poetry).

Hadfield concludes the chapter by arguing that the hyper-vitriolic *Image of Irelande* (c. 1581) by Derricke presents "two different representations of the nature of the Irish [which] compete for hegemony in the mind of the reader" thanks to the "exhortatory force" of shaggy rebel Rory Og O'More's severed head lamenting its own traitorous sins (in English, although Derricke says he speaks in Irish); thus Derricke's treatise "does not fit well with the deterministic rhetoric [of pro-colonial anti-Irishness] articulated elsewhere" (26). This provocative wild pitch turns bean-ball against the reader's credulity: Patricia Palmer instead hits a home run when she labels this weird episode a classic case of mission accomplished and denigrating colonial "ventriloquism." Hadfield also is too certain when he describes Derricke's kern as "defecating" by the fire in the famous woodcut of the feasting Irish (178n); shit is nowhere to be seen and most likely (as noted by Alan Fletcher) Derricke is satirizing the ancient Irish and modern French custom of professional farting (*cf.* "Le Petomain,"

who could quack out “La Marseillaise”). Future studies of Derricke—and subsequently Spenser’s *View*—might greatly profit from study of both indigenous and Continental colonial and colonial, proto-anthropological contexts.

Chapter 2, “English Colonialism and National Identity in Early Modern Ireland,” continues the provocative if superficial (in Hadfield’s own words, a “brief survey” 40) treatment of Herbert, Rich, Edmund Campion, Richard Stanyhurst, John Hooker and the seventeenth-century English colonial writers in Ireland Vincent Gookin and Richard Lawrence. Once again Hadfield cannily spots shared discourses between supposedly antagonistic ethnic and religious and even temporal camps, as when he daringly states, “There exists no simple distinction between medieval and Renaissance accounts of Ireland” (40). Here and elsewhere, Hadfield arguably underplays the importance of the pragmatic application of Roman colonial theory and militant Protestant apocalypticism in many of these tracts, both hallmarks of the Renaissance (and Spenser): more attention to religious rhetoric in particular (including Counter Reformation ideology) as it motivates the writers covered in this book, including Hooker (who translates and appropriates *Cambrensis* for the active use of his own time), Stanyhurst, Derricke, and Spenser, would be useful. Hadfield makes the compelling case that the miserable Bishop of Ossory, John Bale, equates Englishness with Protestantism in Chapter 5 (“Translating the Reformation: John Bale’s Irish *Vocacyon*”), for example, but that chapter’s carefully argued conclusions do not spill far into the rest of the snapshots included here.

To return to Chapter 2, Hadfield also typically highlights contradictions within each writer and/or work, including Sir James Ware’s edition (c. 1633) of Spenser’s *View*.

Hadfield argues that Ware “diffuse[s]” the tract’s “aggressive and offensive” political volatility by promoting its antiquarian value (30). But this only provokes further questions: what specific political events (such as the arrival of Lord Deputy Wentworth the same year) might have encouraged the book’s publication, and how might Bart Van Es’s recent examination of Spenser’s antiquarianism, including the political relevance of the *View*, influence Hadfield’s interpretation, if at all? What is refreshing and especially useful for Spenserians is Hadfield’s focus on the Henry Sidney-influenced historiography of the Dublin Pale, including Derricke, Hooker, Campion, and the fascinating and understudied Old Englishman Stanyhurst, whose “cultural boundaries” were likewise “porous” (35) before his flight to the Continent in 1581 led to a Tridentine hardening of the arteries. Nonetheless there’s no evidence that Stanyhurst ever “chang[ed] his faith” (meaning Catholicism?) at a time when this “faith” was “primarily” the cause for his flight from Dublin (35) . . . a decision that (according to Colm Lennon, Hadfield’s source here) probably had to do with his friend Campion’s recent martyrdom and Stanyhurst’s (dubious) implication in a treasonous Catholic plot, unmentioned by Hadfield. Given these drastic circumstances and decisions, how “[in]coherent” *were* Stanyhurst’s ideological and specifically religious tendencies in the late 1570s? Conversely, to follow Richard McCabe’s lead, to what extent might Spenser’s mixed use of Catholic and Protestant theology in the House of Holiness in Book I of *FQ*, for example, represent a confused engagement with the religious politics of the Pale c. 1580 or represent a reaction against the dangerous faith of the Old English?

Chapter 3, “Malcolm in the Middle: James VI and I, George Buchanan and the

Divine Right of Kings," is not a reprint of a previously published article and like Chapter 8, "Spenser and the Stuart Succession," and the work of Willy Maley, helps recuperate the importance of Scottish and Union politics to Shakespeare and Spenser. *Macbeth* in Chapter 3 is read as a sounding board of Republican versus Divine Right ideas, or Buchanan and David Hume of Godscroft versus King James, and Hadfield's sustained attention to Buchanan in particular as both theorist and Latin dramatist (including *Jephthes* and the "*pièce à clef*" *Baptistes*, both c. 1540s) freshly illuminates the great Scotsman's constant opposition to tyranny. It is a harder step to read *Macbeth* as ultimately anti-monarchical, however, as Hadfield more or less does: "the play does show the evil effects and the destruction of tyranny rather than the good behavior of a monarch" (55). So much for the redemptive re-conquest ("planted newly with the time" 5.9.37) of Scotland by Malcolm, whose name means "follower of [St.] Columba," not to mention his "most sainted king" (4.3.109) of a father, himself buried on Iona, Columba's island, not too far from the Isle of Lewis, where King James instigated a real plantation, c. 1606, undoubtedly enthused by Irish exemplars, including Columba himself, who converted the devilishly painted Pict long before the Statutes of Iona, c. 1609, codified Lowland prejudice against the Irish islanders themselves (Hadfield's superb Chapter 4, "Bruited abroad": John White and Thomas Harriot's Colonial Representations of Ancient Britain," startles the reader into reconsidering the relation of these Scots, the Picts, and their modern forebearers, to the threatening New World savages pictured in Harriot's famous tract, *A Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia*, c. 1590; more attention could be paid in this chapter to the Irish and Scottish colonial scenes as they relate

to Raleigh's New World schemes). Hence, while focusing on the famously twisted conversation between MacDuff and Malcolm on the potential evil of kings (especially Malcolm) in Act IV, the ethical nadir of the play out of which Act V gropes towards the light (while casting evil further in shadow), Hadfield follows readings of irony-prone critics like David Kastan and declares "the hereditary king Malcolm has taught one of his subjects to be a monarchomach" (57); but the play doesn't end here, and doesn't MacDuff rather learn this lesson more tangibly from Macbeth himself, and not from the hereditary *pretender to the throne*? Nonetheless, Hadfield's conclusion, that proto-republican politics roil the play, cannot be doubted.

King James rears his ugly head of state in Chapter 8 as well, wherein Hadfield further bolsters his controversial argument (argued at length elsewhere) that Spenser harbors proto-republican sympathies or at least employs historiographical methodologies familiar to anti-authoritarian or republican authors, both among the ancient Romans and their imitators among New English polemicists in Ireland (*cf.* the highly finessed Chapter 6, "Cicero, Tacitus and the Reform of Ireland in the 1590s," which reads the *View* as an example of this latter "Tacitean" discourse). As for Spenser, according to Chapter 8, "Spenser's portrait of Mary [Queen of Scots as Duessa in Book V of *FQ*] rivaled the most hostile attacks of George Buchanan" on Mary, and James's "anger at Spenser's temerity in *The Faerie Queene* was clearly of the same order" as James's desire to suppress the writings of Buchanan against his succession (125). Guilt by vague association with Buchanan. In his later poetry "it is possible to believe that [Spenser] was starting to believe that an oligarchy would preserve the interests of the English people better than a hereditary monarchy which threatened



the core values of the nation," especially if run by James, the son of a Catholic traitor (127; Hadfield, on 101, finds this argument also in the Munster planter Richard Beacon's political allegory, *Solon His Follie*, c. 1594). Hadfield reads the "[un]manly" James into Duessa as well (131) and into Mutability (136). Bravely criticizing one potential monarch does not equal monarchomachia, however; would Spenser have hated a King Devereux? Another question arises which begs synthesis of this analysis with the Irish focus of Hadfield's other chapters, and indeed Spenser's own Book V: what was James's position on Ireland in 1596? He certainly didn't prevent the mercenary galloglass from entering the country in the 1580s. What threat might he have felt from the New English there, and what from Spenser's hoped-for messiah in the *View*, written the same year as *FQ* IV-VI was first published, (probably) the second earl of Essex?

Hadfield invaluable reads Duessa as more pervasively reflective of Mary Queen of Scots than hitherto acknowledged, not only in the trial scene but also in the anxieties provoked by the character Mutability in Book VII: "The fear the poem articulates is that Mutabilitie may be evil and wrong, but that her claims—like Mary's—are impossible to resist" (134). Hadfield rightly broadens the political resonance of the Cantos, but his reading of them feels strained when he gropes to date it to the late 1580s (135, citing Alice Fox Blitch) so as to place it closer to Mary's trial; or when Faunus is read as an "obvious topical reference" to Hugh O'Neill (132; Hadfield bases his judgement, repeated in his *Edmund Spenser's Irish Experience*, entirely on Helena Shire's *A Preface to Spenser*, which only surmises the connection; this also despite convincing recent work by Judith Owens arguing that Faunus shadows Sir Walter Raleigh); and, as in the next chapter (148-9), he follows critical

fashion and stresses the despairing flight of Cynthia from Arlo Wood in the close to Canto VI as setting the template for the whole. This last reading downplays Nature's magisterial judgement in favor of Jove's right to rule by conquest in Canto VII. Hadfield argues that "Jove's explicit defence of his right to rule is based primarily on his power and authority" (142) but this ignores Jove's belief (quoted by Hadfield) in "eternall doome of Fates decree" (VII.vi.33.6), a line explicitly echoed by Dame Nature's decree that "fate" influences her judgement, or doom, in his favor (vii.58.7). Once again, supernaturally sanctioned conquest gains the upper hand over rhetorical irony in Spenser's poetry.

In my opinion, Hadfield argues more convincingly that Shakespeare uses proto-republican discourse, at least in the 1590s (Hadfield has a valuable new book on the subject that includes much attention to "The Rape of Lucrece"), than does Spenser. Patrick Cheney has lately read Shakespeare as a more republican-leaning "counter-Spenserian," for example, and more has always needed to be done on Spenser's artistic and political influence on Shakespeare, and vice-versa. Hadfield points the way forward in his original Chapter 10, "Shakespeare's Ecumenical Britain," when he deftly compares Spenser's Trojan mythology and historical chronicles with similar motifs in *Troilus and Cressida*, *Cymbeline*, and *King Lear*. Whereas *Troilus and Cressida* is a "nihilistic" reflection of the late, great decayed Tudor court and its British pretensions, for example, and *King Lear* demonstrates a "nation . . . destroyed" (160), *FQ* I-III "allows for the possibility that good advice, if properly heeded, could lead to regeneration and the renewal of the nation (although Spenser is clear enough that Elizabeth has go many things wrong)" (153). Spenser and Shakespeare

trade smiles and frowns by the end of the chapter, however: "Cymbeline's great victory is a rewriting of Lear's great defeat" (164), thus complimenting James's rule; conversely, Spenser's roughly defined "vision of the impending apocalypse," presumably in his later poetry, concludes Hadfield's book (168; cf. also 139-40, 150).

Hadfield valuably contextualizes *FQ* against theories of nation and "Britishness" as well as other prominent contemporaries in Chapters 7 and 9, "From English to British Literature: John Lyly's *Euphues* and the 1590 *The Faerie Queene*," and "Spenser, Drayton, and the Question of Britain," respectively. In the former, *Euphues* "like so many sixteenth-century English literary texts tries to circumscribe and fix national identity and, inevitably, becomes entangled in the logic of that slippery problem"; it nonetheless does express confidence in "the existence of an English nation" under foreign threat (113-4). Spenser, by contrast, "regard[s] political problems in a British rather than an English context and urg[es Queen Elizabeth] to take a similar view" (114). The "simple notion of Englishness" represented by RCK (described, strangely, as "a changeling accidentally switched by a fairy") is thus surpassed in the "wider focus of the narrative" by Britomart's "Britishness" (116-7), itself aligned hopefully with Queen Elizabeth's imperial purpose (118). Despite this early confidence that Elizabeth could help her soldiers in the field build the empire, Spenser's "apocalyptic fear" (140) of personal, colonial and national failure takes stronger prominence in the later books of *FQ*, as explored above and in Chapter 9. Hadfield argues that Spenser, like Drayton, makes extensive use of Camden's *Britannia* (another fundamental text understudied by Spenserians) and concludes that both "articulated serious criticisms of the

very notions of Britain and Britishness" in their long poems (139). Thus the *Poly-Olbion* is "beset by nervous anxiety and division" in part due to desecration of woodland, just as one of its important sources:

Books VI and VII of *The Faerie Queene* depict the terrible vision of chaos which will be wrought throughout the British Isles if Ireland is not reformed and made secure for English rule. Drayton would then appear to be an extremely astute reader of Spenser in transferring the wasted landscape of "Two cantos of Mutabilitie" to England itself. There is an acknowledgement that no territory and its history can ever reveal true stability and harmony (149).

Hadfield has, in short, valuably synthesized his own emphasis on Spenser's unstable Irish experience with Richard Helgerson's and Clare McEachern's analyses of competing political discourses in Drayton and others (143-4 *passim*). His scattered collection, while provocative, could nonetheless use more synthesis itself. The nagging question also remains: how influential and divisive is religion on the sixteenth-century Irish colonial scene, and how fundamentally pessimistic and anxious, rather than self-assured and opportunistic, is Spenser's "apocalyptic" thought when it applies itself on behalf of "British" empire to the "chaos" of wounded and struggling Ireland in the later *FQ* especially? As noted and quoted by Hadfield, Spenser found and anxiously described in the *View* a vision of a "plentifull Countrye sodenlye lefte voide of man or beaste" "Crepinge" with starving peasants who "wrought" the disaster upon themselves (103). Into a "voyde" God had once placed "everie thing that crepeth" (*Geneva Bible*, Gen. 1:2, 1:26) and He continued to fill it with Spenser's bold creativity.

Thomas Herron is an assistant professor at East Carolina U. He has written various articles on Spenser and Ireland and is co-editor of and contributor to the forthcoming interdisciplinary collection, *Ireland in the Renaissance* (Four Courts P). He is also author of the forthcoming monograph, *Spenser's Irish Work: Poetry, Plantation and Reformation* (Ashgate P) and editor of *Sir John Pope Hennessy, Sir Walter Raleigh in Ireland* (University College Dublin P, forthcoming).

### 37.II3

Kaske, Carol V., ed. *The Faerie Queene. Book One*. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 2006. xxix + 222 pp. ISBN 0-87220-808-7. \$32.95 cloth. ISBN 0-87220-807-9. \$9.95 paper.

Stoll, Abraham, ed. *The Faerie Queene. Book Five*. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 2006. xxii + 191 pp. ISBN 0-87220-802-8. \$32.95 cloth. ISBN 0-87220-801-X. \$8.95 paper.

*Review by Daniel T. Lochman*

These two volumes are the first in a series of affordable and teachable texts that together will comprise the entire *Faerie Queene*. The publication of Books I and V, edited by Professors Kaske and Stoll (the series' General Editor), is to be followed by Book II (edited by Erik Gray), Books III and IV together (edited by Dorothy Stephens), and Book VI with the Mutabilitie Cantos (edited by Andrew Hadfield). The series' editors are developing texts that readers are likely to find accessible and that teachers will find appealing as options for undergraduate surveys, topical courses, and genre courses that make use of a book or two rather than the entire poem. Rather than forcing

a choice between the Scylla of purchasing the entire *FQ* and the Charybdis of making do with anthologized, pre-selected books or fragments that may or may not suit the precise needs of a course, this series permits selection of one or more individual (and complete) books, presented in affordable volumes. Kaske and Stoll provide texts that are affordable and feature thought-provoking introductions and annotations together with glosses and an apparatus designed to help students new to the *FQ*.

For graduate students and advanced scholars focusing on early modern studies, these volumes do not take the place of A.C. Hamilton's scholarly edition, but for graduate students examining the *FQ* as an example of a genre or a thematic or theoretical and for undergraduate survey courses they offer a readable, inexpensive text. In contrast to most anthologized versions, which offer tissue-thin paper, double columns, and shrunken, eye-straining fonts, these volumes encourage reading by printing only three or four cantos per page and using legible type on opaque paper with ample white-space for comments. If these volumes offer little glitz—each including one facsimile of the 1590 or 1596 title and a black-and-white cover illustration taken from Walter Crane's 1890 engravings—they nevertheless do Spenser's poem justice by presenting the text as visually attractive.

More importantly, these volumes feature the exemplary skills and learning of two able scholar-editors, each adapting complex interpretive issues to the circumstances of those approaching the poem for the first time. The volumes feature texts freshly edited from 1590 or 1596 and 1609 exemplars, annotations and glosses sufficient for—but not overwhelming to—the first-time reader, and an apparatus that includes features specific to each volume (including brief glossaries of Spenserian language

and a select bibliography) and some common to the series (a short biography and the Letter to Raleigh). The editors' introductions, each under twenty pages, treat Spenser's poetic technique but focus upon each book's literary and cultural contexts, especially the peculiarities of romance and allegory in relation to religion or politics.

In her introduction, Kaske sensibly focuses on the first Book's religious allegory, emphasizing antithetical Catholic and Protestant practices and doctrines in post-Reformation England. She admits the existence of other historical, political, and personal allegories in Book I but sets them aside to concentrate on what she considers a more "necessary" reading that features "holiness" as the central issue in this chivalric quest. She acknowledges the many paradoxes and inconsistencies that Spenser introduces and leaves unresolved, particularly the apparent shift between the overtly Protestant stance of the first nine cantos, which emphasize the power of divine grace and providence relative to the chivalric hero's fruitless efforts at self-governance, and the last three cantos' reacceptance of Catholic emphases such as the merit of good deeds, the virtue of pursuing other-worldly transcendence, and even the iconic value of gold cups and rosaries. In her introduction and in annotations that provide interpretive assistance as well as glosses, sources, and explanations of allusions, Kaske offers some resolution to these problems, but she refrains from drawing conclusions that preclude reflection and reaction. Devotees of Spenser may question some definitions and interpretations (is the Red Cross Knight a "Christ figure," as claimed, at any time, even on the day of his triumph over the dragon?), some contrasts between "Catholic" and "Protestant" doctrines, or the decision to exclude political and historical commentary. To her credit, Kaske does not fear

exercising her judgment, no doubt knowing she may prompt these or other questions but overriding them to direct readers' attention to the central issues of free will and grace in a quest that repeatedly places human agency in doubt.

In the introduction and annotations to Book V, Stoll relates the narrative to the poem's other books and to Spenser's professed design in the Letter to Raleigh. He briefly outlines Aristotelian justice as a moral virtue conceived according to the distributive and corrective forms Spenser introduces into the narratives of Book V, and invokes Aristotle's related concepts of equity and mercy. Like Kaske's, Stoll's introduction concentrates on preventing first-time readers from uncritically receiving the narrative action and the narrator's or hero's point of view. For example, Stoll emphasizes Spenser's inconsistent view of Ireland, noting the poem's colonialist sympathy for Artegall's use of force in defense of Irena, the similarly oppressive justification of English sovereignty advanced in *A View of the Present State of Ireland*, and the poem's contrasting idealized portraits of the region around Kilcolman and interest in "Irish history, mythology, ethnography, social custom, and language" (xv). Stoll prevents readers from accepting Artegall as an unproblematic hero despite his being the "allegorical figure" of justice by pointing to inconsistencies in Artegall's exercise of mercy and justice and to a dubious reliance upon the "robotic and unstoppable violence" of Talus, whom Stoll describes as an "emblem for that frightening moment when, in the name of virtue, torturers become leaders" (xvii). Stoll similarly invites readers to consider Spenser's complex representation of the women warriors Britomart and Radigund, with Britomart, the strong and disciplined knight, revealed as a tender domestic, willing to rescue her hapless husband from the shame engendered

by the dominatrix Radigund, and as a defender of patriarchy anxious to return Radigund to masculine control (xix). Like Kaske in regards to the Red Cross Knight, Stoll encourages first-time readers to entertain the idea of Spenserian heroes as imperfect, subject to critical examination and judgment.

The best test of this new series will come from its readers, particularly those in classrooms, but these readable, well-designed, affordable, skillfully edited and thought-provoking volumes bring immediate relief to instructors who must choose an edition of the *FQ* suited to sophomore-level and advanced surveys or to other courses that do not require a reading of the entire poem.

Daniel T. Lochman is a Professor of English and Associate Dean of Liberal Arts at Texas State U., San Marcos, where he regularly teaches undergraduate and graduate courses on Spenser. He has published on the early Tudor humanists and John Milton and is currently examining friendship in Sidney, Spenser, and Mary Wroth. He is co-editing a collection of essays on early modern friendship and is editing and translating John Colet's commentary on Dionysius's *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*.

### 37.II4

Pugh, Syrithe. *Spenser and Ovid*. Aldershot, Hants, England; Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 2005. 302 pp. ISBN 0-7546-3905-3. \$99.95 cloth.

*Review by Heather James*

Through a lively and sustained reading of the intertextual relationship between Spenser and Ovid, Syrithe Pugh helps to bridge the

gap between the contrasting versions of Ovid currently circulating in Spenser criticism and in classical studies. Whereas Spenser's Ovid is usually seen as skilled in love affairs and aesthetic ornament (the more trifling the better in both cases) but deficient in morals and a sense of public duty, the Ovid of recent classical criticism is better known for his purposeful critique of the emperor's absolutist style of rule and repressive policies in sexual matters. Spenser's Ovid has seemed first and foremost the witty "schoolmaster of love," whereas the classicists' Ovid has increasingly assumed the role of moral and poetic authority on exile. Within Renaissance studies more broadly, the conception of Ovid as a political and ideological poet began to take root in the 1990s, but it has not worked its way deeply into the terrain of Spenser studies (although the perspective on empire provided by the exiled Ovid has received some important attention). In *Spenser and Ovid*, Pugh refuses to separate the poet's ideological concerns from his allusive play and thus helps to shift the critical perspective more centrally to Ovid's political satire.

The elevation of Ovid to a position of moral and political authority in Spenser's poetry, Pugh argues, calls for a revision of the status of Virgil as the poet-prophet of empire and moral counselor on self-government, as well as Spenser's chief poetic model. She notes at the outset that Virgil has long dominated the critical studies of Spenser's self-fashioning as a poet and asserts her book's aim of challenging what she calls the "Virgiliocentric reading" of Spenser: reversing the usual priority of the two classical poets, she seeks to uncover the ways in which Virgilian allusions, when viewed from the vantage point of Spenser's Ovidian perspective, appear "as a veil to deflect the censor from an underlying political heterodoxy" or "as a citation

of the imperial stance from which the work distances itself" (1). In Pugh's account, the relationship of Spenser's Virgil with Augustus is characterized by "political obedience and complacency" (12), in contrast with Ovid, who resists Augustus's imperial and moral policies with brio in his *Amores*, *Ars Amatoria*, *Fasti*, and *Metamorphoses* and who seals his complaint against tyranny in his poetry of exile, the *Tristia* and *Ex Ponto*. In a marked departure from the usual expectations of Spenser's classical identifications, this study finds that Spenser's Virgilian allusions are conspicuously superficial in contrast with his covert and complex allusions to Ovidian texts, which smuggle in complaints from the social margins.

The idea that Spenser's readers might look under the pretty tales of wolves and sheep in Virgilian pastoral only to find a searing critique of political abuse in the voice of the exiled Ovid is both fresh and provocative. Such a perspective implies that the relationship between poetic form and topical allusion in Spenser's verse is more sophisticated than is typically thought to be the case: the allusive veil of Virgilian pastoral does not point directly to topical concerns of Spenser's day, such as the anxiety about the continued commitment of Elizabeth's court to Protestant reform, the silencing of Bishop Grindal, or the Alençon match. Poetry itself, thickened with layers of allusion, plays a substantial role in the representation of politics. To get to the most polemical perspective offered on contemporary scandals, in Pugh's account, one must first go through the mediations of both Virgil (the cover story) and Ovid (the dirt). By enlarging the role that intertextuality plays in political critique, Pugh's reading modifies Annabel Patterson's argument about the functional ambiguity in poetic texts (written under conditions of censorship) that allows for tacit criticism of the state.

*Spenser and Ovid* presents a two-pronged argument: one rests on Ovid's authority as exile, while the other rests on Ovid's critique of Virgil, who is said to voice only the narrowest construction of imperial values. Pugh persuasively argues the case of Spenser as an Ovidian exile, who pits his moral authority against that of the corrupted court. Her readings of *The Shepheardes Calender*, *Colin Clouts Come Home Again*, and the *Amoretti* and *Epithalamion* are especially compelling. The chapter on *SC* as Spenser's pastoral version of the *Fasti* (Ovid's poetic cycle based on the Roman religious calendar), which uncovers a wealth of covert political criticisms, is a must-read for Spenserians. For Pugh, Spenser's early pastoral critiques exist on a continuum with the darker vision of poetic and political enterprise in *Colin Clouts*, where the poet recasts his authority in the Ovidian mold of the exiled poet-prophet and embraces the stark, rural ground of his exile as a refuge from the corruptions of the court. The later chapters also provide an illuminating discussion of the cultivation of friendship—a keyword of Roman republicanism—in the world of exile poetry.

The chapters devoted to each of the first three books of *The Faerie Queene* bring to Spenser criticism a welcome seriousness about the interpretation of the Ovidian intertext in Spenser's vision of love and sexuality. Pugh distinguishes pointedly—and persuasively—between Spenser's "citations" of Ovidian wantonness and his deeper engagement of Ovid's positive representations of married love in the *Metamorphoses*. Like the Red Cross Knight and Guyon, Spenser's readers find themselves challenged to work carefully through complex scenes of interpretation in order to understand the full stakes of their ethical positions, whose complexities and apparent contradictions may be

traced through allusions and imitations. Notably rewarding are Pugh's readings of the bleeding myrrh in Book I, the figure of Amavia in Book II, and the Garden of Adonis in Book III.

Readers of *Spenser and Ovid* will wonder, however, whether it is necessary or desirable to sacrifice Virgil in order to demonstrate Spenser's allegiance to Ovid. Virgil is not a sacrosanct figure in the Renaissance, as contemporary satires and ballads reveal. There are important ways in which Virgil and Ovid differ, as critics have acknowledged, and when these differences are brought out in a given poem, Virgil may be stuck playing the straight man to Ovid's wag. Pugh is therefore justified in suggesting that Spenser's sometimes parodies Virgil or, better, the more flat-footed Elizabethan uses of Virgil in courtly panegyric. But it cannot be the case that Spenser's Virgil amounts to nothing more than the veil of ideology. Pugh attractively proposes that we recognize Spenser's use of the trifling and licentious elements of Ovid's poetry as citations, which contrast with his deeper engagement of Ovid. Why is it that Spenser cannot also have a Virgil, whose depth and complexity of vision is meaningful to Spenser by way of contrast with the narrowest imperial vision associated with Virgilian epic? As Pugh notes, Spenser engages some of Virgil's breaches of ideological decorum (e.g., Silenus, the gates of ivory) in order to emphasize the room for doubting the imperial vision. Although she gives Ovid the credit for Spenser's skeptical reading of Virgil, there is no obvious reason to rule out the presence of a philosophical Virgil in Spenser's poem.

Despite the limitations introduced by heroizing one poet at the direct expense of another (and others), *Spenser and Ovid* makes an important contribution to Spenser studies by insisting on Ovid's centrality to Spenser's

evolving idea of a poetic career founded on the poet-prophet's autonomy from the corruptions as well as the benefits of the court. Pugh is fully persuasive in making her case that Spenser is conversant with a wide range of Ovidian genres and poems, and that he puts the figure of the marginalized Ovidian poet to fascinating uses in his moral philosophy as well as his satirical polemics. *Spenser and Ovid* demonstrates that Ovid can no longer be relegated to the ornaments, subplots, and the margins of Spenser's poetic projects.

Heather James, Associate Professor of English and Comparative Literature at the U. of Southern California, is the author of *Shakespeare's Troy: Drama, Politics, and the Translation of Empire* (1997), and many articles including "Ovid and the Question of Politics in Early Modern England" in *English Literary History*, "Shakespeare's Heroines in Ovid's Schoolroom" in *Shakespeare and the Classics* (Charles Martindale and A. B. Taylor, eds.), and "Milton's Eve, Romance, and Ovidian Poetics" in *Comparative Literature*.

## 37.II5

*Spenser Studies: A Renaissance Poetry Annual*. Volume XX. Eds. William A. Oram, Anne Lake Prescott, Thomas P. Roche, Jr. New York: AMS Press, 2005. vi + 295pp. ISBN 0195-9468 \$110.00 cloth.

*Review by Clare R. Kinney*

It is a critical commonplace that Elizabethan authors who choose to publish their work are always worrying about its reception. The print technology that allows the writer to reach a much expanded audience can also place it in the

hands of the malicious, the suspicious, or the annoyingly uncomprehending. Even if one arms one's work with multiple prefaces clarifying what one is about, it will not necessarily prevent the Gentle Reader turning into the Envious Reader. Spenser begins his career anticipating that "Envie" will "barke" at *The Shepheardes Calender* ("To his Booke", 5) and ends Book VI of *The Faerie Queene* describing the uncontrollable Blatant Beast mangling the "gentle Poets rime" (VI.xii.40). In the midst, he has to cope with important people deploring his "looser rimes" (IV.proem.1) and a royal reader's inadequate response to the gift of a national epic.

Two articles in this volume offer us very different angles on the reception of Spenser's poetry. William Oram's essay (originally delivered as the Kathleen Williams lecture at Kalamazoo) vigorously and often movingly ponders the artistic consequences of the poet's frustrating trip to England in 1589-91. Oram argues that after Spenser realized that neither Queen Elizabeth nor her court were going to recognize his credentials as a poet-counselor and grant him a real voice in public affairs, his subsequent poetic projects reflect a changing sense of the audience for whom he was writing. It is his contention that the shaping of the *Complaints* was much more under Spenser's control than has generally been allowed and that its contents betray his relatively unmediated anger at the court. (In Oram's account, the collection's sententious jeremiads barely mask the author's more personal lamentations and accusations.) The *Complaints'* weaker poems lack the "tendency to imply alternative truths" that complicates the articulation of absolute value judgements in *FQ*; only in "Mother Hubberds Tale" and "Muiopotmos" is Spenser's anger more carefully mediated or ironized (31). In *Amoretti* and *Epithalamion*, by contrast, Spenser attempts

to enact a new kind of authority within a more circumscribed and domestic space. (*The Amoretti* are explicitly directed at just one beloved reader, the *Epithalamion* primarily invites the gaze of an emphatically non-courtly community.) It is a space, suggests Oram, where personal frustration can perhaps be replaced by "Christian conversation" (36). When Spenser does return to the writing of *FQ*, he continues to write to the court, but only because "there was no alternate audience available for a great patriotic epic" (36). His personal interventions in the narrative of Books IV, V and VI reveal "a new sense of isolation on the part of a poet who is writing an epic for an audience he distrusts" (37).

Steven May offers us a reverse perspective on the poet-audience dynamic in his detailed description and compelling analysis of a manuscript book in which Henry Gurney, a Norfolk gentleman farmer, recorded his reading habits and wrote versified book reviews. Gurney's literary criticism includes comments on the 1590 *FQ*, a work he finds pretty much unreadable (although he did transcribe ten of its dedicatory sonnets and much of its commendatory verse into his book): his own leaden couplets deplore the poem's archaic language and its unorthodox and irregular stanzaic structure. He is baffled by its apparent failures of form and cannot move beyond them: as May points out, he does not appear to grasp, either here or in his more general notes on poetic craft, "the imaginative, suggestive, aesthetic qualities that differentiate the creative art of poetry from expository prose" (210). Gurney also had access to a copy of "Mother Hubberds Tale," but found its "Theame obscure" and ended up muttering "who that once hath gott him self a fame / his after faltes bear but reprovers blame." (It occurs to me that some of Gurney's animadversions on Spenser sound



not unlike those of disgruntled 21<sup>st</sup> century undergraduates.)

I cannot begin to do justice to the riches of May's article. It includes fascinating accounts of Gurney's own domestic poetry (and, deliciously, of his son's less than enthusiastic response to his verses, which Gurney dutifully transcribed). It also discusses the provincial coterie of readers to which Gurney belonged—Gurney carefully records the borrowings and lendings of books between himself and his friends—and surveys the contents of his personal library (which Gurney helpfully inventoried in 1595). Tracing the circulation of books among Gurney's circle, May demonstrates that early modern readers could be acquainted with far more works than the bare contents of their libraries might suggest: Gurney's notes on poetry demonstrate that he was familiar with several poets whose works had no place in his own collection.

Among the volume's other articles, three offer interesting reappraisals of much-discussed episodes in *FQ*. Christine Coch revisits the Bower of Bliss by way of some contemporary landscape-gardening: Lord Lumley's Italianate and allegorical Grove of Diana at Nonsuch. Coch's careful explication of the Grove's design suggests that Lumley's pleasure garden was intended both to elicit various strongly felt responses and to encourage visitors to ponder and analyze those responses: its subtle positioning of spectators in relation to engraved panels that glossed its sculptures and prospects invited a constant reassessment of the aesthetic and didactic experience. Spenser's framing of the Bower of Bliss is based on similar protocols, she argues, and Spenser not only wants his readers to temper their responses to his sensuous verse with allegorical reflection but also to measure their own responses against those of Guyon.

Coch notes that the stanza which catalogues the features of the Bower that Guyon furiously destroys (II.xii.83) in fact sounds more like a description of a contemporary pleasure garden than anything in Acrasia's domain—Guyon's problematic violence should not, however, prevent the reader from recognizing that one can learn to "enjoy the art of a pleasure garden or a poem in a responsibly temperate way" (68).

Ayesha Ramachandran's provocative essay on poetry and politics in "Muiopotmos" also takes us back to the Bower of Bliss. Ramachandran argues that if Guyon's triumph over Acrasia represents a (manly) epic victory over the beguilements and menaces of romance, the webs of romance reassert themselves in "Muiopotmos." Clarion's entrapment in Aragnoll's web in this other garden, this other bower, is also a defeat for the epic enterprise (Clarion may be a somewhat attenuated epic hero, but he nevertheless dies a Virgilian death). "Muiopotmos," she maintains, offers a commentary on the poet's own unhappy experience of Elizabethan court politics: the cunning weavers lurking in Spenser's metamorphosed Ovidian subtext take Acrasia's part (and perhaps Circe's part as well) against the "masculine" ambitions of the epic artist.

Another much disputed Spenserian set-piece is revisited in Emily A. Bernhard Jackson's novel account of Busirane's persecution of Amoret. Setting the Masque of Cupid in dialogue with early modern medical treatises, Jackson argues that Busirane's extraction and laving of Amoret's heart and his draining of its blood is a perversion of quite orthodox humoral theory: "Busirane . . . is simply trying to bleed Amoret free of her excessive love for Scudamore" (111). His actions, she posits, also darkly echo those images found in Protestant emblem books in which Christ very literally cleanses the heart of the sinner.

Several other articles in this volume focus upon Spenser's reading. Anthony Miller finds interesting parallels between the Red Cross Knight's sufferings in *Orgoglio's* dungeons and Foxe's depictions of the horrors inflicted upon prisoners of the Spanish Inquisition. James Schiavone offers evidence that Spenser could have found a copy of Erasmus's edition of Augustine's *Opera* in the library of Pembroke College. Jason Lawrence suggests that Spenser's borrowings from Tasso in Books IV-VI of *FQ* deserve renewed attention and offers a fresh account of similarities and differences between the pastoral retreats of Erminia and Calidore. D. Allen Carroll rereads the "meaning of E.K." through a series of playful Latin puns batted back and forth between Harvey and Spenser. Robert Ellrodt finds that Spenser's eclectic treatment of Christian and Neoplatonic attitudes to human and divine love is anticipated in a 1567 treatise by Flaminio de Nobili. Tamara A. Goeglein's essay turns us back to the reading and framing of Spenser by his contemporaries; she makes Abraham Fraunce's insertion of exemplary passages from *SC* in his *Lawiers Logike* the springboard for her thesis that a potentially "emblematic aesthetic" may be found in Ramist handbooks (229). In works like

Fraunce's, Goeglein quite persuasively argues, the "fixed word" of the language of logic is supplemented by the "speaking pictures" of poesy.

Finally, two articles remind us of Spenser's ability to re-read and re-inflect the commonplaces of his own culture. Rebecca Yearling makes the mystery of the girdle that is at once unwearable by the false Florimel and apparently worn by her at the moment of her dissolution the starting point for a discussion of Spenser's reconfiguration of chastity as a dynamic virtue in *FQ*. Hossein Pirnajmuddin's careful distinctions between representations of the Persian empire and representations of Islam in Spenser's epic suggest that the poet's "orientalism" is at once a crucial part of his Protestant poetic and politics and flexible enough to encompass images of exotic realms that are not simply adversarial.

Clare Kinney is Associate Professor of English at the U. of Virginia. Her publications include *Strategies of Poetic Narrative: Chaucer, Spenser, Milton, Eliot* (Cambridge, 1992) and articles on Chaucer, Spenser, Sidney, Shakespeare, and Lady Mary Wroth.



ARTICLES: ABSTRACTS AND NOTICES

*Abstracts compiled by Gitanjali Shabani.*

The articles abstracted below appear in *The 1590 Faerie Queene: Paratexts and Publishing*, ed. Wayne Erickson, *Studies in the Literary Imagination* 38.2 (2005).

We are grateful to Professor Erickson for his help with these abstracts.

37.II6

Jean R. Brink, "Precedence and Patronage: The Order of Spenser's Dedicatory Sonnets (1590)." 51-72.

Wayne Erickson and William Oram have argued that the Dedicatory Sonnets in *FQ* (1590) have literary merit, but the perception that their content and form were dictated by social convention has continued to dominate critical studies by David Miller, Judith Owens, and others. From 1984 to the present, no one has satisfactorily challenged Carol A. Stillman's pioneering argument that Spenser's Dedicatory Sonnets (1590) were printed in the order of the unnumbered Q1-4 insert because "neither he nor the printer had any choice." Stillman claims that "poems addressed to nobleman had to be presented according to heraldic rules for precedence (144) and summarizes the various prescriptive manuals that may have affected precedence at ceremonial functions. Stillman's summary is offered as the explanation for the ordering of the second set of Dedicatory Sonnets in 1590 and the order used in all modern editions. However, the Elizabethan court was more complex than these conclusions acknowledge.

Brink questions the prevailing view of the Dedicatory Sonnets as a social construct with minimal literary significance. By reexamining Stillman's methodology, she shows that Spenser's selection and arrangement of dedicatees was more independent than has been acknowledged. His decision of who to include in the Dedicatory

Sonnets and how to arrange the sonnets was affected by complex social conventions, but these conventions by no means determined the content and form of the sonnets. Instead, Brink argues, substantive bibliographical evidence exists that the heraldry did not determine sequence in Spenser's case. To determine what the literary and social conventions were that governed dedications, Brink examines contemporary practice, analyzing the placement and numbers of dedications in literary ventures comparable to *FQ* published before and after 1590 to arrive at some conclusions concerning the organization of Spenser's dedicatory sonnets.

37.II7

Ty Buckman, "Forcing the Poet into Prose: 'Gealous Opinions and Misconstructions' and Spenser's Letter to Raleigh." 17-34.

This essay surveys the wealth of recent scholarship on the relationship between Spenser and Raleigh and reads the back matter of the 1590 *FQ* to arrive at a new interpretation of the Letter to Raleigh. Starting from the Proem to Book 3 and continuing into the Dedicatory Sonnets and Commendatory Verses, Buckman follows a suggestion Louis Montrose made twenty-five years ago and argues that the occasion of the Letter to Raleigh was Spenser's need to correct a fundamental and dangerous misreading of his new epic that was being advanced by Raleigh himself. Buckman sees Spenser's explanatory gesture in the Letter as at

odds with his allegorical practice and a reluctant attempt to head off the reading of his poem as a version of Raleigh's Cynthia poems.

### 37.II8

Wayne Erickson, "The Poet's Power and the Rhetoric of Humility in Spenser's Dedicatory Sonnets." 91-118.

In his Letter to Raleigh, Spenser calls *FQ* an allegorical "historical fiction," claiming that he has "followed all the antique Poets historical"; in turn, the authors of the Commendatory Verses celebrate Spenser as the English counterpart to Orpheus, Homer, Virgil, and Petrarch. In the Dedicatory Sonnets, by contrast, Spenser appears to disparage his poem with hyperbolic humility in ten of the seventeen sonnets and to minimize its value in most of the others while simultaneously declaring his poem worthy of featuring at least four and perhaps, by extension, others of his powerful dedicatees as allegorized characters in the narrative—their ticket to "euerlasting fame." The irony implicit in the latter formulation infiltrates the whole sequence, but the effect varies from sonnet to sonnet as Spenser juxtaposes assertive and submissive postures to render diverse tones and subject matters. Exploiting the potent resources of the humility topos, Spenser turns an apparently static and superficial pose into a flexible rhetorical medium capable of accommodating various political, personal, linguistic, and aesthetic relationships among the poem, the poet, and his audiences. Furthermore, Spenser's descriptions of his poem in the Dedicatory Sonnets supplement descriptions in the proems, the letter to Raleigh, and the Commendatory Verses, complicating the poet's exposition of genre by suggesting, among other things, that *FQ* attains epic scope in part by the inclusion

of lyric, pastoral, and georgic elements. Spenser offers his poem to the world while adjusting and manipulating his audiences' expectations and responses.

### 37.II9

Thomas Herron, "Raleigh's Gold: Placing Spenser's Dedicatory Sonnets." 133-47.

This essay examines the innovative treatment of Ireland in the Dedicatory Sonnets. According to Herron, the Sonnets celebrate and chastise Spenser's fellow planters and patrons, while promising fertile opportunity to those who might venture west and north across St. George's channel. They call for a militaristic and martial ethic, legitimated by English imperial ideals, and emphasize a pro-martial law stance, also taken by Spenser in *A Verwe of the Present State of Ireland*. Reiterating a sense of "place," the Sonnets situate Spenser and his patrons in a geographical context of world and Irish politics, rather than the abstract ladders of courtly hierarchy centered in London alone. The epic opens with an invocation of empire and the organic plantation impetus underlying Spenser's work. This theme is mirrored in the back matter, such as the Letter to Raleigh and the sonnets to Raleigh and Burghley. The glorification of empire might be seen as intended for Raleigh and Burghley, whose ambitions and accomplishments reflect imperial imperatives.

Herron goes on to analyze what he sees as Spenser's chastisement of Raleigh for not supporting militant sentiments strongly enough in his poetry. He reads Spenser's sonnet to Raleigh as an effort to keep the latter focused on Ireland's ongoing disturbances, demanding a "Martiall" attitude, or "thonder," but also encouraging Zeus-like patronage with showers of gold for Spenser. Other political

players are also lionized for colonial valor and the Virgilian colonial spirit. Metaphors of land and space permeate Spenser's sonnets to Burghley and Hatton, exhorting the two to forge policies that will benefit Spenser and his fellow planters and landowners. The admiring sonnet to Ormond co-opts the lord in the poem's civilizing mission of bringing courtesy to Ireland at the point of a sword. Herron concludes that most of the Dedicatory Sonnets—like the epic they inform—can be read as an appeal to the rich and powerful to combine fruitful and forgiving nurture in Ireland with heroic imperial enterprise. When focusing on Irish soil and its golden opportunities in his epic and its back matter, Spenser provides a visionary impetus towards group cohesion combined with individual endeavor on behalf of New English colonization.

### 37.I20

Fritz Levy, "Behind the Back Matter: The Liminalities of *The Faerie Queene*." 73-89.

Critics have long speculated on the peculiarities of Spenser's Dedicatory Sonnets. The sheer number of dedicatees might well have been controversial at the time, as well as the decision to put the Commendatory Verses, the Dedicatory Sonnets, and the Letter to Raleigh at the end of the book rather than the beginning. Furthermore, the very placement and form of the dedication to Queen Elizabeth is unusual enough to provoke further questions. There is no way to ascertain whether the anomalies in the presentation of these "liminalities" were intentional, nor whether they were the result of actions taken by Spenser, the publisher, or the printer. Instead, we might better speculate on Spenser's dedications through a careful examination of the Renaissance patronage system

in the precise historical moment of *FQ*'s first appearance. This article considers the possibility that after Spenser's first public reading of *FQ* in the Elizabethan court, he received permission to dedicate his epic poem to the queen, resulting in his shifting of the Commendatory Verses, the Dedicatory Sonnets, and the Letter to Raleigh to the end of the book. His layout perhaps reflected his sense of having achieved laureate status in the tradition of Virgil.

### 37.I21

William Oram, "Introduction: Spenser's Paratexts," vii-xviii.

Gerard Genette's *Paratexts* argues that the function of the writing surrounding a literary work is to mediate between the unchanging text and the changing world of its audience whereas the paratext *presents* the work to its readers. Spenser's inventive paratexts in the 1590 *Faerie Queene* form part of his continuous experimentation with such mediation throughout his career. The 1590 paratexts, which present the poet to his audience and announce his importance, contrast with those of *The Shepheardes Calender*, which as a group distance the unknown poet from his audience. In the later poems, the paratexts continue the self-portraiture of the 1590 volume, creating a fictional biography and emphasizing Spenser's independence from the Elizabethan court.

### 37.I22

Judith Owens, "Commercial Settings of the 1590 *Faerie Queene*." 149-71.

This essay calls for a more sustained analysis of the Commendatory Verses included in the 1590 edition of *FQ*. These often-overlooked poems

provide us with valuable points of entry into Spenser's epic vision. In particular, the poems by R.S. and Ignoto situate Spenser's work firmly within London's commercial culture. They enable us to consider how Spenser's imperial epic vision accommodates commercial values. The poem by R.S., for instance, with its opening apostrophe to "Fayre *Thamis* streame," subtly connects Spenser's epic to London's mercantile character and seaborne aspirations. R.S.'s poem thus takes us from the rarefied air of Raleigh's verse and the unctuousness of Harvey's praise right to the heart of London. In doing so, R.S. prompts us to consider contexts, constituencies, audiences, and aims that are substantially different from those assumed by Raleigh and Harvey.

### 37.I23

Toshiyuki Suzuki, "A Note on the Errata to the 1590 Quarto of *The Faerie Queene*." 1-16.

This essay focuses on the "Faults escaped in the Print" or the list of errata appended to the first quarto of Books 1-3 of *FQ*. The list cites over a hundred places for correction; however, the second and revised edition of the work published in 1596 ignored nearly half of the corrections included in the list. Subsequent folio editions independently corrected some of the errors cited in the "Faults escaped" page, yet many of them continued to be transmitted to later editions. The failure of subsequent editions to adopt these corrections has puzzled several later editors of *FQ*. This essay intervenes in editorial debates about the "Faults escaped" page and its role in the printing of *FQ*. Suzuki demonstrates through a statistical analysis of this page that Spenser was probably present in the printing house for at least part of the printing of *FQ*.

### 37.I24

Andrew Wallace, "Reading the 1590 *Faerie Queene* with Thomas Nashe." 35-49.

Recent assessments of the documents printed at the conclusion of the 1590 *FQ* have divided somewhat uneasily into two camps, with proponents of the Ockhamite logic of textual scholarship on one side and literary scholars, with their appetite for implication, on the other. This essay explores this disjunction by arguing that the disposition of these documents trained Spenser's earliest readers to engage in the very forms of speculation that recent materialist approaches to the 1590 volume sometimes reject as anachronistic fictionalizations of the printing context.

### 37.I25

Patricia Wareh, "Humble Presents: Pastoral and Gift-Giving in the Commendatory Verses and Dedicatory Sonnets." 119-32.

This article examines the role of gift-giving in the 1590 *FQ*'s Dedicatory Sonnets by combining close reading of these poems with an effort to place them in the context of early modern concepts of gifts and generosity. Drawing on the work of Marcel Mauss, Pierre Bourdieu, and Natalie Zemon Davis, Wareh considers the paradoxical relationships among gifts, text, and patronage in Spenser's poetic self-presentation in the dedicatory Sonnets and asks how Spenser makes use of the conventional language of dedications (a language formed by both social and literary tradition) for his own specific purposes in the 1590 *FQ*. As their name implies, and as Spenser frequently reminds his addressees, the Dedicatory Sonnets are themselves humble gifts. By making use of a subtle vocabulary of nobility (which is characterized in this period, as

Montrose and others have noted, by a strategy of self-deprecation and even pastoral humility), Spenser in the Dedicatory Sonnets offers himself and his poetry to his audience while simultaneously claiming his superiority.

While the Commendatory Verses note a shift from the pastoral mode to epic aspiration, a shift that is generally characterized as praiseworthy even though it might make Spenser seem like the ambitious shepherd Paris, Spenser in the Dedicatory Sonnets repeatedly refers to his sonnets as low or idle—a characterization contrary to the shift of genre represented by *FQ*. Wareh suggests that the attitude taken by Spenser toward potential patrons in the Dedicatory Sonnets reveals a mastery of the paradoxical vocabulary of courteous generosity as Spenser insists both that the poetic gifts bestowed by him through *FQ* are humble and base and that his poem is a necessary prerequisite for the preservation of his addressees' noble actions and genealogies. Spenser frequently imagines both himself and his addressees as engaged in a competition in generosity, and he implies that his addressees will outdo him in this performance—that the addressees' gifts will be far more noble than Spenser's own poem. Even as Spenser poetically imagines himself in the service of his addressees, his sonnets also suggest that the poet himself might eventually emerge victorious over his patrons—precisely through his paradoxical efforts to abase himself.

## 37.126

Andrew Zurcher, "Getting it Back to Front in 1590: Spenser's Dedications, Nashe's Insinuations, and Raleigh's Equivocations." 173-98.

The decision to position the Commendatory Verses and Dedicatory Sonnets, as well as the Letter to Raleigh, at the back of the 1590 edition of *FQ* should be considered alongside the stop-press insertion of the royal dedication, early in the printing of the volume, on the verso of folio A1. That Spenser was intimately implicated in both of these decisions, and in the botched printing of gatherings A and Pp, is suggested by the relentless and witty satire of one of his most keen observers. Thomas Nashe presents, in the prefatory and framing matter to the 1592 *Pierce Penilesse his Supplication to the Diuell*, a sustained and precise attack on the printing of *FQ* in 1590 as a publishing event, cutting with precise strokes to the heart of a complex tissue of concerns about patronage, politics, precise Protestantism, and the succession. This paper considers the extent, the intent, and the content of Nashe's interest in Spenser's publishing misfortunes, in Spenser's and Raleigh's successive disgraces, and in the larger problems of print patronage politics in 1590s England.



ABSTRACTS OF CONFERENCE ACTIVITIES

SPENSER AT 41ST INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON MEDIEVAL STUDIES

The following papers were delivered at the 41st International Congress on Medieval Studies, sponsored by the Medieval Institute, at Western Michigan U. in Kalamazoo, May 2006

SPENSER AT KALAMAZOO PANEL I:  
MODELS AND AUTHORITIES

Organizers: Clare R. Kinney, William A. Oram  
(Smith College), and Beth Quitslund (Ohio U.)  
Presider: Thomas Herron

37.I27

Gillian Hubbard (Victoria U. of Wellington),  
“**Augustinian Nests and Guyon’s Faint.**”  
At the end of Book II, canto vii of Spenser’s  
*Fairie Queene* Guyon suffers a death-like faint:  
“the life did flit away out of her nest.” He is  
protected by an angel and the Palmer, who,  
trying Guyon’s pulse “courds” it tenderly “as  
chicken newly hatcht, from dreaded destiny.”  
Striking similarities to the imagery of nests,  
unfledged chickens, and covering maternal wings  
in the *Confessions* suggests Augustine as a source  
for this imagery. In Book XII Augustine worries  
for the immature believer who may risk, in proud  
weakness, pushing himself out of the nest of faith  
into the path of trampling passers-by. He prays:  
“Send your angel to replace it in the nest, so that  
it may live until it can fly” (XII.xxvii). Guyon  
is called back to both life and a spiritual “home”  
as Augustine is called back by memory to a  
promised eternity.

SPENSER AT KALAMAZOO PANEL III:  
THE KATHLEEN WILLIAMS LECTURE

Organizer: Clare R. Kinney, Beth Quitslund, and  
David Scott Wilson-Okamura (East Carolina  
U.)  
Presider: William A. Oram

37.I28

Theresa Krier (Macalester College), “**Time  
Lords: Rhythm and Interval in Spenser’s  
Stanzaic Narrative.**”

This paper, the Kathleen Williams Lecture  
for 2006, uses the katabasis motif of *FQ I* to  
formulate functions of the stanzaic interval  
and its alternation with stanzas, arguing that  
this form, best understood as the temporal  
phenomenon of the sojourn, shapes readerly  
experience, and that it has implications for  
genre and literary history. The paper examines  
the Night episode in *FQ I.v*; it examines the  
kind of reader proposed by Jonathan Goldberg  
in his 1981 book *Endlesse Worke* and proposes  
the limitations of that reader in his failure of  
attunement to tempo in reading; it moves to the  
tradition of neoplatonically inflected allegorical  
fiction with its journeys among multiple regions  
of the cosmos; it concludes with an analysis of  
George Saintsbury’s famous remarks about the  
Spenserian rhythm and its implications for epic.

SPENSER’S POETICS

Presider: Scott D. Vander Ploeg (Madisonville  
Community College)

37.I29

Dan Mills (Georgia State U.), “**Diminished  
Metaphor in the Proems in *The Faerie Queene.*”**  
In the proem to Book III, Spenser writes of  
the artist Zeuxis who pieced together various  
different facial features to create portraits of the



ideal woman, and in many ways Spenser channels this technique to characterize his chief subject, Elizabeth. Most of the female characters in *FQ* exhibit different characteristics of Elizabeth, so in many ways Spenser aims to demonstrate the various personalities of his queen. If, as many critics have argued, the proems indeed teach the reader how to read Spenser's narrative, this allows the proems to form a cohesive, symbiotic relationship that underscores the metaphoric relationship between the literal and the allegorical. The relationship between the proems and the books in *FQ* is analogous to that of the *tenor* and the *vehicle* in a metaphor, specifically a *diminished metaphor*. Spenser develops this relationship in the various female characters that ostensibly represent various characteristics of Elizabeth, and in the proems to Books I and II, Spenser plants the seeds for this metaphoric unit that sees development in the narrative proper in the Books they precede.

### 37.I30

Paul J. Hecht (Wake Forest U.), "To Build a Stanza: Spenser's Poetic Development from *The Shepheardes Calender* to *The Faerie Queene*." How did the poet of *SC* become the poet of *FQ*? The most prominent formal feature of *FQ* is the Spenserian stanza, so one might naturally search *SC*'s varied forms for a stanza that looks similar, thinking that in such a place we might catch the epic poet in the act of becoming. In this paper I explore whether the opposite might be true, whether in fact the poet of *FQ* is most visible in those parts of *SC* that bear the least formal resemblance to the Spenserian stanza. The chief quality I suggest we can find in these poems is an approach to creating larger periods, longer trajectories of breath, sustained units of meaning larger than the line or couplet, which

Spenser would need to master in order to write *FQ*. Along with this quality I also suggest that the poems move less predictably—and so provide pleasing variation—taking advantage of the flexibility that the absence of stanzas provides. A corollary thesis is that Spenser in *SC* is not yet the master of stanzaic verse that is on display in *FQ*. The overall view I argue for is that the non-stanzaic poems exhibit qualities necessary to the success of *FQ*, and that we can then see Spenser's poetic development running as a synthesis of techniques spread across the spectrum of forms in *SC*, rather than as a selection of one kind of poetry (in stanzas) to the exclusion of another.

#### SPENSER'S REPRESENTATIONAL PRACTICES

Presider: Nathaniel B. Smith (Indiana U., Bloomington)

### 37.I31

Kasey Evans (Northwestern U.), "Allegory as Allophagy: Representational Violence in *Prosopopoeia. Or Mother Hubberds Tale*."

This most Chaucerian among Spenser's complaint poems represents a meditation on the darker implications of allegory as a representational practice. *Prosopopoeia. Or Mother Hubberds Tale* associates allegorical embodiment with the physical violence and cruelty of insatiable carnal appetite.

This critique turns on Spenser's exploitation of a richly ambiguous complex of definitions of the term *prosopopeia* ("making a face," from *prosopon*, "face" or "mask" + *poiein*, "to make"). The term enters the literary-critical canon in the Platonic dialogues on Socrates's trial and death, and refers specifically to the possibility of bodily resurrection, of embodying the dead and allowing them to speak. The morbidity of

this definition persists into the early modern period, as in Richard Sherry's 1550 *Treatise on Schemes and Tropes*, which defines "prosopopey" as the attribution of "perso[ns or] ... affects of man or of a beast, to a dumme thyng, or that hath no bodye, or to a dead man." Henry Peacham's 1577 *Garden of Eloquence* echoes this insistence on the trope's embodiment of "things which are without life."

In *Mother Hubberds Tale*, the mortality latent in *prosopopeia* becomes an undeniable presence, as if the death drive itself is what is most emphatically embodied by the poem's titular trope. Beginning with the Chaucerian parody of the poem's opening lines—where the zodiacal bodies find their mortal counterparts not in the sweet air of the west wind and an [alleged] search for spiritual regeneration, but in "noysome breath" engendering "plague, pestilence, and death," and the reign of a "wicked maladie ... that manie did to die"—*Mother Hubberds Tale* chronicles the unrelenting violence of allegorical personification.

Spenser's Fox and Ape, I argue, link allegorical agency with unbridled consumption: the literal, gruesome slaying of the yeoman's flock; the perversion of the clerical charge to ensure that the ecclesiastical "flock is rightly fed"; or the cavalier "backbit[ing]" and "nip[ping]" of courtly defamation. They thus link the morbid tradition of *prosopopeia* to another allegorical trope: the biblical (and medieval monastic) notion of eating the book, and digesting it, pedagogically speaking, through intellectual *ruminatio*. But while theorists of the digested book imagine the reader gradually learning to digest more and more complex literary food—moving from, e.g., Alain of Lille's "watery milk" of simple narrative to the "cheese" of allegory and "butter" of tropology—*Mother Hubberds Tale* suggests a far darker vision, in which the

representatives of allegorical seeming themselves, Spenser's Fox and Ape, consume their would-be readers in a rampage of violent deceit, turning allegory into allophagy. *Mother Hubberds Tale*, ultimately, offers one of Spenser's darkest visions about the potential consequences of allegorical embodiment, the dangers of "making a face" for natural, supernatural, or zodiacal impulses that might better be left in the realm of the disembodied.

INTERNATIONAL SPENSER SOCIETY  
"SPENSER'S CIVILIZATIONS"  
U. OF TORONTO

SPENSERIAN *SILVAE*

Chair: Maggie Kilgour (McGill U.)

37.132

Humphrey Tonkin (U. of Hartford), "*The Faerie Queene and the Search for the Perfect Language.*"

Naming things aright is a problem from the very beginning of *FQ*, but it is in Books V and VI that the question of language is explored directly. The confrontation of Calidore's "gracious speech" with the slanders of the Blatant Beast signals the search for a new language, capable not only of describing but also of controlling. This language is both English among the languages of the world and the right English among many Englishes. As Paula Blank has explained, England was faced with a *questione della lingua* not radically different from that confronted by Dante in the *De vulgari eloquentia*, a work which Joseph Lo Bianco has identified as the beginning of modern language planning. Sixteenth-century England was both multilingual (witness Shakespeare's non-native-speaker Fluellen, constantly cantilevered beyond his linguistic

ability) and multidialectal (varieties of English competed for authority). The emergence of a standard language was a process aided by literacy and printing, but the dialogue surrounding it displayed competing views of linguistic history, some authorities complaining about the mass importation of apparently foreign words, others suggesting that these words were not neologisms but revivals of true English speech. Spenser, firm in the Whorfian belief that language defines world view, is particularly indignant, in the *View*, about the intrusion of the Irish language upon English, since it implies moral as well as linguistic degeneration – a position shared by Stanihurst, who perhaps influenced Spenser. In this regard Spenser is an early example of what Phillipson calls linguistic imperialism and Michael Hechter has named internal colonialism. Yet the English that he finds underlying Irish in Ireland is, he seems to suggest, the remains of a purer language – a suggestion that leads Willy

Maley to assert that the English of *FQ*, archaic and supposedly Chaucerian, is influenced by the English that Spenser encountered in Ireland.

Spenser's choice of language for his poem had its precedent in *SC*, but there it was justifiable as the rude speech of pastoral. Here, it is part of a strategy of archaism that parallels the arguments of Foxe and Jewell about the ancient claims of the English Church, and hints at the existence of a mysterious Faeryland beneath the tumuli and earthworks that dotted the English and Irish landscape in Spenser's day. In this British *Götterdämmerung*, Spenser is engaged in an archeological project to revive the ancient speech and hence the ancient ways, when virtue and humanity, signifier and signified, were near-allied. But he is engaged in this search for a perfect language, at least in part, for the most modern of reasons: to create a distinctive British history designed to bolster a unified Elizabethan state reinforced by a national language.



ANNOUNCEMENTS AND QUERIES

37.I33

The following **Spenser panels and events** will be held at the 2006 MLA Convention in Philadelphia, December 27-30.

Thursday, 28 December  
Richard Helgerson's Laureate Career  
8:30-9:45 a.m., 411-412, Philadelphia Marriott  
Presiding: Patricia Fumerton

Thursday, 28 December  
Executive Committee Luncheon and Business Meeting  
12:00 noon, location TBA

Friday, 29 December  
Luncheon and Business Meeting Arranged by the International Spenser Society  
12:00pm, Maggiano's Little Italy, 1201 Filbert St.

Saturday, 30 December  
Spenser's Acoustic Worlds  
1:45-3:00 p.m., 308, Philadelphia Marriott  
Presiding: Heather James

37.I34

**NEH Summer Seminar for College and University Teachers**  
The Reformation of the Book: 1450-1700

John N. King and James K. Bracken of Ohio State University will direct an NEH Summer Seminar for college and university teachers on the gradual transformation of the production, dissemination, and reading of Western European books during the 250 years following the advent of printing with movable type. In particular,

King and Bracken plan to pose the governing question of whether the advent of printing was a necessary precondition for the Protestant Reformation. They also plan to explore the related problem of whether the impact of printing was revolutionary or evolutionary. Employing key methods of the still-emerging interdisciplinary field of the History of the Book, their investigation of cultural continuity and change will entail consideration of how the physical nature of books such as *The Faerie Queene* affected ways in which readers understood and assimilated their intellectual contents. This seminar will meet from June 18 until July 20, 2007, in Antwerp and Oxford. Participants will receive a stipend of \$3,600. Citizens of the USA including independent scholars who have received the terminal degree in their field (usually the Ph.D.), American citizens teaching at colleges and universities outside of the USA, and non-US citizens who have taught and lived in the USA for at least three years prior to the participant application deadline of March 1 are eligible to apply. For further information, please contact: rankin.86@osu.edu.

37.I35

**Graduate Assistantship in Literature and Linguistics**, Department of English, University of South Carolina

Subject of Study: Syntactic analysis of sixteenth-century English poetry

Project Supervisors: Stanley Dubinsky (Dubinsky@sc.edu) David Lee Miller (DaMiller@gwm.sc.edu)

We seek applicants interested in an interdisciplinary course of study that would

culminate in a thesis analyzing the syntax of the major narrative poem in sixteenth-century England, Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*.

Applicants must qualify for admission to either the M.A. or the Ph.D. program in English at the University of South Carolina. Ideally they will have a degree either in literary study with a strong secondary interest in linguistics, or the reverse. The project supervisors will design with the successful applicant a program of graduate study leading to proficiency in both fields, in preparation for the thesis project on syntax.

The University of South Carolina Department of English offers both research and teaching assistantships to graduate students. Further information about the graduate program in English may be found at [www.cas.sc.edu/eng/grad/index.html](http://www.cas.sc.edu/eng/grad/index.html). Information about the Linguistics graduate program can be found at [www.cas.sc.edu/ling/graduate.html](http://www.cas.sc.edu/ling/graduate.html).

This solicitation is a collaborative effort involving English Department faculty affiliated with the Spenser Project and with the Linguistics Program.

South Carolina is one of four American universities collaborating on the Spenser Project, a research program coordinated by the general editors of a new edition of the poet's collected works under contract to Oxford University Press. The project's other goals include the publication of classroom texts and the creation of an extensive open-access digital archive featuring resources to support both research and teaching.

The English Department has seven faculty specializing in early modern English literature: Holly Crocker, Edward Gieskes, Nina Levine, David Lee Miller, Lawrence Rhu, Esther Richey, Andrew Shifflett.

The Linguistics Program is an interdepartmental program with core faculty

in several departments (Anthropology; English; Languages, Literatures, and Cultures; Philosophy; and Psychology). The program has four core faculty in the English Department: Dorothy Disterheft, Stanley Dubinsky, Barbara Schulz, and Tracey Weldon.

Application Deadline: January 30, 2007

Web Address for Applications: <http://www.cas.sc.edu/eng/grad/admissions.html>

For more information, contact: Dr. David Lee Miller: [DaMiller@gwm.sc.edu](mailto:DaMiller@gwm.sc.edu), 803-777-4203, 803-777-9064.

## 37.I36

An Italian publisher, the UTET in Turin, is interested in publishing a translation of the entire *The Faerie Queene* and Luca Manini has been assigned this task. The poem will come out in three volumes, with two books in each, with facing text. The first volume should be ready for publication at the end of 2007.

It will be the first Italian translation of the whole poem, since only the first book was translated in 1950.

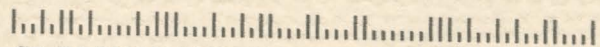


*The Spenser Review*

c/o Sheila Cavanagh  
Emory University  
Department of English  
537 Kilgo Circle, Suite N302  
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