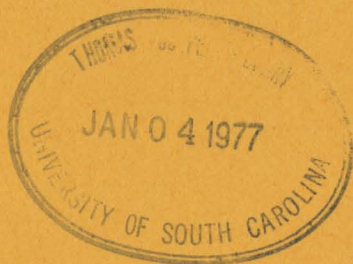


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BOOKS: REVIEWS AND ABSTRACTS

ARTICLES: ABSTRACTS AND NOTICES

DISSERTATION ABSTRACTS

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A. Kent Hieatt. *Chaucer, Spenser, Milton: Mythopoeic Continuities and Transformations*. Montreal and London, McGill-Queen's University Press, 1975. xvii + 292 pp. \$Can 20.00.

Hieatt's preface disclaims any ambition to write exhaustively or definitively about the relationships among the three poets named in the title; he suggests that his subtitle represents his own best attempt to identify his subject. More specifically, he is concerned to trace (with the rigor and punctiliousness that have distinguished his earlier writings) the continuity and transformations, from one poet to the next, of certain "myths" -- patterns of character and plot relationships -- which carry a burden of momentous ethical heritage. Breaking his study into two parts, "Chaucer and Spenser" and "Spenser and Milton," he announces from the outset his intention to attribute to each part a distinct set of moral concerns. The mythic formulations which link Chaucer and Spenser are seen to be directed against "maistrye" of all sorts in personal relationships. In the Marriage Group of the *Canterbury Tales* or in the central Books of the *Faerie Queene*, both poets explore the evils of ill-considered possessiveness in love and friendship. By contrast, the shared concern of Spenser and Milton is with "two opposed tendencies: the passionate propensity to seize credit and get ahead of others violently and fraudulently and, if we do not attain our ends, to resort to vengeance or self-destruction; and the self-indulgent propensity to throw in one's hand and retreat into any available sensual bliss without regard for the consequences..." (2) The adventures of Guyon in Book II are therefore to be seen in relation to Milton's great themes of ambition and temptation in *Comus*, *Paradise Lost*, and *Paradise Regained*.

Hieatt comments that "These two sets of ideas probably constitute the only remaining generally received moral norms in Western society, embodying as they do the imperative of the superego not to regard self;" and he urges their careful study as advanced by the three poets as providing our principal secular scripture. Indeed, this claim seems less extravagant if one considers that with a little rephrasing the two are (in reverse order) the two essential Biblical commandments to love God and to love one's neighbor as oneself. What may be more justly debated is the degree to which these moral imperatives can be systematically and even exclusively attributed to our poets -- or to poetry generally. In a sentence which seems important for its indication of the book's critical assumptions, Hieatt remarks that "The systematic literary study of Chaucer and Spenser, if not of Milton, seems to be still in its heroic age." (3) Perhaps it is true that systematic graduate students tend to become Miltonists rather than Chaucerians or Spenserians; but even so, may they not be responding to a different concern for systematic utterance in their chosen poet?

This is not to say that criticism of Spenser should be deliberately unsystematic, only that systematic study may not always produce

a steady advance of knowledge and understanding regardless of its object. And in fact, Spenserians can be grateful to Hieatt, and can use the numerous discoveries contained in this volume, without necessarily concerning themselves as to the centrality of his thesis. In opening his study of Chaucer and Spenser with the question of the specific edition of Chaucer that Spenser may have used, he provides a model of careful and incisive scholarly method, and leaves us with a sense that here, at least, seems to be a piece of Spenserian study which deserves to be called "definitive". He follows with three chapters on Chaucer which establish (as comparative studies like this are unfortunately forced to do) a "reading" of the predecessor which is presumably to be taken as a consensus shared by Spenser, Hieatt, and ourself. Chapter 3, on "The Knight's Tale, the *Teseida*, and Platonizing Influences," examines Chaucer's borrowings from and revisions of Boccaccio; the tragic vision in which Theseus is unable to assert or restore order is seen as contrary to Spenser's epic theory and/or congenital optimism. In Chapter 4, the *Parlement of Foules* is explored for its profound effect on Spenser's sense of moralized landscape as seen finally and chiefly in the *Mutabilitie Cantos*. Finally, the "Marriage Group" is briefly considered both for its continuity with Chaucer's earlier poetic development and for its enunciation of the major motifs of mastery and sufferance in sexual relationships. The link between Chaucer and Spenser is then made, not surprisingly, in chapter 6: "Spenser's Squire's Tale and Four-Groups: Libido and its Limitation". Hieatt is less concerned to speculate on the possible implications of the link to Chaucer as regards the figure of the poet taking on the mantle and the uncompleted work of his predecessor, than to show the patterns of tetrads or "four-groups" which rearrange the material of the Knight's Tale and repeatedly introduce dichotomies of liberty and mastery, concord and discord. Finally, three chapters on Amoret and Scudamour, the gardens, Britomart, and Isis and Osiris explore the major Spenserian myths in which the Chaucerian theme of mastery finds its fullest development. Hieatt's argument in these chapters is too intricate to be summarized; his conclusion is that Spenser's definition of marriage does not deny or ignore the aggressive impulse, but works with it to control or direct it: "A relationship of love and mutual freedom is established between Artegall and Britomart when the woman initially quells the male libininous mastery and competitive violence directed against her. The quelling is accomplished, however, without the establishment of a Radigund-like regiment over the male. The male then adopts the art appropriate to the situation, which is to woo the female with *gentillesse*. The result is a successful marriage from which flow momentous historical consequences. The troubles of Scudamour and Amoret are avoided; those of Marinell and Florimell scarcely enter the question." (145)

If Books III and IV have been the chief locus of reference to Spenser's debt to Chaucer, it is Book II which dominates the discussion of Spenser and Milton. Hieatt adapts an earlier essay on Milton's *Comus* and the False Genius of the Bower of Bliss, to argue that the masque (in

which the Lady, Alice Egerton, is in biographical fact step-granddaughter to Alice Spencer, the relative of the poet to whom he dedicated *Teares of the Muses* and to whom he referred as "Amaryllis" in *Colin Clouts Come Home Again* 536-43) provides a first exercise in the theme of temptation which is to constitute Milton's principal area of indebtedness to his predecessor. Chapter 12, "Milton's and Our *Faerie Queene* II," provides the ground reading of Spenser on which this indebtedness is to be constructed. Hieatt shows a primary concern for the symmetry of episodes in the Book and for the mythological or emblematic comparisons that such symmetry reveals: he argues persuasively that criticism of Book II in terms of a presumed or denied contrast of Nature and Grace has limited our view of the Book and blinded us to the structure of ideas as developed therein: "they [the ideas] are lively and compelling for us because they are embodied from the inside, so to speak, of our experience. We recognize the very feel of bitter, hopeless, jealous anger or of the drawing tides of deep-drowning sensuality. The concept of experience mimetically rendered is fundamental to Spenser's kind of allegory; the concept of an individual sundered from other individuals and developing a set of nonreversible characteristics called personality is not." (213-214) There follow chapters on "Spenser and *Paradise Lost*" and on "Spenser and *Paradise Regained*". Concluding chapters on "Symbolic Network and Rectilinear Narrative" and "Afterthoughts" lead into a series of appendices documenting some of the mythological material treated in the text of the study.

Hieatt's taste for cogently argued, abundantly documented scholarship in preference to flights of interpretative speculation has produced a volume which will be mined by subsequent Spenserians for its wealth of scholarly novelty. It will be no less useful to readers who may not share wholeheartedly in his predominantly orthodox reading of the moral stances adopted by the three poets. He does not himself discuss the "Milton Controversy" of our days; but his comparison of Spenser and Milton awakens a sense of some of its aspects. Spenserians who have found Guyon less attractive than Red Cross, in part for his not "falling", may find that Books I and II, together, provided for Milton a contrast between a "fortunate fall" and a temptation resisted which was to be the subject of his major works. Or to go back to the two moral concerns identified earlier: if it is possible to see those two imperatives as distinct, may it not follow that they are in some way contradictory or mutually exclusive? Perhaps the muddled attempt by Chaucer's narrator to describe his pilgrims "in order" suggests that the ability to see one's neighbor charitably, as "worthy" each in his own way, is essentially subversive of any hierarchical ranking. Perhaps Milton's condemnation (if it is that) of Adam for his "uxorious" failure to maintain mastery over Eve suggests that one cannot both love God and love one's neighbor as oneself? Not surprisingly, Spenser would seem to be embracing the two contraries, as usual. But although Hieatt does not address these heretical questions, nor any of those other questions of poetic influence and its related discontents which engage many critics today, he does provide a carefully reasoned foundation for all the wilder speculation which is likely to follow after him. [D. C.]

Isabel G. MacCaffrey. *Spenser's Allegory: The Anatomy of Imagination*. Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1976. xii + 445 pp. \$US 25.00; paperback edition \$US 10.50.

MacCaffrey's reading of *The Faerie Queene* makes one doubt that any theory, aesthetic or ontological, went unconsidered in Spenser's formidable mind. She sees the Spenserian canon, and *The Faerie Queene* in particular, as a vast treatise on the process of coming-to-know and on the roles of art and imagination in that process. Allegory, a model of the mind's self-discovery, enables a reader both to test the artist's experience against his own and to prepare himself for the recognition of unveiled reality should he encounter it. Imagination, Spenser demonstrates, plays the central role in human perception; through it alone can man know things as they are.

MacCaffrey's own clarity and force of focus lend clarity and focus to a work critics have often found opaque. She demonstrates that

The poem looks at itself and offers an eloquent argument for its own existence, commenting in the process upon how metaphors work, what is implied by various metaphorical and iconographical strategies, and how far we may trust the basic medium, language. (9)

The poem's goal is to make the reader aware that "a penumbra of unapprehended reality ... invisibly surrounds and controls our own lives," (86) demanding of us the same self-contemplation Prays-desire demands of Arthur. Spenser's reader is his potential hero, seeing himself reflected in the poem's allegorical (Belphebe, Talus, Una) and ecphrastic figures (Britomart, Artegall, Timias). The methods by which the poet sharpens his reader's perception, exercising his ability to survive and to understand, are illustrated by the survival and reading techniques of the poem's heroes. These approaches to reading are documented and weighed in the five major sections of *Spenser's Allegory*. Part I anatomizes the imagination, the power of mind that singles out and motivates the true Spenserian hero. Part II, "Re-Mythologizing: Book I as Context," establishes the reader as wanderer in the Wood of Error. Red Cross (and later in Part III, Britomart) becomes our model reader. Whereas he is limited to a traditional medieval allegorical reading, which none the less teaches him to find order in a paradise outside the Wood, Britomart is a more worldly reader. She learns to order and propagate the Middle Earth that Spenser assumes his reader shares. Red Cross's imagination is controlled by the single perspective of Christian vision. It moves inexorably from the Wood, through the House of Holiness and the infected Eden toward a sighted but unattainable goal -- the Heavenly Jerusalem. Britomart's imagination must, instead, learn to remain within the Wood and, surrounded by Error, to balance the spiritual and the secular. Hers, Spenser makes clear, is the more difficult of the two readings. We see in Red Cross (imagination) and

Guyon (reason) the two powers of mind she must employ, but they are -- or seem to be -- of different worlds, different genealogies.

Within a secular context, the reading offered by Red Cross is problematic. Imagination without the balance of reason and experience too easily allows the vision to become escape, harbor from the labyrinthine demands of the world. Spenser's Narrator seems tempted by this function of imagination throughout the poem, perhaps succumbing in the final stanzas. In the body of the poem, however, such misuse of imagination makes Garden, Bower, or Retreat into prison. Verdant is seen as the victim of such an infected imagination, limited by his inability to explicate Acrasia's artful version of nature. His is a "sleepy mind" and Spenser's world is no country for the sleeper. Neither is it a place for the doggedly literal mind of a Guyon who, lacking imagination, cannot dream (II.viii.4). His is a destructive single-sightedness in contrast to Red Cross's constructive imaginative vision. The latter is at least open to inspiration, Divine Grace. The former is as formidable as Talus, iron-willed, unbending, substituting book-burning for adequate reading.

MacCaffrey interprets Guyon's destruction of the Bower as "the rage of the artist who sees his gift of imagination abused by its dark twin, self-indulgent and self-destructive fantasy" (252) in the figure of Verdant. But where Guyon destroys the Bower, the poet, realizing his reader is lazy or inadequate, also admits to his own limitations, and out of love, the primary impulse, remodels and refurnishes the Bower. A loving reader like Britomart (or MacCaffrey) will respond to the effort and bring to it, as Britomart's receptiveness to instruction in the House of Busyrane suggests she can, a capable mind. The Masque of Cupid provides an example of the most self-conscious of dramatic forms, the masque, in which audience is forced to mingle with masquers in precisely the way Spenser's rhetoric forces the reader to mingle with characters in *The Faerie Queene*. Britomart learns through such experience to doubt neat distinctions drawn by Reason or Imagination. To Britomart, then, the body of the poem is addressed. Red Cross and Guyon, imagination and reason, are melded in Britomart, lending balance to her determinations and actions. She lends to them, in return, the tempering quality needed by Arthur or Calidore/Calepine, and represented symbolically by Isis, which controls the powers of the mind by love -- human love. She learns to exist creatively within the historical realm represented by the Wood: "to confront the flux and reflux of organic, temporal life" and to see how or whether "the mirror of art" aids in making such a creative adjustment. Britomart's central virtue is her sense of when it is appropriate to put aside artful disguise, however powerful such an armor may be, and accept the rhythms of nature and history (human nature). Imagination lets her understand that those rhythms reach beyond the Wood to which mortality limits us. Thus, she includes in her adjustment the values of dream and vision.

The Garden of Adonis pictures for the reader "the Heart" of Spenser's matter. It is a Wood, but not of Error, for it balances, between the poet's intellectual and imaginative perceptions of the real, the order of the world. All his "knowing" reinforces the complexity of the Garden. In it we move, not so much "up" (although we ascend the Mount) as "through a labyrinth of foliage" to "the thickest covert of that shade" -- all images we recall as terrifying to Red Cross in Book I and will discover as foreshadowing of equal terror to be confronted by characters in Book VI. But here they are benign images. Through them we descend into the womb of nature, into the caves of Spenser's mind where "in secret" lies Adonis: the unshaped "secret powers that rule our lives" as MacCaffrey sees him (4). The Garden itself teaches us that the poet's "imagination bodies forth/ The forms of things unknown" and establishes that the powers of imagination are more closely related to the processes of nature than are the powers of reason. The Garden includes, is in process, and is mutable. Reason excludes, seeks to still process and to deny mutability her reign.

Adonis is natural process, biological and artistic. Right love, represented by Venus' love of Adonis, is love that initiates and protects without limiting. Right reading is to advance without disfiguring (Busyrane disfigures, cuts the heart from the matter: Britomart would restore the figure to wholeness and then allow it, urge it, to seek its natural course). Visionary poetry stills the secret center in myth (tapestries) which reason may analyze. But the myths exist so that imagination may enter such still moments and, by moving through them, set them into motion. The business of imagination is to relate the moment to the imageless flux of the mutable world. Thus Time rightly exists in the timeless Garden. It alerts the reader to "the point at which temporality and eternity, the material and the immaterial, unite to create the source of our mixed being." (265) The generative process begins when "an immortal principle embraces a mortal being: an energy that outlasts its forms assumes a specific form." Amoret and Belphebe, for example, unite "two immortal principles: the life-force and matter." (272) Britomart, by rescuing Amoret, grasps what is accessible to mankind in the midst of that twinning. But there remains a part of the equation she cannot grasp. Timias, by renouncing the middle way, approaches pure matter, but he cannot fully know Belphebe either. To know her would be to destroy her essence. The whole, Amoret/Belphebe, the child of a dreaming nymph engendered by an enamored sun, is knowable only to imagination. The echo of the whole in Isis Church aids in the effort, as does the poem's constant search for "sources and beginnings." Appropriately the search is most obvious in the middle books where Britomart is the focus and the matter is "Lovers Deare Debate".

Man is, in Spenser's view, an amphibian being, like the legendary Merlin and Arthur born in and returning to the waters. In the midst,

he adapts to or struggles against "the geographic and temporal limits that straiten the [poem's] characters." (103) Once revealed, imagination can extend these same limits, making them metaphors of the infinite processes which we believe rule our lives. Spenser's Garden of Adonis is such an "aeviternal" image, mediating between "men in the midst and their ultimate destination." (276) Timias, awakening in Belpheobe's bower, mistakes her for an angel because the traditional aeviternal mediator in the Judaeo-Christian code is the angel. And she is to be his means of ascent, as Gloriana is Arthur's. "God descends to man through such 'ensamples,' and through them we reascend to him. Planting and growing 'up' make an inevitable metaphor for this process." (277)

Spenser's solacing Angel is Christianity. It is presented undisguised in Books I and VII. In between the reader encounters the poet attempting to prepare himself and the reader to seek the Christian way not as an escape but out of love. This is possible only if the understanding has been refined, as Red Cross's is, but on the vertical plane of this world where no House of Holiness, no Una exists. The vision must be gained through Fidessa/Duessa and is too often glimpsed as hindsight. Even hindsight must be experienced at first hand: that is why the poet's record of his own firsthand encounter with the Garden exists at the poem's center. There the veil of fiction is rent. The poet exposes himself to Mutability, the Wood of Error, self, and reader. His arrival cannot be ours but can serve us as a clue. It becomes more powerful as other clues join it and our minds use them to make independent visions of the Garden. The reverberations of the poet's image thus becomes "eterne in Mutabilitie." The value of MacCaffrey's reading is that it traces the response of a reader who seems, as a consequence of Spenser's effort, to have experienced the center herself and to have taken to herself the task of reinforcing the poet's clues for others.

The Faerie Queene does not conclude, of course. It breaks off and exists, as a consequence, in the same aeviternity encountered in the Garden of Adonis. It becomes a cosmic poem, but one anchored, as *Paradise Lost* is not, to a poet's attempt to shed the concept of "upward mobility" that has shaped the mental processes of western man. He does not deny that the desire for Paradise is laudatory; but he sees that "the effort to actualize paradise and live there is satanic." (344) Within its fallen geography the human mind must be content to actualize a "Paradise Within". Part IV of MacCaffrey's study examines Spenser's vision of such a place wrought by imagination in the central vision of Book VI, Colin's dance of the Graces. What stands between the hero/reader and that consummate vision is the Blatant Beast, whom he must seek even when he attempts not to do so. That quest is the preoccupation of human systems of justice and courtesy. The Narrator, as the Proem to Book VI admits, is equally involved with the Beast although he realizes he must attempt to deny the quest and seek again the heart of the matter, "the sacred nourser". Calidore, literal-minded as Guyon, responds to Melibee's discourse and to that need with the same literal-mindedness: the

pastoral becomes an escape from nature rather than a mirror of nature.

Despite his hero's literal-mindedness, Spenser manipulates his matter so that Calidore comes within touching distance of the central vision of the poem. That Calidore cannot keep his hands off, as Timias keeps his off Belpheobe, is in keeping with the character who pipes the Beast into Melibee's metaphor. The reader is reminded that love of the real beings of middle earth lies at the center, that "epiphanies are conjured into view by the poet's wit rather than by the effortful deservingness of any questing knight." (371) "A poem is both made and found, the product of both inspiration and labor ... a confirmation of the power of words," (381) an attempt to accomplish for man in the midst what the House of Holiness, Una, and Grace accomplish for Red Cross in the simplified world of allegory. What is missing is the willingness, "at the heart of Christian heroism" and of Britomart's heroism, "to resign ... will into the hands of another power." (388) Colin's vision unites the realms of art and nature. It allows the poet to claim that art and love are -- or can be -- complementary powers. Their function as a whole, as complements, depends upon the reader.

The reader must not, as Calidore and Arthur do, destroy the paradise within "with mimetic literalness" by breaking the fiction's frame. (392) Instead, readers of middle earth must be content to sense truth, indeed to follow it without understanding it. The Blatant Beast blurs the boundaries of Spenser's fiction when the poet's involvement with the 1590's enters too literally into the poem's allegorical landscape. "Like Serena in the woods, the poet awakens from his nightmare and finds it truth." (401) Such unity comes only in "some ultimate kingdom" (396) which the poet can suggest but cannot enter. To attempt to do so destroys the artful illusion of Spenser's allegory. Perhaps, as focus or limit is necessary to a critical work, conclusion or explosion is necessary to a work of art. One of Spenser's points is that the human mind cannot tolerate what is incomplete. *Mutabilitie* is ultimately alien to our nature, seems to us a denizen of the Wood of Error although the poet attempts to help us see her as a part of the Garden of Adonis. Conflict is finally too "irksome" an environment: we impose order (Time) on the Garden, denying what may at least be aeviternity because we cannot comprehend eternity. The alternative seems to be wordlessness. "So the final stanza of *Mutabilitie* takes us beyond vision. The poet ceases to be the active shaper of an allegorical poem. He utters a prayer, which ends in silence and passivity ... Only God can write the ultimately satisfying poem, and it will not be an allegorical fiction." (432) Meanwhile, the poet is left absorbed by grief for monuments defaced by the Blatant Beast and "for the fading, fickle beauty of mortal lives." (430) In the world of Time, perhaps art's ultimate message is the sorrowful truth that the center of reality, change and death, is also beautiful. MacCaffrey goes a step further, suggesting that the great poem ends with a repudiation of the human power to create: "the temptation to make eternal monuments is demonic" (431) -- perhaps as demonic as

attempting to live in paradise. Such paradises may be simply "golden substitutes," easily mistaken for the real as Calidore mistakes Melibee's kingdom for a real alternative. Red Cross, forewarned, turns from the Heavenly City, content or resigned to encounter it in the fullness of time.

MacCaffrey's reading of *The Faerie Queene* is one of the most exciting quests that I have followed among the Spenserian critics-errant. I sense that she, like Britomart, comes as close to the biological and spiritual heart of the poem as one may at the remove of the language of reason: "Discursive verbalization punctuates the process, summing up a conscious position at a particular stage, but it must be, and always is, superseded by a renewed complexity of imaginative apprehension and a further, more adequate clarification." (52) This is a book which will inspire many future intrusions of reason and imagination into the fertile geography of *The Faerie Queene*. [M. W. C.]

ARTICLES: ABSTRACTS AND NOTICES

Jerome S. Dees, "The Narrator of *Christs Victorie and Triumph*: What Giles Fletcher Learned from Spenser," *English Literary Renaissance*, 6 (1976), 453-65.

Introductions to Seventeenth-Century poetry which speak of Spenser's influence on Giles Fletcher overlook the latter poet's indebtedness to Spenser in the development of a narrative voice and strategy which imitate Spenser's but at the same time discover and explore implications which were in *The Faerie Queene* only peripheral. The narrator of *Christs Victorie and Triumph* is presented as an individual straining to retain his grasp on a timeless reality transcending his powers of comprehension. This he does by constantly blending narrative with meditation, and chiefly by distorting narrative detail to conform to the meditative operations and the idiosyncrasies of a mind for which, because of the sacrifice of Jesus, precise temporal distinctions have ceased to matter. Fletcher finds impulse for this narrative-lyric strategy in the way in which Spenser's narrator, in the final three books of *The Faerie Queene*, becomes increasingly personal and reflexive in his yearning for release from the burden of the poem. But whereas in *The Faerie Queene* poetic meaning resides in tensions between the teller and the tale, in *Christs Victorie and Triumph* meaning lies in the representation of a mind which will not allow the narrative to assume an objectivity but constantly shapes it to its personal preoccupations. [J. S. D.]

Haruhiko Fujii, "A Reading of Spenser's *Prothalamion*," *Poetica* (Tokyo), 4 (1976), 50-59.

Prothalamion's visionary world, for all its aura of the mythological, ideal, and eternal, is seen to be permeated with an alien

mutability. This ambivalence is traced through the imagery of the ideal day ("gentle", but uncomfortably "hot", etc.) and of the swans (suggestive of the chastity of the betrothed and, Leda-like, violent passion and disharmonious conflict in married life). The river journey moves from vision to actuality, towards a London which is a symbol of the real world.

Lynn de Gerenday, "The Problem of Self-Reflective Love in Book III of *The Faerie Queene*," *Literature and Psychology*, 26 (1976) 37-48.

Book III of *The Faerie Queene* is a multiple exposition of the unifying theme of love as a force for creation and destruction, as centrally expressed in the opening stanza of canto v. The "variable kinds" of love in the negative extremes of self-preservation and self-immolation lead toward frustration, inertia, and sterility, while love as the "most sacred fyre" generates committed action. The "passions in the mind," the fantasies and fears in love, are emblematically portrayed in the tapestries and Masque of Cupid at the House of Busirane; these same forces threaten human lovers: Marinell's commitment to perfection, characterized by possessiveness, assertiveness, and defense of solitude, leads to melancholia sensed as death; Florimell's commitment to completion, characterized in this book by mindless flight and undifferentiated fear of all masculine pursuers, leads to melancholia sensed as the death of the self in her object of love, Marinell. Timias, caught between his idealization of Belphebe (Diana's foster child) as a courtly mistress and his own exaggerated sense of unworthiness, succumbs to paralyzing self-abandonment; Belphebe's reaction to being perceived as an ideal is to become a cruel mistress, committed to chastity but thriving on Timias' worshipful devotion. While Arthur and Britomart have often been described by critics as complete in their steadfast quest for the love which leads to "noble deedes and never dying fame," both endure crises of despair at the unsubstantial nature of their ideal lovers. Arthur's night of spiritual crisis, "In restlesse anguish and unquiet paine," and Britomart's mirror scene and subsequent night, "Sad, solemne, sowre, and full of fancies fraile," suggest intense ambivalence in their quests. It is crucial to note, however, that both these scenes of hesitation precede the great stanzas on the nature of Love, stanza 1 of canto v and stanza 1 of canto iii, in which true love is associated with action and with loyalty to "first pursuits".

[L. de G.]

Jonathan Goldberg, "The Mothers in Book III of *The Faerie Queene*," *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*, 17 (1975), 5-26.

In Book III the feminine experience centers on the acceptance of the maternal role. With an elaborateness and density of argument that summary can barely suggest, the progresses of the female characters are traced under the archetype of the transforming Earth Mother, in whom creation and conception meet with death and destruction, and

who is seen to be present both as the material world of the Garden of Adonis and as the transcendent "matrix of destiny".

The individual and the superpersonal constantly interpenetrate. Thus Britomart seeks an Arthegall born of her own imagination in a world of perverse and emasculating femininity symbolized by the Venus and Adonis tapestries. But the maternal role of Britomart's quest is defined by a Venus who is creative rather than destructive, and whose superpersonal maternity, in the Garden of Adonis, through generation prefigures regeneration.

Thus the Garden links the Demeter and the Proserpina myths, the latter suggesting feminine transformation: each of the characters suffers assaulted identity and symbolic loss of maidenhood, followed by initiation into a newfound identity of spiritual maternity. The Palace of Busirane with its tapestry images of human suffering suggests the other side of the paradox that relates creation and destruction. There Britomart passes through a ritual initiation which culminates afterwards in a spiritualized maternal pleasure.

Carol V. Kaske, "The Bacchus Who Wouldn't Wash: *Faerie Queene* II.i-ii," *RQ*, 29 (1976), 195-209.

The episode of the Nymph's Well is shown to derive from two sources, one classical and one Biblical. An epigram of Meleager in the *Greek Anthology* IX.331 combines the crucial elements in Spenser's allusion: "When the child Bacchus leaped from the fire, and had just been rolling in the ashes, the Nymphs washed him. Therefore with the Nymphs Bromius is kindly, but if you keep them from mingling, you will take a fire that is still burning." To a degree previously unrecognized, Ruddymane recapitulates elements in the story of Bacchus' birth: Amavia recalls that "the Nymphes ... my midwives were" (i.53); and he is said to have been "in dead parents balefull ashes bred" (ii.2). Spenser could have known the epigram directly, or via such intermediaries as Conti, Alciati, or Erasmus. Another possible intermediary, Pontus de Tyard, links the motif to a specific, metamorphosed nymph, Clitorie, whose name in Ovid (*Met.* XV.322-8) is that of an anti-wine fountain. In presenting this portmanteau allusion, Spenser inverts a traditional emblem of temperance by showing that the linking of Bacchus and the Nymph is fatal to Mortdant and ineffectual in washing Ruddymane's hands. Spenser could have found the washing of a bloody babe in Ezekiel 16. Commentators prior to Spenser and contemporary with him find the Biblical passage allusive to original sin; some also find a reference in it to an attempted but ineffectual washing. Whether Spenser's nymph symbolizes the limitations of classical asceticism, or those of the Old Law, recognition of the classical and Biblical sources of the episode clarifies the predominantly pessimistic emphases in the earlier incidents of Book II.

David R. Shore, "Colin and Rosalind: Love and Poetry in the *Shepherd's Calendar*," *SP*, 73 (1976), 176-188.

Recent critical responses to Colin misrepresent Spenser's text because the critics have failed to acknowledge the conventions the poet employs. There are two kinds of pastoral literature in the *Calendar*. The elegiac and panegyric modes are contained by pastoral but do not depend on the shepherd-poet's song; Arcadia itself is defined in terms of the poet's personal responses to love, nature, and his own art. "March" begins this sometimes painful awakening. Colin's experience differs from the tradition in that his effort fails. Rosalind is unobtainable. In loving her, Colin commits himself to an impossible goal within a convention where the normal object of love is lowly but obtainable. Rosalind becomes for Colin instead an objective much like the lady in the courtly love tradition. Addressing her, he begins a transformation from one mode of poetry into another where the lover's worthiness is measured by the distance of the lady and the impossibility of the goal. The poetry that has been the result of such aspiration (Dante's *Vita Nuova*, Petrarch's *Canzoniere*) transforms Rosalind by the time Spenser returns to her in *Colin Clouts Come Home Again*. There, the poet has returned from his encounter with that courtly audience which Cuddie knew in "October" he must experience.

"August" contrasts the rustic songs of Willie and Perigot with Colin's already sophisticated sestina. "June" prepares the reader for such a comparison by an examination of the strengths and limitations of the shepherd's art. Such an analysis is appropriate at the midpoint of the *Calendar* if the poet is indeed undergoing a process destined to separate him from the pastoral and "presume to Parnasse hyll." To make the move, he must cease to act like a shepherd and become the urbane poet for whom songs of praise and blame, competition and fame, are appropriate. One senses his reluctance to confront in poetry the problems of unrequited love and unredeemed time and to become the sonneteer of the *Amoretti*. Within Arcadia, Colin is limited to the complaint. But the complaints themselves are of a calibre that already transcends the normal limits of the pastoral. The process of creating them has already brought the poet wisdom and maturity beyond his audience as the "December" eclogue makes clear. His vision of the world's mutability drains "pleasance" from the landscape. The pastoral becomes for the heightened imagination a revelation of the fallen world. Although Colin is, at the end of the poem, potentially a greater poet, there is a note of sorrow at what has been destroyed as Spenser leaves the pastoral mode to approach the world in which he himself will sing the praises of the Faerie Queen.

DISSERTATION ABSTRACTS

Fuller descriptions of these dissertations may be found in *DAI*; *SpW* provides here only portions of the authors' abstracts. Copies of the

dissertations themselves may be purchased, at a flat rate of \$US 7.50 per microfilm copy or \$US 15 per xerographic copy (for academics in U.S., as of Oct. 1, 1975; others should write for applicable prices), from Xerox University Microfilms, Dissertation Copies, Post Office Box 1764, Ann Arbor, Mich. 48106; orders should provide publication number and author's name.

Baumgartner, Virginia, *Irish Elements in Spenser's Faerie Queene*. Columbia University, 1972. DAI, 37:324A. Order No. 76-16,348, 223 pages. "The study discusses the imagery and ideas which Spenser's Irish experience provided for his creative work. To place these materials in perspective, it summarizes the events of the eighteen years during which the poet lived in Ireland and introduces his literary, social, and political acquaintances. Materials for the discussion of Irish history and customs during this period are drawn both from the native perspective and from the accounts of her English adversary, including the comments in Spenser's *Vewe of the Present State of Ireland*...The Irish elements which may be discerned in Spenser's poetry fall into two categories: specific echoes of Irish geography, language, or custom, and those more ambiguous characterizations, physical settings, and themes which seem to be associated with Ireland and her inhabitants. For this reason, the discussion of the poetry is divided into two chapters which observe this distinction...There is an increasing incidence of Irish material in the later books of *The Faerie Queene*, reflecting Spenser's extended sojourn in that land and his growing perception of the world around him. The study concludes that the attitude which Spenser displays toward Ireland in the poetry is twofold: his descriptions of the beauties of the land and his use of local legends reflect his affection for his adopted homeland, while in all of the other contexts Ireland and the Irish are depicted in negative terms -- always as villains, threats, evils -- quite in keeping with the conventional attitudes he expresses in the *Vewe*."

Farukhi, Suraiya, *Pagan-Christian Typology in Spenser's Faerie Queene*. Oklahoma State University, 1975. DAI, 36:6700A. Order No. 76-9667, 153 pages. "This dissertation attempts to find pagan "types" in the "allegorical cores" of each of the books of *The Faerie Queene* and attempts to demonstrate these types as prefigurations or adumbrations of Christian events, personages and settings. The work concerns itself only with the most significant mythological characters, settings and events in the central episodes of each book ... Spenser dexterously uses one type as adumbrating and foreshadowing various antitypes instead of the conventional one type-one antitype relationship. Moreover, through pagan-Christian typology, Spenser is able to successfully synthesize the Christian and the humanist traditions, and yet point out the superiority of the Christian viewpoint."

Hutchinson, Mary Anne, *The Devil's Gateway: The Evil Enchantress in Ariosto, Tasso, Spenser, and Milton*. Syracuse University, 1975. DAI, 36:6656A. Order No. 76-7653, 234 pages. "Milton's departure from the

traditional representation of woman as evil temptress, as the tool of the devil, lends new validity to a stock type which had greatly degenerated from the complexities of Tasso's Armida into the grotesques of Phineas Fletcher. In his portraits of Comus, Dalila, Satan, and Eve, Milton uses the conventions of the tradition of the enchantress to reinforce an unconventional treatment of these figures. The allegorical significance of the Circe figure and the Christian iconographical tradition of woman as evil provide the tenor for a long tradition of which the fairy mistress of medieval romance was the vehicle. In the romantic epics of the Italian Renaissance, those of Boiardo, Ariosto, and Tasso, the figure of the temptress moves from one of sheer magic to one whose allegorical meaning is unmistakable. Only Tasso's Armida, whose character is determined by her unique role as both temptress and heroine, departs significantly from a growing consideration of the enchantress as gateway of the devil. In the English epics of Spenser and his successor, the temptress first becomes more dangerous and then degenerates into little more than a moral emblem whose representation embodies the nature of her evil. Working with this stale convention, Milton employs aspects of the tradition to enhance his portrayals of Comus, Dalila, and Satan as well as minor figures in *Paradise Lost*. With Eve, he internalizes the role of the temptress so that she, while remaining relatively innocent and unaware of the danger she presents, embodies for Adam many of the qualities explicit in traditional representations of the enchantress."

Krause, John James, *Elizabeth and Isis: Spenser's Vision of The Faerie Queene*. Ohio University, 1975. DAI, 36:6706A. Order No. 76-8888, 165 pages. "Spenser incorporates the Renaissance understanding of Egypt and its mythologies into the center of his vision of *The Faerie Queene*. Renaissance Egyptology was an amalgam of classical histories, like those of Diodorus and Herodotus; studies in comparative religion, like Plutarch's *De Iside et Osiride*, and Jamblichus' *De Mysteriis Aegyptorum*; fanciful intellectual histories like those evidenced by the Hermetic tradition which saw the wisdom of Egypt as part of a sacred, poetic theology on which the greatest of thinkers, Plato, was nourished; and miscellaneous works too difficult to categorize, like Apuleius' *Golden Ass* and Giordano Bruno's *Lo Spaccio Della Bestia Trionfante*. The influence of these myths of Egypt are most clearly manifest in Books III, IV, and V of the poem, the Books that contain the parallel stories of Britomart-Artegall and Florimell-Marinell. It is the central myth of the Egyptian religion, the myth of Isis and Osiris, that defines these stories. This is most clearly evident in the Isis Church episode in Book V, an episode wherein Britomart literally becomes the Egyptian goddess, Isis. In so doing, Britomart becomes the embodiment of the union of Elizabeth and Isis, which, as representative of the union of Elizabethan England with the best of antiquity, is central to Spenser's vision of *The Faerie Queene*. The myth of Isis and Osiris, especially as it is explained by Plutarch, is central too to the culminating episode in the Florimell-Marinell story, the episode presenting the great marriage of rivers. Here, Spenser complements the dynastic aspect of the myth presented in the Britomart story with the natural (physical) aspect of the union of Isis

and Osiris as the union of earth (Florimell) and water (Marinell) while at the same time emphasizing again the marriage of England and ancient Egypt. That marriage is embodied in Thames and Isis, the ancient parents at the "spousalls." And, to complete the parallel, both stories incorporate the hopeful image of rebirth, the figure of Horus produced of the union of Isis and Osiris.

From these Books, Spenser moves in Book VI from ancient, pre-historic myth to civilized myth. Here too, Spenser invokes Renaissance Egyptology, this time in the figure of the Egyptian Hercules. The Egyptian Hercules' strength was based on his powers of eloquence, not on his brawn. Spenser effects this transformation in the poem by effecting the transfer of the role of Herculean hero from the savage Artegall to the civil Calidore, whose courtesy and strength of character lay in his mastery of the art of civil conversation. In so doing Spenser moves from concern with a just order based on power to a concern with a just order based on the right use of language. This concern, based on the theory of language in Plato's *Cratylus* -- a theory which the Florentine Neoplatonists fused with their understanding of the Egyptian hieroglyph -- saw the poet as instrumental in preserving the right use of language and therefore instrumental in maintaining a just order. This is evident in another transformation that takes place in Book VI. In earlier Books, the power to interpret the mysteries of the visions presented to the questing heroes was given to the sage, the priest, or the wizard; in Book VI, this power is given to the poet, Colin Clout. And in the final ... *Cantos of Mutability*, we see the poet, Spenser, concerned with this very power. The power of the hieroglyph was, as Ficino said, to comprehend the "whole discourse in one stable image." It is this power, this vision, a hermetic vision, that we hear the poet plead for in the final *Cantos* of the poem, the plea for "that Sabaoths sight."

White, Robert Ashlin, *The Place of Comedy in the Narrative of The Faerie Queene*. University of Kansas, 1975. DAI, 37:345A. Order No. 76-16,793, 237 pages. "Comic episodes in *The Faerie Queene*, a section of "The Teares of the Muses," and two short poems from the *Amoretti* show that Spenser subscribed to the Renaissance distinction (most clearly stated by Sidney) between the comedy of laughter and the comedy of delight. His comedy of laughter, like that of the medieval morality plays, is used primarily as an instrument of moral instruction, especially as it ridicules villains (Orgoglio, the Dragon, Lust); and it clearly reflects several of the author's neo-Platonic and Christian beliefs. The most important of these are that man needs divine grace to survive, and that evil, although powerful, is doomed to ultimate defeat. In using laughter to attack even the deadliest of sins, Spenser departs from the theory, taken by Renaissance commentators from Aristotle, Cicero, and Quintilian, that comedy should concern itself only with man's lesser flaws. Spenser's comedy of delight, on the other hand, declares an enthusiastic acceptance of human nature and is especially important in characterizing the poem's major heroes and heroines, particularly Britomart. Although Spenser skillfully uses both kinds of comedy...he makes each subordinate to his central purpose of moral instruction."

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