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BOOKS: REVIEWS AND ABSTRACTS

ARTICLES: ABSTRACTS AND NOTICES

SPENSER AT MLA

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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BOOKS: REVIEWS AND ABSTRACTS

Judith H. Anderson. *The Growth of a Personal Voice: 'Piers Plowman' and 'The Faerie Queene'*. New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1976. ix + 240 pp. \$US 15.00.

"Held close to *The Faerie Queene* -- held, as it were, behind Spenser's poem -- *Piers Plowman* looks in large structural and conceptual ways like a grid for it, a grid in part literary and in part intellectual. But although I am persuaded that *Piers Plowman* influenced Spenser's major work, it would be sufficient for my purposes if questions of direct influence were left in abeyance and apparent influence were considered the result of more general relationships and developments between the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance."

(2) Yet Anderson's extended comparison makes more than a casual argument that *Piers Plowman* is, indeed, a grid for *The Faerie Queene*, and the argument is important on several levels. Primarily it is important because it throws light both on Langland's and on Spenser's achievement. But it also suggests that English writers -- or at least Spenser and his heirs -- are the inheritors of a native tradition at least as rich as the more frequently examined classical tradition. In fact, their classical models do not, as Anderson shows, offer a comparable dream vision. The English dream vision is unique in that it interiorizes and personalizes allegory, providing thereby a "way of organizing and conceiving experience, and a way of exploring the self while searching for Love and Truth." (3) *Piers'* dream vision functions in *The Faerie Queene* as an "inner, echoing poem." And Anderson's comparison functions by examining first the source of the echo in *Piers Plowman*; then the echo in *The Faerie Queene* is sounded; finally, speculations about the growth of the personal voice in both source and vibrating successor are ventured. The more personal the voices become, the more subjective and relative Truth and Love appear to the poets. The inevitable end of such a process is the metamorphosis of allegory into the personal symbolism of Romantic poetry. Though neither Langland nor Spenser is seen as completing a full metamorphosis, *Piers* and *The Faerie Queene* together trace the evolution of a fully self-conscious voice. By seeing the latter poem against the former, Anderson clarifies the poets' increasing sense of their own functions and responsibility, suggesting in the process how characters, incidents, landscapes, and symbols (including the poems' narrators and the stories they unfold) serve to share that growing self-awareness with the reader.

Langland states in his Prologue that his Narrator is a Dreamer whose awareness is a satiric disguise. His narrator cannot rationalize; he sees and reports. It is his poet whose voice is behind that of the Narrator and makes the reader aware that there is a meaning in the dream that must be analyzed. Hence, the field of vision is doubled and perhaps tripled by a kind of dramatic irony. What we see is "experiential and erratic" (13) rather than static and predictable

as allegory is assumed to be. The Prologue prepares the reader to step into the body of a dream vision in which the traditional search of the Narrator for a moral order (Truth) becomes the poet's search for the validity of his art -- of language itself. And that, in turn, becomes more and more obviously a search for right perception, right reading, which involves the reader directly and subjectively in the poem. Truth rests on the reader's ability to "know what words and traditional answers can really mean, given human nature and the nature of this world." (14)

In *The Shepheardes Calender*, Anderson sees Spenser tied to a form that prevents him from overcoming temporal limitations. *The Faerie Queene*, both by abandoning the pastoral and by beginning in the pastoral, shows first that man's Error is his limited perception of the natural world that surrounds and overwhelms him. Red Cross, like Langland's Dreamer, is Everyman confronting that Error. The shift to epic does not allow a clearer vision, but it does prepare the reader to hear the voice of the poet beneath that of the Narrator. Consequently, by the time Spenser returns to the pastoral mode in Book VI, we are ready to encounter the natural order with a different awareness, a new perception. We have seen that classical order, like that offered by the Dreamer's Holy Church and by Red Cross' Contemplation, is but a rationalized version of nature. Spenser's poet will not become the Narrator's Will as Anderson feels the *Piers* poet does, but he takes "a form significantly comparable to Langland's" (22) in that it relies on the reader's understanding of the relationship of poet and narrator in the dream vision tradition. Langland had begun to push outside accepted limitations, enabling Spenser to surpass him and reach, finally, to intimations of a "Sabaoths sight".

The public role played by Spenser's Narrator in the poems parallels that played by the Prologue Narrator in *Piers*. But that public persona is only one of several narrative postures assumed in either poem and is of least concern in the development of the private, personal voice. "Another voice, a narrative presence which enters the fiction, is [Anderson's and the reader's] immediate concern:"

In reading *The Faerie Queene*, we sense this presence subtly more often than we meet it directly or with sudden force, but it is close enough to the surface of the fiction to appear suggestively in Redcrosse's battle with Error and more unmistakably in his descent into hell, and even to break into the middle of the fiction, as it does in the tenth canto of Book I and with redoubled energy and insistence in later Books. In *Piers Plowman*, characters and situations, verbal, figural, and rhythmic surfaces, display a freedom (occasionally a license) which the mind effects on its own terms; a similar freedom touches the heart of Spenser's poem. As in *Piers*

Plowman, its expression varies as the poem develops. (23)

The symbolism is clear. The narrators are, themselves, blind to the meaning of their experience. The poets become their optic nerves, transmitting raw experience to the mind of their readers where it is focused. The clarity and permanence of the vision depends on whether the reader more closely shares the Dreamer's or the poet's persona: in either case, the reader is kept constantly in motion, constantly countered in his attempts to either stay the action or give a rational, systematic, traditional order to what he perceives. "The restless movement of [the Dreamer's] mind -- or words -- depicts the waking-sleeping state of mankind ... This is the state of awareness and bewilderment, of fragmentation and wholeness." (14)

The *Faerie Queene* Narrator and the *Piers* Dreamer share with the reader a need "for unified meaning, for a continuity of being and experience." (14) *Piers* itself records the poet's own personal discovery of relativity as the reality of nature and of the word. Spenser, therefore, can begin his poem by taking his personal belief in the mutability of nature and language for granted. Consequently, Spenser's Narrator seems less a dreamer than a ventriloquist (26) as Book I continues. He is active, dramatic, personal where the *Piers* Narrator is passive. Anderson suggests, however, that the seeming passivity may embrace an active struggle between Langland's Will and ideal Plowman, anticipating more modern dream theory. The dream certainly fragments the dreamer's perceptions of reality within the limitations of human error. And *The Faerie Queene* imitates and expands upon that fragmentation. In fact, it is exactly Red Cross' naive belief that he has conquered error that permits a comforting vision of order to become a part of his regaining of health after he has been similarly fragmented. Red Cross sleeps more and more frequently as Book I unfolds. The initial power Archimago reveals is the power to control dream; thereafter, Anderson notes, there is "a gradual blurring of the distinction between the states of waking and sleeping and a concomitant weakening of Redcrosse's rationally conscious will." (30) In *The Faerie Queene* hero, narrator, and poet battle illusion. Appropriately, then, "the poem moves more and more deeply into an inner landscape;" (31) metaphorically the move is into the "wiðe deepe" (32) where benighted wayfarers find themselves.

The reader is reminded that, like the Narrator, Red Cross needs balance. Survival instinct rather than awareness dictates his willingness to acknowledge the New Jerusalem. Perhaps Spenser and Langland both suggest that pure awareness is a luxury reserved for those who are released by Will or Imagination from the basic struggle for survival. Awareness of the overwhelming odds against the survival of any single individual would plunge most protagonists into the depths of despair. Yet Spenser's Narrator walks constantly on the verge of that awareness. His narrative presence,

once sensed by the reader, keeps reminding the reader that it is the strength of the Narrator's unconscious will to endure that keeps his creatures -- Red Cross through Calidore -- from seeing what is increasingly more obvious in the poem: that relativity permeates the fabric of whatever order (pastoral, heroic, Christian) their creator selects as their field of action. The field of action becomes the field of the reader's vision once it has become that for the poet. The poets' role in the poems, then, is to keep the fabric of the poem permeable, allowing glimpses of the unseen and undreamed of depths to enrich (or darken) each of the Narrator/Dreamer's conceits. What remains most significant is that *The Faerie Queene* is not a dream, that it is "an image, a creative reflection in words, of life." (49) To be aware that dreams are relative is a far cry from Langland's discovery (and Spenser's given) that "the line between living and dreaming is not very distinct and is, perhaps, not real at all. For better or for worse, the line is relative, not absolute: 'We are such stuff/ As dreams are made on' -- a harshly ironic reflection on our nature if we think of Redcrosse's false Una, or Langland's friars or Lady Meed, but an ideal reflection, a hope and a faith, if we think of the Faerie Queene or Piers Plowman, neither of whom appears in these poems except in a dream." (49)

The reader, then, must learn to adapt his perception to a number of juxtaposed postures. The poets evolve both within and between every section of *Piers* and every Book of *The Faerie Queene*; and we must be sure we perceive their postures correctly in order to weigh the value of their observations. As obvious voices within the poem, they are subject to the same limitations that inform Milton's poetry of choice. Once Guyon or Britomart picks up the burden of humankind's quest for unified order (or survival), neither can be trusted as a commentator. Nor can any of those other guides encountered in the poems who are themselves committed to a given order. After the encounter with Mammon, restraint leaves Guyon much as it leaves Conscience in Langland's *Visio* once Lady Meed is confronted. Thereafter Guyon and Conscience lead the reader into a confrontation with sin itself -- the ultimate confrontation. The telling point is whether human nature allows us to perceive that the true antagonist is our guides' own determination to survive. Meed and Mammon would help them stop us short of that realization. Only the sudden appearances of the poems' saviour figures, Piers and Arthur, save the heroes themselves from the fatal perception.

In any case, Anderson's discussion leaves little doubt that Langland's *Visio* is "a poetic source, presumably known to Spenser, which is close, perhaps closer than any other, to the essential meaning of the Cave of Mammon -- closer to the whole of it, not merely to a few of its parts." (76) The secular pursuits of man go on outside "rational moral order"; that realization, reached in *Piers* when the poet attempts a return to medieval faith, lies

at the base of much sixteenth-century thought. Consequently, once Spenser has traced Langland's original growth toward awareness in Books I and II, he has prepared his reader for further modification of his idea of order. Books III and IV are expansions of Passūs XII-XIV. Again, what was for Langland discovery is for Spenser a given. It is the figure of Imaginative -- "reason using the resources of the imagination in an imaginatively reasonable way" (84) -- that Langland discovers and Spenser exploits. Langland's personal confusion leads him to revise his text (A, B, C versions); Spenser imitates the revision in order to keep the reader from overcoming his confusion. In fact, what he does is expand the confusion to Britomart and Arthur. Anderson suggests that III.iv becomes the "self-conscious imaginative act for the poet" (108) that is missing in *Piers*. Britomart's lament illustrates his dilemma. She sees that she must shape nature (the future) and yet is aware that she herself is being shaped by impersonal forces. The dramatic activity of her quest is not so effective a shaper as are the words of her lament, the poet's element confronting the deep.

Arthur's lament echoes hers as well as such earlier laments as Acrasia's Song of the Rose. Anderson's sense is not that Spenser is controlling these echoes -- at least the totality of them -- but indeed that "the poet overhears them himself" and is led as his readers are to see that they reveal the process of the poet's mind. (110) Thus, in Book III, the poet's surrogate, Arthur, addresses Night and confronts (as the poet must) a force more primal than the object of Britomart's lament. Duessa's journey to Mother Night in Book I permeates this lament, taking it to depths beyond the order imposed by the life force -- the sea -- Britomart had confronted. Arthur takes us close to anarchy, to that inner psychological darkness which launches Red Cross into the seas of his own chaotic passions in Book I. But these are Spenser's own inner stretches and only the process of creation -- the remainder of the poem -- can lend order to that darkness. The tension of the rest of *The Faerie Queene* rises from our sense that the poet, unlike the armed Narrator, might fail. Thus, ironically, the laments are themselves ordering devices; indeed they are the oldest ordering device of the Anglo-Saxon tradition. Through them, Britomart and Arthur save themselves from Malbecco's fate. Neither becomes an allegorical figure, the metaphor of the passion that controls his/her imagination. Isn't the Narrator so translated? He is nothing other than the teller of the tales that obsess his imagination. And the poet? Busirane, whose masque will conclude the third Book, is threatening precisely because he realizes that ultimate control comes not from Archimago's manipulation of our dreams or Acrasia's of our sexuality but from manipulation of the imagination. What saves the poet from becoming Busirane?

The masque itself suggests that control of social role -- of

masks -- is the underlying problem, one Langland anticipated in Piers' attempt to establish a community within the natural world. His failure precipitates the pilgrimage which simplifies the ordering (as Chaucer would agree). The poet can order natural process as Spenser does in the marriage of the Thames and Medway, or human process (quest, pilgrimage); but attempts to juxtapose orders seem unsuccessful. Lakes of lethargy, Bowers of Bliss, Melibee's pastoral retreat, all lack the energy of nature. Therefore it is in Book IV that the poet's presence is most enigmatic. No mask suffices for him to survive in the woods and seas through which characters move in that Book. His role is in the process of definition; he and his reader must learn to see in a new way. The process is, as Anderson says, "revisionary". (114) Once we have experienced it, it will force us to see the first three Books anew. Its continuance throughout the remainder of the poem will require revision upon revision.

Langland is more blatant about the relativity of the past in his Passūs X and XI; but both he and Spenser express a new self-awareness which carries with it "further personalization". (114) In a sense, the poet slips the role of Busirane over to his Narrator, reserving for himself the role Britomart and Arthur play as destroyers of false seeming. Ate becomes in these central Books the poet's subject; consequently, the stanzas devoted to her tell us about the poet and his concerns. His question seems to be whether what is fragmented can be infused into a single being, different from but containing the original (much as *The Faerie Queene* contains *Piers Plowman*). If Anderson is correct, the infusion of the earlier poem into the later -- and of Chaucer into Spenser, Priamond/Diamond into Triamond -- responds to this question. But the reader remembers that false revisions -- like that of Una to Fidessa/Duessa -- are equally possible. His discovery thus increases in complexity as his personal involvement in the poem grows, or, to borrow Spenser's own term, dilates its being. One thinks of the dilation of the pupil and its resulting effect on vision.

By the middle of IV.viii (seemingly the poet's most comfortable canto in each Book), the test is made. The poet's voice intrudes without disguise, giving life to Slander and, ultimately, the Blatant Beast. They, in turn, bring the discordant nature of the social and natural worlds fully into the poem. And they are Spenser's own experience, not the fruit of tradition. He achieves a new self-consciousness and control over his materials; the final line of almost every canto in IV reminds us of that control. The problem is to determine how far the poet-persona will go to retain and impose control. Anderson deals with this problem in Part III of her study (on Spenser's Books V-VI, Langland's Passūs XV-XX). Here the poet's personal power will be challenged by cultural and historical precedents. Langland's Long Will must confront Anima in order to learn that word must become will (act). But even when the Incarnation occurs, because it is

psychological as well as metaphysical it will be challenged. Basic are the motivations which provoke the incarnation: Need and Conscience arise when it is clear that the only pure motivation is Love -- God's love for man causes the word to become flesh. Langland enforces our sense of this by making the dream within the dream of Passus XVI a resume of the life of Jesus. In the midst of the recollection, Jesus speaks in his own voice, evoked it would seem by the purity of the dreaming Will. Again we pass to a realm -- albeit the opposite of chaos -- which the poet cannot control. Awareness can be sought but not willed.

Langland's poet has admitted that order does not exist except at the superficial levels that men can control. He is "poised between opposite values and courses of action" (150) as the dream turns into the final nightmare of the Anti-Christ. The scene returns to the poet's present where Holy Church is indeed corrupt, just as in *The Faerie Queene* we shall be left at the end of Book VI under the present discordant threat of the Blatant Beast. It is a present haunted with nightmare. The only course open to Conscience is to "become a pilgryme" and seek out the non-existent Piers. Spenser's poet has no illusions about the possibility of seeking out Gloriana. The Will -- imagination's and reason's activator -- is left alone in each poem. Langland's Will has his "shield of belief," believes in the efficacy of Grace, and thus does not quite hear "the sharp crack of [his] own voice ... in the stillness." (153)

That crack is heard in Spenser. Particularly in the *Mutability Cantos*, where the narrator's voice is silenced and with it all the defenses of his need and conscience, we hear the sound of "a fully self-conscious" voice. The body of *The Faerie Queene* dissolves, subsumed into the increasingly personal and unframed forms of the *Cantos* -- fable, pageant, meditation, prayer. With it go the poet's public roles. The final prayer is for personal vision rather than control or the ability to guide. The reader seems almost an eavesdropper, a threat to the desired vision as Calidore was to Colin's. But it is not the reader who has changed; it is the poet who has grown. Where in Books I and II he was a straw man, here (and to an extent in Book VI) the poet's personal experience, his testing of received truth against the reality of his life, is recognized as the only guide. That awareness is Spenser's equivalent for the sound of Jesus' voice in Langland's Passus XVI. But the vision that communicates that awareness is finally only a symbol and the reader must not make Calidore's error of trying to enter it as if it were real. Undoubtedly, without the guide of Contemplation Redcrosse would have made the same error.

Colin, because he is a poet, can create the dream vision, but he can neither enter it himself nor control his reader's response to it, for he has had no way to prepare Calidore. The poet is himself

so taken by the beauty of the vision that he breaks into the narrator's poem (VI.x.13). Thus the three functional voices, poet, Narrator, and character, interfuse; as Imaginative's infusion into Langland's Dreamer brought deepened understanding to the reader, Spenser's concept of his own poetic responsibility is clarified by the breakthroughs in Colin's vision. But the *Mutability Cantos* are "closer to the poetic life of *Piers Plowman* than anything else Spenser wrote." (198) They are "a continuous process of thought realized immediately before us ... a fully self-conscious creative vision" (199) such as neither Colin nor Spenser's Narrator could sustain. They end with a longing to test the self as both perceiver and creator. To achieve a vision that has more stability than Colin's requires the ultimate balance. "This final plea remains poised between the earthly present and the time to come, between having and not-having, between a moving assertion of faith and desire and the utter elusiveness of its fruition." (202)

The ending of *The Faerie Queene* is not as abrupt as Langland's only because Spenser is able, building on Langland's personalization, to achieve a more personal realization of the poet's dependence on distance and "impersonal power". Without the memory of *Piers*, it might have been impossible for Spenser to channel the immense complexity of his poem into the voice of a single speaker -- and thence into silence. The final, personal voice is independent of the fictions that precede it and yet subsumes them all. This single voice is lonely, exists in no landscape, has no companions. But as Anderson writes, with reference to the conclusion of the *Cantos*, "a voice we have never heard quite this way before in the poem seems to reach across two centuries, still searching for the immediacy of the promise that Will called *Piers Plowman*." (203) Anderson has shown that Spenser can educate a reader to hear that most private of voices -- his own.

[M. W. C.]

Richard A. Lanham. *The Motives of Eloquence: Literary Rhetoric in the Renaissance*. New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1976. xi + 234 pp. \$US 12.50.

To appreciate "these brief exploratory essays" on Plato, Ovid, Chaucer, Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis*, *Lucrece*, the sonnets, and *Hamlet*, Castiglione, Rabelais, and Shakespeare's *Henriad*, read first the Bibliographical Note and list of Works Cited (225-30). There Lanham admits his primary cultural debts to Kenneth Burke and Johan Huizinga. He reveals the basis of his rhetorical counterstatements to Werner Jaeger and Karl Popper on Plato; to "the fundamentally wrong, totally serious treatments of Ovid by I. P. Wilkinson and Brooks Otis; to Stephen Booth's fine book on "the serious issues" of Shakespeare's sonnets; to C. S. Lewis and Erich Auerbach, who "told their stories greatly but got them essentially backwards." He acknowledges the influence of Barthes, Caillois, Erikson, Freud, Lainq, Ortega y Gasset, Polanyi, Speirs, Streuver, and Whitehead,

and tells us that his first draft was "nearly twice as long," so that we have been spared "two hundred pages of detailed explication and contentious citation" (xi). Only with awareness of these contexts do we dare approach this skillful combination of high seriousness (suspect) and high spirits (praiseworthy).

The first chapter, "The Rhetorical Ideal of Life," (1-35) sets forth the serious premises for the traditional study of rhetoric that Lanham wants to offset. In practice, the rhetorical *paideia* has subverted its own premises. A unitary self, society, and nature are impossible for *homo rhetoricus*, whose "overpowering self-consciousness about language" and its possibilities for manipulation make him an unregenerate nominalist. He is essentially an actor, a role player; he views life as a social situation that calls for agility in assuming flexible stances; he thinks first of winning by the rules of the current game; his motivation is ludic and bifurcated, since he plays for advantage as well as pleasure; his present is the only reality, for he knows that the past can be re-created only subjectively, dramatically, the way the present is created; he leaves simple clarity of style to the simple minded, because opaqueness yields multi-dimensionality and hence is more fun; he thinks sincerity of utterance is irrelevant, since context (the word) is more important than content (the idea); his literature is therefore characteristically aleatory. "*Homo rhetoricus* cannot, to sum up, be *serious* ... But unlike his serious -- or existential -- *doppelgänger*, he doesn't repine, bathe in self-pity because his world possesses no center."

After stripping the serious man of serious critics as Arthur and the Red Cross Knight stripped Duessa, Lanham does not say, like Una, "Such is the face of falsehood." In his allegory of Rhetorical Man, Lanham has further use (like Spenser with Duessa) for serious literary critics, Platonists all, who in their attempts to ascribe a central self to man have accounted for only one half of him, his serious, purposive half. His rhetorical, playful half is missing. But serious critics in their self-contradictory implications have made an "authentic contribution to the larger task at hand, constructing the complex, unstable, painful Western self." Having made hash (by implication) of David Riesman's dichotomy between "inner-directed" man (central self) and "other-directed" man (social self), Lanham insists that we must hold the two in oscillation.

A narrative-speech-narrative-speech alternation, "that fruitful clash between rhetorical and serious reality," is the stylistic pattern endemic in Western literature. A sense of context enables us to distinguish speechifying from professed purpose in Homer, Thucydides, Cicero, and Ovid; likewise in Chaucer, Castiglione, and Shakespeare. The use of serious coordinates in discussing rhetorical works plays hob with criticism. We need a more complex poetic, liberated from Aristotle's anxiety about the nature of mimesis, to

cope with two literary modes, "one serious and purposive and the other dramatic and playful." We need a new theory of style uncluttered by the usual notions of clarity. "If everyone is happy, clarity has arrived." One of Lanham's wittiest gestures (25) is his spectrum of styles that runs from referential language (geometry, telegraphese, Hemingway) to emotional language (Henry James, religious chant, babble), with neutral reportage -- is that possible? -- in between. But this spectrum can chart only serious, not rhetorical attitudes toward the world.

What can this serious (purposive) book about the non-serious (rhetorical) aspects of literature offer to Spenserians, stuck with their sage and serious poet? More than one might suppose. Wasn't Spenser trained in formal rhetoric? In the second edition of the McNeir-Provost bibliography, see the more than fifty entries under "Rhetoric and the rhetorical tradition." Doesn't Spenser manipulate his reader's responses? See some of the entries under Paul Alpers, Donald Cheney, Jerome Dees, A. C. Hamilton, C. S. Lewis, Lewis Miller, Kathleen Williams, and Harry Berger. Did Spenser lack a funny bone? See the forty-odd entries under "Comedy and humor in Spenser's poems."

Lanham in his specific references to Spenser exemplifies his own precepts by being now serious, now ludic. He says Ovid's only rival in "poetic recreation of mythic reality" is Spenser, although Ovid doesn't invite us to allegorize or make sense of mythology (59). Verbal artifice is prominent in Shakespeare's sonnets. "To make the point the surface has to show. For Spenser, antique diction authenticated the allegory." A serious allegory of Shakespeare's sonnets can take them as "an anatomy of self under sexual pressure, much like the middle books of *The Faerie Queene*." (123-4) Castiglione's *Cortegiano* is a long book about the training of the courtier; the time required to read it, "as with *The Faerie Queene* or *Clarissa*," makes a difference. "It takes time to train us as we pass through." (149) Shakespeare's *Henriad* is an epic description of dramatic reality; his self-consciousness about style and motive required a different kind of epic. So it was with Ovid and Spenser. The conflict between explicit political theory and implicit political reality is common in Renaissance literature. *The Faerie Queene* celebrates the Tudor myth, "a static vision," while the image of man in the poem denies this stasis. (207, 218) Sidney's *Old Arcadia* "was built upon rhetorical coordinates, but the *New* was to be serious." Sidney was "aware, like Ariosto, Spenser, and Shakespeare, that the old epic seriousness would not do;" but he failed in "an attempt to encompass two realities" and was therefore unable to finish the *New Arcadia*. (215) Question not raised but implied: is that why Spenser failed to finish his *Faerie Queene*?

Readers may choose between purpose and sporting in Lanham's

remarks cited above. Not so with the deliberately outrageous comparison of Rabelais and Spenser in an exhibitionistic display of gamesmanship (169-75). Both writers commit allegory. "No cigar, to borrow Freud's familiar example, remains just a cigar." Lazare Saineau remarks that Rabelais and his book "ont été au cours des âges, l'objet d'étranges déformations et d'interprétations singulières." Can't the same be said of Spenser and his *Faerie Queene*? In Spenser as in Rabelais we have "a literal level of physicality" and on top of this level "the strongest and most complex invitations to allegorize." Both confuse us by using complex, overlapping genres. "Both call for agility, intuitive good sense about when and how to allegorize. Both use styles calculatedly opaque, incantatory," self-consciously fascinated with allegory as a way of knowing and trying to redeem the method with "a whole range of syncretistic techniques: for Spenser, antique diction; for Rabelais, slang... Many scenes in both just 'are,' exist beyond any interpretable framework. Think of the sybil scene of Raminagrobis, and then of Despair's Cave and Britomart skewering Marinell ... panels of self-sufficient grotesque detached from concept or moral. And above them, allegory hovers more as a self-pleasing exercise than as a real effort to explain." Can this be our Spenser? The great advantage of allegory is that "you need allegorize only as much as suits your argument.... We are asked to realize and rearrange -- notes, orchestration, myths -- as we wish to, to collaborate in making meaning. It lies in our patterns of expectation as much as in the work of art releasing them." Nearer the mark, we may say, but still disconcerting, that is, if we insist on being serious.

The comparison of Rabelais and Spenser is a paradigm of Lanham's rhetorical view of literature, pleasurable because it unexpectedly links two writers never placed in such jolly juxtaposition; it scores in a game that is fun to play.

[W. F. M.]

Naseeb Shaheen. *Biblical References in "The Faerie Queene"*. Memphis, Memphis State University Press, 1976. vii + 217 pp. \$US 12.50.

The aim of this book is quite simply to present the fullest and most valid possible catalogue of biblical allusions. Four categories are used: (1) reasonably certain references; (2) 'probable or possible' allusions; (3) possibly coincidental resemblances; and (4) doubtful items. References are cited from the Geneva Bible (except where the Bishop's Bible seems more probable) and from the Prayer Book Psalter.

Surveying previous work, Shaheen sees much imprecision in Grace Landrum's pioneering 1926 article (*PMLA*, 41) and serious incompleteness in the Variorum Spenser. His own catalogue cites roughly twice the number of references as the latter. Inevitably few of these new identifications will in themselves much alter our readings of *The Faerie Queene*. (The key allusions are as obvious to those reasonably

well read in the Bible today as they had to be to Spenser's contemporaries to make the poem work in the first place.) But something is demonstrated about the range and texture of Spenser's biblical allusiveness beyond what has hitherto been shown. In this respect the book's encyclopaedic range is impressive. To my ear, most of the new items are valid allusions, though inevitably some fail to sound convincing. But then some subjectivity is impossible to banish completely from a project like this. What is a valid (and relevant) allusion depends a great deal on the context one's particular kind of study establishes. Better for an editor to provide too much than too little. Sensibly, nothing the Variorum editors accepted is excluded, though much of it is relegated to the doubtful category.

A survey of available English Bible translations is included. Caution is of course required in trying to determine which version Spenser used (Did he rely on his own ability to translate directly from the Latin of the Vulgate? Was he influenced by the alternate translations of the Prayer Book services and the Prayer Book Psalter? Did versions get mixed in his memory?). As Spenser's allusions are rarely literal, and as new translations always built on earlier work, copying whole passages verbatim, the question becomes very complicated. Ceding the impossibility of pinning Spenser's biblical knowledge tightly to any one version, Shaheen concludes that the Geneva Bible (1560) is most in evidence in *The Faerie Queene*. But there are also signs of the Bishop's Bible (1568) and its forerunner, the Great Bible (1539), and possible earlier predecessors.

The introductory portion of this book would have been better if it had drawn more heavily on related previous work, especially when it goes beyond setting out the method and the criteria used in the catalogue and attempting to determine Bible versions. A chapter on Spenser's religious views is particularly disappointing: nothing new is learned about Spenser, and recent specialist scholarship on sixteenth century theology goes relatively unsurveyed and unsampled. There seems to be a consistent preference for somewhat dated works, and the three recent works I'd most quickly reach for don't even make it into the bibliography: *The Cambridge History of the Bible* covers the period in volume three, with a helpful bibliography (ed. S. L. Greenslade, Cambridge University Press, 1963); *Historical Catalogue of the Printed Editions of the English Bible 1525-1961* is much more useful within its range than *STC* (ed. A. S. Herbert, British and Foreign Bible Society, 1968); *The Geneva Bible: a facsimile of the 1560 edition* has a useful introduction and bibliography (University of Wisconsin Press, 1969).

[R. D. S.]

ARTICLES: ABSTRACTS AND NOTICES

Michael F. N. Dixon, "Fairy Tale, Fortune, and Boethian Wonder: Rhetorical Structure in Book VI of *The Faerie Queene*," *UTO*, 44 (1975), 141-65.

Although the basic plot of Book VI may seem to have much in common with the quests of the prototypic fairy tale, Spenser multiplies perspectives on such a fantasy plot and thereby suggests some of the richness and high seriousness associated with "epic". In the story of Sir Bruin, for example, he presents a hero who has done what no hero of fairy tale may do: he has grown old. Bruin, like the hero of Book I, has conquered an enemy in a three-fold battle. But Cormoraunt remains a brooding threat until Bruin's son can complete the task. In the interim, fate or fortune are conspicuously prominent factors: "Boethian wonder," the uncertainty expressed by Boethius at the presence of evil in a presumably good world, is an apt response to Spenser's denial or complication of the normal fairy-tale denouement to his plot.

Spenser elaborates the single hero of fairy tale into three in Book VI: Calidore, Calepine, and Arthur; by so doing he provides structural *expositio*, or repetition with variation. Characters like Blandina and Turpine, who behave with inhumanity and thereby cause temporary but real suffering, awaken Boethian wonder and deny the simplistic values which Calidore initially asserts. Magical helpers like the Hermit or Salvage Man provide a counterforce to the mishaps of fickle fortune: in the paradigmatic episode of Bruin, the baby is released from the bear's mouth to fulfil the terms of a long-frustrated prophecy. But the Hermit treats Serena and not Calidore, whose mission is to engage the Blatant Beast, not avoid him. Though the Hermit resembles Contemplation in Book I, Book VI deals with a different realm of experience, the social and temporal rather than the individual and spiritual.

Like the voracious Cormoraunt in the Bruin paradigm, or the cannibals or Brigands or Turpine, the Blatant Beast embodies an ever-present, external threat of brutishness waiting to devour one's quietude. In seeking such quietude Calidore is guilty of truancy from his quest, as his loss of the vision of the Graces makes clear. Calidore's love for Pastorella is the rhetorical equivalent of Calepine's love for Serena and Bruin's need for an heir; it makes him vulnerable by making him subject to fortune. Pastorella is almost destroyed by the Brigands, as Meliboe is wholly destroyed; and Calidore's victory over the Beast is only temporary. Calidore ultimately fails: he is an idealized human, not a humanized ideal, closer to tragedy than to romance or fairy tale. The movement of Book VI from fairy tale to Boethian wonder is essentially a movement toward a tragic vision.

A. Bartlett Giamatti, "Headlong Horses, Headless Horsemen: An Essay on the Chivalric Epics of Pulci, Boiardo, and Ariosto," in G. Romanelli and K. J. Atchity, eds., *Italian Literature, Roots and Branches: Essays in Honor of T. G. Bergin* (New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1976), pp. 265-307.

The image of the frenzied horse, appearing notably in Vergil (esp. *Aeneid* 6, applied to the Sibyl) and modified by Boethius and Dante, is examined as a key to the central concerns of the three Italian poets. Rinaldo's taming of the monstrous horse in canto 13 of the *Morgante* is taken as a symbol of Pulci's mixture of admiration for the new energies that are transforming the chivalric tradition, and his sense of the crucial last moment when those energies must be tamed lest they destroy the past. Boiardo is governed by a simpler, less ambiguous impulse: he fears the immense forces toward dissolution, and tries to find a model for an orderly world in his chivalric creation. Horses, horsemen, even chivalry itself -- all show a recurrent tendency to go beyond proper and necessary limits. Boiardo's Charlemagne expresses Pulci's vision of courting excess as a means to restraint; and the chaos he unleashes is a critique of that vision. Finally, Boiardo can only cry "Whoa!" to his own poem. Building on both these poetic visions, Ariosto explores the image of *sfrenatura* in a number of bridled or runaway mounts. His complex view of Orlando's madness, and mankind's tragic inability to control language, demonstrates that artistic creation is itself a version of the problems of restraint and release that the work of art describes. [Although Spenser is not mentioned until the last paragraph of this essay, readers of this *Newsletter* may find it illuminates major Spenserian concerns.]

A. Bartlett Giamatti, "Primitivism and the Process of Civility in Spenser's *Faerie Queene*," in F. Chiappelli, ed., *First Images of America: The Impact of the New World on the Old* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, University of California Press, 1976), pp. 71-82.

Spenser's treatment of primitives and primitivism shows a contemporary awareness that the Other World of folklore has become the New World of fact. In his proem to Book II he hints that Faerie Land may now be actualized in America; and elsewhere he distinguishes between the merely primitive and the potential -- between wild men and foundlings, those who at best are susceptible of being tamed and those who can be reformed. Examples of wild men are the satyrs in I.vi and III.x, the forester in IV.vii, the salvage man in VI.iv, and the salvage nation in VI.viii. Though these figures vary in levels of savagery, they share an incapacity for transformation to a truly civilized condition. They are the primitive ancestors whom self-transforming Renaissance man has left behind.

Spenser's "foundlings", however, are at least potentially upwardly

mobile. The list of those who were foundlings is substantial: Satyrane, Arthur, Redcross, Belpheobe and Amoret, Artegall, Tristram, Pastorella. Those who are include Ruddymane and the baby found by Calepine. Those in the former group show the results of a process of civility. This is both an ethical process and a radically aesthetic one. The foundling is disciplined or nourished or shaped by antique mentors and ideals for a purpose; the result is a different creation than would have occurred had the child been left to grow naturally in a primitive state. The poem's two foundling infants illustrate the dynamics of this process in its earlier stages. Ruddymane's ineradicable stains show the new-found in its bleakest aspects; his future seems limited as we last see him entrusted to Medina's upbringing. The baby in Book VI is seen in a more hopeful light: when Calepine entrusts it (with obvious relief) to Matilde, he reminds her that many of the greatest knights have come from similarly obscure origins. He invites her to "enchase" whatever form she pleases in this unformed infant. He uses a term frequently exploited by Spenser for the artistic act: most memorably, Colin's lady is seen "as a precious gemme/ Amidst a ring most richly well enchaced,/ That with her goodly presence all the rest much graced." (VI.x.12) Calepine's foundling, recalling all the earlier foundlings in the poem and projecting the vision of Mount Acidale, figures the process of civility: the radical alliance of aesthetic and ethical concerns that is the individual and cultural movement we call Renaissance.

John Manning and Alastair Fowler, "The Iconography of Spenser's Occasion," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 39 (1976), 263-66, plate 27.

In *Faerie Queene*, II.iv, Spenser transmutes the traditional figure of *Occasio* into one peculiarly adapted to his allegory of Temperance. The emblem books show *Occasio* as a young, naked woman, standing on a wheel, with razor and billowing sail or scarf; Spenser's Occasion is an old, ill-favored hag, lame in one leg and clothed in rags. Spenser keeps the traditional forelock and bald occiput, but reinterprets even these attributes as respectively a temptation to rash violence, and either remorse or frustration. When Guyon grasps Occasion's forelock it is to restrain her, not to enjoy her benefits. All of Spenser's changes express aspects of the occasion or "root of wrath". Furthermore, the tableau of a guilty Phedon pursued by Furor and Occasion recalls Vaenius's emblem CULPAM POENA PREMIT COMES, in which lameness is an attribute of the slow but certain Poena. But Occasion is at best a travesty of divine Nemesis since she lacks the latter's bridle and must be restrained by Guyon with a "scold's bridle." In Boiardo, Orlando's failure to grasp the Fata Morgana's forelock exposes him to the wrath of a hag named *Penitenza*. An association of Occasion and Penitence (as a consequence of missed opportunity) derives from Ausonius, and is found for example in Corrozet's emblem, L'IMAGE D'OCCASION. As *Penitenza* pursues Orlando, so does

Occasion pursue Phedon. Spenser combines in one figure both the temptation to wrath and its consequence remorse. And when he comes upon this complex tableau, Guyon seems to turn upon himself the violence which Phedon directs against others. Finally, the imbalance of Occasion, lame in one leg, may be analyzed later in the Book when Maleger is shown (II.xi) accompanied by two hags, one lame and named Impotence, the other moving more freely and named Impatience.

James Nohrberg, "On Literature and the Bible," *Centrum: Working Papers of the Minnesota Center for Advanced Studies in Language, Style, and Literary Theory*, II.2 (1974), 5-43.

Spenser (with Milton), as a poet clearly working in close relationship to scripture, is called forth as a primary exhibit in an attempt to drive a firm wedge through the middle of the "Bible as Literature" syndrome. The aim is to destroy irrevocably any vestige of academic respectability that may remain in seeing the Bible as a literary work among literary works. To begin with, the Bible is finite in content, delimited by its canon; literature, on the other hand, is clearly capable of increment, *ad infinitum*. The Bible is a "collapsed" and completed literature, coalesced to a gritty core by the rigors of centuries of redaction. Monotheism and transcendence of nature, key tenets of Hebrew theology, are strong forces toward canon; polytheism, on the other hand, logically produces an open-endedness and pluralism in literature.

The Bible is seen to be "pre-generic": institutionalization of Exodus in Passover disqualifies it as epic, and history is always subsumed to "theology of history". Thus simple memorableness of story is bogged in the prolixity of tradition which subsumes inconsistency, reduplicativeness, and variant versions within itself. "Literary" approaches to the Bible tend to assume a discreteness of textual unit in a way that ignores the tight patterns of interdependence which interlace even such seemingly separable elements as the book of Job: stories are rarely told for their own sake, but more usually in context, and story "units" often contain within themselves latter accretions which complicate their own telling.

If form is the liberating energy of literature, then the Bible stands "beyond formalism". The intense redactive processes that produced the Bible have rendered a dense, agglutinative, almost granular pattern that exhibits "texture" rather than "structure". Literary history is collapsed into a larger whole, with its elaborate anticipations and fulfilments and other modes of theological linkage and synthesis -- modes which subordinate fearful complexities and preserve the serial historicity of the very material that is re-fashioned and accommodated.

The setting of the canon coincides with the dissolution of the "faith-community" into its various successors, a process seen as the

result of the death of prophecy and the Hellenization of the Near East. What is canonized is the dynamic of the word: the word as opposed to a word, or words. Word relates to events "kinetically," rather than reflectively or "allegorically". Even though the canon is irrevocably closed, the Bible is in a sense incomplete: its understanding anticipates the end of time, and is thus inseparable from faith. Thus Biblical authority stands over against the authority of fiction, where "suggestability" is all that is demanded. The reality of fiction is bounded by a "once upon a time" and an "ever after"; the Bible insists, to the culture receiving it as canonic, upon its own open-endedness. The world of fiction comes close to that of dream, except that in fiction there is stability and control: the literary work can be re-experienced, indeed repetition and repeatability are inherent in it.

The "truth" of revelation is exclusive and unified, implying the rejection of its own variants. But the plurality which is degeneration in revelation is the stuff that literature is made on. Thus, in *The Faerie Queene*, Archimago is both in the poem, as pervertor of the truth, and outside it, with the poet, as the creator of veiled allegory and obscured truths: his very name suggests primary imagination. What is "faction" in the realm of revelation is "fiction" in literature. As Archimago creates the division of true and false Una, so Spenser creates that of true and false Florimell. We can redream Redcrosse's dream by re-reading the book; just so, Redcrosse re-dreams his own dream in the eleventh canto, asleep under the tree of life, a second Adam dreaming of a second Eve. Thus the study of the Bible as literature becomes in fact the study of literary works having an allegorical relation to the Bible.

Heather Dubrow Ousby, "Donne's 'Epithalamion made at Lincolnes Inne': An Alternative Interpretation," *SEL*, 16 (1976), 131-43.

This article suggests that Donne may not have been parodying Spenser, as David Novarr argued in an influential article (*RES*, 7 (1956)), but merely imitating him half-heartedly and unsuccessfully. Since this epithalamion was apparently written eighteen years before Donne's two other epithalamia, its immaturity may account for elements which Novarr considers parodic; and such discordant details as the imagery of death and violent disembowelling may be seen as generally characteristic of Donne's metaphysical wit. Echoes of Spenser's poem may be seen, then, as serious but inept imitations: both poets are trying to build a sense of excitement and immediacy through repetition, but Spenser is far more skillful. As with his imitations of Ovid or Petrarch, Donne is drawn to imitate a poet who is fundamentally different from himself; and most of the oddities of the poem may be seen as the product of tension between Donne's interest in Spenser and his need to reject him.

The ninety-first annual convention of the Modern Language Association of America was held in New York from 26-29 December 1976. Of its 666 numbered meetings, four contained papers of immediate and apparent interest to readers of *SpN*:

#121A. Comparative Studies in Renaissance and Baroque Literature.
Program Chairman: Michael Murrin; Topic: Allegory.

1. "Allegory in Petrarch's *Canzoniere*," Thomas Roche.
2. "Boiardo and the Fata Morgana," Charles Ross.

The allegory of Orlando's meeting with Morgana [see also Manning and Fowler, above, p.15] can be approached by means of a comparison with similar scenes in the *Innamorato*. Boiardo uses allegory to present persons or machine-like marvels which play upon a hero's otherwise two-dimensional character. Morgana, as Ventura, personifies chance. Orlando's failure to seize her resembles the scene in which he fails to seize Angelica, similarly sleeping beside a fountain. And Morgana's underworld contains images which allude to Orlando's limitations: a labyrinth which he cannot or will not study, a bridge he cannot cross. The same underworld will be treated differently by the covetous Rinaldo, with details which make the episode seem closer to Guyon's at the Cave of Mammon. Boiardo resembles Spenser more closely than any other Renaissance poet in his ability to tailor every detail of his fairy garden to themes of distant longing and elusive dreams.

3. "Seven Types of Spenserian Allegory," James Nohrnberg.

The Faerie Queene is engaged in a constant enterprise of self-refiguration: its internal running commentary on itself is an *allegory* of the text. The allegory of allegory can emerge from study of the compounding of the text with itself in Spenser's first episode, by means of an analysis of allegory as a compound of the *dianoia* of literature with literature's six parts. (1) The *mythos* of allegory is the fictionally displaced history or myth, the legend or fable. Redcrosse is St. George, Perseus, Theseus, Apollo, and Daniel. (2) The *ethos* is exemplarist characterization, mythically the avatar, here the Messianic Precursor. Legends are vocational, but romances are allegories of childhood: Spenser's legends celebrate infantile character strengths pedagogically reconstructed, here trust in the oral word -- the symbolic babe in Book I is nursing, and so are Error's infants. The mythical animus of the animated abstraction is the daemon, here the hybrid woman possessed by a pythonical spirit; anomically, the bookworm. (3) The *dianoia* is theme perceived at one remove from itself: briefly, the proverb (to err is human, the dog is returned to its own vomit); emblematically, the veiled wisdom-goddess Isis, and the temple guarded by a sphinx or threshold-monster; anomically, the dwarfed wisdom of prudence-counsels, and the ass bearing mysteries. (4) The *melos* is cryptic speech: the

oracular Pythoness or sphinx slain with the advent or accession of Apollo or truth. (5) The *lexis* is the figure *allegoria*, the anatomy of Error; briefly, the etymology of error. (6) The *opsis* is the amazing or provocative image, the emblem of Laocoon, the labyrinthine appeal to the eye corresponding to the riddle's dithyrambic appeal to the ear. All allegories perpetrate and correct an error about the literalness of a fiction.

Redcrosse slays Error, but understands nothing: he takes no wounds in the episode because he is not forced into a genuine hermeneutical engagement where understanding so closely coheres with the thing understood that the understander objectifies himself in it. He goes to sleep and Archimago starts creating more allegories in collusion with the poet. Puttenham calls allegory the figure of False Semblant, and Boccaccio says the allegorist divides one into two *diverse* meanings, as Archimago divorces Redcrosse from Truth. Duessa is thus simply a product of the secondary compounding of the allegorical *dianoia*, and this newly generated untruthfulness of allegorical likeness bedevils the hero thereafter. Effective heroic activity in *The Faerie Queene* thus coincides with the occupation of the poem's principal internal hermeneuts.

In Book I the hermeneut is Contemplation, the Johanine seer who can read the book of God's foreknowledge. The heroic type is Perseus, who slays the Gorgonical nature and is thus elevated to heavenly contemplation. Arthur's unveiled shield lifts the Mosaic veil that hardens hearts, revealing the light of gospel truth and blinding those that persecute it. In Book II the hermeneut is Eumnestes; the hermeneutic derives from rational understanding and the mind's ability to temper Occasion deliberately or retrospectively. Meaning emerges in the "mean-time" or the mean space -- the latter deriving from the topological and topographical featuration of the landscape, which creates meaningful chiasmic space between exteriority and interiority. In Book III the hermeneut is the maiutic Merlin (and also Genius), a genealogist of the future. Allegorical entities in Book III are generated -- a degenerative example is the self-allegorizing Malbecco. Neo-Platonic contemplation is generative, its ideas are seminal, realized or materialized through a *mater* or mother. In Book IV the hermeneutical activity is the method of seeing the preceding partner book extended in the sequel, or seeing the likeness of a lover to a friend. The genealogical allegory of Book III becomes the more lateral and less diachronic allegory of kinship. Whether a conjugation of the world's self-resemblance is strictly a hermeneutic may be doubted, but the biform Venus does wear a veil. In Book V the heroic allegorical activity is the making of signs and monuments -- the first is Astraea-Talus. In cutting off Munera's hands the iconoclast Artegall makes an icon of "handless Justice." The hermeneutical activity is the interpreting of the law equitably. In Book VI the hero is a courtier, a kind of poet of conduct -- his allegorically veiled truth is the polite white lie.

Puttenham advises the court poet to dissemble not only his conceits, but his conduct, calling *allegoria* "the Courtier or figure of faire semblant." The hermeneut is Colin Clout, but the hermeneutical virtues of subtlety and finesse suggest a hermeneutics not of allegory but of irony, the negative or self-effacing pole of literary obliquity. So ends the romance of the virtues as childhood character strengths, upon the emergence of a sense of irony about role-playing.

Each of Spenser's legends is haunted by its own hermeneutical ghost. The second episode is sarcastic about the success of the first, and sarcasm, like irony, is a kind of self-subverting allegory. This gives us a third register for the types of allegory, as its compound *dianoia* gave us a second. In Book I the poet's allegory of one true faith is divided between Redcrosse and Una. In Book II the poet's figure for melancholy, sickness, and mortality -- Maleger -- is made alive upon his very allegorization. Despair can never despair of being Despair -- for him suicide is not a viable alternative. We meet here an allegorical equivalent for the antithetical sense of primal words: Redcrosse tries to cleave unto the truth, and creates the cloven fiction Duessa. The Chair of Forgetfulness in Book II recalls the Chair of Memory -- the mind remembers its own forgetfulness. In Book III, the heroine, a closet heterosexual, is introduced by images of narcissism, incest, bisexuality, transvestitism, and lesbianism. In the social installment, the friend is a rival, the master a slave, and quest and host are strangers to humanity or recluses from it: irony is the technique of saying one thing and meaning the contrary.

The Faerie Queene suffers occasional crises of allegoricalness, as evidenced by the mocking Doppelgänger, or contradiction of identity. The disappearing epiphanies of a numen in Books VI and VII coincide with the exposure of fakes elsewhere in the poem. These are not the ontological mysteries belonging to the indescribable entity, except where the entity is the "borrowed being" of allegory itself. Rather, they are the epistemological ambiguities inherent in the elected mode of description. At this point our seven types of allegory have become seven types of ambiguity about allegory. [J. N.]

#320. Special Session: Renaissance Literature and Emblems. Discussion Leader: Winfried Schleiner.

1. "Emblem and Paradox in Sceve's *Delie*," Thomas Greene.
2. "Spenser's *Muiopotmos* and the Fates of Butterflies and Men, or, When Is a Butterfly Not a Butterfly?" Andrew D. Weiner.

Criticism of Spenser's *Muiopotmos* has tended to join the poem's narrator in magnifying the importance of his butterfly-protagonist. Thus Allen identifies Clarion with the rational soul, and overlooks the problems of poetic representation raised by such an identification. Since there are frequent Renaissance illustrations of butterflies as emblems of triviality, and apparently none which continue the late-classical identification of butterfly and soul, this paper proposes that Clarion may indeed

be no more than a butterfly. In such a reading of *Muioptmos*, the narrator will be seen unable to see the hopeful aspects of human mortality. Instead of considering the fruitful olive that triumphed over the warlike steed, he, like Arachne, has seen only the butterfly fluttering wantonly. He has failed to heed one warning stressed in Geoffrey Whitney's *Choice of Emblemes* (1586):

The Scripture soe, hath two effects we see:

Vnto the bad, it is a sword that slaies

Vnto the good, a shield in ghostlie fraies. (*Vitae, aut mortis*)

3. "Emblems and the Religious Lyric," Barbara K. Lewalski.

#533. Special Session: Spenserian Poets of the Seventeenth Century.

Discussion Leader: William Oram.

1. "'Or of Reviv'd Adonis': Milton and Spenser's Images of Love," Carol Barthel.

In *An Apology for Smectymnuus*, Milton rejects the criticisms of Puritans like Ascham, insisting that the "lofty fables and romances which recount in solemn cantos the deeds of knighthood" teach not bold bawdry but chastity. Chief among the solemn cantos of which Milton was thinking must have been those of *The Faerie Queene*, whose middle books, especially, employ motifs that the Renaissance had inherited from medieval romance in a semi-allegorical anatomy of the virtue of chastity, in whose definition Spenser, a good Protestant, included faithful married love. Invoking the epic as well as the romantic tradition, Spenser makes chastity one aspect of "magnificence," the overall personal ethical virtue that he presents as the modern and Christian equivalent of the virtue of the traditional hero.

If the Spenser of the middle books of *The Faerie Queene* was the first major epic poet to make a heroic virtue of chastity, the Milton of *Paradise Lost* was the second. In Eden, wedded love, "Heav'n's last best gift" to man, is also a responsibility. By the proper use of their sexual nature man and woman participate in the fruitfulness of God's creation; its misuse contributes to their fall. In being so emphatically marital, Milton's conception of man is both very Protestant and very Spenserian. It is Spenserian also in the mode of its poetic depiction. In *The Faerie Queene*, Spenser had used all sorts of literary materials -- classical myth, chivalric romance, medieval allegory -- as vehicles for depicting the significance of love in the order of creation and in human life. It presented Milton with a model for a poem adapting the literary tradition to the concerns of the Puritan epic of the spiritual life.

Comus offers clues as to the nature of *Paradise Lost*'s Spenserianism. Milton's most overtly Spenserian poem, the masque is also his most clearly romantic, its structure, as Frye writes, being the journey, struggle, and triumph of a hero whose chief virtue is chastity, a physical purity representing fidelity to the divine order sustaining the

universe and opposed to the moral disorder of vice. Within this overall romance pattern, the masque's action shows many local affinities with the trials of Spenser's romantic heroes and heroines, including Britomart, Belpheobe, and especially Amoret. Whether or not Milton intended all these parallels, he is, like Spenser and probably in part following his example, employing the romance tradition to portray semi-allegorically the heroic struggle of the Christian soul against sin. In any case, the Epilogue makes the artistic significance of these parallels clearer. The Attendant Spirit's description of the Hesperian gardens clearly recalls Spenser's Garden of Adonis, the allegorical core of Spenser's third book that places the heroic chastity of Britomart, Belpheobe, and Amoret in the context of universal love, joy, and fruition. By placing the Lady's virtue in this Spenserian context, Milton shows that her chastity is not, as Comus would have it, a denial of life and love, but rather, like Amoret's, its affirmation.

The qualities of Spenser's Garden of Adonis are also echoed in the images of fecundity that Milton uses, in *Paradise Lost*, to describe Eden. The sexual metaphor for creation that Spenser introduces in Titan's impregnation of Chrysogonee reappears in God's creative brooding over the vast abyss and making it pregnant. This sexual image is linked with a horticultural image of fertility in both poets: the world of nature is the garden of God, the "sovrain Planter," its simultaneous blossoms and fruit evidence of his life-giving energy. Man's sexual nature is part of the vitality of the garden of the world: Adam and Eve, like Amoret, by their love participate in the universal fecundity. Like Spenser's Garden of Adonis, Milton's Paradise provides a symbol, an allegorical core, what Fletcher would call a "temple" displaying the divine meaning that lies behind the "labyrinth" of human life.

In portraying this human life Milton, like Spenser, draws on the resources of the romance tradition, the experiences of Adam and Eve, like those of the Lady in *Comus*, resembling the adventures of Spenser's knights and ladies. Eve, like Amoret, embodies the ideal of modest and loving womanhood expounded by Christian writers, and Adam's wooing of Eve, like Scudamour's of Amoret, recalls the allegorical psychology of the Rose tradition. Unlike Spenser, Milton presents Eve's view of the episode, thereby calling into question Adam's traditionally romantic interpretation of Eve's equally traditional drawing-back: a romantic tradition is both exploited and criticized. Adam, the first romantic, idealizes his mistress: Milton shows this idealization to be a dangerous overestimation of the lady's very real charms.

In her submissive love for her mate, Eve resembles Amoret; in her "virgin majesty," Amoret's sister Belpheobe. Like Belpheobe, human goddess of the forest, she combines nature's freshness with a goddess-like beauty; a frailer Belpheobe, she also goes off on an adventure alone, "though not as she with Bow and Arrow arm'd." Belpheobe meets Braggadocchio and Trompart; Eve, Satan, whose Aeneas-like address to her and subsequent courtly seduction resembles the attempt of Spenser's

comic villains. Unlike Belpheobe, however, Eve is seduced from her heroic virtue by Satan's flattery.

Fallen, Eve takes on the characteristics of Spenser's Radigund to Adam's Arthegall. Though Spenser shows considerable sympathy for the virago-ideal in Britomart, in Radigund he turns orthodox and doctrinal and condemns female "liberty." Like Radigund, Eve desires the freedom of superiority: "for inferior, who is free?" Arthegall was not subdued by Radigund's arms but by her beauty, "overcome, not overcome/ But to her yielded of his owne accord"; so Adam yields, not to the force of Eve's arguments, but "fondly overcome with female charm." Spenser so sympathizes with the chivalrous Arthegall's almost comic dilemma that he makes excuses for him. While some readers have found Adam's chivalry similarly sympathetic, Milton places it in a context which must condemn it: once more Milton uses the artistic resources of the romantic tradition in order to condemn the moral tendency of that tradition.

Woman, in Britomart, restores social order by reinstituting male authority; Eve restores order in the society of Eden by kneeling to Adam. Herself restored to grace, she is Amoret once more, and Adam and Eve depart from Eden, as Scudamour and Amoret leave the paradisaical Island of Venus on Book IV, facing life in the fallen world "hand in hand." In Milton, as in Spenser, virtuous married love becomes one means of undoing the effects of the Fall, of attaining the true, Adonis-like Paradise of fruitfulness and joy, within. Milton uses the traditional motifs of romance in his epic, criticizing them, revising them, reinterpreting them according to the Protestant moral ethic and a new conception of heroic virtue. In doing so, he, like Spenser, helps to create what C. S. Lewis calls the "romance of marriage" that the English Renaissance gave to the modern world. [C. B.]

2. "Drayton's *Poly-Olbion*: England's Body Immortalized," Barbara C. Ewell.
3. "Michael Drayton, Prophet without Audience," Paula Johnson.
4. "Milton and Spenser: The Virgilian Triad Revisited," Richard Neuse.

When Milton told Dryden that Spenser was his "original" he may have spoken more truly than has been realized. Spenser was the first important poet of the English Renaissance whose major works constitute a unity. This unity was to a considerable degree modelled on the Virgilian triad of pastoral, georgic, and epic. Whereas the idea implicit in the Virgilian triad may be primarily programmatic, Spenser made of it an essentially autobiographical progression. For Spenser, that is, Virgil was the principal guide in a pilgrimage not vertically oriented, as with Dante, but horizontally, towards History (to put it in one word) as its goal. And the stages of this pilgrimage are now a Spenserian adaptation or transmutation of Virgil's genres: pastoral, epithalamium, epic.

Milton's major works display the same fundamental unity as Spenser's. They may likewise be conceived as the record of a poet's pilgrimage in which Spenser as the "English Virgil" serves as the guide. History in epic perspective is again the goal, though Milton finally leaves his guide behind in viewing history in starkly tragic terms. Milton also wrote no poem that could be called an epithalamium, but aside from the fact that there is a recurrent epithalamic motif in a number of his poems, there is one, *A Mask*, which qualifies fully as a symbolic epithalamium. The 1645 *Poems of Mr. John Milton* may therefore be considered as Milton's *Shepherd's Calendar* and his *Epithalamion* combined. Like these, the 1645 volume is profoundly autobiographical. By his arrangement and occasional dating of the poems Milton invites the reader to witness the gradual unfolding of a talent, stages in the development of a youthful poet as he grows in imaginative mastery of experience and searches for "something like prophetic strain." At the same time the volume represents a magnificent tribute to the author's guide and presiding genius. The homage to Spenser begins with the *Nativity Hymn*, the first of the volume's English poems and clearly done in the Spenserian manner; it culminates with *A Mask*, which concludes the English poems and in context can be read as an allegory of the young author's debt to the master of dark conceit.

Like the *Shepherd's Calendar*, the 1645 edition of *Poems* looks forward to "greater things," is a "prospectus" of the epic to come as well as a retrospect to departed youth. And like the *Epithalamion* Milton's collection, particularly in the last two of its English poems, represents an apotheosis of the poetic imagination in its ability to reconcile even the most painful contradictions of human experience. In both *Lycidas* and *Comus* the poet "marries" heaven and earth, man's sublimest intuitions with his blind stumbling on the perplexed paths of this drear wood. And he does so in part by becoming a kind of priest who renews the ritual forms -- of elegy and masque -- by which the community has traditionally confronted its deepest fears and expressed its most ideal aspirations. His way of renewing the forms is of course variable and subtle, but most fundamentally it involves the poet-priest's personal participation with an intensity that suggests he is "rediscovering" and remaking them in answer to a deeply felt personal need.

Such renewal from within of literary forms is a familiar dogma of Renaissance epic theory. The degree to which this renewal bears Milton's profoundly personal signature in *Paradise Lost* becomes evident when we consider its basic continuity with the 1645 *Poems*. To an even greater degree than the *Faerie Queene*, *Paradise Lost* is a prelude to history and it takes as its dominant concerns precisely pastoral and epithalamium. The "epithalamic" relationship between Adam and Eve is the center of the epic, the real focus of its tragedy, in relation to which Satan comes to be seen as the hero-fool in a tragicomedy of cosmic divorce.

By way of conclusion, it should be observed as one of the major ironies of English literary history that Milton's name should have become synonymous with the kind of dogmatic or theological poetry that in his actual practice he firmly rejected. An approach to Milton's poetry via Virgil and Spenser -- to Milton as, in fact, "a 17th-century Spenserian" -- should teach us that far from being a builder of dogma in verse, Milton was a poetic allegorist who questioned religious tradition with the same personal intensity as he challenged social and political ideas.
[R. N.]

#619. Special Session: Literature and Psychoanalysis. Discussion
Leader: Morton Kaplan.

"Phedon's Fury: Some Psychoanalytic Notes on *Faerie Queene* II.iv,"
John Price.

Phedon's rescue from Furor and Occasion by Guyon in Book II, iv, is a minor masterpiece of power and psychological interest, focusing on Phedon's account of the occasion and progress of his murderous rage as he pursues Pryene, and culminating in Phedon's consuming, self-generating objectless passion allegorized in Furor. But why does his crescendo of fury culminate in Pryene? why does he unjustly charge that "she did first offend,/ She last should smart", an account brazenly inconsistent with earlier accounts which indict Philemon as "the source/ Of all my sorrow"? We are carried with Phedon toward Pryene, feeling a kind of "rightness" in the pursuit which gratifies deeper expectations aroused by the story.

Phedon's love is split into two currents: high and low, sacred and profane, affectionate and sensual, Claribell and Pryene: an intimate relationship enacted when Pryene dresses in Claribell's clothes (27-8). Philemon in turn is Phedon's "base" impulse split off and attached to the "base" side of Claribell (the close identity of Philemon and Phedon is stressed in stanzas 18, 20). Phedon's final rage against Pryene can be attributed to his loathing of what attracts him: Pryene's offense is her response to Philemon's advances. The "sacred band" (23) between Philemon and Phedon is the third and perhaps most important pairing in the episode, characterized by oral sadism (Phedon *poisons* Philemon, Philemon's ocular poison spoils Phedon's bliss). It is as much the loss of his friend as that of Claribell that makes for Phedon's "grief", and among the passions which determine his choice of Pryene as final object is jealous rage -- she did "first offend" by stealing Philemon from him, as the ambiguity of "faithless squire" suggests (18) and as Phedon's prior attachment to Claribell makes *him* faithless to Philemon. Afflicted, he not only projects his own unconscious impulses towards infidelity on the woman, but thinks that he loves the woman and is jealous of a rival. In fact, he unconsciously identifies with the woman and loves the man.

Returning to Phedon's first words, in 17, we find an indictment of yet another woman, Misfortune, developing a negative maternal image and

stressing Phedon's weakness before her "whelming lap" (17). The pursuit of Pryene condenses all the whelming laps before which he feels now murderous, now impotent; the choice between phallic fears and the threat of oral regression, engulfment, death takes us toward the lethal lap of Acrasia, the climactic encounter of Guyon in the Bower of Bliss.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Spenser Society. The Spenser Society was officially inaugurated on 27 December 1976 at the Graduate Center, City University of New York. The Executive Committee of the Society for 1977 consists of: Patrick Cullen (Graduate Center, CUNY), President; Judith H. Anderson (Indiana), Vice-President; A. Kent Hieatt (Western Ontario), Secretary; Thomas P. Roche (Princeton), Treasurer; and Donald Cheney (Massachusetts), *ex officio*. A reception and luncheon will be held at the University Club, 11.30 a.m., 29 December 1977, during the next MLA convention. Plans for the following year include the publication of a membership and work-in-progress booklet and the possible adoption of *SpN* as the society's official organ. Dues are \$3.00 per year (regular membership) and \$1.00 (special membership for students and for retired and unemployed people), payable to the Society, care of Thomas P. Roche, Dept. of English, Princeton University, Princeton NJ 08540. It would be appreciated if, with their payment of dues, members would indicate whether it is likely that they will be able to attend the luncheon meeting at Chicago.

Spenser Studies. A new annual publication, *Spenser Studies* is now officially in existence. During the MLA convention the editors, Thomas P. Roche and Patrick Cullen, announced the formation of an editorial board and reported that they were negotiating with the University of Pittsburgh Press. Since then, the University of Pittsburgh Press has agreed to publish *Spenser Studies*, an annual collection of essays on Spenser and on areas related to Spenser; it is designed as a counterpart to *Milton Studies*. The editorial board consists of: P. Alpers, D. Cheney, A. Fletcher, A. B. Giamatti, A. C. Hamilton, S. K. Heninger Jr., A. K. Hieatt, J. Hollander, W. B. Hunter Jr., C. V. Kaske, I. MacCaffrey, H. Maclean, J. Nohrnberg, G. F. Provost, J. Steadman, H. Tonkin, V. K. Whitaker, J. A. Wittreich. Details for submission of manuscripts will follow in the next issue of *SpN*.

Duquesne Studies. Duquesne University Press announces a new series of monographs which will place special emphasis on Spenser and Milton and the classical and medieval heritage of the two poets. The first monograph accepted for publication in the series is John M. Steadman's *Nature into Myth: Medieval and Renaissance Moral Symbols*.

Manuscripts should be of a length which will produce a book of 150-350 pages. No monograph which has been accepted as a dissertation will be considered unless full and mature revision has converted it into a study which advances significantly on the dissertation. All submissions should be preceded by a query to: Foster Provost, Editor, Duquesne Studies in Language and Literature, Department of English, Duquesne University, Pittsburgh PA 15219.

Canadian Society for Renaissance Studies. All scholars interested in the Renaissance will wish to know of the formation of a new national organization, the Canadian Society for Renaissance Studies/ Société canadienne d'Etudes de la Renaissance. The Society was founded in May 1976 during the meetings of the Learned Societies. The next annual conference will take place at Fredericton, N.B. on May 28-29, 1977. The Society's executive includes scholars in various disciplines from the different parts of Canada. Its present chief officers are: President: F. D. Hoeniger (Victoria College, Toronto); Vice-President: J. M. De Bujanda (Directeur, Centre d'Etudes de la Renaissance, Sherbrooke); and Olga Pugliese (Italian Studies, Toronto). The Society's annual membership fee is \$10. (\$5. for graduate students). The Society will co-sponsor the Toronto-based journal *Renaissance and Reformation: Renaissance et Réforme* (annual subscription: \$6. to the journal's business manager, John Priestley, French Dept., York University, Downsview, Ontario, or to the Society's Secretary-Treasurer). As it wishes to improve contacts among Renaissance scholars across Canada, and stimulate local and regional organizations, the Society would appreciate information and enquiries. The meeting at Fredericton will include sessions on: "The Fine Arts in the Renaissance" (organizer: Rosemarie Bergmann. History of Art, McGill); "The Southern Renaissance (including France)" (organizer: Claude Sutto, Institut Médiéval, U. de Montréal); and "The Northern Renaissance" (organizer: Murdo MacKinnon, English, Guelph). Proposals for papers in either French or English should be sent to the organizers.

Clarion State Conference. The Fourth Annual Conference on Medieval and Renaissance Cultures will be held at Clarion State College during 25-26 March, 1977. Of especial interest to Spenserians will be the appearance of Professors Humphrey Tonkin and O.B. Hardison, Jr., on the program. Further information may be obtained by writing to Francis G. Greco, Dept. of English, Clarion State College, Clarion PA 16214.

Spenser at Kalamazoo. "Spenser: Classical, Medieval, Renaissance and Modern" will be the topic of four special sessions at the Twelfth Conference on Medieval Studies, Kalamazoo, Michigan, 7-8 May, 1977. Cherie Ann Haeger (Gannon College) will review the conference for *SpN*. The program for the four sessions follows (with Commentator's name in parentheses):

I. Chairman: Mark Rose; "Mother Hubbard's Tale: Spenser's Myth of the Golden Age in a Fallen World," D'Orsay W. Pearson (Gerard J. Gross); "The Concept of 'Character' in *The Faerie Queene*," Rawdon Wilson (James Fitzmaurice); "The *Faerie Queene* as an Attitude of Mind: Some Thoughts on Myth in Elizabethan Literature and Society," Humphrey Tonkin (Waldo P. McNeir).

II. Chairman: Alice Miskimin; "Prince Arthur and Bottom the Weaver: the Renaissance Dream of the Fairy Queen," Carol Barthel (Walter Davis); "For Profite of the Ensamble: Spenser Moralizing His Song," John C. Ulreich, Jr. (John Webster); "Chaucer and Spenser: Senses of Ending," Michael Holahan (Georgia Ronan Crampton).

III. Chairman: Anne Shaver; "Luther's Warriors and Spenser's Knights," William A. Sessions (Gregory J. Wilkin); "The Parameters of Courtesy," Alice Fox (Lorna Irvine); "In Praise of Poet's Wit: Spenser and the Sister Arts," Elizabeth H. Hageman (Michael L. Donnelly).

IV. Chairman: Roger Kuin; "Spenser's Anti-Neoplatonism," Jerome S. Dees (Elizabeth Bieman); "Spenser's *Epithalamion* as Verbal Charm," Suzanne H. MacRae (A. Kent Hieatt); "Intense Ray of Poetry: Virginia Woolf's Reading of Spenser," Elizabeth W. Pomeroy (Susan R. Gorsky).

To register for the conference, write: Otto Gründler, Director, The Medieval Institute, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo Mich. 49001. For further information about the Spenser sessions: David A. Richardson, Department of English, Cleveland State University, Cleveland Ohio 44115.

Kalamazoo in '78, Too. Spenser at Kalamazoo (1978): a third special session is tentatively approved for the Thirteenth Conference on Medieval Studies at Kalamazoo, Michigan, in May 1978. Abstracts are invited *before 15 September 1977* (triplicate, double-spaced, 2-page max). Commentators and chairmen needed; indicate area of interest and expertise in Spenser. Please include home and office telephone numbers with correspondence. Inquiries to David A. Richardson, Department of English, Cleveland State University, Cleveland Ohio 44115.

Blake's "Characters of Spenser's Faerie Queene". The large color reproduction of Blake's Spenser painting originally published in *Blake Newsletter* 31 with an accompanying essay by John Grant and Robert Brown is now available as a separate print. The picture is printed on a very large sheet of white enamel paper, with wide margins to allow framing. It is unfolded, and will be sent by first class mail in a cardboard mailing tube. The price is \$4.50, which includes about \$1.60 for postage and \$1.25 for the mailing tube. Make cheques payable to "Blake Newsletter" and send to Debra Sackett, Circulation Manager, *Blake Newsletter*, Department of English, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque NM 87131.

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