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TO OUR READERS

87.01 The editor must begin this issue with three notes, two of thanks, one of regret. First, many thanks to all those who read papers at the MLA convention, and who were so helpful in supplying abstracts for my use in preparing the report that appears in this issue. Second, having learned first-hand how complex a project convention reporting can be, I am doubly concerned to have discovered that the report on last year's Kalamazoo meetings appeared in *SpN* 17.2 without attribution. That carefully prepared, fluent, and punctually submitted report was written by Pamela J. Benson (Rhode Island College). We very much regret the omission of her name. Third, many thanks to my colleague James P. Thompson, who in the capacity of guest editor, is seeing this issue through the final stages of preparation, and who will be tending to the editor's duties throughout the spring semester. Correspondents can direct their mail to James, or continue to send it to me. It will find the correct mailbox.

BOOKS: REVIEWS AND NOTICES

87.02 Dundas, Judith. *The Spider and the Bee: The Artistry of Spenser's "Faerie Queene."* Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1985. xvi + 231 pp. 6 b&w illustrations. $12.95.

Few poems call attention to their artfulness as frequently as *The Faerie Queene*, and few can leave the reader in such a quandary about art's morality. Time and again, art in the poem and the poem's art seem to undermine and contradict each other, most celebratedly in the Bower of Bliss. A history of Spenser criticism -- and perhaps of more -- could be written from accounts of this episode alone. In confronting "the artistry of Spenser's *Faerie Queene*," as her subtitle puts it, Judith Dundas chooses one of the great topics; her bravery is all the greater since the reader must inevitably consider the author's own craftsmanship. In the event, not the least impressive feature of *The Spider and the Bee* is its capacity to provoke, educate, and discuss so much in so small a compass: *multum in parvo*.

The explanation and rapid establishment of the metaphors of Professor Dundas' title assist here, as she explores the apparent disparity between Spenser's careful craft and his magical power over the reader. Drawing on her impressive readings in the humanist tradition and the aesthetic theories of Spenser's contemporaries, she proposes "two kinds of form -- expressive and restrictive -- [which] in their complex relationships have a decisive effect on the imagery of *The Faerie Queene*" (29) so that, for instance, the interplay between the complex and constraining stanza form and the open-endedness of the romance genre becomes a prime quality of the poem: "schematic form supplies frames within which fantasy can express itself" (28).

Essential to this reading of the poem is the preeminence of the illusion of sight. The second chapter then addresses the very question of how and what art expresses, and goes on to explore Spenser's own concentration at crucial moments on the connections

and competitions between verbal and visual arts. Again, the century's debates on imitation, invention, the *paragone*, and *ut pictura poesis* are skillfully explicated and used to elucidate Spenser's own stance, revealing the uneasiness of his responses to illusion and the senses, his awareness of the limits of imitation and, finally, of metaphor itself. And in art's competition with nature -- "the art of God" -- we reach her central theme: how Spenser the artist can use art, so prone to mislead, to reveal its own shortcomings, and ultimately nature's, as part of his attempt to reach the truth of the divine maker.

Little here is entirely original; on such a topic that would be asking too much. But Professor Dundas has a way of restating and reshaping the known so that one perceives it with renewed force and renewed pleasure. Her local readings are often fine. Few paragraphs lack at least one crisp phrase clarifying otherwise vague and misty perceptions. Again, her own skill is one she recognizes and applauds in Spenser, as "he brings the stock image to definitive perfection" (152).

Her control over, exposition of, and sophisticated response to detail are essential to the body of the book. It contains chapters on Spenser's rhetorical devices, and on images as decoration and as devices fulfilling an expressive function. These chapters examine the aesthetic and moral qualities of ornament both within and beyond the poem. Professor Dundas's close analyses here are extremely useful, but gradually a sense of frustration grows as these fail to build to a convincing original argument. Occasionally, that capacity to present the known slips into bathetic statement of the commonplace: "In *The Faerie Queene*, Spenser has no hesitation in using alliteration quite freely. . . . He is sparing of the more elaborate kinds of repetition"(108). The admirable encapsulations and telling summations continue, but these only comfort the reader who senses the evaporation of the hope that this book would propel discussion of Spenser's aesthetics onto another plane. The final chapter "The Poet as Painter," the Epilogue, and the Excursus are interesting and intelligent, but something has gone wrong. This investigation of Spenserian aesthetics seems futile when the reader is forced back on the moral allegory by the disappointing circularity of such conclusions as, "the expressive value of ornament depends upon the context in which it appears" (141).

With the Bower of Bliss, this disappointment is most striking: "ironic praise must be read in the light of Renaissance aesthetic ideals, to which in many ways the Bower conforms" (111). How true, but also, how debilitating that imprecision is. Professor Dundas was ill-served by the editor who let "in many ways" through, since the fudge brushes aside further analysis of the essential issue of *why* the Bower is evil if it conforms so directly to the aesthetics Spenser is assumed to share. Dundas eventually falls back on the non-aesthetic in her attempt to deal with this *impasse*: "Yet if the *context* is changed, exactly the same sort of art may become the object of the moralist's ire" (112).

But is it, for Spenser, "exactly the same sort of art"? Professor Dundas's Preface delivers a smart and engaging rebuke to the more predictable deconstructive readings of *The Faerie Queene*, all fractures and fissures. Yet her own implied version of sixteenth-century aesthetics is perhaps too homogenized. And it is also ahistorical. When she explains the origins of her work, she rightly eschews a post-romantic view that Spenser was "creating art as self-sufficient and autonomous" (ix). Her only permitted antithesis,

however, is that of "art . . . as an offering to the divine" (ix). But Spenser was a profoundly political poet; poetry in his day was ideologically engaged. There was not a single version of aesthetics acceptable to Englishmen and Italians, Protestants and Catholics alike. There were competing versions, the ideological undertows of which were sometimes seen, sometimes sensed by artists who chose between them. Occasionally Professor Dundas recognizes this, but she rarely permits that realization to influence her interpretations. Instead she remains within the critical tradition of seeing "Renaissance views," standard "Renaissance aesthetics." She talks with disturbing ease of "the Renaissance writer" or "the Renaissance artist."

This ahistoricism is confirmed by her silence concerning the conclusions of some recent Spenser criticism, the "two chief directions" (ix) of which she describes in her Preface as iconographic and linguistic. But much of the best recent criticism has concentrated on reading Spenser and his contemporaries in their political and social contexts, with the result that scholars have rediscovered the diversity of all kinds of opinion in Elizabethan England. If there was a multiplicity of radically opposed attitudes in religion, why assume that all subscribed to the same aesthetic creed? Why should a late sixteenth-century Protestant Englishman subscribe totally to the aesthetics of Alberti or Ficino? The author quotes a letter in which Merritt Y. Hughes remarks: "'It seems to me that everything I consider moral, you consider aesthetic'" (ix). That Professor Dundas rests content with this dichotomy disappointingly limits her vision in a book which is otherwise admirable.

Michael Leslie
University of Sheffield

87.03 Estrin, Barbara L. *The Raven and the Lark: Lost Children in the Literature of the English Renaissance.* Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press; London and Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1985. 228 pp. $29.50.

This wide-ranging study addresses the foundling plot as a recurrent literary theme whereby, in Estrin's generic description, "an exposed aristocrat . . . is saved by peasants, raised in primitive surroundings, and returned (usually at the moment he is about to marry) to his biological parents. He thereby restores a royal dynasty severed by his absence" (13). In both its pure form and its various permutations (stories of "analogous foundlings") Estrin finds a consistent opposition of philosophical values: art, in the adoptive sections with the ministrations of foster parents, and nature, in the "ultimate exaltation of the biological parents" (13). After exploring classical and biblical backgrounds in Greek myth and the stories of Moses and Christ, she extends her study through Malory, Sidney, Spenser, and Shakespeare, including a chapter on Elizabethan social conditions that, in her view, lent special timeliness to the theme. *Newsletter* readers will be interested in the three chapters on Spenser (6 through 8), though few, I believe, will find their approach to *The Faerie Queene* entirely satisfying.

Estrin summarizes the thesis for these sections in the following terms:

> Spenser frees himself from the demands of the foundling formula upon which his characters' consummation depends. Una and Pastorella find their parents, Britomart a vision of her progeny. But their expected weddings never take place.

> In book 1, the poet weaves two foundling plots involving irreconcilable conclusions: Saint George's hagiography demanding a renunciation of earthly entanglements; Una's love story requiring the nuptial ceremony the saint story negates. The middle books are structured around three heroines -- Florimell, Amoret, and Britomart. Only Florimell marries. In the sixth book, the poet reveals why he denies the social commitment of the plot he ostensibly follows when he exalts the Petrarchan inspiration he privately seeks. (68)

These statements seem to me to contain several distortions of the text, distortions on which much of the ensuing discussion relies. In point of literary fact, Amoret *is* wed within the existing poem (IV.i.2-3); and lest the unconsummated nature of the union furnish grounds for the kind of critical annulment Estrin performs, Spenser leaves no doubt, with the six stanzas he wrote to tie up the ending of Book III in the 1590 edition, as to how her story should be expected to end. In the case of Una, surely we may assume, without going over the familiar ground of betrothal customs in Elizabethan England, that the ceremony in I.xii.36-40 has the symbolic force of marriage -- a marriage that, in Protestant eyes, is in no way inimical to the Red Cross Knight's projected sainthood. And few readers, one guesses, have been so ungenerous as to imagine Britomart's progeny (III.iii) descended without benefit of clergy.

The central problem, of course, is that, given the unfinished nature of the poem and the heavy reliance on deferred closure that is part and parcel of its genre, it is simply not possible to say that a conclusion "never takes place" unless the poet specifically declares that it will not. In the cases cited above, Spenser's indications of eventual consummation are much too clear to be ignored. Estrin invokes in passing our awareness of an incomplete text (16, 68), but proceeds to ignore its limitations in an exposition that gives little weight to incompleteness or to the prevailing narrative mode of the poem.

In this reading, Archimago "inspires a wet dream connecting love and death" (74) and sends the hero off into a world of confusion, much of it over sex, until the New Jerusalem episode shows a promise of rebirth -- "a past and a future he never knew existed" (80). Deliverance, however, is not complete: so overwhelmed is the knight with his vision that he now "continues as if by atrophy the old quests" (81). His return to Una is not a success but a distraction, "both from his real self and the saint story in which he will one day participate" (81), and both the love story and the hagiography remian inconclusive. Besides requiring us, by implication, to regard the dragon-slaying of canto xi as a more or less anticlimactic and disspirited act, Estrin's approach necessitates assumptions about Una's human feelings (she is "betrayed by her belief in happy endings," 82) that the text neither encourages nor sustains. By the end of chapter 8, which discusses Book VI, we find Spenser's fictional self in a state of withdrawal from marriage and its demands, admiring the energy of the vegetative world but rejecting "animal lust" and altering the foundling theme, with its emphasis on generation, to accommodate a recognition that "his inspiration lies in the death of love" (106).

I suspect that many readers, in evaluating the evidence Estrin offers for this reading, will find useful individual insights and a number of stimulating ideas. I further suspect, however, that most will be put off by the often unnecessary difficulty of a style inordinately given to parallelism and rhetorical antithesis and to parenthetical expressions that wrench attention from the point at hand. The following example is not atypical:

> When he works within (or deviates from) the established paradigm, the poet's resolution of the art/nature controversy involves (a) his choice of literary genres (tragedy, comedy, and romance); (b) his exploration of both emotional and philosophical ("womanly" and "manly") approaches to life; (c) his juggling of a private passion to forge a poetic -- creative -- identity with the contravening impulse to contribute the the social -- dynastic -- mainstream; and (d) his weaving (in an effort to achieve balance and reveal his purpose) double or multiple narrative structures (as in *The Old Arcadia*, *The Faerie Queene*, *King Lear*, *The Winter's Tale*, and *The Tempest*). (16-17)

Even Homer nodded; but exposition such as this places requirements on the reader that are difficult cheerfully to accept.

Jerry Leath Mills
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

87.04 Gleckner, Robert. *Blake and Spenser*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985. xi + 403 pp. $29.50.

Blake and Spenser extends Robert Gleckner's earlier work on this much-neglected literary relationship, most notably (and recently) his *Blake's Prelude: "Poetical Sketches"* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1982). A study of poetic influence, *Blake and Spenser* nonetheless discusses "influence" of a peculiar sort. As Gleckner acknowledges, Blake makes very few references to Spenser by name, omitting him from his "visionary company" (in *Jerusalem*) of both "the beautiful" ("Milton & Shakspear & Chaucer") and "the damned" ("Bacon & Newton & Locke"). Gleckner counts only five references to Spenser by name: "An Imitation of Spenser" from Blake's *Poetical Sketches*; Blake's *Notebook*, beside four lines from *The Faerie Queene*, Book II (part of a series of emblems called "Ideas of Good & Evil"); an illustration to Thomas Gray's poems, called "Spenser creating his faeries"; a portrait of Spenser done for his patron William Hayley's "Heads of the Poets"; and a painting entitled "The Characters in Spenser's *Faerie Queene*."

Despite this, Gleckner argues convincingly that not merely allusions to Spenser, but more specifically criticisms of him, pervade most of Blake's works. These allusions tend to be overlooked, he claims, because of Blake's "habitual techniques of contextualized allusion and buried quotation (or near-quotation)" which preclude "conventional source-hunting or mere listings of allusions." Blake employs a "complex allusionary technique" which depends on "borrowed contexts" rather than on borrowed lines, phrases, or words. By "borrowed contexts," Gleckner seems to mean (in part) something like "literary conventions" -- the conventions of Petrarchan or courtly love, for example, or the conventions of pastoral. Such conventions are repeatedly inverted, subverted or "otherwise manipulated" by Blake, Gleckner claims, in a technique "related to satire [which] is essentially a poetic-technical version of Los's 'Striving with Systems to deliver Individuals from those Systems'" (2).

The "System" against which Blake-Los so persistently strives is "Allegory," and it is in Blake's famous distinction between "Allegory" and "Vision" that Gleckner's Blake-Spenser relationship finally rests. "Allegory & Vision . . . ought to be known as Two

Distinct Things & so calld for the Sake of Eternal Life," Blake declares, and "Allegories are things that Relate to Moral Virtues Moral Virtues do not Exist they are Allegories & dissimulations" (*A Vision of the Last Judgment*). Allegories are rational abstractions from life, abstract fictions or "darke conceits" which masquerade as visionary truths. Clearly *The Faerie Queene* is a tissue of such allegories and dissimulations, and Gleckner demonstrates with meticulous and convincing detail the kinds of Spenserian "allegories" which Blake exposes and subverts.

Two such allegories (as mentioned above) are those of Petrarchan love and pastoral. Gleckner claims that the struggles of the sexes ("the torments of love & jealousy") throughout Blake's poetry, and particularly Blake's notion of "the Female Will," the cruel and delusive female who delights in tormenting her lovers, owe much to Petrarchan conventions epitomized in Spenser's *Amoretti* and in the very notion of an epic dedicated to a "virgin queen." Further, he claims, Blake rejects Spenser's solution to this Petrarchan problem -- Christian marriage -- as a "hermaphroditic union" of false contraries. Priesthood, religion, marriage, and "reason" are for Blake aligned with, not opposed to, restraints on desire; they are in fact identical with those very restraints. Excess (excess of desire) and temperance, moderation, and chastity (excess of reason) are therefore for Blake,again, false contraries, their conflict a delusory one.

Gleckner also finds (following Northrop Frye) Spenser's Garden of Adonis to be central to Blake's view of Spenser. This world of natural cycles, where "All things decay in time, and to their end do draw," where Adonis reigns "eterne in mutabilitie," is anathema to Blake, the world not of regeneration but of generation. Blake seeks, by contrast, an eternity where "One Thing never Changes into another Thing Each Identity is Eternal," for "Eternal Identity is one thing & Corporeal Vegetation is another Thing" (*A Vision of the Last Judgment*). Further, it is this world of generation and ultimately death which for Blake underlies the false eternity of the pastoral world, an idyllic but delusory retreat into "Beulah" which is at best a fragile and precarious fiction, an "allegory" of the true eternity.

Gleckner traces these and other ideas through detailed readings of "The Book of Thel," "The Golden Net," "The Crystal Cabinet," "The Marriage of Heaven and Hell," and "I Saw a Chapel," frequently invoking Spenserian analogues and possible sources. His most extended analysis, however, (chapters 5,6, and 7), is of Blake's painting "The Characters in Spenser's *Faerie Queene*," which he sees as central to understanding Blake's critical response to Spenser. It is indeed on the basis of this painting -- a special kind of illustration which Blake accorded only to Chaucer besides -- that Gleckner argues for Spenser's importance to Blake. Here Gleckner follows the precedents for "reading" the painting set by similar readers of Blake's "Chaucers Canterbury Pilgrims," often thought to be a companion-piece to the Spenser painting (perhaps its "contrary," as Gleckner suggests). By analyzing such details as the progression from left to right, the groupings or configurations of characters, and the relation of the "mundane" to the "supernal" realms, Gleckner suggests that Blake repudiates or corrects central Spenserian "errors" in *The Faerie Queene*. Fundamentally, he claims, Blake felt that Spenser structured it "backwards -- from the eradication of error and a vision of the New Jerusalem, through the state of experience, to innocence; or from apocalyptic prophecy to pastoral" (233). As such, it is a retreat and failure much like that of Blake's own Thel (who flees from "experience" back into the delusory pastoral "innocence" of the Vales of

Har): "after five books of moral virtues based squarely on the validity of the senses and their warfare . . ., Spenser flees back to his version of the Vales of Har, complete with Adam and Eve . . . and a Thel alter ego, Pastorella" (299).

All of this suggests that Blake found little to admire in Spenser; yet Gleckner means to argue just the opposite. Blake does not repudiate "Allegory" for "Vision." On the contrary, as Gleckner points out, Blake acknowledges that "Fable or Allgory [sic] is not without some Vision Pilgrims Progress is full of it" (*A Vision of the Last Judgment*). Spenser, like Milton, is for Blake a poet who can be "redeemed," not utterly cast out as unmitigated "error." He is what Blake calls a "contrary," a worthy antagonist, rather than a "negation" to be ignored. Gleckner thus neatly applies Blake's own theory of poetic influence (a theory which, however Harold Bloomian it may sound, originated in Blake's *Milton*) to his own analysis of Blake and Spenser.

The question becomes, then, just what it is in Spenser that Blake sees as redeemable "Vision." Here Gleckner's study, detailed, provocative, and generally right about Blake as it is, may fail to convince. Gleckner suggests that, for Blake, Spenser's vision may have contained the seeds of its own redemption in such things as Spenser's recognition that Petrarchan love was a "problem" requiring a solution (Christian marriage) -- even if Blake disagreed with the solution. And in a brilliant reading of Blake's picture of Archimago (Chapter 5), Gleckner suggests that if in this duplicitous character "even . . . glimmers of Spenser's sensitivity to the perils of his own *modus operandi* shone through now and again, Blake not only would have been pleased, but clearly would have regarded such critical diabolism as a sign of Spenser's redemptiveness" (175). Blake, like Spenser, is concerned with differentiating the shifting veils of "error" in the fallen world of generation and experience from the single face of "truth." But it is nonetheless difficult to accept Gleckner's claim that Spenser equalled Milton in Blake's eyes. It seems more likely that for the visionary Blake, Spenser's world of pastoral romance precluded any apocalyptic stripping of the veil (including the veil of allegory) -- that Spenser remained trapped in the land of faerie or "negation" where, in Gleckner's own words, "disguise breeds disguise, error breeds error, names breed names" -- and "when the truth appears in its own guize, it is thought to be an allegory of error, like all the rest" (147).

Lorraine J. Clark
Mount Holyoke College

87.05 Hannay, Margaret P., ed. *Silent But for the Word: Tudor Women as Patrons, Translators, and Writers of Religious Works*. Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1985. 313 pp. $27.50.

This collection of essays, a timely addition to the current list of gender studies, is especially welcome for its groundbreaking research into the workings of a culture that effectively silenced its women. Spenserians, or anyone interested in Tudor politics and letters, the Reformation, or "reclamationist" history, will find Professor Hannay's volume immensely useful. The collection emphasizes silence: the voices of Tudor women are best recalled from historical amnesia by listening for what is *not* there, what they do *not* say, and what emerges from the silences of their translations. Noticing that these women wrote only religious works and translations, most of the essays conclude that paternalistic

constraints forbade any other forms of discourse. The aims of the essays, however, vary. Some pieces venture to reclaim women from the shadows of men -- Margaret More Roper from her father's; Mary Sidney from her brother's; Aemilia Lanyer from Shakespeare's -- but others attempt to redefine the dilemma of the rebellious or martyred woman, to determine the quality of Tudor women's translations, and to examine the politics of patronage.

The authors find that the production of religious works by Tudor women is almost always involved with the political and reformist struggles of the aristocratic families. Yet there are some surprises: in choosing texts to translate, these women were usually influenced by a brother, father, or tutor; their works contributed to the rapid promulgation of Protestant texts; their audiences were primarily female. And on occasion, the translators succeed in subverting the (author)ity of their texts.

After Hannay provides a brief survey of English women writers before the Renaissance, Valerie Wayne raises the questions common to the collection. She links the silence of Tudor women to the misogynist injunctions found in such non-fictional texts as Vives' *De Institutione Foeminae Christianae*. This work is not, she argues, an educational treatise outlining a formal course of study for a Renaissance woman (like the one he wrote for young men), but an extremely popular "conduct book" for women. Citing Vives' restrictions on the Tudor woman's "play of mind," his insistence that a woman's concern is, first, for her "chastyte," and, second, that "none at al here her," Wayne concludes that Vives' -- and the humanists' interests -- showed more concern about a woman's sexual purity than her education, her body than her mind and (perhaps) her soul. Wayne compares his exhortations with the literary works of the period, *Much Ado, Othello, Cymbeline, Comus, The Faerie Queene, Lucrece*, and their "unwholesome preoccupation with women's sexual goodness" (25).

Rita Verbrugge, like many other authors in the collection, suggests problems yet to be studied in Renaissance women's writings. By comparing the texts of Erasmus' *Precatio Dominica* and Margaret More Roper's translation, and by questioning the disputed authorship of a dialogue-letter from Margaret to Alice Alington, Verbrugge tries to tease out Margaret's response to Henry VIII's demands. Margaret's concern for a "responsible translation" (39) and her tendency toward embellishment -- adding doublets, alliteration, parallel constructions -- conforms to the practices of other Renaissance translators, but in her choice of expression and in her emphasis on the vileness of man and the benevolence of God, Margaret's own voice may be detected. The voice of eleven-year-old Elizabeth may be easier to hear, through her translation of Marguerite de Navarre's long poem, *Le miroir de l'ame pecheresse*. Anne Lake Prescott finds interesting indeed Elizabeth's errors and omissions in a text exploring "a set of analogies through which mortals can indicate otherwise incommunicable religious feelings, expressing them in terms of familial and erotic relationships" (68). Elizabeth omits several references to God as a benevolent father and confuses the genders of mother/father, sister/brother. Although Prescott hints at the connection between this confusion and Elizabeth's lack of a benevolent father, she does not speculate on its ramifications in Elizabeth's later life or works.

Several groups or "circles" of women become the subjects of various essays concerning patronage or translations. Observing that through Catherine Parr's influence,

Ascham, Aylmer, Foxe, and Wilson were appointed tutors to sons and daughters of royalty and nobility, John King establishes a "circle" of women who patronized translations and publications of religious works, and claims that the members of this circle helped to popularize Protestant humanism. Jon Quitslund argues that such patronesses may also have influenced the secular writing of the period. Spenser, aware of the need to "assemble" his audience and motivated to please his female reader(s), speaks, in his dedications and in the contents of his post-1590 works, to another "circle" of women surrounding Queen Elizabeth; Quitslund identifies the Russell sisters as its prominent members. His suggestion that Spenser addresses a two-fold audience, university-trained men and this circle of women, should offer Spenserians new directions for research.

The three essays that treat works of rebellious women distinguish between the way each woman presents herself and the way men chose (and still choose) to read her. Elaine Beilin argues that Anne Askew's *Examinations* is not the inner dialogue of the weak and foolish vessel of God reformists assumed it to be, but a first-person narrative, a public statement to an audience Askew understood and played. Carole Levin's attempt to discredit the tradition of Lady Jane Grey as a submissive victim of political intrigue challenges the accumulated opinions of several centuries. Exploited by Foxe and rendered passive by Dekker and Webster, she was in fact one of the best educated women of the Tudor period, fiercely loyal to Protestant ideals, vehement toward her theological enemies, and capable of condemning her parents, tutor, and cousin Mary for not living up to her own high standards. With her energy and fierceness diluted, she became an especially popular figure in the nineteenth century: young, beautiful, passive, and dead. And finally, Sandra K. Fischer's essay establishes Elizabeth Cary as one of the first feminist revisionists of history, her voice clearly outside the male tradition. In Cary's *Tragedie of Miriam* (1613), the earliest extant original English tragedy by a woman, the heroine, like Cary, must come to terms with the political and domestic tyranny of her husband.

Three essays are devoted to Mary Sidney, currently the most well known and celebrated of Renaissance women writers. Margaret Hannay argues that the two poems appended to the 1599 presentation of the *Psalmes*, which never reached Queen Elizabeth, together reveal a strong political statement of Mary's intention to continue Philip's militant Protestantism. This lucidly argued essay places the poems in the tradition of admonitory poetry -- intended to instruct and praise. In another essay, Diane Bornstein examines Mary's translation of Phillipe de Mornay's *Discours de la vie et de la mort* for stylistic changes, sustained parallelism, and extended metaphors, praising its grace and clarity at a time when English syntax was far from settled. She also claims the work is more Stoic than Christian. Beth Wynne Fisken reads Mary's *Psalmes* as a search for the author's own style and voice in the introspective Protestant tradition, but laments that Mary had no female poets as models. She argues that after consulting several translations Mary attempted to dramatize the psalmist's ordeal and to reflect both the original style and matter as well as the spiritual world of the translator.

In one of the most important essays in the group, Barbara Lewalski seeks to redirect attention to Aemilia Lanyer's poems -- and to rescue her in the process from the irrelevant notoriety generated by Rowse's contention that she was Shakespeare's "dark lady." Lanyer's *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum* demands our interest because published

poetry by Renaissance women is so very rare, because it defends and celebrates "good women," and because it displays remarkable poetic merit. Each of the poem's three parts contains an apologia of women's virtue and morality; thus, this "Book of Good Women" is both religious and feminist, employing several poetic genres and verse forms. The dedications address a contemporary community of good women, the title poem gives them a biblical line of descent, and the last poem describes Cooke-ham as a *locus amoenus*, a new Eden inhabited by women alone. Although dates are uncertain, Lanyer's poem seems to pre-date the publication of Jonson's "To Penshurst," thought to be the earliest English country-house poem. Lewalski ends with the thesis that "the fundamental Christian myths -- Eden, the Passion, the Community of Saints -- are here revised, with women at their center" (224).

Although some essays in *Silent but for the Word* achieve the aims of the volume better than others, each one presents information that could be gained only through energetic, even exhaustive research. It could be highly valued for that alone. It has future value too, however, since Gary Waller's final essay raises issues central to the future of Renaissance studies -- issues the theorists must begin to address (255). But as it now stands, this important collection has already reclaimed from the margins the voices of several important and hitherto silenced women.

Ellen M. Caldwell
Clarkson University

ARTICLES: ABSTRACTS AND NOTICES

87.06 Breitenberg, Mark. "' . . . the hole matter opened': Iconic Representation and Interpretation in 'The Quenes Majesties Passage.'" *Criticism* 28, no. 1 (Winter 1986): 1-25.

A study of Elizabeth's coronation pageant reveals the unity of representation with meaning in the English Renaissance. The identification of the queen with allegorical attributes of statecraft (Justice, Wisdom, Pure Religion, and Love of Subjects) is accomplished by use of emblems, rhetoric, and exempla, "all of which assert the essential indivisibility of what can be seen, heard and read." We must appreciate the unity of meaning and text in the pageant because "political power in the sixteenth century . . . possesses a deep investment in the continuation and maintenance of . . . perceptual categories." Culture is emblematic: it portrays and signifies. Meaning is conveyed by likenesses, integration, and amplification. "The proliferation and popularity of emblem books . . . allows us to realize the sixteenth-century perception of the interconnectedness of pictorial representation, allegorical tableaux and rhetorical figuration . . . meaning is contained immanently in words just as it is in the direct observation of a picture."

Structural control of state emblems (as in the transference of the four virtues from Mary's coronation to Elizabeth's) involved control of cultural meaning -- "what it was possible to think and how that could be represented." Rhetoric, too, controls meaning by determining what can be thought. The rise of rhetoric books in England corresponds with the rise of nationalism and a need to embody the state in language. Rhetoric mirrors

a divine order of "hierarchy and obedience" which is embedded in the hierarchical representation of political rhetoric. The figures who address Elizabeth speak for her, just as she speaks for them. "Elizabeth's entry pageant . . . is a means of establishing a rhetoric, a set of figures amplified, for conceiving political authority." The exempla of the four virtues makes Elizabeth "equivalent" to the truth. The separate spectacles in her "passage" through London, like the separate events of the *FQ*'s narrative, constitute "an overall thematic unity of parallel narration," all of which are "true." When text (words and rhetoric) and event (emblems and exempla) become one, cultural meaning is established as truth. [Kevin Farley]

87.07 Dasenbrock, Reed Way. "Escaping the Squires' Double Bind in Books III and IV of *The Faerie Queene*." *SEL* 26, no. 1 (Winter 1986): 25-45.

Unlike books I and II of *FQ*, which concern the actions of individual characters and are more easily interpreted, books II and IV deal instead with groups of characters and have been more difficult to understand. These books are properly read when we concentrate not on single characters but on the groups, for the organizing principle of *FQ* III and IV is the Petrarchan double bind of courtly love. The squire group (Timias, the Squire of Dames, Amyas, the Squire of Low Degree, and Placidas) is trapped by the Petrarchan rules of love. The lover must "be bold" and love a lady who is his superior; he must be "not too bold" and expect reciprocation. Even those characters, like the Squire of Dames, who parody courtly love remain caught in the double bind which prevents true love. The squires' adventures falter because their Petrarchan love involves domination of one lover over another, no resolution therefore being possible. "The world of books I and II, in which an isolated character needed to resist social entanglement in order to be virtuous and to accomplish his quest, is replaced by a more complicated world in which entanglement is inevitable and essential in order to achieve one's quest."

Spenser's narrative attacks Petrarchism. The satire of sexual dominance and "critique of Petrarchan false chastity" creates an ideal of love which "emerges from the two." This ideal, created by negative examples, is Aristotle's conception of friendship, a love not based on dominance of the beloved and constraint of the lover. The book's figures achieve this ideal by undergoing "Petrarchan thralldom," moving repeatedly from dominance to constraint. Marinell and Florimell, like Britomart and Artegall, achieve Spenser's ideal: "Each has been bold, but not too bold, and an equality and reciprocity characteristic of the highest type of friendship has been created in the process." The double bind produces the narrative escape through ideal friendship. [Kevin Farley]

87.08 Fumerton, Patricia. "Exchanging Gifts: The Elizabethan Currency of Children and Poetry." *ELH* 53, no. 2 (Summer 1986): 241-78.

The circular gift exchanges of the Kula tribes, as described by Malinowski *inter alia*, provide a helpful if inexact analogy for the workings of *FQ*. They also supply a "new and more positive way of viewing the endless substitutions and deferrals noted (particularly in the middle books of *The Faerie Queene*) by recent Spenser critics." The Kula system, which incorporates obligations to give, to receive, and to repay, "enmeshes" gift exchanges between two individuals in a system that "is the whole society and, indeed, cosmos (insofar as nature itself is personified as a gift partner.)" The rituals include "ceremonialized self-interest and antagonism" which "displace not only physical

warfare but its economic embodiment, the competitive money market." They foster trust and generosity by providing each "gift participant" with "liberty and identity," achieved "through bondage to a larger body that dilates egos and mingles selves."

The Elizabethan custom of "fosterage" worked in comparable ways. The placing of children among five noble families and the court, for instance, treated the children as gifts, and endeavored to achieve social cohesion by displacing various expressions of belligerence. Unlike its "uncanny lookalike, the 'barbaric' Irish system,'" which reinforced the decentralizing cohesiveness of septs, the Elizabethan system fostered national unity: the "Court of Wards itself emblematizes the suppression of warfare -- in its form of competitive economics -- by the gift spirit of generosity." Similarly, *FQ* "continually exchanges and fosters." It "is a circle of gift, an endlessly liminal, transformational round wherein all loss is gain, all giving taking, all dying living." Especially in the Garden of Adonis, "Spenser engenders a liminal poetic that mingles English and Irish customs of child exchange, and in the process realigns Irish fosterage, centering it upon the English court and an all-embracing, life-giving, cultural round." [D.J.G.]

87.09 Howard, Jean E. "The New Historicism in Renaissance Studies." *ELR* 16, no. 1 (Winter 1986): 13-43.

Renaissance studies have recently become the site for renewed efforts to understand the relationship between literature and history. This project, ironically often involving a rewriting of the Renaissance in terms provided by twentieth-century culture, potentially challenges a positivistic criticism which sees literature as simply reflecting and mediating historic facts. By contrast, the new historicism invites a reunderstanding of history as itself a discursive construct and of literature as one of an ensemble of discursive practices participating in the ideological management of the real. Attention therefore focuses on the productive, rather than the reflective, role of writings designated as literary and on their function in the construction of historically specific modes of subjectivity and in the reproduction and subversion of dominant ideologies. The work of Louis Montrose and Stephen Greenblatt reveals some of the provocative and original dimensions of the historical criticism and also allows one to see the theoretical problems not yet fully addressed by it. [J.E.H.]

87.10 Miller, Jacqueline T. "The Omission in Red Cross Knight's Story: Narrative Inconsistencies in *The Faerie Queene*." *ELH* 53, no. 2 (Summer 1986): 279-88.

Although Red Cross Knight often misinterprets events throughout *FQ* I, he first actively *misrepresents* only in canto 12. In recounting his adventures for Una's parents, he omits any reference to his liaison with Duessa. The misrepresentation is highlighted by the reader's expectation that Red Cross has become sufficiently virtuous to avoid dishonesty, and by the narrator's suggestion that the knight's story has been complete: "From point to point . . . [He] discourst his voyage long" (xii.17). "The omission in [the knight's] story reflects the narrator's omissions in his, and we are ultimately inclined to cast the same doubtful eyes on the narrator that Una's father soon turns to fix on the hero." In the final canto of *FQ* I, therefore, Spenser radically challenges our faith in his hero and in his text. The author's "distrust of his own medium is one he endeavors from the start to instill in his readers"; he "*intends* us to note and respond to . . . the internal

incoherence of his fiction." Spenserian narration is more deliberately unsettling than the confident and easily revised provisionality Alpers describes. We need to admit that *FQ* often seems "'abrupte' and 'confused,'" and to accept these traits "as inherent characteristics of Spenser's narrative and its effect upon us." [D.J.G.; cf. item 85.37]

87.11 Silberman, Lauren. "Singing Unsung Heroines: Androgynous Discourse in Book 3 of *The Faerie Queene*." *Rewriting the Renaissance: The Discourses of Sexual Difference in Early Modern Europe*. Ed. Margaret W. Ferguson, Maureen Quilligan, and Nancy J. Vickers. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1986. 259-71.

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In *FQ* III.22.1-2, Spenser revises Ariosto's somewhat back-handed compliment to unsung heroines in a way that bespeaks "genuinely revisionary" views. "Spenser fashions the *Legend of Britomart* in response to Platonic hierarchical dualism and Petrarchan poetics." Petrarchan poetry "enshrines male subjectivity in a specious transcendence" which relegates women to a passive role on "the margins of the lyric." Britomart, who engages actively in amorous pursuit, is "an anti-Petrarchan heroine," whose "warmth and vulnerability expose the essential sterility and self-absorption of Petrarchan lovesickness." In his description of Merlin's mirror and its engendering of Britomart's love, "Spenser offers a model of subjective participation in the object," where "the interdependence of subject and object," mutually exclusive categories in the Petrarchan system, "effect a kind of truce."

These revisionist views appear most clearly in the House of Busirane and in the Gardens of Adonis. Busirane, "master of Petrarchan sexual poetics," cannot "thrill" Amoret's heart in the best sense ("move [it] emotionally") "because his poetics make no allowance for another subjective consciousness, independent yet engaged." In the Gardens of Adonis, Spenser rewrites Plato's "metaphysics of full presence," which "opposes abstract and concrete, spirit and flesh . . . in order to exalt the ideal over the mutable." Spenser, by contrast, "emphasizes process and relationship over presence," developing here a "poetics of harmonious discord as a genuine revision rather than an expedient transformation of Platonic dualism of spirit and matter." [D.J.G.]

87.12 Teskey, Gordon. "Milton's Choice of Subject in the Context of Renaissance Critical Theory." *ELH* 53, no. 1 (Spring 1986): 53-72.

In order to see clearly "the obvious choice" of subject for his epic, Milton needed to free himself from the "'metaphorical' principle of authority" which enabled "poems to call themselves 'epics' by a relationship of *similarity*." The most obvious consequence of this principle, dominant in Renaissance criticism, was "the privileging of formal treatment over what Tasso had significantly called the 'bare matter' of the subject." Eventually conceiving his poem, "as an *extension*, rather than an *imitation* of the original Word," Milton differed from the prevailing idea of a subject. He based his conception instead on "a *contiguous* or 'metonymical' principle of authority by descent from an origin, one in which the term 'heroic' may now be applied not to formal treatment but to what actually occurs in the poem."

A major consequence of "the metaphorical principle of generic authority" is a reduction of "history to a chain of substitutions that can be passed through the abstracted form of a heroic poem without significantly affecting that poem's meaning." This

consequence appears in Spenser's *Letter to Raleigh*, "where the poet declares his intention to instantiate the general truths of moral philosophy in what he calls an 'historical fiction' concerning Prince Arthur." Clearly, "Arthur is but one possibility in a generalized class any of whose members may anchor the floating abstraction of a 'good governour and a vertuous man'." This metaphorical conception of his poem appears alongside a metonymical one, however, whereby the twelve projected "quests of *The Faerie Queene* are contiguous at their origin where each begins on one of the twelve days of Gloriana's feast." This ambivalence "is symptomatic of the larger change in European aesthetic sensibility, a change of root metaphors from that of a broad-branching tree to that of an animal harmoniously integrated in all of its parts. The difference was coded in Renaissance critical theory by the terms" unity and variety. [D.J.G.]

87.13 "AND TAKEN UP HIS YNNE IN FISHES HASKE"

> But nowe sadde Winter welked hath the day,
> And *Phoebus* weary of his yerely taske,
> Ystabled hath his steedes in lowlye laye,
> And taken vp his ynne in *Fishes* haske.
> ("Nouember," ll. 13-16)

These lines have teased Spenserians for years, especially since E.K.'s gloss only underlines the riddle:

> In fishes haske) the sonne, reigneth that is, in the signe Pisces all Nouember. a haske is a wicker pad, wherein they use to cary fish.

The line seems to refer to the constellation Pisces, which E.K., ignoring the woodcut for "Nouember," which depicts Sagittarius, incorrectly ascribes to November. Since any sixteenth-century child would catch that error and since Spenser probably oversaw the printing of *The Shepheardes Calender*, it seems likely that the mistake is deliberate. Both McLane and Parmenter felt that *fishes* is a singular possessive noun, referring to the Dauphin (Dolphin) of France; the line thus described Elizabeth, or the sun, as in danger of being caught by France.[1] Spenser may well have intended the line to refer to Elizabeth's metaphoric death if she allowed herself to be trapped by Alencon's marriage proposals, but it would have been impossible to prove without first defining *haske*.

Here, the OED is more helpful than E.K. Since Spenser coined the word, he obviously wanted it to sound like a more familiar word and thus to evoke a common meaning or meanings. The most likely homonym here is *haspe*, an indigenous word used throughout the medieval and renaissance periods in England. As a noun, *haspe* referred to a fastening or a clasp, to a reelful of yarn, or to a reel or a hinge. As a verb, it could also mean to clasp or to embrace or confine. With its interrelated meanings, *haspe* is probably the word Spenser wished to evoke with his employment of the nonce word, *haske*. Taken one way, the line might well refer to Elizabeth's marriage, to the likelihood of the Queen's being embraced or confined by the Fish, as the Dauphin was sometimes called. However, if we take the more common meaning of *haspe*, as a clasp, a fastening, or a reel of yarn and apply it to the zodiacal constellation of Pisces, it would refer to the star Alpha Piscium, the star that Robert Recorde described in the *Castle of Knowledge*: "The Fyshes tyed by the tayles with a common Lyne . . . . and where those two lines are

knitte togyther, there is one starre more, which is called the Knotte."[2] *Alpha Piscium* was and is commonly known as the Knot of Pisces, since the constellation is compared to two fish connected by a "ribbon."

The Knot of Pisces not only marks the point where the ribbon is tied, but the point of departure of the sun from Pisces into Aries around the time of the vernal equinox.[3] Spenser thus used *haske* as a particularly complicated pun. As a homophone, it evoked *haspe*, meaning hinge or fastening or reelful of yarn. *Haspe* then recalls that knot joining the ribbons that connect the fishes in the constellation Pisces. If we take the *Fishes haske* to mean the *fish's* embrace, then the sun has taken up its inn, meaning its habitation or abode, in the fish's embrace and is therefore caught. However, if we take the *Fishes haske* to mean the *fishes'* knot, the sun has taken as its inn, or *temporary* dwelling, the Knot of Pisces, or is just leaving the constellation of Pisces.[4] The one describes the end of the action, the other announces a new age.

Just as Elizabethans frequently dated the year from the beginning of Elizabeth's accession to the throne, in November of 1558, so Spenser offered his readers a new Elizabethan calendar. "Nouember" and its apparent decline is designed to turn use away from the mortal Dido and towards the sun celebrated in "Aprill," where Spenser places his blazon of Elisa as an immortal figure of stability and magnificence, whose rising ushers in a new era. As E.K. reiterates, November is that season "when the sonne draweth low in the South toward his Tropick or *returne*" ("*Nouember*," Glosse, 15; emphasis added).

Notes

[1] Paul E. McLane, *Spenser's Shepheardes Calender: A Study in Elizabethan Allegory* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1961, rpt. 1970), p. 54; Mary Parmenter, "Spenser['s] 'Twelve Aeglogues Proportional to the Twelve Monthes," *ELH*, 3 (1930), p. 214.

[2] Robert Recorde, *The Castle of Knowledge* (London, 1556), p. 267. The Latin word for knot, *nodus*, was likewise used to designate *Alpha Piscium* by Latin writers. See Cicero, *Arati Phaenomena*, 251 (17); Germanicus Iulius Caesar, Aratea Epigrammata, 370.

[3] I am indebted to Anthony Aveni of the Department of Astronomy at Colgate University for providing me with this information. See also Alastair Fowler, *Spenser and the Numbers of Time* (New York, 1964), p. 146. In Canto 1 of the *Purgatorio*, Dante associates Pisces with the vernal equinox and hence with the theme of resurrection.

[4] As the *OED* notes, *inn* could mean either a dwellingplace or a house, or it could mean a place of sojourn. "To take (up) one's inn" was thus used to describe either permanent or temporary residence.

Lynn Staley Johnson
Colgate University

SPENSER AT MLA

The following meetings at the annual convention of the Modern Language Association of America, held in New York City on 27-30 December 1986, included numerous items concerning Spenser, his poetic language, and his cultural contexts.

Session 111: *Edmund Spenser: Reflecting (on) the Queen*, Program arranged by the Spenser Society. Presiding: Richard Helgerson, California Institute of Technology

87.14 In "Redefining Chastity: Britomart, Firme Chastity, and Elizabeth I," Susan Frye (University of Wyoming) argued that *The Faerie Queene* registers many alternative perspectives to the attitudes of Elizabeth's court -- and often validates these perspectives by expressing them in allegory, the court's discourse of representation and legitimation. A prime example of Spenser's exploitation of court allegory is his use of the iconography of the Queen to assert his own values. From *FQ* III's proem and development of the narrative featuring Britomart through Colin Clout's vision on Mount Acidale (VI.x) when "Firme Chastity" replaces Gloriana at the center of the dancing muses, Spenser is engaged in redefining Chastity as a more Protestant, sexual, poet-created and controlled value than Elizabeth's official Chastity. In order to legitimate this point of view, he makes explicit his culture's procedure for changing the meaning of allegories: he takes a well-known allegory, the figure of Chastity, replete with its associations of an Elizabeth whose virginity became the foundation of her domestic and foreign policy -- and associates his version of married Chastity with that courtly and political tradition. In the process, Spenser displays the power of the Renaissance poet and deviser of pageants to use language to create himself and his culture as well as the Queen. [S.F.]

87.15 In "The Myth of Power and Spenser's Voice of Counsel," S. Clark Hulse (University of Illinois, Chicago) maintained that, driven by the humanist desire to combine learning with power, Spenser forged in the *Faerie Queene* a language that simultaneously analyzes and celebrates the imperial claims of the Elizabethan regime. His mythopolitical discourse found itself in competition with another humanist language, the Machiavellian discourse of *realpolitique*. Over the course of the next century, Machiavellian discourse would become the dominant language of politics, a language that seemed to represent the realities of power while poetic mythology seemed to represent only flattering illusions. The myths of Astraea, Artegall, Chrysaor, and the Giant Leveller in Book 5, however, suggest that Spenser was not ready to accept this division or submit to the role of mere flatterer. Instead, he undertook to probe the historical and moral bases on which Elizabeth justified her opposition to the Hapsburgs and her domination of Ireland. Armed with the destabilizing ambiguities of his poetic myths, Spenser could strike an implicit bargain with his prince, in which her acceptance of his moral ideology would cause the weapon of his learning to be directed against her enemies.

The political language of the *Faerie Queene*, then, bears a startling resemblance to that of the *Vewe of Ireland*. Each has recourse to transcendant absolutes in order to control a relativistic analysis of history and culture. Each lays bare the workings of Elizabethan power, not to subvert it, but to shape it and claim it for themselves, and even to magnify it into a terror of nature or of the supernatural. The *Vewe* seems to have pleased Elizabeth less than did the *Faerie Queene*, perhaps because its imperialist-

colonialist analysis of the Irish situation contradicted her essentially feudal policy. Ultimately, however, the Machiavellian discourse represented by the *Vewe* is even more flattering to the prince than the mythopolitical discourse of the *Faerie Queene*, since the former celebrates her as the virtuoso performer of political manipulation, while the latter holds out the possibility that power itself may not be enough. [S.C.H.]

87.16 In "Spenser's Royal Icons," John N. King (Bates College) noted that royal iconography fills a vacuum left by Spenser's iconoclastic episodes at locations like the Bower of Bliss or the "blasphemous" shrine of Geryoneo, with its golden "Idole" and "Altar" on which "daily sacrifice" is made. Conversely, the threats faced by Gloriana's knights are often demonic parodies of regal ideals embodied positively in England's maiden queen. Spenser's most potent attack on a false queen or princess could not apply to Elizabeth, for example, because it is directed against Duessa as a personification of papal power. The decorum of parody dictates that negative images of royalty throughout the epic, which include Lucifera, Acrasia, and Radigund, satirize neither Elizabeth as queen nor monarchy as such, but rather abuses opposed to "true" majesty. These demonic females are examples of *vituperatio*, a species of rhetorical blame that represents the negative side of conventional epideictic categories used in the rhetoric of praise.

Spenser embeds his praise of Elizabeth as a Protestant heroine within a circular pattern of iconic type characters, all of whom resemble each other and refer back to archetypes of virtue assigned to the queen. Thus he repeatedly styles royal types like Una, Britomart, Mercilla, and Gloriana herself in terms of the Reformation emblem of the "godly" woman or queen, which was well-known in literature and art. Although the poet conceives of Elizabeth as the summation of all virtue, notably the imperial attributes of Justice and Mercy, the Protestant iconography of *The Faerie Queene* repeatedly identifies her with Truth and Faith. As the embodiment of Truth, Una looms in the foreground as Spenser's archetype for a faithful queen. Although female figures had personified virtue in medieval romances and romantic poetry, Spenser models Una on the Woman Clothed with the Sun, whose flight from the Seven-headed Beast into the wilderness served traditionally as a type for the church under attack from Antichrist. Elizabeth was cast in roles analogous to Una or the Woman Clothed with the Sun in her coronation pageantry and in many other examples of royalist iconography. [J.N.K.]

87.17 Responding to the papers, David L. Miller (University of Alabama, University) reflected, in "Reflections on the Above," that specular relations tend to beget rivalry within identification and to produce identity out of rivalry. Their logic can be shown to inform both the field of political struggle in a monarchy and the allegorical rhetoric of *FQ*. They operate in the polemical texts of the period as a structure of political rivalry and in the poem as a structure of thematic rivalry: this structure begets antithetical doublings in the effort to secure its polarities, but also generates repetitions, reversals, and transvaluations of the motifs that signify these polarities, tending in the process to destabilize the polarities by manifesting their antithetical identity.

In "Spenser's Royal Icons," King argues that Elizabeth is not implicated in the poem's negative images of queenship. This argument oversimplifies both the structure of allegory and the rhetorical motives of the text; it does not engage readings that have shown how Spenserian narrative and allegory tend at a certain level to identify thematic

opposites. In "Redefining Chastity," Frye sees Spenser adapting royal iconography to revisionary uses. This generally persuasive argument may err in casting *FQ* as a creative challenge to reigning ideology, since Elizabeth's use of official celibacy to retain power is probably more unorthodox than Spenser's celebration of a male-centered, procreative Chastity. Also, Frey's view of *FQ*'s critical motives may be too programmatic. Spenser is caught up in a specular identification with Elizabeth: as a social and historical being -- political subject, landholder, colonial official, and imperial poet -- he is constituted by the figure of sovereignty. Because it inhabits this fundamental identification, the rivalry through which Spenser presumes to rewrite Elizabeth is expressed only through muted equivocation.

In "Spenser and the Myth of Power," Hulse offers a suggestive approach to the study of competing "discourses of power." A minor qualification is needed with respect to the description of how the skeptical motives of statecraft emerge within the "mythic discourse" of *FQ*. Spenser is not likely to have intended a fundamental skepticism about the divine sanction of Elizabeth's reign. Although sometimes implicitly critical of the Queen, Spenser is not immune to the radical mystification of royal power. [D.L.M.]

Session 166 *Pragmatism in Literary History*

87.18 This special session, organized by Patricia Rae (Queen's University), and Elizabeth Jane Bellamy (University of Alabama, Birmingham) included Professor Bellamy's paper, "Empire as Theory: Spenser and Epic History." Her argument constitutes a pragmatic analysis of the *translatio imperii* as an exercise of political power which succeeded only because it embedded itself so thoroughly and imperceptibly into cultural awareness that it was no longer perceived as power. The *translatio imperii* is one of the more teleologically determined concepts in literary history. As the informing structure of Western dynastic epic, the *translatio imperii* purports to be the final resting place of Aeneas' fragmented Trojan remnant, the point at which the interplay of history and (epic) literature celebrates the founding of the ultimate *imperium sine fine*. The Trojan holocaust becomes a kind of fortunate fall as the ruins of Troy are happily subsumed by the "fictive" history of empire. The *translatio imperii* is dictated by a powerful scope in which history advances teleologically from Troy as its posited origin to the inexorable, providential fulfillment of *imperium* in the present Royal House. In such a scheme, history becomes thematized, and the *translatio imperii* becomes the ultimate manifestation of empire as theory, in effect a meta-discourse which seeks to reveal the *imperium sine fine* as virtually a theory of history itself. *The Faerie Queene*, and Book V in particular, succeeds in dismantling the theoretical truth-claims of the *translatio imperii*, extracting the Tudor *renovatio* from the *aevum*, preserving an undefined openness of time, indeed a *future* for British history -- and creating a dialogic opening which replaces the dialectical constitutiveness of epic trans-history. [E.J.B.]

Session 199 *Reading and Readers in the Renaissance*

87.19 Another special session, organized by Gary F. Waller, (Carnegie-Mellon University), included a paper by Sayre N. Greenfield (University of Pennsylvania), "Spenser at Large: Reading Structure in *The Faerie Queene*." The paper examined the extent to which Spenser's readers can see the large patterns underlying his poem. In *FQ* III, a symmetry of settings representing the various lovers' attitudes balances excessive

loves with corresponding defective loves. But how can a reader escape a merely sequential reading and recognize such a pattern? Textual understanding usually assumes a perspective like that detailed by Mutabilitie in the "Mutabilitie Cantos" as she surveys the condition of the universe. The titaness and mortal beings typically see the world as a succession of impressions, reading the universe in the manner of reader-response critics. But however elusive the wider, atemporal vision of the "Saboath's sight" may be, man's rage for order makes it desirable. In a textual realm, such a vision is potentially accessible. The disruptions of continuity in the Legend of Chastity remove some obstacles from the contemplative view, and Spenser, with an ultimate faith in the order of Nature's world, cannot frustrate his reader's search for pattern by failing to build upon one in his poetic creation. [S.G.]

Session 354 *Spenser and Milton: Dialectical Interactions and Poetic Resolutions*

87.20 This Special Session, jointly sponsored by the Spenser Society and the Milton Society, was chaired by Albert C. Labriola, (Duquesne University) and William Oram (Smith College).

87.21 In "Epic Continuity: The Lyric Epithalamia in *The Aeneid*, *The Faerie Queene*, and *Paradise Lost*," Sara Thorne-Thomsen (Virginia Polytechnic and State University) noted that in *Paradise Lost* IV, the narrator's greeting, "Hail wedded Love," signals the beginning of a lyric epithalamium inspired by the example of perfect conjugal love just witnessed by the narrator in his first view of Adam and Eve in the Garden. By including this lyric in the fourth book, Milton continues an epic tradition embracing Virgil's *Aeneid* and Spenser's *Faerie Queene*. Poets early recognized the symbolic potential of this popular, if limited, genre and began to use it as an integral part of a larger work in which it retains its original function as a poem of praise and assumes symbolic significance as well.

If we look at Milton's epithalamium as the culmination of an epic tradition that begins with Virgil's celebration of the "marriage" of Dido and Aeneas in *Aeneid* IV and continues with Spenser's celebration of the marriage of the Thames and Medway Rivers in *FQ* IV, we can see how Milton uses genre to turn marriage into a metaphor for divine love and cosmic harmony. In *Aeneid* IV, Virgil announces the consummation of Dido's love for Aeneas with a parody of an epithalamium, which reflects their parody of a marriage. This epithalamium implicitly introduces the ideal of a valid marriage into a poetic universe which focuses on the actions of warriors responsible for the founding of the Roman nation. Like *Aeneid* IV, *FQ* IV also contains an unusual epithalamium, which celebrates the marriage of the Thames and Medway Rivers. Spenser transmutes the traditional epithalamium to focus not on the personal pleasure of the bridal couple anticipated in the consummation of the marriage, but on the guests, because for him, marriage is primarily a social concept. With this epithalamium Spenser moves marriage beyond the limited human realm and makes it a symbol for cosmic harmony. In *PL* IV, Milton derives from Spenser's epithalamium the use of an epithalamic form in an epic as a means of symbolizing cosmic harmony and rendering this harmony accessible to his audience. In *PL* IX, Milton emphasizes the significance of marriage when he borrows negative images from Virgil's parody to describe the perversion of Adam and Eve's marital love. [S.T.T., adapted by D.J.G.]

87.22 Sheila T. Cavanagh (Brown University) argued, in "Battles of the Mind and Body: Rational and Sensual Seduction in Spenser and Milton," that the purveyors of sin represented in *FQ* and several of Milton's works astutely recognize that men and women are attracted by significantly disparate lures. By planning their enticements accordingly, they highlight a connection between gender and the rational and sensual seductions noted in the title. The male seducers portrayed in *FQ*, *Comus*, and *Paradise Lost*, for example, exhibit only transient interest in the sexual acts which constitute the initial goal of their seductions of women. Though moved in part by lust, the tempters evince an even greater desire to engage their targets in *sinful* acts, which would imperil the souls of the virtuous victims as well as assuage the licentious desires of the seducers. Since the virtuous men represented often succumb to the power of lust -- and consequently sin -- immediately, this distinction loses its significance in their cases, but the sexual reticence displayed by the women necessitates a more intricate strategy for a seduction designed to draw the victims into sin. Women and men are differentiated in these texts by the qualities associated with their minds and their bodies; the characteristics of seduction mirror these disparities. [S.T.C., adapted by D.J.G.]

87.23 In "Making Dreams Truth, and Fables Histories: Spenser and Milton on the Nature of Fiction," John C. Ulreich, Jr. (University of Arizona) contended that Milton's comparison of Edenic fruits with "*Hesperian* Fables true, / *If true*, here only" invites a question: where -- in what way, if at all -- are poetic fictions true? The visionary poetics of Spenser and Milton are grounded in a radical affirmation of the poet's capacity to make new truth by manifesting "things invisible to mortal sight." The significance of this affirmation is clarified by reflecting on the ways in which "Imagination may be compared to Adam's dream -- he awoke and found it truth." When Adam *enacts* the desire inspired by his dream, he brings, first Eden, and then Eve into being. Adam's erotic imagination of Eve echoes Arthur's problematic dream in *FQ*. Like Adam's quest for Eve, Arthur's quest for the elusive embodiment of his desire is a crucial symbol of the poet's struggle to incarnate his imagination, as well as a model for our reading of Spenser's epic. And a still more explicit model is provided in Calidore's response to the Vision of Colin Clout concerning Courtesy. Calidore's fortunate fall, his necessary failure and ultimate success, foreshadows a similar pattern of self-discovery and enactment in the final books of *PL*: as Adam *awakens*, he first makes dreams into truth by interpreting his vision, and then begins to turn fables into histories by learning how to *enact* the paradise within himself. And that is where Hesperian fables are true. [J.C.U.]

87.24 In his response to these papers, William Oram praised Thorne-Thomsen's discussion of epithalamic parody in *Aeneid* IV and *Paradise Lost* IX, and her attention to the Vergilian echoes in the Miltonic fall. The Spenserian marriage of rivers, however, seemed too clearly a member of a distinct subgenre to be usefully compared with the other epithalamic quotations. Agreeing with Thorne-Thomsen's emphasis on divine harmony in the epithalamic moments of *PL* IV, Oram added that the whole "Hail Wedded Love" speech departs strikingly from the normal tone of the epithalamion. Milton's narrator here does not act as society's representative (the usual role of the epithalamic speaker) but as God's prophet, attacking those who undervalue His gift of sexuality.

In discussing Cavanagh's essay, Oram felt that the term "rational seduction" was inexact, since the reason itself is not tempted but blinded. He did, however, feel that Cavanagh's paper pointed to an important pattern in the poem -- that where heroes often yield to lust, heroines are by and large instinctively chaste and are tempted by other passions (self-love, fear, anger, etc.). He suggested that this stress stems from the importance of female chastity in the patriarchal culture of the English Renaissance: a hero can fall sexually and be rehabilitated, but with the loss of her chastity a heroine ceases to be a heroine. Their concern with chastity makes both Milton and Spenser peculiarly protective in limiting the blame attaching to any heroine who *is* tempted by lust (Amoret with Lust in *FQ* IV.vii; Eve in *PL* IX). Finally, Cavanagh's stress on the delusions of heroes and heroines reminds one of both poets' suspicion of the unguided imagination.

Ulreich's paper stressed the opposite function of the imagination -- a redemptive one. Oram praised this ambitious, compressed essay for finding in various incidents (Adam's dream *PL* VIII, the historical visions under Michael's tutelage *PL* XI-XII, Arthur's dream *FQ* I.x., Colin's vision *FQ* VI.x) a common pattern of imaginative vision becoming a pattern for worldly action. He dissented, however, from the paper's suggestion that Adam *creates* Eve out of his own subjective longing, stressing the absence of evidence for such a reading, the abundance of counter-evidence, and adding that Milton saw any attempt to create without God's aid as essentially Satanic. In the discussion that followed he said he thought Ulreich tended in the manner of some Romantic poets to identify man with God, which leads to a literalizing of God's nature. [W.O.]

Session 448 Annual Meeting and Luncheon of the Spenser Society

87.25 Anne L. Prescott (Barnard College), President of the Spenser Society, presided at this congenial event, held at the Princeton Club. At the business meeting following the luncheon, Richard Helgerson (California Institute of Technology) was elected president for 1987. Judith H. Anderson (Indiana University, Bloomington) was elected vice president. The indefatigable Russell Meyer (University of Missouri) will continue as Secretary Treasurer. Elected to three-year terms on the Executive Committee were Patricia Fumerton (University of Wisconsin, Madison), Kenneth Gross (Rochester University), and S. Clark Hulse (University of Illinois, Chicago).

Professor Prescott then announced that the Society will sponsor two meetings at next year's MLA convention in San Francisco: an open session on Edmund Spenser and one on Spenser and pastoral. She also presented the Isabel MacCaffrey award -- which brings with the less palpable honors a handsome medallion of St. George slaying the dragon, and a not unhandsome check -- to Jacqueline T. Miller (Rutgers University), for her article "The Status of Faeryland: Spenser's 'Uniust Possession,'" published in *Spenser Studies V*. For further details concerning next year's MLA and the MacCaffrey award, see ANNOUNCEMENTS.

Professor Patrick Cullen, co-editor of *Spenser Studies*, announced editorial changes of interest to Spenserians: the removal of a maximum length for submissions, and the opportunity to submit short, or very short, notes for a new section of *SSt*, tentatively titled "Gleanings." For details, see the earlier announcement in *SpN*, item

86.138. Giving the proceedings a particularly happy turn, Professor Cullen also announced that *Spenser Studies VI* has been dedicated to Hugh Maclean, on the occasion of his retirement. The dedication page displays an especially apt quotation (*FQ* VI.i.2):

> . . . beloved over all,
> In whom it seemes, that gentlenesse of spright
> And manners mylde were planted naturall.

Professor Maclean accepted the honor with characteristic modesty, and expressed gratitude to the colleagues he has worked with throughout the years. There was sustained and energetic applause.

The meeting concluded with a witty and informative talk by Professor Donald Cheney (University of Massachusetts, Amherst), on "A View of the Present State of *The Spenser Encyclopedia*." The project has reached its final stages, with the editors expecting to send the text to the University of Toronto Press "sometime next summer." They predict publication, in the spring of 1988, of an *Encyclopedia* in "two volumes in a two-column format, containing approximately 1 1/4 to 1 1/2 million words . . . some 700 articles ranging in length from 200-7000 words, written by some 400 authors from 175 institutions in 21 countries." Nearly all of the articles will be sent to their authors for a final review *this spring, so please let the editors know if you will not be at your usual address*. Because the editoral process has "more frequently than not" been "the occasion of lively and good-natured dialogue," the project has served "as a kind of United Nations of Spenserians and others trying to find a common language." [D.C.]

Session 524 *Spenser's Well of English*

87.26 At this session, sponsored by the Spenser Society, Judith H. Anderson (Indiana University, Bloomington) presided.

87.27 In "Imposing Names: Spenser and the Power of Naming," Thomas Willard (University of Arizona) observed that Spenser's language has intrigued readers ever since he wrote. The first published glossary of his words appeared in 1653, nearly seventy-five years before the first glossary of Shakespeare's and more than ninety before the first of Milton's. In the last generation, many scholars discussed his language as magical, Adamic, or Cratylian -- a language that somehow mirrors the nature of things. And in the last decade, critics have searched his verse for power plays -- turns of phrase which show him challenging political or other authority. Both approaches have been productive, but seem open to question. It seems doubtful that Spenser was indebted to Plato's theory of language (or the theory imputed to Plato) or that he was a proto-deconstructionist. To the contrary, Spenser's linguistic assumptions fell well within the Aristotelian tradition, and his poetic practice suggests he courted power more than he exercised it.

Like Aristotle, the Renaissance humanists regarded language as consensual in origin, rather than natural, and regarded etymology as a topic or type of proof, especially the etymology of a proper name. Unlike Plato's Cratylus, Aristotle thought that the only words of natural origin were those which expressed simple passions. Spenser agreed in practice; for the only character of his to speak "naturally" is the savage, and he speaks only "senselesse words, which nature did him teach, / T'expresse his passions."

Spenser's characters, notably Mutabilitie, resort to etymological argument on occasion. Some characters have multiple names, like Duessa / Fidessa, to reflect their complexities; and Red Cross learns his future name, St. George, only near the end of his quest. However, most characters have names with meanings which Spenser spells out in the verse or leaves for readers to discover. He follows the epic tradition of "speaking names" which reaches back to Homer and Virgil and the allegorical tradition which originates in the etymologies of Isidore and Jerome and, ultimately, in the Bible. To "impose" names on people or things (Lat. "imponere") was not a ruthless act, as some have supposed from quotations out of context, but a normal linguistic activity to be carried out by the worthy person. Even where Spenser is most in search of poetic justice, in *FQ* V, he takes an almost Shandean delight in seeing characters live up to their names. Acidia ("injustice") is turned into a tiger "To prove her surname true, that she imposed hath." [T.W.]

87.28 Although she was ailing and absent, Maureen Quilligan (University of Pennsylvania) prepared a paper, "Feminine *<u>End</u>*ings: The Sexuality of Spenser's Rhyming," which was presented by Margreta DeGrazia (also of the University of Pennsylvania). Originating in a "collective lapse of memory" experienced by a distinguished group of Renaissance scholars assembled at the MLA convention in Washington two years ago, this paper sought to discover whether feminine rhyme as defined today was so defined in the Renaissance, and whether its application in Renaissance poems carries sexual implications. The first question, readily answered by reference to texts, any would have recalled after their amnesia had begun to pass -- Sidney's *Apology*, for instance -- is "yes." "The use of feminine rhyme is a distinct, self-consciously Renaissance practice, bespeaking specific English borrowing from Pleiade theorizing." Moreover, the words Sidney employs to exemplify feminine and masculine rhymes appear to tell "the story of sexual difference specifically in terms of patriarchy"; they therefore suggest that "noticing where Elizabethan poets consciously choose to use feminine rhyme may tell us something about the complex interrelations between the politics of poetry and of sexuality in the English Renaissance."

Specifically, the "strange increase in feminine end-rhymes" in *FQ* -- from none in the *FQ* I.i-vi to five in a single stanza of the *Cantos of Mutabilitie* -- tells "a very interesting story about sexual difference and, indeed, sexuality." For instance, the rhyming of *daughter : slaughter* and especially the internal *mother : daughter* rhyme in *FQ* V.iv.41 "insists with grisly humour on the insubordinate mother-daughter matriarchy Radigund represents as Amazon warrior queen, a power specifically inimical to the patriarchy Britomart reasserts after she, rather than Artegall, finally hacks off Radigund's head." Having deprived Radigund's mother of a daughter, Britomart assumes the throne and, "de-femalizing her own rule" (vii.42), "becomes a goddess, and honored in that 'non-political' status shared by so many other female figures of authority in the epic. . . . As the principle of generation, of natural sexuality, of motherhood, femaleness is authoritative and acceptable." A final example shows "how specific and yet how generally significant is Spenser's practice of feminine rhyme." Although the Faery Chronicle Guyon reads in *FQ* II "quite rightly has a feminine ending in the reign of Gloriana," and therefore could "end on a glorious celebration of feminine power, *FQ* itself ends weakly, in despair, presumably betrayed by the feminine power who would not protect it from the displeasure of a mighty Peer." At *FQ* VI.xii.41, the tone bespeaks "self-lacerating despair" while the poet tells "his text to keep better measure in a feminine rhyme."

87.29 In "Words and Meter in Scaliger and Spenser," S. K. Heninger, Jr. (University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill), remarked that the salient characteristic of Spenser's language is its remarkable evanescence. We can quote amply from Shakespeare and Milton, for example, but no one seems to recall the actual words Spenser uses. Rather, what we remember are his conceptual constructs, such as the Palace of Lucifera or the Garden of Adonis. While modern poets such as Eliot and cummings insist that attention be focused upon the linguistic surface of their poems, Spenser held just the opposite view of language in poetry and hoped to make it a neutral medium of expression -- the palpable integument in which his artifact is presented to the public, but neither its form nor its content.

What reasons can we adduce to explain this phenomenon? First, in the orthodox tradition of allegory as enunciated by Boccaccio, poetry is allegorical fiction, a veil to conceal an underlying truth, and the verbal medium must not distract or detain the reader in search of edification. Second, the proximity of poetry to music depressed the value of language in a poem because, having already chosen a metrical form to express heavenly beauty, the poet was then constrained to choose words which would realize that form. Third, language in poetry was subordinated to conceptual content to the extent that poetry assimilated to Ciceronian rhetoric, because in the classical rhetorical exercise *verba* was secondary to *res* (*inventio* was not verbalized until the third step, *elocutio*).

All of these attitudes toward language were strangely conglomerated in Scaliger's *Poetice*. Furthermore, by inquiring into the *materia* of poetry, Scaliger allowed for a shift in importance from *res* to *verba*. In this inquiry he proceeds by comparing a poem to a statue -- specifically, a statue of Caesar. What, he asks, is the substance of that statue? Not the historical personage of Caesar, he replies, or the idea of emperorship, but rather -- evidently -- the bronze or marble of which it is made. Similarly, the *materia* of poetry is the verbal system in which it is expressed. Such a conclusion about the self-sufficiency of poetic language accords with Saussurian linguistics and points toward the modernist poetics of Eliot and cummings. Because it precludes referentiality and intentionality, such a conclusion also condones a deconstructionist reading of Spenser where the text is self-reflexive and meaning is continually deferred. But these assumptions about language are inappropriate to Spenser, who was one of the more conservative members of an essentially logocentric culture. So we are right to let his actual words slip easily by our notice. We read Spenser not for surfaces, but for depths. [S.K.H.]

87.30 In "Spenser, Riddling 'Well'," Elizabeth Bieman (University of Western Ontario) maintained that for Spenser, a poet who writes "well" dips his pen into those textual fountains he reveres, flowing from pasts distant and near. Speaking more metaphysically, he draws from the divine fount whose streams renew the cosmos through all its levels, physical, social, and noetic-textual. On the social level, in the Elizabethan body politic, such eros dare not issue freely into language. This gentleman who would be a courtier-poet could exercise his vatic vocation only by drawing in cautious equivocation from the wells of "language undefil'd." The stanzas in *FQ* V.ix.25-26 on "BON FONT" and "Malfont" -- the same poet, read at different times as "Bad" and "good" -- show Spenser subscribing to a strategy of imaginative indirection which not only protects the prudent poet, but serves also, like Socratic dialectic, to lead its interlocutor-interpreters into situations of liberating aporia. [E.B.]

SPENSER ON THE HUDSON

87.31 Barnard's Eighth Annual Conference on Interdisciplinary Approaches to Medieval and Renaissance Studies, held November 15, 1986, attracted several Spenserians. Entitled "The Passing of Arthur," the Conference included a plenary address by A. Kent Hieatt (University of Western Ontario) and a special session on Spenser's Arthur, with papers by Judith Anderson (Indiana University) and Sheila T. Cavanagh (Brown University).

In "Spenser, Shakespeare, and the Line of Arthur," Professor Hieatt offered evidence that Spenser intended "a second epic, an Arthuriad, or a continuation of *The Faerie Queene*, in which a King Arthur married to Gloriana . . . would emerge on the analogy of Agamemnon conquerer of Troy, Aeneas conquerer of Latium, and Godfrey of Bouillon conquerer of Jerusalem." Arthur reads in the Book of Briton Moniments that England had to pay tribute to Rome until "Arthur all that reckoning defrayed" (II.x.49), a reference to Malory's account, based on the long tradition of the Arthurian epic, of the hero's conquest of Rome and his paying the tribute in corpses, not treasure. Further, in the Letter to Ralegh, Spenser states his intention to attempt a second twelve books, after the original twelve centered on Prince Arthur's private virtues, "to frame the other part of polliticke vertues in his person, after that hee came to be king." The Knight of Holinesse leaves Una to serve the Faerie Queen for six more years "gainst that proud Paynim king, that workes her teene" (I.xii.18): this suggests religious allegory, not history. The line of Britomart and Artegall carry out the historical struggle against the Saxons; the Paynim king who terrorizes Gloriana is probably the allegorical representation of "the oppressive forces of Catholicism in pre- and post-Reformation England." Thus lack of historical verity is no impediment, in 1590, to Spenser's plan "to write the great Protestant epic of the liberation and purification of Catholic, Spanish dominated Rome, but allegorically, in terms of Arthur's conquest of the ancient empire." By 1596, however, with the heroic mode so discredited by Rabelais, Montaigne, and Shakespeare, Spenser had probably given up on the idea. Shakespeare, perhaps in reaction to Malory, or perhaps to Spenser's Briton Moniments, rejects an adversary stance in Cymbeline, when he has the victorious British king pay tribute to Rome of his own free will.

Professor Anderson, in "Arthur, Argante, and the Ideal Vision: An Exercise in Speculation and Parody," argued that "Spenser's Argante is a simple antitype of the chaste Belphoebe and shares, through the origin of her brother Ollyphant's name, a distant tie to Prince Arthur's vision of the elf queen, and in these radically deflected ways parodically approaches the idea of Elizabeth I." Both the name Ollyphant and an erotic vision of an elf queen appear in Chaucer's *Sir Thopas*. More significantly, the name Argante in Layamon's *Brut*, used as a variant or substitute for Morgan, to designate the queen who bears the wounded king to Avalon, suggests the "secret Isle" to which the lustful Argante would bring her intended victims (III.vii.50). In the third book of *The Faerie Queene* structure suggests parodic intention. On both sides of the centrally placed Garden of Adonis are instances of thwarted lust or love: on the far side, Argante is one of several; on the near side, then, Belphoebe with her devastating effect on Timias "can be read as a terrible reflection of and on Elizabeth's notorious exploitation of courtly flirtation with her younger male courtiers." The effect of all this is to call Prince Arthur's allegorical perfections into question: "He is at once a figure of pure and open potential and . . . a figure embedded in the failures of history." Other elements of parody touch

Arthur: his dream, taken from comic Sir Thopas and with echoes of Redcrosse's false vision of Una; his dragon helmet with its suggestions of serpentine evil; his crest, described with the same words as that of Archimago impersonating Redcrosse; the word "haughtie," which connects him with Lucifera and Orgoglio. That most of these images are redeemed by other, virtuous connections only increases their ambivalence. Argante is just one instance of the pervasive parody in the poem which glances at both Arthur and Gloriana, thus at Elizabeth herself.

Arthur's chastity was questioned by Sheila Cavanagh in "Beauties Chace: Arthur and Women in the *Faerie Queene*." The sexual suggestiveness of his dream in Book I is reinforced in Book III by his ambiguously motivated pursuit of Florimell and by his not rescuing the Knight of Chastity as he does all the other titular knights. Arthur's sexual activity, whatever it is or is not, occurs off the page, in the folds or margins of the text. Applying Jacques Derrida's equation of text with hymen and Helene Cixous' discussion of masculine dreams to Arthur's situation illuminates the position of women in epic generally as well the problem of reconciling chastity and desire. "Encapsulating Gloriana in a dream or in an emblem ensures that love will remain, as Cixous' calls it, 'a threshold business' which will not interfere with male domains or adventures." Virtuous women, because of the conflicting and contradictory desires they arouse in men, are just as dangerous as evil ones; thus, in epic, they are kept at a distance where they are powerfully enchanting and at the same time relatively non-threatening to masculine chastity and heroic action. "Woman's continual deferral" in Spenser's epic is an example of this strategy; Arthur's chastity is a matter of uncertainty, but there is no overt record of its loss.

Patrick Cullen (CUNY) opened the discussion by asking whether or not Arthur "becomes." Ms. Cavanagh replied that if titular knights don't, the reader certainly does. Professor Anderson said that Arthur is at his most ideal in Book I; then after a resurgence in V, goes out "with a whimper" in VI. Professor Hieatt defended Arthur's chastity in Book IV, while Anne Shaver (Denison University) pointed out that he participated in the Poeana episode, a rare instance of an unchaste woman redeemed. Professor Anderson called that episode a baldly unsatisfactory allegory of friendship and reminded us of Arthur's failure to rescue Mirabella in Book VI. Fred Porcheddu (Denison University) suggested that as the poem was unfinished, Arthur might have had successes to come. When Professor Anderson asked how Britomart and Pastorella fit her analogies, Ms. Cavanagh replied that Britomart is the one who defers consummation, that she is much more hesitant in her sexual responses than Artegall. She also suggested that Britomart is not finally "present." Either she kills herself in killing Radigund, or she becomes simply a proxy for Artegall. Some discussion ensued over whether or not Spenser radically revalued women and marriage, and over just how much realism we are justified in asking of allegory. To the assertion that all characters depart from unfinished epics in problematic ways, Professor Anderson replied that the separate books are finished and do offer material for comparison and contrast. Professor Hieatt agreed, saying that one-liners tell us more about Arthur than longer episodes do. Professor Anderson added that one-liners may be more important than plot, since Spenser and Spenserians alike are constantly forgetting the latter.

Anne Shaver
Denison University

ANNOUNCEMENTS

87.32 CALL FOR PAPERS: For the 1987 meeting of the MLA, the Spenser Society solicits papers of no more than 18 minutes for one session on Edmund Spenser and one on Spenser and the pastoral. Papers or abstracts should be submitted in duplicate by *March 15, 1987*. Please send those on Edmund Spenser to Professor Richard Helgerson, Division of Humanities, California Institute of Technology, Pasedena, CA 91125; send those on Spenser and the pastoral to Professor Patrick Cullen, Department of English, College of Staten Island, CUNY, Staten, Island, NY 10301.

87.33 At the Spenser Society MLA Luncheon, the second annual Isabel MacCaffrey award for a significant article on Spenser was awarded to Jacqueline T. Miller (Rutgers University). The award was granted in recognition of the high quality of "The Status of Faeryland: Spenser's 'Unjust Possession,'" published in *Spenser Studies V*. The judges -- Paul Alpers, Anne L. Prescott, and Jon Quitslund -- also expressed admiration, however, for Professor Miller's article, published in *ELH* 53 (1986), "The Omission in Red Cross Knight's Story: Narrative Inconsistencies in *The Faerie Queene*" (see abstract above, item *87.10*). The editor notes also that Professor Miller's new book, *Poetic License: Authority and Authorship in Medieval and Renaissance Contexts* (New York: Oxford UP, 1986) has just been published. The "contexts" in question concern mainly Chaucer, Spenser, and Sidney.

Next year's judges for the award -- presented for a significant article published in calendar year 1986, ordinarily by a younger scholar -- will be Jon Quitslund, chair, Judith H. Anderson, and Donald Cheney. People wishing to make nominations should send author's names and citations of the articles to Professor Russell J. Meyer, Department of English, University of Missouri, Columbia, MO 65211. People wishing to enter their own work should send three copies of the article to Professor Meyer. The deadline for nomination or application is *September 15, 1987*.

87.34 Spenser at Kalamazoo, 1987. For details of the program, see inside the back cover, opposite. This year's program was organized by Donald Stump, Chair (Virginia Tech), Pamela J. Benson (Rhode Island College), Jerome Dees (Kansas State University), Margaret Hannay (Siena College), and William Oram (Smith College).

87.35 Readers interested in, or already members of, the Southeastern Renaissance Conference are reminded that its home is now Raleigh, NC. Please direct all correspondence to: John N. Wall, Secretary-Treasurer, Southeastern Renaissance Conference, Department of English, Box 8105, North Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC 27695-8105. Dues are $7.00 per year.

SPENSER AT KALAMAZOO, 1987

Spenser I: Marital Visions, Marital Nightmares

Sponsored by Spenser at Kalamazoo
Organized by Donald Stump, Virginia Tech (Chair)
Pamela Benson, Rhode Island College
Jerome Dees, Kansas State University
Margaret Hannay, Siena College
William Oram, Smith College

Opening Remarks: A. Kent Hieatt, University of Western Ontario
Presiding: Mark Heberle, University of Hawaii

"The Wailing Male and Busirane's Amoret"
Sayre N. Greenfield, University of Tulsa

"Artegall's Marriage Nightmare"
Mary A. Pryor, Moorhead State University

Respondent: John Webster, University of Washington

"Nature and the Marriage of Matter and Spirit"
Benjamin G. Lockerd, Jr., Grand Valley State College

Respondent: Sheldon Zitner, University of Toronto

Spenser II: The Anxiety of Influence

Presiding: Sara Thorne-Thomsen, Virginia Tech

"Spenser's Anxiety: Ariosto and *The Faerie Queene*"
Peter DeSa Wiggins, College of William and Mary

"*Prothalamion* and *The Faerie Queene*: Spenser's Spousal Verse as a Defense of Allegorical Love Poetry"
Patrick Cheney, Pennsylvania State University

Respondent: Gordon Teskey, Cornell University

"Spenser's *Amoretti*: The Poet Lover as Artificer"
Lisa M. Klein, Indiana University

Respondent: Anne Lake Prescott, Barnard College

Spenser III: Maps and Diagrams: The Body, the Soul, and the State

Presiding: Susan Burchmore, Baldwin-Wallace College

"Historical Moments and Versions of History: A Political Map of *The Faerie Queene*"
Wayne Erickson, Georgia State University

"Tempering the Corporeal in *The Faerie Queene*, Book II"
Norman Farmer, University of Texas at Austin

Respondent: Richard Helgerson, California Institute of Technology

"'Some other wayes aduize': Spenser's Pre-Baroque Psychological Model"
J. W. van Hook, University of Arkansas

Respondent: Susanne Woods, Brown University

Spenser IV: The Kathleen Williams Lectures on Spenser and His Age

Presiding: Robert Stillman, University of Tennessee

"Spenser and the 'New Historicism'"
A.C. Hamilton, Queens University

"'In mirrours more then one': The Spenserian Text and the Production of Ideology"
Louis Adrian Montrose, University of California at San Diego

Closing remarks: A. Kent Hieatt, University of Western Ontario

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Univ. of Alabama
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