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CONTENTS

TO OUR READERS

88.95 Readers may want to take special note of a few items that appear in subsequent pages. Since this, the "Fall 1988" issue, is emerging in January, we are announcing here -- one issue earlier than usual -- the program for Spenser at Kalamazoo, 1989, and the call for papers for Spenser sessions to be held at the MLA meetings in Washington, DC, in December 1989. See below, items 88.116 and 88.114.

The "Books" section in this issue contains a somewhat unusual feature, a review essay; we plan to publish such essays occasionally, as space and the editors' sense of the importance of the item allow. Susanne Wofford's reflections on *Representing the Renaissance*, and the New Historicist work it represents, are well worth the extra space they require.

And readers will no doubt welcome another annual contribution from John W. Moore, Jr., whose Spenser Bibliography Update, 1986, appears as item 88.115.

The editors express warm gratitude to Anthony M. Esolen, Kevin Farley, Phoebe Jensen, and Jonathan Simmons, who have supplied abstracts for this issue of *SpN*.

88.96 Please note that there are important announcements -- concerning the Spenser Society and a NEH Summer Seminar on *The Faerie Queene* and -- at items 88.113 and 88.112 below.

BOOKS: REVIEWS AND NOTICES

88.97 Greenblatt, Stephen, ed. *Representing the Renaissance*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988. xii + 372 pp. $42, cloth; $12.95, paper.

This handsome and useful volume collects the major articles on the English Renaissance published in the journal *Representations* from 1983 to 1986. Though their method and critical assumptions diverge greatly -- this is not a volume drawn together by a thesis in the way such anthologies as *Political Shakespeare* or *Alternative Shakespeares* might be said to be -- the articles together make a persuasive case that in the English Renaissance the boundaries of "the literary" were, as Stephen Greenblatt puts it in his introduction, "contested, endlessly renegotiable, [and] permeable." They make this case by insistently crossing those boundaries, often travelling towards the "historical," broadly understood to include the disciplines of art history, cartography, literary, social and cultural history, as well as the workings of ideology. While not constituting a manifesto or summarizing all of the recent developments in New Historicist analysis, then, the volume does generally participate in the New Historicist project of redefining the arena of literary study in order to examine the social, political and ideological functions of literary texts and of other cultural representations and images. The volume is useful in part because of the diversity of the essays included, and in part because it collects and provides in convenient form several of the most important early (and definitive) New

Historicist cultural studies, notably the 1983 essays by Montrose, Greenblatt and Mullaney.

Of these, perhaps most important for the study of Spenser is the influential essay by Louis Adrian Montrose on the figuration of gender and power in Elizabethan culture, "'Shaping Fantasies': Figurations of Gender and Power in Elizabethan Culture." Montrose approaches this topic in part through a reading of certain key passages in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (especially II.i), and in part through a study of Elizabeth's use of her gender (whether by invoking or denying it) to institute and confirm her power. His sources for the "shaping fantasies" of Elizabethan court culture are diverse: the queen's speeches to Parliament, courtly behavior, dress, negotiations with foreign diplomats, flirtations with foreign and English suitors, control of the marriage plans of her maids of honor, evocation of favorite mythologies, and the courtly use of the language of desire and eroticism to express political ambition. The argument of this essay -- one of the most important single contributions to the study of Elizabethan literature made by the New Historicists -- has yet to be fully assimilated by Spenser criticism, nor have some of its difficulties been answered or theorized.

Montrose makes three principal arguments in his study of the dreams and other fantasies that Elizabeth evoked: first, that a widespread cultural ambivalence characterized the male Elizabethan response to female rule, an ambivalence discoverable in contemporary testimonies (such as the *Diary* of Simon Forman, from which Montrose extracts a dream about the queen that displays remarkable affinities with Bottom's "dream" in Shakespeare's play) as well as in cultural artifacts such as plays. He is concerned to show the ways in which fantasies of male power -- of which making love to the queen provides only one example -- circumscribe or set boundaries to any representations of female rule.

Secondly, then, he is interested to define the ways in which the theater may contribute to, rather than merely reflect, the cultural formations from which it arises, and his work therefore challenges the metaphor of the "mirror" or of "reflection" both for the relation of stage to life, and also implicitly for the relation of any text (including his own critical text) and "history." The theater instead demonstrates what Montrose calls "the dialectical character of cultural representations" (33); it contests and thereby re-shapes certain key cultural claims and assumptions, in this case specifically those having to do with the eulogy of female power typical of the cult of Elizabeth, but also with the broader authority of the monarch to be the final determining or shaping cultural presence. "To the extent that the cult of Elizabeth informs the play," Montrose concludes, "it itself is transformed within the play. The play bodies forth the theater poet's contest, not only with the generativity of Elizabethan mothers but with the generativity of the royal virgin; it contests the princely claim to cultural authorship and social authority" (56).

This argument turns in two directions. On the one hand, it emphasizes the extent of male resistance to the inversion of gender roles necessarily represented by the fact of Elizabeth as queen or "prince"; it therefore suggests that the play participates in a conservative, male "containment" of the threat implicit in female rule. On the other, it demonstrates the theater's contestatory power, showing its capacity to reshape the culture and to challenge even the monarch's power by defining an arena of cultural conflict or

struggle with royal power itself. This is potentially a more disruptive and radical function than that of male "containment."

Montrose's third point concerns specifically the conservative or "containing" turn of the play itself. He finds that "the structure of Shakespearean comedy symbolically neutralizes the forms of royal power to which it ostensibly pays homage" (55). Montrose also argues that in the description of the wounding of the flower "love-in-idleness," which creates the play's love potion, Shakespeare's reference to the "vestal" throned in the west (conventionally understood as a compliment to Elizabeth) marks the exception that proves the rule: "the vestal's very freedom from fancy guarantees the subjection of others" (52). Here and throughout, he argues, the play represents Elizabeth's power as an inversion of customary power relations that guarantees the continuance of the rightful order. Moreover, the play articulates a series of male fantasies to counter the vulnerability men feel in the face of the female capacity to create, a capacity both cultural, with Elizabeth as the great mother holding power over her children / subjects, and biological, in the sense that men "come from" women. Montrose demonstrates the ways in which the play consistently presents "a spiritual kinship among men that is unmediated by women," "the procreative powers of men," and the "autogeny of men." The play overcompensates for female generativity by arguing that "men make women, and make themselves through the medium of women" (42). In a final interpretive step of his complex argument, then, Montrose suggests that in the consistency with which it makes these containing and compensating moves, the play ends up disclosing through "intermittent ironies, dissonances, and contradictions" (and thus "despite itself") that "patriarchal norms are compensatory for the vulnerability of men to the powers of women" (45).

Like other New Historicist studies that emphasize the powers of cultural forms to "contain" the challenge to patriarchy or hegemonic culture posed by any representation of the "other," whether a local sub-culture or an exotic alternative, Montrose's argument tends to deemphasize the effect of representing such alternative or "invented" worlds. In *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, for instance, in contrast to such theories of containment, the play's representation of a female power and kinds of female bonding may have a force that cannot be completely undone by the play's closural moves -- its comic conclusion in marriages and reunions that reestablish the conventional gender hierarchy. What makes Montrose's argument unusual in this respect, however, is his concern for the double turn that cultural products take, showing how the text may "disclose" its own participation in efforts at containment or compensation. Such "textual disclosures" make the text more culturally multiple than some New Historicist studies seem to allow it to be. This aspect of Montrose's argument (typical of his work more generally) is characteristic of the best of New Historicist interpretation, and is demonstrated in many of the essays contained in this volume. One finds, for instance, a similar interest in "textual disclosures" that may go against a text's apparent ideological or thematic claims in such essays as Stephen Orgel's "Prospero's Wife," a lively and persuasive antithetical reading of Prospero, or Robert Weimann's, "*Fabula* and *Historia*: The Crisis of the 'Universall Consideration' in *The Unfortunate Traveller*," which demonstrates Nashe's inability fully to connect his text's two opposing representational tendencies.

Montrose refers fleetingly to Spenser in this essay, yet his approach has wide implications for interpreting *The Faerie Queene*. While many critics have begun to read

the poem more explicitly as an Elizabethan text, stressing the political implications of Spenser's representational and figurative strategies, there is still room for considering whether the kind of ideologically multiple cultural readings that Montrose demonstrates here could fully illuminate the poem. While "historicist" work on Spenser is generating many excellent studies, fewer of them seem engaged in describing the kind of "textual disclosures" that might be made by *The Faerie Queene*: the range of its ambivalences towards its "dearest dred," the kinds of (often contradictory) appropriations of power made by the poem (the conflict, for instance, between its "laureate enterprise," its contestatory Protestant polemics, and its claim to a higher fictional and moral authority), and the relation of these "shaping fantasies" to Spenser's various representational schemes, especially to the powers and dangers of allegorical representation as he figures them in the poem. Even an episode so central to the poem as Arthur's dream vision of the faery queen (I.ix) can be read as a specifically cultural (as well as an imaginative and visionary) moment, different from both Bottom's "dream" of making love to the faery queen, and Braggadocchio's attempted rape of Belphoebe, in part because it imagines the queen's appropriate lover, an idealized and legitimizing figure. The episode represents as the final -- if unreachable -- closure of the poem the moment when "iust time" has expired and the queen will be paired with an ideal male lover guaranteeing English sovereignty and power. Interpretation of *The Faerie Queene* can still respond more fully to the complex picture of cultural "negotiation" (as Greenblatt puts it in his recent book on Shakespeare) that the best of the New Historicist work has given us. This would allow a more multivalent and multivocal version of the poem to present itself and discover within the allegorical hierarchy which the poem attempts to establish its competing (and even contradictory) cultural, political and aesthetic claims. In return, the kind of close attention to verbal imagery and texture required to read *The Faerie Queene*, and the training in allegorical complexities and representation that the poem provides, could strengthen the New Historicist project which can in its more limited cases reduce a work to a cultural artifact that strictly contains whatever political or literary ambivalences or complications it may "disclose." (Goldberg's work on Spenser, and some of Montrose's specifically Spenserian essays, make some substantial headway in this regard.)

The question of how to interpret such cultural and representational ambivalence is central to Greenblatt's provocative essay on "Murdering Peasants: Status, Genre and the Representation of Rebellion." The argument of the essay is based on interpretations of a Dürer sketch for "A Monument to Commemorate a Victory over the Rebellious Peasants"; on Sidney's account in *The New Arcadia* of the battle against the rebellious peasants, eventually put down by the rhetoric of Pyrocles / Zelmane; on Spenser's account of Artegall's and Talus' similar victory over the followers of the Egalitarian Giant (*FQ* V.ii); and on Shakespeare's representation of Jack Cade's rebellion in *II Henry VI*. Greenblatt shows how each of these representations of rebellion includes an unexpectedly sympathetic reading of the rebellion; the violence unleashed against the rebels is thus unleashed also against this unauthorized interpretation, present but violently suppressed in each case. The danger that this violence will provoke a negative response is controlled, he suggests, most explicitly in the case of Spenser, by the separation of rhetoric and violence (Artegall who tries to persuade, Talus who does the dirty work). But what is more important to his essay is the double claim that these representations are constituted of two opposed images, expressing and generating a cultural ambivalence that can be controlled only through an ideological move marked in the representations

themselves as violence. Here too, then, we find a stress not only on containment and its ideological function but on those aspects of the image or text that make such containment difficult, or which leave their marks nonetheless in the representation, and, presumably, by extension, in the culture.

Both Helgerson, in "The Land Speaks: Cartography, Chorography, and Subversion in Renaissance England," and Janet Halley, in her fine piece "Heresy, Orthodoxy, and the Politics of Religious Discourse: The Case of the English Family of Love," treat aspects of this same topic. For Helgerson, Christopher Saxton's project of mapping the counties of England would seem to suggest that such interest in representations of the land is largely consonant with the royal aim of extending its authority through identification of the monarch with the land (such as is suggested in works like the Ditchley portrait of Elizabeth). He finds, however, that interest in the representation of the land ultimately participates in the development of local and regional identifications that work against the royal claims, until the point that subjects, asked to choose between identifying with the "land" or the king, choose the land. Images that begin by appearing fully malleable to royal aims in fact carry a subversive potential that eventually becomes their single purpose. Helgerson finds an historical development, then, from one tendency to the other within the image, but points out nonetheless how even Saxton's maps include or demonstrate the ambiguity that ultimately will make them cease to function as symbols of royal power. Helgerson briefly discusses Spenser's marriage of the rivers (*FQ* IV.xii), locating Spenser's mythologizing quite early in his continuum of historical change, and noting that the episode is not a true example of chorography since it does not remain faithful to the natural disposition of the land: rather it becomes an image of "royal and artistic power exercised in defiance of the very geographical differences that the poem seems intent on celebrating" (355). The strict hierarchical procession of the rivers, moreover, again makes apparent that this is a "royal" wedding and a royal celebration, not a celebration of locality and difference (354). Spenser's treatment of the rivers in fact helps Helgerson to demonstrate how an interest in chorography often works against royal ideology. One might wonder, however, if there is not more tension in Spenser's poetry than such an account allows -- tension precisely between the local and the royal (perhaps at issue, among other places, in Diana's punishment of the landscape in *The Cantos of Mutabilitie*), between the poem's treatment of some landscapes as adumbrating royal power (or even the royal body) and its alternative endowing of them with their own *genii loci* and specific mythologies.

In her efforts to describe the heretical sect of the English Family of Love, which flourished in the latter half of the sixteenth century, Janet Halley similarly finds a kind of double representation at work. Here there is no temporal development that controls the ambivalent representations of a group which defined itself as both "highly conciliatory and sharply opposed to the state church" (320). Rather, a consistent ambiguity helps to reveal that such group identities were far more fluid than historians have seen. Like Greenblatt in his essay on the rebellious peasants, Halley finds that the authorities of the Church of England can only draw clear lines to distinguish this heretical group by using violence, and that the orthodoxy of the day relied in part on the dissenting group to help define its own boundaries.

The dialectic she describes is a familiar one in New Historicist interpretation. It reappears in Mullaney's "Strange Things, Gross Terms, Curious Customs: The Rehearsal

of Cultures in the Late Renaissance," a study of the complex processes by which a ruler or dominant culture may explore or "rehearse" cultural alternatives in order to control or domesticate them, and to extend royal power and authority. What is particularly resonant and provocative in Halley's account, as in Greenblatt's and Helgerson's essays, is the insistence on the unresolvable doubleness or ambivalence in the representations themselves. This doubleness means that the interpreter must look for the marks of an ideological choice of one alternative meaning over the other, and to the work's (or in Halley's case, the heresy's) ideological function within the power dynamics of its society, in order to begin to determine its meaning. It also means that there remains an unresolved cultural ambiguity that may allow the representation or self-representation to take on unexpected meanings that cannot be so easily contained. New Historicist interpretation tends to stop and mark this ideological moment, and not to follow the textual or imagistic ambivalence further. Thus Greenblatt specifically arrests his analysis at the moment when a violent choice between alternatives is made for ideological purposes. He leaves unanswered the resulting question of how the residue of ambiguous or ambivalent imagery should be interpreted, or what such verbal, imagistic or definitional undecidability might suggest about the work's response to this unclosed, potentially transgressive, and uncontainable aspect of representation.

Paul Alpers' "Pastoral and the Domain of Lyric in Spenser's *Shepheardes Calender*" challenges certain of the assumptions that underlie political if not historical interpretations of the kind represented here. He argues that in *The Shepheardes Calender* Spenser established a literary or fictive "demesne," and thereby achieved "a certain distance from courtly and social accountability" (174). His concern is with the kind of authority that Spenser institutes for himself. He finds that Spenser's efforts in his pastoral poetry "to stake out his claim in the world of European letters" (175) allowed him to establish a specifically literary authority. Even in this case, however, the article turns on the ambivalence or doubleness made culturally necessary in any such efforts to found a new authority. Alpers shows how "the shepherd's simplicity, the source of his moral and political strength, is coextensive with his vulnerability and powerlessness" (166). Spenser's shepherds have "a genuine doubleness about them, a mixture of outspokenness and diffidence" (166) that allowed the poet to create a literary and a cultural authority so complex and so difficult to interpret -- a doubleness that involves appropriating power from several often contradictory sources.

It is impossible to do this volume justice in a short review, since each article makes a complex and separate argument, while all are genuinely interdisciplinary and synthetic, not only in combining disciplines but in transporting methods of analysis and particular theoretical questions from one discipline to another. I found some of the less "literary" essays -- such as Christopher Pye's dense and sophisticated study of the daemonic in Hobbes ("The Sovereign, the Theatre, and the Kingdome of Darknesse: Hobbes and the Spectacle of Power") -- especially engaging in this regard. Patricia Fumerton's insightful piece ("'Secret' Arts: Elizabethan Miniatures and Sonnets") on the similarities between Elizabethan miniatures and sonnet form also belongs in this category, for the emphasis of the essay falls on her interesting explication of the kinds of "secret" spaces -- a bedchamber, an innermost room, a private cabinet or closet, a hidden locket -- appropriate for the viewing of miniatures. Her account of the ways in which such ostensibly "private" spaces often became the most public provides an analysis of the Elizabethan organization or interpretation of space that may well have resonance for

some of Spenser's "secret" places as well. While only a few of these essays treat Spenser in particular, then, many provide stimulating and engaging analyses of Elizabethan culture. Spenserians will appreciate the breadth and range of the essays, and find much in them that illuminates otherwise unseen aspects of Spenser's poetry.

It might seem, in conclusion, that we hardly need one more anthology of essays illustrating an approach or making a common argument, even a collection so attractive and influential as this one. It should be noted, however, that, beyond convenience, this tendency of recent scholarship has begun to allow literary critics to escape from an institutional over-emphasis on the need to pursue individual or "private" intellectual projects. While many other fields provide some room for collaborative work -- social history, for instance, as well as the obvious example of most work in the "hard" sciences -- ours has proven particularly resistant to it. One appreciates, therefore, the sense that a volume such as this one represents a shared intellectual project, with its debates and its differences of opinion and approach, a project that is on-going and still being defined. This volume provides a space for individual voices that nonetheless speak as part of such a collective cultural endeavor.

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88.98 Patterson, Annabel. *Pastoral and Ideology: Virgil to Valery*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988. xiv + 343 pp. $45.00

Anyone who could read this beautifully designed book (cogently illustrated with fine black-and-white and color reproductions) without being engrossed and informed must be either envied for his capacious knowledge and understanding of European intellectual history, or pitied for his limited scope of interests. It is, however, a book that must be read as a book, not dipped into, as the author herself warns: "the argument is essentially incremental" and "depends less on the depth or intricacy of individual 'readings' than on a network of connections and cross-references" (16). Though sections of chapters have been published previously as more or less self-contained essays, it is not indeed a work in which one profitably harvests, let us say, a new interpretation of the *November* eclogue, but rather a new view of how Spenser's approach to the state is expressed through his treatment of pastoral texts, a view different from Montrose's but arising from a similar critical revaluation of the poet's relation to his political and historical context.

Spenserians may be familiar already with the portion of the book most directly relevant to Spenser, since it was published previously under the same title, "Re-Opening the Green Cabinet: Clement Marot and Edmund Spenser," *ELR* 1 (Winter 1986): 44-70 (*SpN* 86.133). Now it appears as part of a longer chapter, "Versions of Renaissance Humanism" -- a book by itself in anyone else's hands -- treating of Landino, Poliziano, Brant, and Vives as well. This is followed by another chapter including previously published material, which takes us from Bacon's georgic impulses through Dryden's translations, with brief looks at Milton, Marvell, and Browne of Tavistock along the way.

Before briefly rehearsing Patterson's thesis regarding Spenser, it seems useful to describe what this book is and is not, since the title may give misleading clues. First, it is

really a study of how Virgil's *Eclogues* (and, to a small extent, *Georgics*) have influenced Western culture and have themselves been used to express attitudes which Patterson broadly terms ideological. To trace this, the author discusses many facets of the Virgilian legacy: commentaries, translations, allusions and quotations, and illustrations. In itself her book is a tour-de-force of interdisciplinary and comparative studies. In addition, she brings to these texts and icons detailed consideration of the sociopolitical context which she sees as influencing or impinging upon the writer's or artist's response to Virgil's pastoralism. It is not, as one might expect from the subtitle, a survey of the pastoral genre or studies of pastoral careers from Virgil to Valery, nor is it a theory of the pastoral genre. Indeed, Patterson dismisses the latter as "a cause lost as early as the sixteenth century," proclaiming that "[i]t is not what the pastoral *is* that should matter to us" (7). That is, what should matter is how artists and intellectuals have taken, or used, the pastoral.

Patterson's "should" in the previous quotation is a grand gesture that wipes more than one book off the table. One might object that in this way she diverts attention from the fact that she is seldom really discussing the poems as such. Yet it must be said that many of the works included in the scope of this study have had many "readings" and will have many more. We have not had precisely this sort of cultural and intellectual history, which along the way tells us much about the pastoral tradition's elasticity, and reminds us of Virgil's complex significance for Western thought.

As Patterson sees Spenser, the Virgilian inheritance came partly by way of Marot, who gave to the English poet "a model for constructing the pastoral of state, or, more precisely, for adapting to the needs of a modern European nation the Virgilian strategy of address to those in power (119). It is the compex balance of opposites that this study explores, through such strategies as E. K.'s remarks appealing to "international humanists and linguistic nationalists, courtiers and the general public," as well as the woodcuts, appropriate to the lay and learned alike (120). The same sort of tension appears regarding Elizabeth, who was for Spenser a political and religious figure whose actions sometimes warranted criticism, a source of much-craved patronage, and the embodiment of a worthy ideal (somewhat tarnished in actuality). As she reads the *November* eclogue, then, Patterson evokes McLane's allegorical reading, though believing that to be too narrowly constituted. That poem is, for Spenser, in her view a brooding lament for lost political hopes (121). From Spenser, she argues, Elizabethan pastoral theories emphasize "enigma and discretion" (127). Appropriately since he contrived to express "the unspeakable criticism alongside the celebration," paying the price of "cultural exile in Ireland" but producing a book of poems "so peculiarly equivocal that even now it remains possible for readers to see in the *Calender* only what they choose" (131).

The book is generally free of jargon, though one occasionally meets with an oddity such as terming an explication of Servius's commentary "the mainframe" (38), or a sentence rather stuffed with overweighted adjectives (e.g., "Landino's definition of his Camaldolese hermeneutics as the georgics of the mind was, therefore, consistent with Laurentian mythology, creating for the early 1470s a generative vocabulary of the intellectual life and its responsibilities" [65]). These seem the perils of condensing rich conceptual associations in a longish text, not disdain for the reader. A book so capacious makes cavils meanspirited. There are countless places throughout where I wanted to pause to argue, to ask for further clarification, to plead for a look at a specific passage,

prompted by Patterson's own concern for details of history, biography, book production, and the graphic arts. Yet it is a book from which I emerged feeling that I had acquired a remarkable amount of real knowledge (as well as information) about a subject I thought I knew fairly well. One more comment: one never doubts for a moment in reading the book that Annabel Patterson cares deeply about literature, culture, and the critique of literature and culture to which we must also devote ourselves as teachers and scholars.

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ARTICLES: ABSTRACTS AND NOTICES

88.99 Anderson, Judith. "Arthur, Argante, and the Ideal Vision: An Exercise in Speculation and Parody." In *The Passing of Arthur: New Essays in Arthurian Tradition.* Eds. Christopher Baswell and William Sharpe. New York: Garland, 1988. 193-206.

Spenser's source for the name Argante may be "Argante the queen, an elf most fair" from Layamon's *Brut.* Once this is assumed, Argante can suddenly be seen as a "monstrous parody of the Faerie Queene" -- and indeed of Elizabeth I herself. Though an attempt is made to contain the parody set off by Argante -- and even by Arthur himself, as recent criticism has increasingly suggested -- these subversive elements combine to mount "an assault on the object of Arthur's quest" from which it "never fully recovers." (P.J.)

88.100 Cavanagh, Sheila T. "'Beauties Chace': Arthur and Women in *The Faerie Queene.* In *The Passing of Arthur: New Essays in Arthurian Tradition.* Eds. Christopher Baswell and William Sharpe. New York: Garland, 1988. 207-18.

The erotic overtones in Arthur's dream of the Faerie Queene in Book I, and his sexually ambiguous pursuit of Florimell in Book III, "greatly problematize [Arthur's] status as a superior knight," and raise questions about the possibility of representing women in the epic. A primary model for women is the elusive Faerie Queene, who lingers in the margins of the text, never present, forever desired, in a state which can be illuminated by Derrida's writings on the "virgin" properties of texts and the primacy of distance in definitions of female power. Women such as Florimell, who are neither clearly "demonic" nor obviously "iconic," tend to disappear into the "irretrievable folds of the text, where their fate and Arthur's activities with them remain just outside the sight of the reader." (P.J.)

88.101 Cheney, Patrick Gerard. "'Secret Powre Unseene': Good Magic in Spenser's Legend of Britomart." *SP* 85, no. 1 (Winter 1988): 1-28.

In Book III of *The Faerie Queene* Spenser uses the allegorical device of good magic to specify the relationship between chaste human love and providence. The action of good magic, like that of grace itself, is fourfold: love is kindled in the human heart by a divinely granted vision of beauty; prophecy or revelation teaches that this love is

providential in origin; Christian magic arms the soul with spiritual power, enabling it to complete the cycle by transforming that power into moral action. Evil magic, by contrast, subverts this hierarchical order. Whereas Merlin -- who never practices magic in the poem -- foretells the destiny already ordained by heaven for Britomart and Arthur, Archimago and Duessa change their shapes and force demons to assume human form in order to deceive. Merlin's revelation encourages Britomart to labor in the world to convert her ideal vision into reality; Archimago and Duessa attempt to trick the hero into believing that he can attain the reality without effort. As Britomart and the reader learn to distinguish Merlin's visionary magic from illusion, they learn also to trust in the unseen secret power of Chastity, the virtue which unites human sexual desire with divine will. Thus Scudamour, recognizing the powerlessness of reason to overcome Busirane's images of love as narcissism and masculine fury, cannot save Amoret; but Britomart solves Busirane's puzzle by relying upon the spiritual understanding which Chastity affords her. (A.M.E.)

88.102 Craig, Joanne. "'As if But One Soule in Them All Did Dwell': Busyrane, Scudamour, and Radigund." *ESC* 14, No. 1 (March 1988): 15-25.

Books III and IV of the *FQ* -- especially Book III -- embody the tensions of Spenser's 1596 revisions of the 1590 conclusion to Book III, tensions which "disintegrate the narrative" to expose the "dominance and constraint in relationships between women and men" which "engaged Spenser both in the public context of *The Faerie Queene* and in the personal context of the *Amoretti*. Book IV's opening -- wishing that the "sad story" of Amoret and Florimell "never had been writ" -- suggests "that the story is becoming too complicated and that the narrator consequently wants out." The revisions of love-relationships in Book IV, especially Amoret and Scudamour, show that the 1590 view of love and marriage gives way in 1596 to "a society in which the sexes have in common the desire to dominate each other" (evidenced in hunting imagery), reaching its climax in Book V in Radigund's "parodic parallel to the male lover: her use of force justifies his, in a context that makes force the ruling principle of all relationships between individuals and groups." *FQ*'s "shift from Book I, in which a nation is saved by grace, to Book V ... in which a nation is saved by the sword," figures the narrative's disintegration from romantic equality to dominance. (K.F.)

88.103 Dauber, Antionette B. "Allegory and Irony in 'Othello.'" *ShS* 40 (1988): 123-144.

"Allegory is the mode of self-conscious faith, and Spenser's corpus may be read as a portrait of the artist as allegorist, wrestling first with the burdens of self-consciousness and then with the burdens of faith." *Othello* is a "Spenserian tragedy," in which "Shakespeare compresses and objectifies this struggle," dramatizing "the internal weaknesses and external onslaughts that lead to its destruction." The mystifying and idealizing rhetoric generated by Cassio in his Act II description of Desdemona is at once both similar to Spenser's, in that it operates by means of allegory, and yet crucially different in that it lacks any self-consciousness of its own authoring role. Similarly, in his Act I defense of himself before the Duke, Othello employs the poetic convention of "affected modesty," but he does so not as part of a deliberate rhetorical strategy, but "in full seriousness to define himself." "Together Cassio and Othello subject the Spenserian poetic to extreme pressure, by assuming naively that the object they portray coincides

absolutely with the words they speak." In his description of Una, Spenser inoculates allegory "with a dose of ironic self-consciousness," thus protecting it from skepticism in a way that neither Othello nor Cassio can do. They use "the language of allegory unawares" and in so doing, "rob it of its strength." Iago, the skeptic and the source of most of the irony in the play, takes advantage of this loss of strength and leads the assault on allegory. The "irony of this play devolves from the ashes of allegory"; it "is the attitude engendered by the spectacle of the ruined ideal." Iago not only aims to bring about Othello's fall, he seeks to undermine mediation and faith, "the twin premises on which a Spenserian art is founded." Like Spenser's Archimago, an enchanter and a manipulator, Iago "conjures up a Spenserian House of Truth, where we might expect to find Desdemona as mistress," but he leaves the too credulous victim of his deceit on the path before the door: "If imputation and strong circumstances / Which lead directly to the door of truth / Will give you satisfaction, you might hav't" (3.3.406-08). Attention is deflected from the "allegorical edifice" to the pathways outside it; "truth itself is defenseless against misappropriated allegory." (J.S.)

88.104 Grimm, Nadine G. "Mutabilitie's Plea before Dame Nature's Bar." *Comitatus* 17 (1986): 22-34.

Constructing a compelling argument according to the rules of Aristotelian rhetoric, Mutability attempts to win the listener's confidence, engage his emotions, and prove her claim. The very structure of classical argument, however, is hierarchical and predicates natural and positive law. When, in the manner of a classical exordium, Mutability humbles herself before Dame Nature and agrees to abide by her decision, she unwittingly places herself and Jove within a "pactum unionis" and a "pactum subjectionis" implying the existence of the Social Contract and the Divine Right of Kings. "Social banditry" yields to reason; Mutability abandons open rebellion and confirms the rule of Nature by engaging in debate. Even so, Mutability's logic is marred by one fatal omission: she fails to mention the week, a temporal division which points toward divine control over the universe. Since her case is based upon presenting a sufficiency of evidence, that single omission forces Dame Nature to decide against her. (A.M.E.)

88.105 Hieatt, A. Kent. "The Passing of Arthur in Malory, Spenser, and Shakespeare: The Avoidance of Closure." In *The Passing of Arthur: New Essays in Arthurian Tradition*. Eds. Christopher Baswell and William Sharpe. New York: Garland, 1988. 173-92.

Critics have not fully taken into account how Spenser's overall 24-book plan for *The Faerie Queene* must have influenced his conception of Books I-III. Given the models of other Renaissance epics, as well as internal evidence from the extant poem itself, we can assume that the last twelve books whose subject was to be Arthur's "polliticke vertues" would have climaxed in some glorious military success. Close reading of a passage from the Book of Briton Moniments which tells how England "was tributarie made / T'ambitious *Rome*, and did their rule obay, / Till *Arthur* all that reckoning defrayd" reveals striking parallels to Malory's tale of Emperor Lucius. By referring to this earlier work here, Spenser is obliquely signaling the reader that an Arthurian conquest of Rome was to be the climax of the epic's second half. New understanding of Books I-III would follow "if [this] proposal is well accepted," since the

explanation for many perplexing elements in the earlier books "may lie in the needs of the sequel." (P.J.)

88.106 Kucich, Gregg. "Leigh Hunt and Romantic Spenserianism." *KSJ* 37 (1988): 110-35.

Critics generally ignore Hunt's Spenserianism or ridicule it as focusing upon a trivial, effete aestheticism. But Hunt's reactions to Spenser were complex and symptomatic of a tension in Romanticism between the poetry of realism, morality, and political progressivism, and the poetry of beauty, romance, and escape. Hunt projected upon Spenser the contradictions in his own nature, his love of voluptuous beauty, and his ultimate bondage to responsibilities. In so doing, he created a model for himself as he tried throughout his career to confront his inhibitions. Thus Hunt sees in Spenser his own youthful desire for abandonment, his later attempts to season beauty with truth, or to renounce beauty in favor of terseness and severity, and finally his acceptance of a "piquancy of contrast" in life, a mingled joy and sorrow. (A.M.E.)

88.107 Miller, David Lee. "Figuring Hierarchy: The Dedicatory Sonnets to *The Faerie Queene*." *RenP* (1987): 49-60.

The "threshold status" of the dedicatory sonnets which preface the 1590 *Faerie Queene* "mediate between the poem and the social order around it" and inhabit "the boundary between literature and nonliterary realm of court politics and patronage." The sonnets form a "'body politic,' an ideological formation at once social, legal, mythic, and aesthetic." Thus they participate in Spenserian allegorical structure "since each is organized with reference to the political body of the sovereignty." A microcosm of *The Faerie Queene*, the sonnets image "1) the authoritarian basis of allegory; 2) the function of ornaments (or *kosmoi*) as insignia of hierarchical status; 3) the tendency of allegory to constrict or compartmentalize meaning; 4) the role of the corporate protagonist; 5) the taboo of the ruler; and 6) the emotive nature of ornament." Although the sonnets demonstrate "Kenneth Burke's notion of culture as a public 'symbol exchange,'" two "crucial figures" in that exchange -- Elizabeth and the poet -- are absent. The queen, however, exists as the poem's subject; also, "Elizabeth *is* the procession" of power in the sequence. The poet's place is less certain, and the poem registers Spenser's "anxieties" about his relationship to authority and the worthiness of his art. But Spenser is Elizabeth's "effaced counterpart": "The poet's labor in mirroring hierarchy has value precisely *because* the social order (like any rhetorical construct) is based on mutually constitutive relations." (K.F.)

88.108 Myers, Jeffrey Rayner. "Ut Picturae Poemata." *RenP* (1987): 71-94.

In visual and literary art alike, critical assessments that ignore the structural elements of the particular works they evaluate, and are based instead upon definitions of artistic form derived from popular conceptions of an artistic or literary canon, produce results of questionable value. Such an assessment is one that labels *Romeo and Juliet* a failed experiment in tragedy which succeeds only despite itself in the lyrical quality of its language. Examination of the structuring elements in the play: the sonnet and various epithalmic conventions, reveals that rather than being a failed experiment, as defined against a certain canon of Shakespearean tragedy based upon notions of Greek tragedy,

the play is an experiment in literary forms along the lines of that which is found in Spenser's *Amoretti and Epithalamion*, where sonnet and epithalamion meet in a "novel conjunction" that defies Petrarchan conventions. Spenser's work thus "provides a precedent and conceivably a model for Shakespeare's" adoption of "the dynamic interaction of the sonnet with other lyrical genres" as the "structuring principle" of his play." (J.S.)

88.109 Pope, Maurice. "Shakespeare's Medical Imagination." *ShS* 38 (1986): 175-86.

In his references to anatomy and bodily functions, Shakespeare displays a grasp of theories originating in Galen and Erasistratus, but tempers them with his own knowledge of current medical controversies to produce a self-consistent physiology. He did not thoughtlessly absorb some medieval or Tudor medical orthodoxy, which did not really exist, nor did he allow himself, like the university-educated Spenser, to remain confused and inept in his discussions of veins, blood, arteries, spirits, and major organs of the body. In particular, an awareness of the triple function of blood as nutritive, humoral, and procreative helps to explain often misunderstood passages in *Coriolanus* and elsewhere, and to deepen our appreciation of the poetry of others. (A.M.E.)

88.110 Silberman, Lauren. "Spenser and Ariosto: Funny Peril and Comic Chaos." *CLS* 25, no. 1 (Winter 1988): 23-34.

Humor in *The Faerie Queene*, if acknowledged at all, is usually considered ancillary to Spenser's moral intent. But Spenser uses irony to engage the reader in a construction of his various ideal knights, especially Britomart. The reader, like Britomart, is in a comic peril as he learns to make his way through the uncertain episodes of Book III. In the story of Bradamante and Fiordispina, Ariosto uses a self-assured ironic stance to distance the reader from the action; the reader smiles knowingly with the author as the notions of love, sexuality, and identity are deconstructed. Spenser's reader, however, can never be so confident of iconoclasm and chaos. Unlike Bradamante, Britomart is an ingenue who is still, in an often humorously naive way, training to become a Maid Martial. The comedy of errors at Castle Joyeous, a revision of Ariosto's tale, hazards Britomart's identity even as it presents her the opportunity for locating it, since for the first time she must face vulnerability, passion, and loss of virginity. We understand Britomart's mistakes as we totter along with her on the brink of uncertainty. (A.M.E.)

88.111 Sterling, Eric. "Spenser's *Faerie Queene*." *Expl* 46, no. 3 (Spring 1988): 9-11.

Despite the scorn Spenserians heap upon him, Malbecco is a pitiable old man who loves his wife. He imprisons her because it is his only means for preserving his virtue; he hoards gold as a symbol of their matrimony and uses it to attempt to rescue her. (A.M.E.)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

88.112 NEH SPENSER INSTITUTE. The National Endowment for the Humanities is funding a Spenser Institute, to be sponsored by Princeton University this summer. The Institute will occur at Princeton, from July 10 - August 14. Its aim is to provide twenty-four non-specialist teachers the opportunity for an intensive study of *The Faerie Queene*. The program will include daily morning seminars in which the poem will be studied sequentially and an afternoon lecture series in which both permanent and visiting faculty will discuss aspects of the poem from different perspectives. Resident faculty will be Darryl J. Gless (University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill), Annabel Patterson (Duke University), and Thomas P. Roche, Jr., Director (Princeton University). The visiting faculty includes Harry Berger, Jr. (University of California, Santa Barbara), David Lee Miller (University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa), Maureen Quilligan (University of Pennsylvania), Gordon Teskey (Cornell University), and Susanne Wofford (Yale University).

Participants will receive a stipend of $3,000 to help defray the cost of room, board, and travel to Princeton. For further information and application materials, write to Professor Thomas P. Roche, Jr., Department of English, 22 McCosh Hall, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ 08544. (609) 452-4060; (609) 921-2264. Application deadline is **March 1, 1989.**

88.113 A note on the SPENSER SOCIETY. During its annual meeting at the MLA convention this year, the Executive Committee of the Spenser Society considered some matters likely to interest everyone concerned with Spenser studies. President S. K. Heninger, Jr. (University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill) is especially eager to have readers of the *Newsletter* know that:

(1) Together with the *Newsletter* staff, the Spenser Society will soon make it possible for members to combine their payments of the membership fee (now $5 per year) with subscriptions to *Spenser Newsletter*. This will not only be a convenience; it is also intended to encourage new members to join the Society.

(2) Increased membership has begun to prove important because of a policy the MLA announced this year. Unless affiliated organizations like the Spenser Society have more that 200 active members, they will be allowed to sponsor only one session at MLA conventions. As most of you know, the Spenser Society has for years been automatically given two sessions, and usually a third -- the Spenser and Milton special sessions that ran for several years prior to 1987. For the past two years, the Society's backing has also helped win approval for a third session, "Chaucer to Spenser."

Such sponsorship is, of course, central to the Society's purposes, which are to provide occasions when scholars interested in Spenser and his cultural contexts can present versions of work in progress and become part of the national network of Renaissance scholars. Among these occasions is the Spenser Society luncheon, held annually at MLA -- for which the Society makes the (sometimes elaborate) arrangements and supplies wine. The Society also works to encourage and reward excellence in scholarship, especially by younger scholars, by funding and awarding the MacCaffrey Prize at the luncheon. At $5 per year, these important services are available at a bargain rate. And

the combined membership plus *Newsletter* subscription option will make it available still more cheaply -- at a price to be announced in forthcoming issues of *Spenser Newsletter*.

In the meanwhile, however, if you aren't yet a member of the Society (or if your membership has lapsed), send your name, address, and $5 check to John Ulreich, Secretary-Treasurer, The Spenser Society, Department of English, Modern Languages Building #67, University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ 85721. John's membership renewal announcement, next November, will initiate the opportunity to combine membership and *Newsletter* subscription fees.

A full report on the 1988 MLA sessions will appear in Spenser Newsletter 20.1, scheduled for publication around March 1, 1989.

88.114 CALL FOR PAPERS, for Spenser Society sponsored sessions at the 1989 MLA Convention in Washington, DC. Send abstracts or papers (20 minutes) for the session titled *Spenser* (any topic), by MARCH 1, to S. K. Heninger, Jr., Dept. of English, CB# 3520 Greenlaw Hall, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill 27599-3520.

For the sessions titled *Later Spenser: "England's Arch-Poet" in Elizabeth's Last Decade*, send abstracts or papers (20 minutes), by MARCH 15, to David Lee Miller. Department of English, CB# 3520, Greenlaw Hall, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC 27599-3520. PLEASE NOTE THE ADDRESS. David is not in Tuscaloosa this semester.

88.115   *SPENSER BIBLIOGRAPHY UPDATE, 1986*

John W. Moore, Jr., The Pennsylvania State University

The following checklist includes Spenser items published during 1986 plus a number of earlier items not included in previous updates. Items reviewed in the *Spenser Newsletter* are referred to by year and item. 86.10 refers to the tenth item in the 1986 volume.

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Opening Remarks: Roger Kuin (York University)

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"Reading Mirabella"
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John Webster (University of Washington)

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