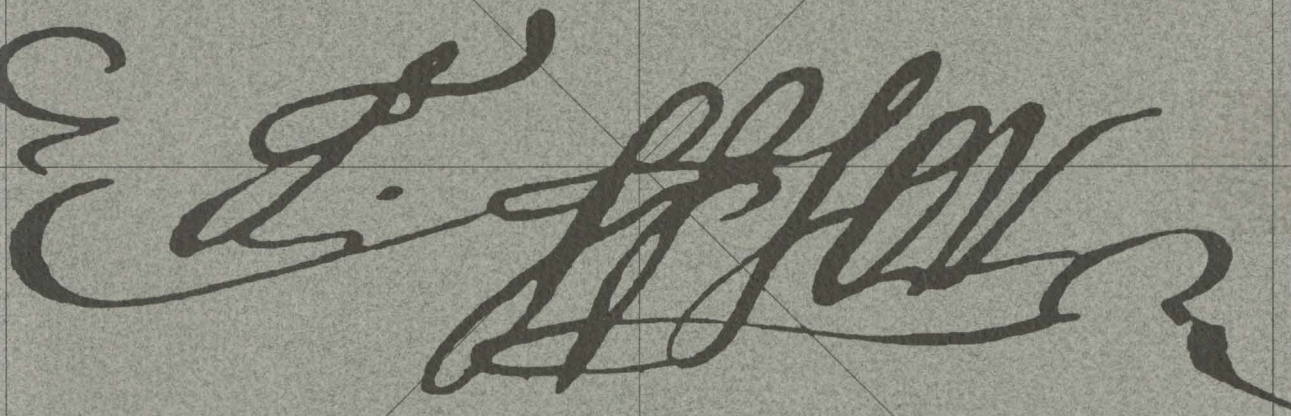
SPENSER • NEWSLETTER

SPRING/SUMMER 1993 • VOLUME 24 • NUMBER 2



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CONTENTS

The *Spenser Newsletter* is published three times a year, Winter, Spring-Summer, and Fall, by the Department of English at Kansas State University. Please address all communications to *Spenser Newsletter*, Department of English, 122 Denison Hall, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS 66506-0701.

The editor solicits letters containing news of any sort which would be of interest to Spenserians, and will make an effort to print any legitimate inquiry. He also solicits abstracts and/or offprints of articles (with full publication data, please), the receipt of which may reduce the time between publication of the article and the report on it.

Subscription rates, institutional and private: $6.50/yr in USA, $6.50/yr (US funds or equivalent) in Canada, $11.00/yr US in Latin America and overseas. These rates are for Vol. 23, 1992, and for Vol 24, 1993.

TO OUR READERS

93.33 Rather than begin this column (as usual) with the latest excuse for the continued delay in getting *SpN* back on its wonted schedule (that comes later), I'll call attention instead to the error in numbering items in volume 24.1, where a feat of editorial absentmindedness produced a string of 94's instead of 93's (perhaps I really hoped it was 1994). Readers may wish to correct their copies, so that, when the Index appears in the next issue and refers, correctly, to items **93.1** through **93.32**, there will be minimal confusion.

It might seem almost "Spenserian" to be able to attribute this latest delay to the revages of the great flood of '93 -- a product of too heavy tippling by the river gods who attended the marriage of Thames and Medway? -- but alas, the real reason was good old American technological failure.

BOOKS: REVIEWS AND NOTICES

93.34 Borris, Kenneth. *Spenser's Poetics of Prophecy in* The Faerie Queene *V.* English Literary Studies 52. Victoria, B.C.: U of Victoria, 1991. 128 pp. $8.50.

As Kenneth Borris points out in the Introduction to this monograph, critical evaluation of the final cantos of *FQ* 5 have tended to the extremes of attacking their historical transparency or of ignoring history in favor of analyses of iconography and myth. Borris intervenes in this debate with his persuasive suggestion that the end of Book V complexly combines history and iconography in a poetics of prophecy, drawing on the imagery of the New Testament to shape an understanding of contemporary history. The mythologizing of history, in Christian terms, was a common enough practice in Renaissance England, not only among divines but also among political advisors and deputies. A letter to Elizabeth from the Lord Deputy of Ireland (and patron to Spenser) opens this study, providing an example of apocalyptic analysis of contemporary events, here represented in the siege at Smerwick. Lord Grey marvels that men "should be carried into unjust, desperate, and wicked actions by ... the right Antichrist and general ambitious tyrant over all right principalities, and patron of the diabolica fede," that is, the pope, under whose auspices the Spanish and Italian troops carried out their ill-fated expedition into Ireland in 1580. Borris demonstrates that a prophetic understanding of history also enables the poet to transform historical matter into poetry. "Spenser's emphasis on divining or prophecy [in the Letter to Ralegh] accords generally with the close association of 'Prophets and Poets' in much Renaissance literary theory, for they were said 'to have great affinitie, as the name *Vates* in Latin doth testifie.' However, he especially links *FQ* with the Virgilian heroic mode that transforms the particulars of history into vehicles for the ostensibly prophetic revelation of cultural destiny" (8-9). Thus Spenser has poetic and political precedent for his apocalyptic handling of the material in the closing cantos of Book V.

The first chapter in this work sets out in great detail numerous allusions in the Belge episode to imagery in Revelations and related biblical passages. These links create the foundation of Borris's discussion of Spenser's prophetic historiography. Chapter 2 examines Protestant apocalyptic readings of current events which Spenser might have drawn on in creating his own combination of these elements. However, Borris takes great pains at this point of his analysis to distinguish the aims of the polemicists from Spenser's poetic project, essentially emptying the poem of any historical or political effect. In doing so, he reasserts the unhelpful New Critical distinction between literary and non-literary texts and commits himself to a reading of the end of Book V, and perhaps the poem as a whole, as a transcendent Christian vision that comments on, rather than intervenes in, contemporary society. While the differing formal concerns of polemics and poetry certainly create divergent effects, they may nevertheless share political aims while retaining their distinctive functions.

Borris argues that the Belge and Irena episodes at the end of Book V gesture towards, respectively, the victory of Christ over the Antichrist at the end of time, and a contemporary echo of that conflict that is mired in the failure of the temporal world. If Arthur is a veiled type mirroring the success of Christ's ultimate battle, Artegall is a representative of earthly justice who epitomizes "the general problems of power and reform in human society" (69). Borris's reliance on continental literary theory and apocalyptic prophecy leads him to the implicit conclusion that the poet somehow stands outside of history in his (in this instance) ability to perceive larger Christian truths and satirize human shortcomings. However, this ignores accounts of poetics, such as Puttenham's, which connect the origins of poetry with both prophecy and politics, as well as Spenser's own political allegiances, including his status as a colonial agent whose livelihood was reliant on the Queen's Irish policy. Borris correctly registers Spenser's stance towards Elizabeth's Irish policy as a critical one; what he does not see is that Artegall does not represent that failed policy, but its critique. Artegall's strategy of harsh repression, as implemented by Talus, corresponds with Grey's brutal approach which Spenser advocates in *A Vewe*. Spenser's own holdings in Ireland were acquired by means of official appropriation of "rebels'" lands; to the extent that he was critical of English and Old English (i.e., Anglo-Irish settlers who often sided with the Irish) actions, it was not from the perspective of a transcendent Christian revulsion against secular violence, but from the fear that this ruthless strategy might be abandoned before the natives were completely subjugated and his property secured. With regard to the Belge episode, Borris cites Leicester's failure in the Low Countries as evidence that Arthur's success distinguishes him from the historical actor. I would grant that Arthur does not re-enact the disastrous Leicester expedition, but argue that the episode does reflect contemporary events insofar as the Spanish influence in the Low Countries was on the wane by the early 1590's.

This monograph makes an excellent case for the importance of biblical prophecy in understanding the poetic project of the final cantos of Book V. Its shortcoming lies in the fact that it fails to see that Spenser's literary and religious interests were also political, and shared by the very powerful group of his patrons and friends: Leicester, Ralegh, Sidney, Grey, and Essex. As Borris himself notes, it is Spenser's claim of divine inspiration that

authorizes his criticism of temporal power (69); however, this censure, while certainly poetic and prophetic, is also necessarily political.

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93.35 MacBeth, George. *The Testament of Spencer*. London: Andre Deutsch, 1992. 222 pp. £13.99.

This novel, completed shortly before George MacBeth's death in 1992, of motor neurone disease, should interest Spenser scholars working on the poet's connections with Ireland. Its postmodern variations on a Spenserian theme may well appeal also to a larger professional audience. For the rest, the book's a pretty good read, even something of a page turner.

MacBeth, remembered chiefly as a poet (21 volumes since 1954), published also eleven novels, the early "prose poem" *My Scotland*, and among other items the prize-winning autobiography *A Child of the War* (1987). A Lowland Scot by birth and temper, his was a dark imagination. An early taste for intellectual fun and games had more or less faded out by 1980: in that year, interestingly, his choice of "recreation" for *Who's Who*, until then quiet "motoring," gives way to something entirely different -- "Japanese swords." Typically in his later work love struggles against a backdrop of war, blood, fire, death. For the poet Stephen Knight, "death was always MacBeth's primary subject." The pattern of this final book holds all these elements; but in the end destructive and purgative fire matters most.

While MacBeth's oeuvre reflects continuous care for the various arts of poetry, there is little firm evidence in earlier work of a particular taste for Spenser, though (for what it's worth) the narrator-poet remarks, "I was interested [in Spenser] for years." *The Testament of Spencer* makes play especially with "June," *FQ* 2.12, and *Colin Clout*; echoes of the *Vewe* sound throughout. Perhaps the *Vewe* really surfaced for MacBeth in 1989, when, after years of residence in England, he moved with his third wife to an early-nineteenth-century mansion in Tuam, County Galway. At the end of the book a chronology of Spenser's life will help non-Spenserians to keep their balance as they explore MacBeth's *Testament*.

The action takes place at the end of the present century, in an Ireland independent, free, and (we are asked to imagine) united. No borders or check-points; Protestant guerrillas not much in evidence. The scattered English live here still, often in country houses still claimed as of ancient right by Irish Desmonds or O'Neills, who hate and harass the English, and forever challenge their legal instruments, while maintaining a bland and impudent sociability. All but one chapter of the tale is told by the English poet and sometime civil servant John Spencer, newly arrived with his pregnant second wife Liz ("you" in the narrative) to take up residence in a decaying mansion, once "a place of plastered ceilings and great halls," in Munster. Not Kilcolman; but Edmund Spenser is bumping about in the

undercroft, as it were. John Spencer has a problem: "I sometimes feel that I'm someone else," he confesses to his doctor -- and to a priest. In fact, Edmund Spenser serves as John Spencer's "Other," a steadily more pervasive influence on the newcomer's mind and creative art. If John Spencer's testament is first and last a story of tormented husband and saving wife, it is thoroughly intertwined, until the last two chapters, with that other "testament," the life of Edmund Spenser.

Extended flashbacks punctuating the narrative illuminate the course and character of John Spencer's poetry: early pastorals and sonnets, then "an idea for twelve [or twenty-four] novels," eventually the plan for a big poem of "twelve books, twelve cantos." "Structure came before theme." But the poem at length becomes "an allegory for the times," serving the several purposes of ambitious Tom Gray, "caught up in his Napoleonic dream" before Glenmalure, and especially Clever Riley, poet, naval hero from the Falklands armada, and Gray's hit-man at Smerwick. These two play on the poet's ambition to advance their own political schemes. MacBeth's invention also transforms Spenser's Rosalind into Spencer's first wife Linda, now a glittering and moneyed actress in London. Her promise to get the poem published matters more ("I felt the lust of fame") than the prescient doubts and fears of his own Liz. He sends the poem to London; Linda-Acrasia responds through her solicitor, bringing suit for "the libellous portrait of my client." Even a subsequent audience, of sorts, with the cool monarch at her brittle Court (MacBeth manages this rather well) isn't altogether reassuring.

Meanwhile the seeming-amiable but stubbornly hostile Irish pick away at the poet in various unpleasant ways. One or two figures make cautiously supportive gestures. Principally, the dour caretaker ("Harland" is his name) stands firm, with a useful shotgun. Not all the Irish are hateful. But Spencer has no time for the sympathy that now and again surfaces in the *Vewe*. Instead, "let them crawl and eat their own dung. There is no other way .... Write down the final solution, how to deal with the bastards." Given the times, the customs, prose serves better than poetry. "No rhyme, just a few images: it has to read easy, and then they'll listen." After his death Liz can go through the pages "and cut the crap." In this darkening landscape, with its pagan midsummer fires, only the hard birth of their daughter Francesca, child of the solstice, preserves some fragile hope.

An apocalyptic pattern of struggle, apparent death, and final triumph informs the last three chapters. Desmond's gang turns up to attack and fire the home. John Spencer, bitterly recalling the jolly times when Tom Gray's "Blazers" hunted the north and west, cannot find his way to the child he would save from the flames, though he is brought away by others. In the very brief chapter that follows, that old Edmund Spenser, saved from burning Kilcolman by his man Harland (who was there all along), speaks in his own voice, from a saddler's cart on the road to safety, with quiet despair: "What will become of us I know not, but the child is lost." These few pages are as well done as anything in the book. In the concluding chapter, it turns out that John Spencer has in fact, though badly burned, saved his daughter after all; but the manuscripts of his poem went up in the fire. His wife's

oracular word, "It took the child, saving the child," leads on to a flood of optimistic imagery, focused on the emergence of a newly creative self freed from comfy old patterns.

A salient strength of the novel is MacBeth's attention to power, chiefly the poet's power to move and make new, the glittering prizes that political power may assure or deny, the silken thread of women's power running through everything. In this latter connection, the love-story of John and Liz is rendered with some care: tenderness, wit, and a sufficiency of cheerful sex make a reader-friendly mix. The updating of Grey, Ralegh, and Rosalind is cleverly managed. And the "idea" of Harland catches the caretaker's strange and enduring "rough-cast" of Scots-Irish loyalty, even to outlanders he steadies and serves. The Irish and their island are savage enough, but for poets early and late, whatever their nation, "Ireland" spells home.

Macbeth's style -- glancing, nervous, *agitato* -- is not everywhere agreeable to the narrative flow, so often interrupted in any case by flashbacks. But then, this book is intensely personal to its author. Anthony Thwaite's forward gently insists that "the experiences of John Spencer are in no sense those of George MacBeth," and one takes his point. All the same, John Spencer lives with "a strange pricking in the joints," and he knows how it feels "when your bones all freeze together." So, one takes the urgent style as it comes.

Another reviewer has called the book "an elaborately literary joke." Is that all there is? Call it, rather, a memorable fancy.

Hugh Maclean
Delmar, New York

93.36 Rambuss, Richard. *Spenser's Secret Career.* Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1993. xv + 164 pp. $39.95.

What ever happened to the young poet who dared to dream an imperialist "verse vowd to eternity" (*Am* 69: 9)?

I take this question to be the energizing core of current Spenser criticism. With its roots in a comment by John Worthington in 1660, its initial budding in Church and Warren at the end of the last century, its powerful unfolding in Neuse and Berger during the '60s of this century, its full blooming in a dominant crop of critics from MacCaffrey to Montrose in the '70s and '80s, and its most courteous stalk in Helgerson in 1983, we appear to be obsessed with the fate of a man who boldly advertised himself as England's Virgil.

His dream took the form of a stubborn structure, fortified by walls of jasper: an ethics of virtuous self-fashioning; an erotics of mutual wedded love; a politics of just imperialism; and a theology of salvific grace. In the dream, England became the great leader of a Protestant League uniting Europe in peace; Elizabeth, the sovereign head of that

League; the poet himself, her principal secretary; and the poet's wife, another Elizabeth. What Worthington noticed was that towards the end of the dream the poet appeared to turn from his Virgilian ideology: "in his latter years ... [Spenser] most relish'd the more divine strain of poesie." We have seized on this change and told, with only a few dissenting voices, a winter's tale. Each teller keeps us from the chimney corner, but all agree about its warm center: Spenser had a single, Virgilian career structured on the progression from pastoral to epic, but toward the end he became disillusioned enough to abandon his quest for glory in favor of a less ambitious poetry of private reform, deep within the mind.

In *Spenser's Secret Career*, Richard Rambuss enters the dream; he changes the dream forever. Conceived of as a response to the central dream vision -- Helgerson's brilliant *Self-Crowned Laureates* -- Rambuss' courteous exchange makes three revisionary contributions to Spenser studies. Forged together, the three unlock (new) secrets to Spenser's career(s).

First, Rambuss argues that Spenser did not have a single career, but two careers: not merely was Spenser the New Poet; he was also the New Secretary. Whereas Helgerson has trained us to think that Spenser had a single literary career, Rambuss reminds us that Spenser also forged a successful career as a professional "secretary" -- perhaps as early as 1577 with Henry Sidney, but certainly by 1578 with John Young, and then in posts with Leicester, Grey, and, at the end, John and Thomas Norris. Rambuss argues that we must not marginalize Spenser's career as a secretary; we must speak of a "'double career'" (7) -- and not simply because Spenser performed both simultaneously, but rather because he linked the two intimately. The intimacy lies in the shared idea underlying the two: *secrecy*.

Readers of Spenser's poetry have long been privy to what Gabriel Harvey called the New Poet's "vowed and long experimented secrecie." For the most part, however, we have understood "Spenserian secrecy" as operating in "the service of the higher knowledge of an hermetic poet" (4) -- an artistic habitat native to any poet writing in that arch-genre of secrecy, allegory. This cover Rambuss exposes.

For many men of Spenser's generation and class, secrecy was not an eccentric personality trait but a vital strategy of professional survival. In *The English Secretary* (1586), Angel Day "points to a generative etymological linkage between *secretary* and *secret*" (2). In the Renaissance, secretaries doubled as secret agents. "By bringing together secretaryship, secrecy, and literary production, Day's text ... delivers ... a kind of 'secret-sharing' ... between Spenser's secretarial and poetic careers" (28). Rambuss argues that Spenser openly deploys "secrecy" in his inaugural pastoral in order to present himself, not merely as England's Virgil, but also as *employable* -- as "an available and trustworthy secretary" (30): "Spenser's manipulations of secrecy in the *Calender* ... are displayed as credentials for aristocratic service" -- "to Sidney, to Leicester, even to Elizabeth," to whom Spenser may have been petitioning for "a position in *her* cabinet" (57, 61).

Rambuss' opening two chapters introduce us to Spenser's secret job as an Elizabethan secretary, but they also lead us to cabinets of secrecy *in the Spenserian text*. In chapter 1,

for instance, on the evidence of June and Julye, Rambuss suggests that "Piping low and in the shade may indeed be the (hidden) master trope" of *SC* (15), while for *Gnat* he tactfully asks whether "Spenser's secret" may not be that "he disclosed Leicester's secret" marriage to Lettice Knollys (22). In chapter 2, on Angel Day and *SC*, Rambuss demonstrates that "Spenser has written the secretary function into the structure of his own text" (56).

Second, Rambuss argues that Spenser's literary career does not consist simply of the Virgilian progression from pastoral to epic, as advertised in the Proem to *FQ* 1. Responding again to Helgerson, Rambuss suggests that in the 1591 *Complaints* Spenser turns to an alternate career model, which Rambuss designates Chaucerian (15-16). In the first part of chapter 3, he shows that the 1590 *FQ* employs "Spenser's secretarial poetics" (63) in order to demonstrate to Elizabeth his capacity to occupy the "intimate ... place of an especially privileged servant" (71). Rambuss' textual analyses are repeatedly illuminating: on the link between the "greene cabinet" of the *Calender* and the secret "scrine" of *FQ* (65-66); on "the unobtainable, undiscoverable Faery Queen" as the poem's "synecdoche for secrecy" (67); on the secret lacuna in Briton moniments (68-69); and on the "most pointed expression of Spenser's secretarial poetics" in *FQ* (70), the mirror image in the Proem to Book III (70-74), in which "Spenser's mediatorial act of holding up a mirror for the queen" advertises himself as a qualified secretary for the queen's secretive projects (71). In the second part of chapter 3, Rambuss designates the *Complaints* as "a decisively non-laureate, non-imperial volume" articulating Spenser's "frustration that his epic accomplishment did not merit further advancement" (63-64). Rambuss suggests that the poetry published after the 1590 *FQ*, including *Colin Clout*, *Epith*, and Book VI, "enacts a significant public renegotiation of both Spenser's relation to the court and his terms of literary management": this renegotiation "entails Spenser's staging of a suspension of his role as imperial poet" through a "'revival' of the medieval forms of complaint, dream vision, estates satire, and fabliau" (64). Rambuss concludes that "whereas the impulse in his poetry up through the 1590 *Faerie Queene* was to keep secrets, the impulse in the 1591 *Complaints* is to expose them" (64).

Finally, Rambuss argues that Spenser does not turn from courtly to contemplative poetry at the end of his career. Responding again to Helgerson, in his last chapter Rambuss constructs a new model for the close of Spenser's careers. In the first part of the chapter, Rambuss focuses on *Colin Clout* to argue that "within the expressly Irish bucolic" landscape, "the poet fashions a counter to the court that has no place for him by exerting a nearly occult centripetal force to establish himself as the poem's center" (99). In this poem, Spenser begins to "decenter" Elizabeth in favor of himself as the reigning monarch (99). The shift is marked as a gender shift from a female source of inspiration who dictates to the poet to an "amorous *male* god of love" who dictates to her (100). Spenser thus secures "an alternative space for poetic production, at once secluded and public" (101). In the second part of this chapter, Rambuss turns to the 1596 *FQ* to find "this paradoxically secret and still public place for his poetry" (103). His brief but engaging analyses of Books IV, V, and VI thus identify "a new office for the poet" (105). Rambuss concludes with this eloquent statement: "It is through and across these shiftingly delineated spaces of publicity and privacy, of

visibility and opacity, of disclosure and secrecy, that the verses of this doubly employed poet/secretary, this taletelling holder of secrets, keep their measure" (124).

In short, the secret story Rambuss tells is of a poet who doubles as a secretary to pen an art that will promote him as a secret agent for a sovereign lady; but this poet becomes disillusioned enough with the court to pen an art that promotes *himself* as a sovereign gentleman publicly inhabiting "the private, even occluded conditions of modern subjectivity, of a 'truer,' secret inner self that exists behind the veil of outward appearances" (120).

For the secrets it discloses about Spenser's career, Rambuss' story will prove influential; his is a necessary supplement to Helgerson's pioneering study. While I admire the force of Rambuss' story -- it is critically sane and rhetorically eloquent -- I want to conclude with a few observations and questions.

First, secrecy has an important manifestation in the Reformation. Nonetheless, you will find no references in Rambuss to Calvin, to Luther, to the English Reformers (except briefly to Rochester and Grindal in *Julye*), to Hooker -- to their great forefather, Augustine, or to the Bible. You may find a passing reference to Protestantism, but the term has no entry in the index. Yet *Cruden's* records that *secret* and its forms occur about 100 times in Scripture. Job, for instance, speaks of the "secret counsel of God" (15:8), while David utters "the secret of the Lord" (Ps. 25:14), and Christ says, "thy Father that seeth in secret ... wil rewarde thee openly" (Matt. 6:4). Part of the power of *Spenser's Secret Career* lies in its economy, and critics are now engaged in "redrawing the boundaries," but the theological domain may be too important to the story Rambuss is telling for him to neglect it. For instance, what warrant for secrecy did Spenser find in the Bible, in Calvin (for whom secrecy is a recurrent topic), in the English Reformers, and even for that haunted Augustinian (lover) Petrarch, who also had a secret? And how does such a warrant enter Spenser's secretarial poetics? Similarly, how does the 1596 *Fowre Hymnes* cohere with Rambuss' career narrative? He mentions this important, late, Augustinian poem only twice in passing.

Second, Spenser's career is marked by sharp contours that Rambuss does not identify -- in addition to *Fowre Hymnes*, such poems as *Am* and *Proth* (again, Rambuss mentions each poem only a few times in passing; he does have a few pages on *Epith*). Thus, in Rambuss' story we find a significant body of Spenser's "late" poetry curiously occluded. Most importantly, I wonder, how can a narrative about Spenser's literary career avoid coming to terms with the final product of that career? Rambuss' analyses of *Complaints* and *Colin Clout* in Spenser's career are stunning, but the "Spousall Verse" adds a later contour in which Spenser represents himself coming home, not to Colin's pastoral Ireland, but to his own civic "London" -- a *city* that here is "mery" (127). Doesn't *Proth* lead us to question any (Romantic) narrative of Spenser's career that portrays the poet turning from courtly to contemplative poetry or even to a poetry that is paradoxically both public and private? Evidently, we find it intolerable that an imperialist, British, Renaissance poet could remain an imperialist, British, Renaissance poet.

A few final questions. Does Spenser wait until the 1596 *FQ* to start dictating to Elizabeth? What about the line back in Aprill, "Now ryse up Elisa" (145), or the (patron-seeking) line in the same eclogue addressed to her nymphs (quoted by Rambuss): "Let dame Eliza thanke you for her song" (150)? And does Spenser wait until 1596 to "rewrit[e] ... history ... with a political agenda that is not exactly Elizabeth's" (114)? What about Algrind's "bared scalpe" (*Julye* 221)?

None of Rambuss' own "covertures" necessarily invalidates the authority of his story; we will never speak of a single career again! *Spenser's Secret Career* is thoughtful, original, and important; it responds powerfully to the most pressing question we continue to raise about Spenser: What did happen to the young poet who dared to dream an imperialist verse vowed to eternity?

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93.37 Roberts, Gareth. *The Faerie Queene*. Open Guide to Literature. Buckingham: Open University P, 1992. viii + 135 pp. $17.95 pap.

This is one of a series of short introductory, "teacherly" books, written to "develop in the reader the confidence to undertake further independent study of the topic." However, to echo Gareth Roberts' caution regarding Spenser's poem, nothing is what it seems, and Roberts' book is far and away not what its "introductory" label may seem to imply. Students using it are expected to do some work, to read and reread sections of *The Faerie Queene* in increasingly larger portions and "to think about the process of reading ... particularly of reading allegory." The larger intent of the Open Guide Series is to develop a tutorial exchange between the writer of the Guide, the text in question, and the reader. In using this approach, Roberts does not defend a particular reading of the text but rather attempts to teach readers to do this for themselves, and, in time, to dispense with the use of his book altogether.

Peppered throughout the Guide are sentences and paragraphs in bold print which question readers on aspects of the poem and prompt them to explain their reactions to what they have read, to write brief essays, to reread and rethink, and to consult parts of other suggested works. Roberts' own "discussions" following these boldface promptings are clear and accurate. In them, he attempts to take readers inside the poem -- for example, to "share imaginatively in [Redcrosse's] struggle." Users of the Guide are prompted to look up hard words and are led through a brief lesson on "close reading with particular attention to the meaning of words." This strategy, says Roberts, would, if time allowed, be "the most useful first step towards considering the [whole] poem as allegory."

In order to cover a number of critical approaches and issues, to broaden interpretation of the poem, and to expose readers to related ideas, the Guide uses the Spenserian method of frequent digression. In his discussion of "close reading" Roberts touches briefly on both

"formalist" and "structuralist" criticism, explaining how their practice of studying "words and signs in their relationship to each other" aids in the reading of allegorical writings like *FQ*. He compares passages from the Geneva Bible of 1560 and from *The Divine Comedy* with passages in the poem to exemplify how metaphor and allegory were used in earlier works and to indicate how such sources might have influenced Spenser's writing.

Roberts also introduces readers to some modern critical approaches, offering "historical," "feminist," and "deconstructive" readings of various passages in the poem. Keeping these critical stances in mind, users of the Guide are encouraged to "read" the poem by contributing their own point of view "to the construction of the poem's meaning." For example, users of the Guide should be aware that Spenser's poem reflects a sixteenth-century protestant view of politics and religion, and also that events in the poem are presented predominantly from a masculine point of view. Roberts suggests that readers try to give an account of the first two cantos of the poem from Una's point of view. He points to the fluctuating identity of the Redcrosse Knight as his problems multiply in Book I. The Knight ceases to really know himself; his view is available but no longer trustworthy. Readers may "deconstruct" the text by making judgments of true and false regarding the events and actions in the development of the poem, not only in relation to Redcrosse, but also to Duessa, Archimago, and others.

Although the Guide calls for a fairly high level of thought and concentration, its presentation of critical concepts is systematic and clear; anyone willing to do the work called for should emerge with a deeper knowledge and a greater appreciation of at least the first three books of Spenser's poem; for, like the poem, the Guide is "unfinished," covering as it does only the first three books. Perhaps the Open University Press may allow Gareth Roberts to finish the job in some future edition of the series.

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93.38 Wofford, Susanne Lindgren. *The Choice of Achilles: The Ideology of Figure in Epic*. Stanford: Stanford UP, 1992. 520 pp. $45.00.

In his essay "The Rhetoric of Temporality," Paul de Man "locates" the genre of allegory in a void: for de Man, allegory comes into focus at the point at which history is suppressed in favor of a void (i.e., the "void" as poetic figure). For de Man, then, allegory (where poetic error is implicated in the very existence of the trope) "leads to no transcendental perception, intuition, or knowledge" (*Blindness and Insight*, 107). At the same time, much of the work of Fredric Jameson has been concerned with interpreting the errancies of literary meaning as having more materialist consequences. Thus, in *The Political Unconscious*, Jameson demonstrates that the often strange turns of narrative occur because narrative must suppress or can no longer negotiate certain unresolvable political and social contradictions within the text. In a post-New Critical era, it is not unusual to assert that literature evades totalization -- that the contradictions generated by the errancies of

literary meaning cannot coalesce into a synthesizing dialectic; but it is perhaps only recently that we have begun to explore the relevance of the errancies of literary meaning for a fuller understanding of the operations of Spenserian allegory. In *The Choice of Achilles*, Susanne Wofford has brilliantly situated her comparative study of the literary history of epic in the theoretical space between de Man's rhetorical study of tropes and Jameson's materialistic approach to narrative, arguing that poetic figuration is used to resolve narrative difficulties. The result is the most sustained, comprehensive, and widely-researched study to date of the ideological operations of epic narrative in general and of Spenserian allegory in particular.

The fundamental premise of Wofford's extensive investigation of the literary history of epic (with chapters on Homer, Virgil, and Spenser, and a concluding section on Milton and Cervantes) is that poetic figures perform ideological "work" within epic narrative. Phrased broadly, then, *The Choice of Achilles* is concerned with what happens to epic narrative when politics and poetics collide. Though epic narrative is divided by an unbridgeable gap between poetic figure and action (divided, that is, by an uneasy tension between a celebration and a critique of imperial ethos), ideology always seeks, however arbitrarily, for resolutions and compromises to make action and figure coincide. For Wofford, then, the literary history of epic is the "story" of how poetic figuration transforms a resistant and often contradictory action into a larger and more coherent political, ethical, or cultural system. In such a scheme, for example, Homer's renowned "heroic code" is to be interpreted as the arbitrary movement of the narrative from simile to metaphor.

But for Wofford, the privileged tropes of epic narrative that do the most significant ideological "work" are analogy, metalepsis, prolepsis, catachresis, apostrophe, and prosopopoeia. In the *Iliad*, for example, the figure of analogy consistently offers an "aestheticizing dimension" to heroic suffering that diverts the reader from much of the violent brutality of the action such that, in the final analysis, we come to see how the presumably ennobling concept of "heroic death" simply papers over the violent disjunction between knowledge and action. Wofford argues that action and figure appear more naturally to converge if the figure can be interpreted as the *cause* of the epic action. Thus, in the case of the Aeneid, we see how Aeneas's celebrated virtue of *pietas* is arbitrarily and retroactively made manifest by the figure of metalepsis, which invites the reader (though not Aeneas) to look back in time and find Roman values "always ready" in evidence (and, thereby, invites the reader to ignore the extent to which Rome's *telos* is a destructive temporal scheme). The figure of catachresis (which, as described by Wofford, ambitiously attempts a "metaphorical transfer of figure into action" [231], is the principal trope by which secondary and perhaps otherwise incomprehensible elements in the narrative (such as the snake that Allecto throws into Amata's breast) are made to appear "natural" and readily accommodated within the larger narrative.

Arguing that epic figuration is often a source of violence as it does its ideological "work," Wofford discusses the dual figures of apostrophe and prosopopoeia as "tropes of absence" and, indeed, of death (as the most arbitrary of ideological resolutions). In my

estimation, it is Wofford's discussion of these two tropes in particular that provides her with such an impressive analytical tool for a further probing of the *lacrimae rerum* that haunt the *Aeneid* and render it so ineffably sad. Throughout the *Aeneid*, for example, apostrophe consistently marks the death of the characters apostrophized and indicates "an unacknowledged connection between the poetry of lament and the willingness of the narrator to accept violence as an inevitable cost of his hero's legitimacy" (99). The figure of prosopopoeia, as evidenced by the Cape of Palinurus, a promontory named for Aeneas's drowned pilot, transforms Palinurus elegiacally into a "trope of legitimization": the prosopopoeia effects a naming of the landscape -- but at the disastrous cost of the death of a character, a largely incomprehensible death that, as Wofford observes, suggests a suppressed violence inherent in the representation of nature itself.

Wofford's extensive treatment of Spenser argues that *FQ* is particularly marked by the collision of politics and poetics, and her focus is on the ways in which Spenserian allegory works dialectically to critique at one level the very ideology it celebrates on another. For Wofford, Spenser's allegory persistently works oppositionally: even as the epic diverts attention to its own tropes (as one kind of resistance to allegorical moralizing), the allegory works "to enforce assent to dominant traditional discourses" (222). But despite Spenserian allegory's hegemonic and totalizing impulses, Wofford argues that the narrative often fails to negotiate its own figures. *FQ*'s many epic similes, for example, "insinuate a suppressed interpretation" that the allegory cannot readily resolve. Such failures occur most often when Spenser's narrative attempts to struggle with "explanations" for or "causes" of events that "can only be another narrative repeating at a secondary level what it is invoked to explain" (264). In Book II, for example, the Palmer tells an elaborate story of the "cause" for the fountain in which Guyon attempts to wash Ruddymane's bloody hands, narrating how Diana preserved the chastity of one of her nymphs, pursued by the lusty Dan Faunus, by transforming her into a "stony moniment." This and Spenser's many other "secondary" narrations (producing, at various points throughout *FQ*, anything from Celtic legends to embedded novelle to, in the case of Diana's nymph, pseudo-Ovidian narratives) point to an inevitable circularity in Spenser's allegorical representation -- and, as Wofford cogently notes, perhaps a circularity to literary history itself.

The nymph's fountain is, of course, a distinctly *gendered* fountain, and, accordingly, Wofford argues that a focus on the ideology of poetic figuration has inevitable consequences for any study of gender as a discursive construction. Catachresis, as what Wofford calls the trope of narrative "compulsion," is a trope that proves to be particularly relevant for gender concerns. Because catachresis offers no proper "motivation" for the trope, catachrestic narrative's most frequent result is a distinctly female (i.e., "unmotivated") madness, or *furor*, as evidenced throughout the *Aeneid*, for example, by Amata's ravings, Juno's brooding, or Allecto's uncontrolled fury. What Wofford refers to as the "disruptive effects of figuration" are, in other words, often gendered by the narrative as "female" -- and always condemed by the narrative as inimical to the epic *telos*. Thus, in the case of Dido's renowned passion for Aeneas, female eroticism "becomes both the figure that hides the poem's imperialism and

the source blamed for most of the obstacles to Aeneas's 'success' as founder of Rome" (197).

In the case of *FQ*, Spenser's women are seen as generating an "erotics of compulsion" (or an allegory of desire) that is set in opposition to politics (or an allegory of power). Wofford argues that Spenser's frequent deployment of images of bondage or "thralldom" for so many of his imperilled female characters ends up miming the figurative strategies of allegory itself. Such moments of enthrallment as the petrification of Diana's virginal fountain represent not just human loss but a distinctly *female* loss -- "a loss or failure from which the poet as allegorist has gained figurative power" (303). In this context, Wofford reminds us of the bizarre fate of Amoret, "tortured and deformed" by the pseudo-allegorist Busyrane, a sadistic reminder of the extent to which Spenserian allegory itself participates in a misogynistic violence.

A theme continually developed throughout *The Choice of Achilles* is that of "heroic ignorance," i.e., the extent to which the characters within epic are ignorant of their destinies and cannot share in the larger interpretive vision being shaped by the poetic figuration of epic. Wofford's theme of "heroic ignorance" has particular relevance for *FQ*, helping to explain, as it does, the odd incoherence of so many of Spenser's characters. Wofford conceives of *FQ*'s various quests figuratively as an unclosed prolepsis in which the part promises to become whole, but which denies the Spenserian vision any fulfillment. This unclosed prolepsis is the constitutive figure of *FQ*, but it persistently denies Spenser's characters any access to the allegory. Belphoebe, for example, fails to acknowledge or understand the massive symbolization that structures her own detailed descriptions. Put another way, Spenser's characters do not *know* they are in an allegory, they cannot "read" the very poetic figures that describe them, and they fail to unpack the political claims that are embedded in these poetic figures. Their "heroic ignorance" occurs because Spenser's allegorical narrative fails to represent their inner life fictionally: the motivation of Spenser's characters is not generated internally, but rather is "compelled by [the] ideological need" of the epic narrative (143).

Wofford's concept of "heroic ignorance" structures much of the discussions of Milton and Cervantes that conclude her book. Prolepsis is the trope that expresses the predestination that controls the narrative of *Paradise Lost*. But Adam and Eve, enacting their own version of "heroic ignorance," never *know* that God has foreseen their fall. In the strange case of *Don Quixote*, Wofford perceives Cervantes' protagonist as perhaps the first epic hero who can "simultaneously act and read the narrative of his own fiction" (392) and, indeed, embrace that narrative as more "true" and desirable than his own experiences. In so far as it is possible to argue that *Don Quixote* closes out the literary history of epic, it may be because Cervantes' protagonist has finally (if unwittingly) succeeded in penetrating the veil of "heroic ignorance."

So ambitious in scope and so unified in argument is *The Choice of Achilles* that any future undertaking of the literary history of epic in general or of Spenser in particular should

almost certainly be compelled to negotiate this book first. This is a major achievement that will set the standard for any future work on the operations of rhetoric and/or ideology in epic narrative.

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ARTICLES: ABSTRACTS AND NOTICES

93.39 Fisher, James R. "Certaine Signes of the Zodiac: The Shape of Spenser's Allegory in Book II of *The Faerie Queene*." *Constructions* 8 (1993): 9-35.

In the proem to Book II, Spenser promises "certaine signes" to guide the reader who would find fairyland, a promise that can be taken as an allusion to the twelve signs of the zodiac. Once this pattern is pointed out, the following become obvious: Pyrochles and Cymochles are Gemini, even the initials of their names match Pollux and Castor's; Alma the virgin queen is Virgo; the "library" of her mind, where Arthur and Guyon each read a chronicle, is a punning suggestion to Libra; and Maleger the mounted archer is Sagittarius. In modelling Book II on the zodiac, Spenser goes beyond a simple, linear pattern. Instead, from across the circular zodiac of Book II, he has Belphoebe and Alma face each other, mirroring the two persons of Elizabeth. Finally, just as the sun descends from the vernal equinox at Aries to the summer solstice in Cancer, so Guyon descends through a chain of four "elemental" characters -- Pyrochles, Phaedria, Cymochles, and Mammon. In entering Mammon's cave, Guyon passes through Macrobius's portal of men into the "infernal regions." Guyon's narrative descent is a combined astrological, neoplatonic, and Christian movement. The geography of Guyon's quest is truly cosmic in scope. (JRF)

93.40 Greenfield, Sayre. "The Politics of Allegory and Example." *Genre* 24.3 (Fall 1991): 233-55.

Allegories of some size and complexity inevitably deform themselves into "exemplative fiction" (i.e., aspects of texts that provide instances of particular types of human behavior without making the metaphorical leap required of allegoresis). An allegory produces pieces of exemplative fiction to give a more detailed account of human behavior and circumstance than the dominant mode can achieve. Exemplative fiction has the potential to betray allegory's conservative ideological system, and it is just this potential for disruption that makes exemplative fiction the conveyor of what is politically radical or subversive in the text. In *Piers Plowman* and *Pilgrim's Progress*, it is their authors' radicalism (social and theological) that drives their allegories into exemplative fictions. In the case of *FQ* 1, Spenser's most allegorical book, the process may work the other way: perhaps "his examples of how the courtier can fall away from Holiness nudge his text toward an antiestablishment attitude." This is indicated by the House of Pride, where Spenser's emphasis is on the scene itself and not on the *idea* of sin, and where the episode's "most subversive potential" centers

on the Queen, "if one reads her as a product of the political and social system." Allegories slip into examples because they must find embodiment, and bodies corrupt ideas.

93.41 Lethbridge, J[ulian] B. "Raleigh in Books III and IV of *The Faerie Queene*: The Primacy of Moral Allegory." *SN* 64.1 (1992): 55-66.

Until recently, and in spite of much recent work on its nature, function, and meaning, Katherine Koller's authoritative description of the presence of historical allegory in *FQ* ("We trace the allegory only to find the story slipping from us") commanded wide agreement. Recently, however, this conception has been variously challenged by Donald Cheney, William Oram, and particularly James Bednarz, by much more exact and detailed readings of Raleigh in Books III and IV than have been generally thought possible. Readings of the putative historical allegory have then guided their respective interpretations of the moral allegory, leading to some distortion. This detailed reading of the historical allegory is unjustified: the history simply does not fit the poem, and even if the poem only glances to Raleigh, some of the discrepancies between putative allegory and history (for example Amoret's presence) call for alternative explanation. In fact, this crucial discrepancy is a positive requirement of the moral allegory, which provides the necessary alternative explanation, and requirements of the moral allegory -- that Spenser analyze different sorts of chastity, each of which he defends and each of which is complete in itself -- override what historical allegory there may be. Historical allegory, if indeed casually present, gives way to moral allegory, and whether the historical allegory is elusive, allusive, or illusive, it is moral allegory which guides the poem. This should prevent the historical erudition of the critic distorting the moral wisdom of the poet. (JBL; modified by Ed.)

93.42 Lister, Raymond. "Samuel Palmer's Copies of Spenser and Cowley." *The Book Collector* 41.4 (Winter 1992): 498-505.

Notes the recent discovery of the 1679 edition of *The Works of that Famous English Poet Mr Edmond Spenser* owned by the English landscape painter Samuel Palmer (1805-81); transcribes annotations which, although not certainly, are probably by Palmer; presents evidence of direct Spenserian influence on Palmer's paintings; and suggests that Spenser seems often "not far from [Palmer's] mind."

93.43 Patterson, Annabel. "The Egalitarian Giant: Representation of Justice in History/Literature." *Reading Between the Lines*. Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 1993. 80-116.

Carving space between the "consensus" of Irish historians that the *Vewe* is "a disgraceful instance of colonial prejudice" and the dilemmas of "reverential" literary critics of *FQ* 5, who are "divided between conflicting imperatives," suggests a reading of the two works from the assumption that Spenser "might have been embarrassed by the ethical conflicts posed by the colonial experience, and that he was strong-minded enough to give expression -- troubling expression -- to the contradictions he perceived." Argues that

Spenser fully realized the dilemma presented by Justice -- the distance between abstract ideal and concrete instance -- and in Book V the problem comes to a head, that book being the "hard core" of Spenser's interrogation of the "ideological moves a society makes when it encodes as Platonic Forms necessary protocols and procedures, from organized religion, through socialized sexuality, to ordinary politeness." The conflict between Artegall and the Giant can't be reduced to a simple case of right versus wrong, and anyone who reads without a political bias against the giant already in place can only find the episode "destabilizing." Similarly, a disinterested reading of the *Vewe* will find that its introductory sections "make fully explicit the conceptual problems which the poem renders fantastic." Spenser's genuine ambivalence about his Irish experience speaks through both Irenius and Eudoxus, as is revealed, on the one hand, by the latter's views of the meaning of mantels and glibs and of Irish bards and, on the other, by Irenius's account of Brehon law as grounded in *equity* and by his admission that no laws are just "according to the strait rule of right." Why postmodern critics have obscured or explained away this embarrassment (e.g., via the new historical concept of "containment") is hard to fathom. The evidence suggests that Spenser's Legend of Justice and his *Vewe* were "participating in a contemporary struggle for control over the idea of Justice that went far beyond Ireland and its implications": he may well have had connections with Job Throckmorton, the Marprelate polemicists, and others like them who were demanding the reconstruction of their society.

93.44 Stillman, Robert. "Spenserian Autonomy and the Trial of New Historicism: Book Six of *The Faerie Queene*." *ELR* 22.3 (Autumn 1992): 299-314.

Drawing on theories of Pierre Bourdieu and Roland Barthes for a "historicizing hermeneutics that seeks to explain rather than submit to the idealized autonomy of Spenser's works," argues that Spenser's Courtesy is "the virtue of customary reform," and is based on the same "historical needs" that led Spenser in the *Vewe* to "represent customary reform and civility as the necessary vehicles of cultural intervention." In *FQ* 6, Spenser constructs "a political survey for future reform" -- one that supplies "ethical legitimacy" for "renewed exercise of the sword." Out of Spenser's experiences in Ireland came the "historical need to construct an assimilationist mythology" in which Irish and English could be one people, a myth which is exemplified by the united action of Arthur and the Salvage Man (both "savage" and "salvageable") in the book's middle cantos. The would-be devourers of Serena's flesh are romance transpositions of "Irish driven to cannibalism by programmatic campaigns of starvation." The garlands and circles of Acidale find complements in Ireland's folkmotes. The episode of the brigants "transforms the dispossessed Irish into dispossessing pirates worthy to be slaughtered." Throughout Book VI we see "the power of Spenser's dreamscape to transpose historical fact into saving form, and to provide ethical legitimacy to the exercise of the sovereign sword."

SPENSER AT KALAMAZOO, 1993

The program for 1993 was organized by Jerome Dees (Kansas State U, Chair), Anne Lake Prescott (Barnard C), Jon Quitslund (George Washington U), Anne Shaver (Denison U), and Lauren Silberman (Baruch C, CUNY). Donald Stump (St. Louis U) welcomed us to the "17th reenactment" of Spenser at Kalamazoo (he'd somehow misplaced a year), where new and established Spenser scholars meet in sociable exploration and debate.

In the absence of Elliott Simon (U of Haifa), Anne Lake Prescott presided over Session I, *Uncivil Conversation.*

93.45 In "Reflections on the Blatant Beast," Kenneth Gross (U of Rochester) confessed to "a certain affectionate regard" for the monster, and certainly showed "Spenser's mad pet" to signify a complexity beyond all previous interpretations. Not just the personification of slander that ruins reputations and does violence to its object's self-esteem, the Beast is connected to the violence of change, roaring through monasteries as Henry VIII had done, and to the dark passions of a poet who chooses to represent his enemies "under such a monstrous guise." Called forth by the vulnerable interior "secret" self, the poison of slander may be necessary to self-recognition; like the poet himself the beast, bound, resorts to language, and like the poet's imagining immortality through language even as he acknowledges the limits of poetic control, the beast is soon unbound: "an image of the equivocal energies of language ... the generosities and poisons of the poetic word."

93.46 "'Bloud is no blemish': *Virtu* and the Maintenance of Civil Order in Book VI of *The Faerie Queene*" dealt with the problem of violent action in the service of morality. Bruce Danner (U of Alabama) showed that the quality of *virtu* creates a paradox: as the quality through which we innovate, it both quells fortune and invites chaos. Briana's self-serving, one-sided interpretation of Calidore's violent intervention in her affairs nonetheless reveals the problematics of ethical action. Calidore's defence of violence ("bloud is no blemish" in meting out deserved punishment) is based in social relativism, contradicting Contemplations's precept of non-violence in Book I, just as his condoning the squire Tristram's despoiling of the arms of a knight contradicts the Palmer's doctrine in Book II, and his protection of Priscilla requires the desecration of a corpse as well as out-and-out lies. Thus Spenser acknowledges the difficulty faced by a "real world defender of virtue" as he exercises a Machiavellian *virtu*.

93.47 Charles Ross, a former teacher of Bruce Danner, showed in "Spenser's Customs of Courtesy" that "Spenser problematizes ... custom itself" through his use of the medieval "custom of the castle" convention. Since imposing change on the social (or anti-social) behavior of others calls attention to the artificiality of custom and threatens the stability of reform, Spenser in Book VI relies on "vagueness, flexibility, and interpretation" to set forth an ideal of courtesy that can transcend the real future of unwelcome intervention.

93.48 In response, Jennifer Carrell (Harvard U) earned the first Baby Jesus in the Temple Award by situating our current focus on cultural contexts in *FQ* in a triangulation made up of the text, Spenser's late 16th century culture, and the specific dilemmas we face in our own *fin de siècle* culture. "How much do we need," for example, "to be at the center of the world's most virulent ethical debates -- to slander and be slandered at home and abroad -- to know who we are?" She celebrated the three papers for opening up the poem to new and relevant terms of debate, including a more honest look at Spenser in Ireland, but warned against the academy's "current love affair with indeterminacy": "to make no decision, to take no moral stand, can become itself a terrible decision."

93.49 Susanne Wofford (U of Wisconsin, Madison), whose response was (un)read by Anne Lake Prescott, also welcomed what she termed "salutary changes of focus" in Danner's and Ross's papers, but offered instances -- using Britomart's activities -- where custom was avoided rather than confronted or where it was destroyed rather than changed, and argued that the poem denies the double action of *virtu*, privileging instead "an undefined and pre-existing notion of what is courteous action." After suggesting that Gross extend his argument to consider whether, in the Serena episode, the Beast might represent the romance reader's own prurient thoughts, she acknowledged that all three papers contribute subtle new ways of reading the poem's politics.

93.50 In discussion, asked if anagogical terms might work, Bruce Danner acknowledged that "custom of the castle" narratives have links to the grail story, but that Spenser is dealing with Ireland, and with acts controlled by virtues vague enough to be adapted to changing specifics. It was noted that in times of crises of confidence, courtesy and civility are not synonyms, that it is hard to distinguish between civility and hypocrisy. In response to the idea that one of Calidore's acts is the reestablishment of "natural" gender roles, Danner agreed that Briana was stripped of her power and reduced to a scold, and Gross reminded us that according to Machiavelli, patterns of order imposed *could* become patterns of moral order.

The presider at Session II, Sotto Voce*: Under Spenser's Breath*, was Catherine Callaway Dauterman (U of Maryland).

93.51 Mark A. Sherman (Rhode Island School of Design), situating his argument between Elizabeth Bellamy's internal and Susanne Wofford's external analyses of the Castle of Alma, asserted that Spenser, like Dante, makes of his allegory "a discourse of countersignification" which demands that the reader resist "the pretensions of an ... ideological coherence." Focusing on the chiastic couplet, "The one imperfect, mortall, foeminine; / Th'other imortall, perfect, masculine," Sherman asserted that Spenser's most apparently abstract ideas are socioculturally situated, and the poet's language enables us to recognize Arthur's desire-driven reading of British history as the imposition of "a cultic ethos of individual heroism on the sociocultural," and thus to recognize the prince as a "foe" penetrating the body politic, which is also inevitably the body of "*Aegyptian* slime."

93.52 Attending to the masculine gaze in "Una and the Reification of Elizabeth," Lynne Dickson (Rutgers U) argued for Una as an intersection of Spenser's psychic and political concerns in *FQ*. Una's complicated and gendered configuration derives from her designations as a stand-in for Elizabeth. Yet surprisingly, Book I tends to represent Una as absent or disembodied, repressing her role as an active agent in the text. Her absent representation speaks to a Spenserian desire to reify and reduce the figure of Elizabeth, so powerfully present on the throne.

93.53 Elizabeth J. Bellamy (U of New Hampshire), whose recent book *Translations of Power* (Cornell 1992) in part inspired both the preceding papers, responded by reading Dickson's text against Sherman's to ask, "What if the act of interrogating ideology ... is *itself* a patriarchal gesture?" She then recommended our closer critical attention to the subject of agency in allegorical characters, with its threat to the seamlessness so long thought to be the goal of the form, as a mode of further investigating early modern subjectivity, especially since Milton "so pointedly rejected (Spenserian) allegory for his epic."

93.54 The third paper of this session, "Spenser's *Astrophel* and the Sidney Legend," was given by Lisa M. Klein (Ohio State U). In *Astrophel*, she claimed, Spenser questions the values celebrated in the myth of Sidney as shepherd-knight, criticizes poets for perpetuating that ideal, and expresses despair at the failure of Sidney's humanist poetics, namely the belief that poetry provided an incentive to virtuous action. The elegy presents violence not as heroic but as a disturbing intrusion into the pastoral world, and demotes Sidney's image to that of a simple flower, celebrating him as Stella's lover rather than as a poet or warrior, in keeping with Spenser's end-of-career disillusionment and his turn from public concerns to private experience.

93.55 Richard Peterson (U of Connecticut, Storrs) responded by arguing that what may seem a demotion is in fact a promotion of Sidney, dead of a wound to the thigh, to the very center of the Garden of Adonis. The flat tone of *Astrophel* is a result of Spenser's efforts to cool down the "hot" myth of Adonis, while the "Lay of Clorinda" (which Peterson believes to be Spenser's, not the Countess of Pembroke's) apotheosizes the dead hero wrapped in spices and flowers more like a bridegroom than a corpse.

93.56 In the short discussion that followed, it was noted that allegory invites inventive readings (such as Sherman's of "foe-minine" and Judith Anderson's "foe-of-mine"); the authorship of the "Lay of Clorinda" was briefly debated; and it was suggested that the naive shepherd persona of *Astrophel* protects Spenser's disillusionment with Sidney from showing too harshly.

Session III, *Colin Clout Views the Present State*, was chaired by Dominic Delli Carpini (Pennsylvania State U).

93.57 Maryclaire Moroney (John Carroll U) spoke on "Spenser's Dissolution and the Reformation of Ireland in Book V of *The Faerie Queene* and the *Vewe of the Present State*

of Ireland." She reminded us of "his double vision of change as potentially beneficent and transience as tragic." Although Spenser seems to have no trouble conflating political and religious tyranny located on the continent (e.g., Arthur vs. Geryoneo), when it is located in the English past or the Irish present he is not as comfortable. Kirkrapine "foregrounds the blurred line between the greedy prelates of the medieval church and the rapacious proponents of the new" through his destruction of ecclesiastical material and his own material dismemberment. The underlying dialectic of razing vs. reforming appears also in Talus's razing Munera's castle so that Artegall can reform its customs, as it does in the conversation of Ireneus and Eudoxus in the *Vewe*. Spenser's fear that "reforming the body politic may involve such absolute destruction that 'reformation' becomes a euphemism for annihilation" of society, morality, and meaning is illustrated in the ravaging of the Blatant Beast at the end of the poem.

93.58 Carol Kaske (Cornell U) responded by reiterating the connections between reformation and annihilation, between allegory and oppression, in Spenser's ambivalent feelings about change and the methods of change.

93.59 In "Spenser and the Bards" Christopher Highley (Ohio State U) argued that Ireneus, the Spenserian persona of the *Vewe*, has a more complex and complimentary view of Irish bards than he has been given credit for. In fact, "Ireneus routinely lays out in surprisingly sympathetic detail the indigenous cultural practices that he will ultimately proscribe," reflecting Spenser's conflicting impulses toward Ireland and the Irish. In *Colin Clout*, we see Spenser's unofficial interest in the bardic tradition, especially the bard's power over his audience. While the official Spenser was interested in knowing Irish customs in order to use them to English advantage, he also may well have envied the power and status of the bard in contrast to his own waning hopes of recognition by the English court. *Colin Clout* proposes to the English enclave with whom the poet lived a transferring of loyalty and affection from their English origin to their Irish locale.

93.60 Sue Petitt Starke (Rutgers U), in "Briton Knight or Irish Bard? Spenser's Pastoral Persona and the Epic Project in *A Vewe of the Present State of Ireland* and *Colin Clouts Come Home Againe*," pursued the same question. By comparing the rhetorical situation of *Colin Clout* to that of the *Vewe*, she showed how the Colin persona offers Spenser a space outside the Virgilian career model in which to create a new national poet by melding the classical pastoral and the Irish bardic modes. Colin is a mediator between pastoral and epic cultures, between imperial Britain and pastoral Ireland.

93.61 M. Lindsay Kaplan (Georgetown U) declared that these two essays provided more than sufficient commentary on each other. Kaplan pointed out how both talks complicate the figure of the bard, Highley by showing what it is that Spenser appropriated, Starke by showing in detail how he did it. She suggested that the strengths of the two papers -- Highley's study of the cultural position of the bard and Starke's close reading of Spenser's texts -- compliment each other, and might result in a joint project.

93.62 In the discussion period, Bruce Danner wondered if powerful language could overwhelm the epic project; Bill Oram questioned whether Spenser, who so feared "going native" in Ireland, could really so have admired the bards; and Judith Anderson, who earlier gave us "foe of mine," offered "absenteeism" as a meaning for Abessa.

93.63 In the seventh annual Kathleen Williams Lecture, Don Cheney showed us how Spenser, though "no Ariosto," makes eloquent use of Ariostan events to construct "the internalized action of dream romance convention."

Cheney tied Spenser's differences in part to northern Protestantism and the specifics of Elizabeth's court, but claimed also a richer purpose for the British poet's "moody, internalizing transformations of the Italian." Spenser uses Ariostan episodes and characters to further his own agenda. Rather than tying up narrative strands as Ariosto does, Spenser uses Ariostan plots to allude to various possible conclusions; rather than carefully mapping exotic but actual settings, Spenser produces a dreamscape; rather than creating psychologically consistent characters with meaningful family relationships, Spenser drifts toward solipsism, melting one character into another, literally in the case of Priamond, Diamond, and Triamond, suggestively in many other cases, pointing, perhaps, to a future in which "all would be subsumed into the collective figure of Arthur." Thus Spenser uses the *Orlando Furioso* allusively to enrich *FQ*, and thus he reopens narrative time to "the internalized action of dream romance" which Ariosto had closed down by tying up the loose ends of the stories of his own precursor, Boiardo.

In closing this year's proceedings, Donald Stump thanked the program committee and bid us farewell (though welcome to Porlock) until next year, the nineteenth of Spenser at Kalamazoo.

93.64 Dorothy Stephens (U of Arkansas) presented "'But if ye saw that which no eyes can see': Conditional Erotics in Spenser's Faerie Land" in a separate session entitled *Lesbians in the Middle Ages: What's in a Name?* Through a close examination of conditional verbs in the Malecasta and Busyrane episodes in *FQ* and in Spenser's blazon of the bride in *Epith*, she sought to show that in each case "a crucial verb that defines what is at stake in the encounter takes a conditional form in order to allow female characters a hypothetical or linguistic intimacy that the characters' narrative situation within the plot specifically denies them." Thus the conditional verbs in *FQ* 3.1.60-61 allow readers to consider the issue of eroticism between women, as well as the issue of an erotic reading pleasure generated in a passage where there are only two female characters. In a related, though tonally quite different way, the Medusa simile in *Epith* 183-90, which works similarly to Busyrane's "Be not too bold," offers the bride and her bridesmaids "an alternative to her poet-husband's script for her"; in effect he invites them to "usurp the bridegroom's claim to a unique position of intimacy."

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SPENSER IN THE HOUSE OF SHAKESPEARE

The 1993 annual meeting of the Shakespeare Society of America in Atlanta featured (at least for Spenserians it "featured") a Seminar on Spenser and Shakespeare, divided into two sessions, held on 2 and 3 April 1993. At these sessions, organized by Susanne Wofford (U of Wisconsin, Madison) a total of 23 papers were presented. In the abstracts that appear below I have, for the most part, used the authors' own words as handed out to seminar participants. For the sake of brevity, I have shortened some of the longer ones, and for stylistic consistency, I have adopted a reporter's stance, using third-person pronouns and past-tense verbs.

93.65 In "Spenser and the Canon: a Prospectus," David Lee Miller (U of Alabama) looked at the 17th century's reception of and response to two issues: Spenser's "no language" and his extraordinary exploration of human sexuality. He suggested that Spenser was marginalized by the emerging political culture of the Enlightenment because his poetic style would not lend itself to the ideological needs of this culture in the way Shakespeare did, and because his exploration of sexuality was too radically disturbing to be assimilated. Noting the absence of explicit discussion of the second topic among 17th century commentators, he suggested that their critical discussion of the most conventional topics -- gothicism, the fabulousness of his narrative, the multiplicity of his fable -- was informed by an unacknowledged discomfort over his treatment of sexuality. He asked whether Spenser might not prove an extraordinary resource for the aesthetics of postmodernism, and whether his work might not therefore merit a more prominent place in the literary tradition than it has been accorded.

93.66 Jennifer Carrell (Harvard U) looked at how shape-shifters came to represent in Renaissance England "a crisis in literary categorization." Her "In Pursuit of the Fairy Queen and Fictional Worlds" argued that *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *FQ* are haunted by shape-shifters who explicitly represent anxieties about confounding the boundaries between true and false, imaginary and real. The fairy queen's allegorical identity is more complex and less complimentary than commonly assumed: she represents not only Queen Elizabeth, but also a prostitute and a witch. However, we should not pursue the fairy queen outward into these identities, but into the fictions themselves, a task made difficult by the fact that she always recedes: in her place the texts substitute "the land of the fairies," imaginary primary worlds that reveal "extraordinary experimentation with fictionality." Spenser's and Shakespeare's works explore both unknown worlds and "unknowable" worlds. In so doing, they help create science-fiction and fantasy as genres. At the same time, they experimented in allegory, both *MND* and *FQ* being not so much allegory as many allegories, none of them consistent. These two experiments extend the bounds of the imaginary, while at the same time they multiply to a bewildering degree the links their narrative worlds have to the actual world. They indicate both a growing fascination with the imaginary and an anxious reaction against that interest.

93.67 The central question of Robert L. Reid (Emory & Henry C) in "The Fairy Queen: Gloriana or Titania?" was whether *MND* is an example of Bloomian "anxiety of influence." While a number of critics, including the latest Arden editor of *MND*, have noted the pervasive influence of Spenser's *SC* on the diction of Shakespeare's comedy, and a few critics have noted Shakespeare's reformulation of the "fairy queen," no one has speculated that Shakespeare's fairy queen is a trope which not only challenges Queen Elizabeth (her gender, authority, mirroring of divinity) but which, more pertinently, seeks to undermine the authority of Spenser as England's preeminent poet, as well as his courtly/Platonic allegorical mode of poetry. Shakespeare's comic transformation of the seminal metaphor, the Queen of the Fairies, burlesques the sublime mythmaking of Spenser's immense epic, and in so doing proclaims the advent of a new *ars poetica*, a new vision of nature and of human nature.

93.68 In "Making Trifles of Terrors: Displacing Autophobia in *King Lear* and *The Faerie Queene*, Book I," Harry Berger, Jr (U of California, Santa Cruz) looked at ethical self-representation in the speech of Edgar and Cordelia and in the narrative of Redcrosse's behavior and responses. He began with the proposition that such ethical discourses as those of the donor ("I gave you all"), the victim ("I am a man / More sinn'd against than sinning"), and the sinner ("I am more sinning than sinn'd against") are language games, cultural resources enabling speakers and agents to cope with the dilemmas of conscience and projects of identification. The theatrical and narrative performances of those projects are interrogated by textual devices that represent them as structures of bad faith and explicated by the patters of self-avoidance involved in what Stanley Cavell calls "disowning knowledge." In discussing *KL* he concentrated on the theme of family and generational conflict; in discussing *FQ* 1 he examined gender conflict: how the text represents and critiques the complicity of Redcrosse, Una, Arthur, and the narrator/narrative in minimizing the protagonist's guilt by scapegoating Duessa.

93.69 Kenneth Gross (U of Rochester) compared the ways in which Spenser and Shakespeare fictionalize the work, threat, and pleasure of slander, focusing on the Blatant Beast and Hamlet, a figure who can be read as himself an uncanny mouthpiece of slander and rumor, even while he exposes the "slanders" implicit in "official" languages of mourning, politics, and love. Gross's "The Beast and the Ghost: Spenser, Shakespeare, and Slander" sought to show how an aberrant, distorted, disorderly, and criminalized form of speech becomes central to the two writers' accounts of subjectivity and knowledge. Their works point to a space of hidden desire, both in the victims of the Beast and in Hamlet himself, that is mysteriously vulnerable to slander and yet can work to sustain or feed it. Both works also point to a real ambiguity or overdetermination of motives in their pictures of slander; those pictures even contaminate what we might think of as the privileged domain of decorous praise and blame, whether erotic or political. To that degree, the complex workings of slander seem to emerge at the troubled "centers" of Spenserian allegory and Shakespearean tragedy. These fictions also suggest the degree to which the work of slander can be a source of processes that should sustain the force of authority, in particular the work of justice and reformation.

93.70 "The Secret Wound," by Marion A. Wells (Yale U) considered how Arthur's description of his dream of the Faerie Queene in Book I works as an explanation of his "secret wound" by investigating the relation between memory -- i.e., Arthur's memory of the dream on the narrative level, and the poet's memory of Chaucer's Tale of Sir Thopas on an intertextual level -- and figurative language. He used Wittgenstein's discussion of the logic of dream language to analyze the modulation from "fresh bleeding wound" to "secret wound" which takes place in the stanzas in which Arthur is required to "read" his situation for Una's and the reader's benefit. He suggested that Arthur's cataleptic experience of the dream, his sudden fall into love and into a consciousness of an inner reality, can be taken as paradigmatic of the action of textual memory within the poem itself.

93.71 In "Magic and Metaphor: Tree Rings in the Renaissance Arboretum," Judith Anderson (Indiana U) examined the bearing of magic on the illusion of verbal substance in Renaissance writings. First looking at Launcelot Andrewes' sermon practices in the context of linguistic materialism as it developed from Agrippa, Ficino, and the radical spelling reformers, she next aligned Andrewes' reifications of language against some short arboreal passages in Spenser and Shakespeare to demonstrate the cultural memories of magic in Andrewes' treatment of word as thing and to suggest some characteristics and implications of the process by which these memories are sedimented. In order to develop further the relation of Andrewes' exposition of the iconic word to the rhetorical substance of allegory, she then analyzed the arborealizations of Spenser's Fradubio and Shakespeare's Ariel. The arborealizations of both poets displace Andrewes' focus on the substantive word and its figuration, but in varying ways both also reflect, or reflect upon, it.

93.72 According to Eva Gold (Southeastern Louisiana U), in "Writing Lyric in Spenser and Shakespeare: *Love's Labor's Lost* and *The Faerie Queene*, Book 3," both works present the lyrics they contain as framed or enclosed "spaces" produced by writing, specifically by the male hand. These lyrics are designed to create a locus of female subjectivity in the works, one that is "contested" by the women characters. In both, women resist closure: the women in *LLL* "break the neck of the wax" and Britomart forces Busirane to "reverse" his charms. Women thus have much to do with the failure of closure that is so important in each work.

93.73 Ingrid Pruss (Western Connecticut State U), in "Making and Breaking Forms: The Poesis of Vision in *The Winter's Tale* and *The Faerie Queene*," compared the way metaphor functions in the final scene of Shakespeare's romance with its working in the Bower of Bliss, Isis Church, and Mt. Acidale episodes in *FQ*, so as to distinguish between "incarnational" art, which leads to remembrance, and "escapist" art, which leads to forgetfulness. Both writers use the strategy of an "aesthetics of iconoclasm" to prevent the ossification of their metaphors into cliché. Though both writers break their metaphors, the visions they provide their readers are quite different.

93.74 In "'They that loue do live': Love, Sex, and Death in Book III of *The Faerie Queene* and *Venus and Adonis*," Andrew Weiner considered Shakespeare's poem as "in dialogue" with Book III. In contrast to Spenser's rather optimistic view of love as providential and sex

as perhaps the one pleasant way to satisfy at least one of the divine commandments ("increase and multiply"), Shakespeare presents us with the fatal consequences of Adonis's rejection of love, largely, it seems, because of all the things Adonis has "heard" about love, lust, and how to distinguish between them.

93.75 The argument of Sayre Greenfield (Washington, PA), in "Transformations of Venus and Adonis in Shakespeare and Spenser," began from the premise that while allegorical reading depends on already knowing what we will see, its metonymic connections with a text can work against our pre-established cultural sense of association, thus letting radical and discomforting ideas emerge. In *FQ* 3, Malecasta's tapestry shows Adonis's adherence to the active life as leading to death, an unsettling "moral" that one can defuse by contextualizing the passage as part of a larger metonymic field: the idea becomes appropriate for the self-indulgence of Malecasta's castle. The similarly disruptive potential of metonymic reading of *V&A* can also be smoothed away with reference to fields of writing beyond the one text. Allegory arises as a response to associative disjunction when the coherence of the texts in question must be preserved. The era of New Criticism produced allegorical readings because it made the associative features within each text problematic. The figures of Venus and Adonis in Spenser's Garden became allegories for the processes described in the earlier portions of the garden, instead of being "interesting by inexplicable details" (Saurat, 1930); and Shakespeare's figures, instead of participating in the diffusiveness of Renaissance art, became the center of an allegory that could subsume all the particulars. These allegorical readings tried to solve the associative disjunctions the critics felt by splitting one area of troubling metonymy into two or more areas held together metaphorically. Recent deconstructive views of these pieces also allow critics to keep the areas of incompatible metonymy separate; yet only readings that accept the ability of the texts to enforce new, uncomfortable bands of association can be truly radical.

93.76 Thelma Greenfield (U of Oregon) compared "Ethical Endings in Shakespeare and Spenser." Characteristic of the endings of Shakespeare's comedies is a promise of continued discourse, arguably an ongoing ethical opportunity in which a listener who has not "heard" allows another his or her own voice. In the phrase of Emmanuel Levinas, "I" recognize the inviolable exteriority of the other in a generous welcome of alterity, abide its questions, and put aside my totalizing, internalizing egocentrism. Bertram's demand at the end of *All's Well* for continued discourse sets up his first real dialogue with Helena, who for the first time receives his invitation to speak to him for herself. *FQ*, at points of temporary suspension of the narrative, shares in a projected continuing discourse that reflects endless desire and militates against closure, but in this case in spite of the apparently totalizing system within which the poem works. Spenser's hero *must* define and internalize the Other, for one way or another, otherness is intrinsically subject to the hero's will. And unlike Shakespeare, Spenser relates endings to physical and psychic weakness. His pauses thus invite the ministrations of both nature and Grace. In the latter books, however, ethical freedom appears to be compromised, until the Mutability Cantos finally move the poem outside the jurisdiction of the literal human contingency.

93.77 In "The Denatured Pastoral in Shakespeare and Spenser," John Rooks (Morris C) argued that both Shakespeare and Spenser subvert the traditional pastoral romance tradition through parodic assertions of its rhetorical strategies in the Calidore-Meliboe dialogue and Belarius's "vaporizing with the boys." The spiritual and moral pretensions of the tradition are directed back to the older, more rigorous Wild Man tradition by Arviragus, Guiderius, and Posthumus in *Cymbeline* and by Calidore's excessive grief over the loss of Pastorella. As a result, the pastoral space is left empty of positive moral/spiritual resonances. The romance denouement in *Cymbeline* is morally outrageous and Meliboe's village is inherited by the wretched Coridon. What might fill that space is perhaps best seen in *As You Like It*. There one version of Arden provides a psychological landscape for Frederick, Oliver, and Jacques, who are associated with the Wild Man tradition; while the other version is just a time and a place to fall in love or to hang out till you're given back your court. There is no mysteriously restorative exile or pastoral pick-me-up.

93.78 The narrative of a woman falsely accused of unchastity was the subject of Mihoko Suzuki (U of Miami). In "Gender, Class, and Intertextual Relations from *Tirant lo Blanc* to Shakespeare and Spenser," she traced the motif from *Tirant* through Ariosto's *OF*, Bandello's *Novelle*, 1.22, Shakespeare's *Much Ado*, and *FQ* 2.4. Whereas *Tirant* emphasizes anxieties about class, race, and women's sexuality, succeeding retellings of the story increasingly omit (and displace) elements of this configuration until Spenser's version appears only to be concerned about social mobility as a figure for intemperance. In terms of the textual economy, however, the apparent occlusion of certain elements of the narrative actually indicates their importance as what has been repressed.

93.79 In "Shared Sources in Spenser and Shakespeare: *Faerie Queene* 2.4, *Much Ado About Nothing*, and Harrington's *Orlando Furioso*," Lawrence Rhu (U of South Carolina) argued that we find in the three men's works versions of the same Ariostan episode. All of these English renditions of the Italian source make a noteworthy issue of interpreting events represented in Ariosto's original, with Harrington's appended commentary to this translation performing functions similar to those made internal to Spenser's poem and Shakespeare's play. His paper considered "problems of interpretation" brought to light by a comparison of the variations.

93.80 "Exclaiming Against Their Own Succession: Literary and Monarchical Innovation in *The Faerie Queene* and *Hamlet*," by Katherine Eggert (U of Colorado), sought to correlate the two works' generic experiments with their attempts at repealing feminine authority. "Succession," as a matter of both monarchical and literary innovation, ironically requires severing all connection with the feminized modes of authority on which that succession depends. *FQ* 5 answers two questions raised by the poem: not only how Britomart will end her quest for Artegall and launch the English monarchy, but also how the poem's second installment will end the 1590 version's unfinished digression into the feminized genre of romance. Book V thematizes the dilemma of the arrested, feminized text in the threat that marriage poses for Artegall -- a threat he escapes by spurning his wife and the poem escapes via a drastic revision of its own construction. Book V's turn toward bald historical allegory,

while not poetically pleasing, grants a quality of completion to episode and canto that the poem has not employed since Book II. Talus-like, historical allegory mows down all opposition to its ends. And as it cancels romance, Book V cancels queenship: having escaped one shadowing of Elizabeth Tudor and Mary Stuart (Britomart and the beheaded Radigund), Artegall goes on to vanquish another -- Duessa and Mercilla, whose waffling pity he overrides. Her paper went on to show how Hamlet, in contrast, is caught in a feminized succession, both of monarchy and of dramatic genre, that suspends the forward momentum the Ghost asks of him.

93.81 Jane Hillberry (Colorado C) took a related look, in "Radigund and Goneril: Doubles or Demonized Others," at women characters who, because they have political ambitions, are represented as cruel, lustful, and emasculating, a representation which constitutes a male projection onto women characters of a fear of passion usurping reason, a fear that the sexual powers of women can expose in men either impotence or uncontrollable lust. In each case, the politically ambitious woman is counterpointed against a virtuous female character who remains subject to "mannes governance." The integrity of the virtuous female character is based on her difference from the ambitious woman. Her paper showed how these pairs of characters may be seen not as opposites but as doubles of each other, Britomart like Radigund, Cordelia like Goneril.

93.82 Kathryn Schwarz (Howard C) argued in "Wooing with the Sword: Amazons on the Referential Horizon" that, as Amazons, Radigund in *FQ* 5 and Hyppolyta in *MND* impose an interrogation of referentiality, a self-consciousness that questions the space between body and trope, referent and representation. Queen Elizabeth invites the Amazonian trope and makes it dangerous. Both Spenser's opposition of Radigund the Amazon and Britomart the Elizabethan ancestor, and Shakespeare's fragmentation of the royal compliment among mother, wife, virgin, and fairy queen, reflect the need to impose distance between the Amazon and the Queen. At the same time, both Radigund's insistent mirroring of Britomart and Hyppolyta's doubled identity as "queen of the Amazons, betrothed to Theseus," suggest the sense in which iconographic distinctions threaten to collapse. Both Radigund and Hyppolyta represent conflations of eroticism and violence, aestheticization and monstrosity.

93.83 "Nightmares of Desire," by Sheila T. Cavanagh (Emory U), highlighted the frequency of succubi, hags, and witches in *FQ* and elaborated on the significance of these figures' shared etymology as nightmares. Combining material from Elizabethan witchcraft treatises and from modern feminist theory, she explored the ramifications of these demonic females' presence in the poem, as well as the shifts that occur between the three categories of malevolent females. Such permutations help illuminate the poem's underlying theories of female sexuality.

93.84 In "Three 'Flower Children' as Figures for Chastity: A Discussion of Florimell, Amoret, and Perdita," Nina Pal (Marianopolis C) proposed that the ambivalence toward female chastity implied in the flower iconography often associated with it gives rise to the question of whether Spenser and Shakespeare consider female sexuality a problem or a gift.

Shakespeare's last plays and *FQ* 3 put forward, then reject, the view that chastity is a prize in a battle between winners and losers. Analysis of flower passages in both works shows that each author exposes the fallacies on which the flower symbology of chastity is based. Each offers an alternative vision of female sexuality as a beneficent and redemptive force -- saying it with flowers.

93.85 Jeffrey Knapp (U of California, Berkeley) discussed "National Identity in Spenser and Shakespeare," focusing on England's Trojan heritage as it figures in *FQ* 3 and *Richard II*.

93.86 Elizabeth Truax (Chapman U), in "Legends of Power in Tudor England: Spenser, Shakespeare, and *Historia regum Britanniae*," was concerned with Tudor monarchs' use of ancient British myths as political propaganda to affirm and enhance their power. Although both Spenser and Shakespeare are preoccupied with relations between myth and history, these legends of power affect their invention in ironically contrasting ways. The fusion of myth and history serves as a form of political propaganda for Spenser to woo a Queen for patronage and for Shakespeare to sell tickets at the theater.

93.87 In "Politics and the Irish Question: Spenser and Shakespeare," Jean R. Brink (Arizona State U) expressed worry over the way some literary critics and historians too frequently use a few historical documents uncritically to gloss literary texts, which are then found to have made a political statement that allows the twentieth-century critic to judge the "political correctness" of the sixteenth-century author. In the case of Shakespeare, a bibliographical methodology and a sophisticated theoretical tradition safeguard the texts, insuring that the critical enterprise is grounded on substantive evidence. Spenser has fared less well: if the critical and bibliographical methods taken for granted in Shakespearean scholarship were applied to him, then four new manuscript versions of the *Vewe* would not have been virtually ignored for more than a decade. The evidence is very slim that Spenser actually wrote the *Vewe*.

93.88 David Haley (U of Minnesota) inquired into the political meaning of the trial by combat in *FQ* 5 and in Shakespeare's plays from *1 Henry VI* to *Hamlet* and *Lear*. In "Justifying Their Wrongs: Judicial Combats in Spenser and Shakespeare," he distinguished formal judicial duels from tourneys and from retaliatory or punitive encounters; trial by combat yields a primitive justice that is bound up with the individual honor and oath of nobleman and knight. Drawing upon Hegel's famous dialectic of lordship and bondage, he noted two facets of the theory that throw light on the judicial combat. The combatants, before one submits to the other, momentarily achieve mutual recognition (*Anerkennen*) in the face of death; and this recognition is public and historical, not merely psychological. In applying this theory to the question of whether Artegall and Hamlet achieve justice, he found that Spenser's Knight of Justice accomplishes his task only to see his honor beset by detraction and the Blatant Beast; in Shakespeare, on the other hand, the detraction has passed over into doubt as to whether any justice has been revealed. (Ed.)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

94.89 CONFERENCES. Sixteenth-Century Studies Conference, 8-11 Dec. 1993, Toronto. Address: Thomas Max Safley, Dept of History, U of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA 19104-6397.

Modern Language Association, 27-30 Dec. 1993, Toronto. Address: Convention Office, MLA, 10 Astor Place, New York, NY 10003-6981.

John Donne Society, 17-19 Feb. 1994, Univ. of Southern Mississippi. Address: Eugene R. Cunnar, Dept. of English, New Mexico State Univ., Las Cruces 88003.

Antierotic Discourse in the Renaissance, 12 Mar 1994, Madison. Address: Jan Miernowski or Ullrich Langer, Dept of French and Italian, 618 Van Hise Hall, Univ. of Wisconsin, Madison 53706.

Renaissance Society of America and South-Central Renaissance Conference, 7-10 Apr 1994, Dallas. Address: Lester Brothers, Coll. of Music, Univ. of North Texas, Denton 76203.

Attending to Women in the Early Modern Period, 21-23 Apr. 1994, U of Maryland, College Park. Address: Attending to Women, Center for Renaissance and Baroque Studies, 1120L Francis Scott Key, U of Maryland, College Park 20742-7311.

94.90 FICINO is an electronic list devoted to all matters concerning the Renaissance and Reformation, continental and English. The list has members in Canada, the USA, Britain, and a number of other countries, and provides a useful forum for the circulation of calls for papers, notices about conferences, queries scholarly and critical, and of course Spenserian problems when they arise. FICINO is sponsored by the Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, Victoria College in the University of Toronto. The listowners are Germaine Warkentin (English, Victoria College, U of Toronto) and Bill Bowen (Music, Scarborough College, U of Toronto). To subscribe, e-mail your request to <Editor@epas.utoronto.ca>.

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