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To Our Readers

38.01

This issue offers readers the opportunity to read the papers presented at MLA in honor of the International Spenser Society's 2005 Colin Clout recipient, Richard Helgerson. Serendipitously, it also includes a review of one of Helgerson's most recent books. Readers are encouraged to peruse the program for the upcoming Spenser at Kalamazoo sessions in time to make travel plans. This issue also includes abstracts of Spenser papers from the 2006 MLA and other items of Spenserian interest. As always, we invite readers to submit materials of interest to the Spenser world.

Book Reviews and Notices

38.02

du Bellay, Joachim. *"The Regrets," with "The Antiquities of Rome," Three Latin Elegies, and "The Defense and Enrichment of the French Language": A Bilingual Edition.* Ed. and trans. Richard Helgerson. Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 2006. xv + 441 pp. ISBN-13: 978-0-8122-3941-6; ISBN-10: 0-8122-3941-5. $75.00 cloth.

Review by Anne Coldiron

Happy the Spenserians, who, like Ulysses, have voyaged far and can now return to this superior yet unassuming bilingual edition. My allusion to the best-known lyric included in it, "*Heureux qui comme Ulysse*" (*Regrets* 31), is not idle: reading this edition and translation feels like a homecoming, so well-aligned are Helgerson's choices with du Bellay's sensibility. This book welcomes scholars of du Bellay and less-than-perfectly francophone readers alike. It welcomes Spenserians in particular for its instructive selection; for its meaningful layout and straightforward editorial principles; for its concise, informative introduction; and for the thoughtfully maieutic decisions in the translations themselves.

Instead of the du Bellay of *L'Olive* (which I find a less interesting side of the poet), Helgerson selects the *Regrets*, the *Antiquitez*, the *Songe*, the *Deffence et illustration de la langue françoyse*, and three of the Latin elegies. The selection is thus perfect for Spenserians, since it shows the sides of du Bellay that so strongly informed Spenser's poetics. The engagement with the Roman past, with contemporary monarchy, with vernacularity in literature and language as connected to nationhood, with one's native poetry and one's poetic futurity—these shared concerns connect the selection perfectly to Spenserian poetics.

Spenser came early to du Bellay; his first poems were translations from French, published in Jan van der Noot's *Theatre for... Worldlings* (1568) and later repackaged in the *Complaints* volume of 1591. Spenser absorbed quite early in his career the ways du Bellay posed the relation of a national vernacular literature to the classical past, to the native literary past, and to the continental literary competition. Not that the two poets found identical solutions to issues in national vernacular poetics, but, as recent work from scholars like Prescott or Melehy has shown, they defined the issues in some of the same ways. Helgerson's selection drives this point home. My only wish where selection is concerned is that Helgerson had given us more Latin elegies, since even more of us are imperfectly Latinate than imperfectly francophone.

In the translations themselves, Helgerson's first thoughtful decision is to follow the path of Robert Durling, translator of the *Rime sparse*, in providing plain prose renderings of each poem. This neatly sidesteps what trips and crashes many poetic translators, a wish to render multiple equivalences at once (that is, a wish to reproduce meter, rhyme, lineation, sound effects, metaphor, and more, along with semantic content). Gifted poetic translators do sometimes achieve multiple equivalences (one thinks of Heaney's *Beowulf* or Spenser's *Ruines of Rome* itself), but that purpose in translation requires and establishes an alternative poetics, and a translation so intended is usually marked with its moment—with belatedness. Many nineteenth-century translators, for instance, took multiple equivalences, even multiple replicativity, as a mission, and as a result, we now find their

translations quaint rather than "faithful," as they had hoped. Rossetti's ballade after Villon ("Where are the snows of yesteryear?") will always be a pre-Raphaelite, not a late-medieval, poem, despite its replicative efforts. Like Durling, however—indeed, like Spenser and du Bellay—Helgerson understands perfectly the cultural embeddedness of poetry. He has therefore chosen a translation method with a different, historically sensitive purpose and usefulness. Here we find each poem's content clearly restated in English, and that, quatrain by quatrain and tercet by tercet, with spacing preserved between. This allows non-francophone readers of du Bellay what they need most in a bilingual edition: to understand the meanings of words first, and next to feel the unfolding of the poem's structure or argument. Helgerson's translations reveal the way du Bellay develops the inner logic of a poem, its internal coherence. Sometimes an unfolding, sometimes a turning (or even a zig-zagging), sometimes an excavation of layers: as with Petrarch and Spenser—indeed, as with Shakespeare, Meredith, or Berryman—the inner motions of du Bellay's sonnets are key.

Helgerson's plain-style prose translations eschew impeding ornaments, a strength of the work. The lexical choices seem generally conservative, rendering nuance when possible without excess phrasal addition. After all, if we want large dilations on the lexical nuances created by historical distance, we have always got Cotgrave and Huguet, not to mention *Le Robert historique* or Grandsaignes. Helgerson's notes, too, are spare and non-interventionist. The idea seems to have been that the fewer layers of apparatus between us and du Bellay, the better. I found the lean edition and clean prose translations refreshingly unencumbered.

That said, Helgerson has made one rather flamboyant translation choice that warrants comment. du Bellay's landmark treatise of literary criticism, *La Deffence et illustration de la langue françoyse*, is here "The Defense and Enrichment of the French Language." This *faux-ami* title is a tough one for English; I know of no successful attempt. Gladys Turquet's "Defence and illustration" misses the boat ("illustration" as du Bellay meant it involves making the language lustrous, which is not what the English word "illustration" conveys). In an unpublished thesis, Elizabeth Smudlers tried "The Defence and Glorification," which is only a bit better, since it captures du Bellay's complex aim at Gallic glory, but in English implies vainglory or excess, or that what is being glorified is not worth the trouble. We have no perfect word for what du Bellay means here: illumination? no, since du Bellay wants more than that; improvement? dull, as would be "strengthening"; polishing? it is more than a surface he is after; restoration? adds a relationship to the past that is both incomplete and not fully warranted in du Bellay's opinions; nourishment? implies a diet of neologism and copia, not what he was about; sanctification? never; elevation? perhaps. ("Enhancement" might work.) Helgerson's choice, "enrichment," does convey du Bellay's effort to empower and improve French letters. It also adds an economic figuration and the hint of a golden glow. Did du Bellay really think of his project chiefly in terms of trade, store, exchange, treasury? This bold choice, which Helgerson discusses in the introduction, is one I cannot completely embrace; still, its strength is that it demands our scrutiny of just what du Bellay did mean by "illustration."

Another bold choice here, one that works perfectly, is the arrangement of the pages. Mise-en-page and the ordering of poems in open-page sets were important signifying resources for du Bellay. Françoise Joukovsky's and Daniel Aris's

editions (1971, 1993, 1996) first brought this notion into our wider awareness. Among other techniques, du Bellay's progressions, contrasts, recusations, or comparisons create coherence among the four poems one encounters in reading a set of opened pages. He sometimes uses what I think of as "seeding," that is, planting seeds in one poem that are then given varied kinds of growth in the rest of the set. Exploiting the readerly experience of the opened book, du Bellay adds complex, signifying connections to what might otherwise be read as merely narrative, linear, or catenary sonnet sequences. Helgerson's edition, too, takes visual layout and the experience of the page seriously. He creates an ingenious apparatus for conveying, in a facing-page translation, what du Bellay's editions added to the experience of reading sonnet sequences. Readers of the volume may find it odd at first, when looking at a set of opened pages, to read French on the left-hand page (verso) and English on the right-hand page (recto), and then to turn to the next opened-page set, and find verso English and recto French. With this layout, Helgerson is issuing, a bit more insistently, the same subtle invitation to readers that du Bellay originally issued: please connect these four poems to one other in more-than-linear fashion. When we turn a page, we are involved in a poetic turning as well, something of which one becomes conscious very soon in reading the *Regrets*. In the *Antiquitez*, of course, the invitation is more obvious and more architectural than prose translation can convey, since du Bellay puts sonnets in *alexandrins* on the lower half of the page, *décasyllabe* sonnets at the top, and additionally cross-connects the poems thematically and verbally as if using cross-rafters in a building or diagonal lathing on a wall. Still, even without du Bellay's showily builded meter, Helgerson's ingenious handling of facing-page translation creates sets of four pages, not two, which draws our attention to this signifying aspect of du Bellay's work. Spenser, too, was aware of the signifying powers of mise-en-page. *Amoretti* preserves the stately singularity of each sonnet, setting one per page; the *Visions* poems use visual connections among the emblems. So here again Helgerson has transmitted one of the potentials in sonnet sequences that Spenser found in du Bellay. It is a potential too often lost in modern editions. The Press should get credit, too, for allowing a layout that must have been time-consuming and tricky in production.

This edition makes du Bellay genuinely available, in every sense, and neither elides nor overplays historical distance. It is a great gift to readers, and especially to Spenserians, who can now clearly understand how important du Bellay's poems and his larger literary theories and aims were in making Spenser the poet he was. Spenser praises du Bellay as "the first garland of free poesie," and Helgerson's lucid introduction explains the subtleties of what that meant to the two poets. Helgerson's work here has other purposes, but it is another sort of "garland of free poesie," achieving a kindred grace and an enduring value.

A. E. B. Coldiron is Associate Professor of English, Florida State University. Her essays (in the *Yale Journal of Criticism*, *JEGP*, *Comparative Literature*, *Chaucer Review*, *Criticism*, *Spenser Studies*, and elsewhere) and her books (on Charles d'Orléans and on early printed poetry) focus on French-English literary relations, early print culture, and the poetics of translation.

Panel: Richard Helgerson's Laureate Career

International Spenser Society's Special Session of the 2006 Modern Language Association Convention, December 28, 2006, Philadelphia, PA

38.03

Patricia Fumerton (U. of California, Santa Barbara), **Introduction.**

Good morning. I'm Patricia Fumerton, and I want to welcome you to the International Spenser Society's session honoring Richard Helgerson. This session was formed in acknowledgment of Richard's having received the Society's 2005 Colin Clout Lifetime Achievement Award. Richard himself cannot be here today in person (having been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in August of 2005, the day after he turned 65, he has since undergone continual chemotherapy, which has caused fatigue and compromised his immune system, so that the trip out here would simply be too much); but Richard *will* be here in virtual presence and—against his humbler nature—has agreed to provide a brief videotaped response to the panelists' papers.

The panelists before you were among the very first (among many) that Richard listed when asked "when you think of the influence of your work on Spenser studies, what colleagues come to mind?" Of course Richard's influential career can be mapped—and I use the word "*map*" advisedly—far beyond Spenser studies, as the panelists' own papers will testify.

To begin in reverse order of presentation:

Anne Lake Prescott is Professor of English at Barnard College and also teaches part-time at Columbia University. In addition to a slew of articles and a number of editions, she is the co-author of several collections of essays and author of two influential books, *French Poets and the English Renaissance* (1978) and *Imagining Rabelais in Renaissance England* (1998).

David Lee Miller is Professor of English and Comparative Literature at the University of South Carolina and also author of two important books, *The Poem's Two Bodies* (1988) and *Dreams of the Burning Child* (2003). From 1989 to 1994, David designed and directed the Hudson Strode Program in Renaissance Studies at the University of Alabama. He is currently one of four general editors for a new Oxford edition of Spenser's collected works.

Patrick Cheney sent me an impressive 19 page CV in answer to my request for information about himself. But I prefer to cite the following self-description, which he appended to the vitae. He writes: "Patrick Cheney is a professor of English and Comparative Literature at Penn State. He makes his living by writing books on authorship that respond to the work of Richard Helgerson: one is on Spenser's 'literary career,' another is on Marlowe's 'counter-nationhood,' and two are on what he calls Shakespeare's 'counter-laureate authorship.'"

We fittingly begin, then, with Cheney / Helgerson.

38.04

Patrick Cheney (Pennsylvania State U.),
"Laureate Scholarship: Richard Helgerson and the Forms of Criticism."

I once told Richard I thought he might write a book on *Fowre Hymnes*. It was just after I'd learned about *Adulterous Alliances*, and he looked puzzled. Then, in a genial manner he asked what I meant. I answered, with some gravity, "Richard, consider the shape of your career. You began with a study of amateur poets, *Elizabethan Prodigals*. Then you followed with two installments of your epic, *Self-Crowned Laureates* and *Forms of Nationhood*. Now you tell me you're sporting your muse in the pleasant mew of domesticity. Surely in your next book you will fly back to heaven apace." Richard laughed, and assured me he had no such plan.

I'm grateful to Paddy for titling our session "Richard Helgerson's Laureate Career," because it helps me realize that I might have company in imagining Richard's career to *have* a shape. Yet by characterizing that shape as "laureate," we are not simply trying to be celebratory. We are identifying the achievement of Richard Helgerson to be co-existent with the early modern goals and values of laureate authorship that he himself defined. Richard's laureate scholarship is a cherished legacy, the fruit of thirty-six years of labor, and this morning I hope to attend to what might be its most original feature: the scholarly invention of a new *laureate* form of criticism.

Let me hasten to add that I cannot think of another critic writing today whom I would classify as a laureate scholar. The job-title is Richard's alone. By looking at each of Richard's books, we see more than a series of important critical narratives that continue to influence the work we to do. We also see linkages—one of his own favorite words is "pattern"—suggesting that in the collected works of Richard Helgerson we witness the writing of the international forms of criticism itself.

Richard's genius, I am positing, may lie in his *inaugural power*, his *evergreen ability to invent new forms of criticism*, and to make each a cornerstone in a public edifice. In the 1976 *Elizabethan Prodigals*, he invents his first form of criticism, featuring the amateur poet, and he singles out five for attention: Gascoigne, Lyly, Greene, Lodge, and Sidney. In this "amateur" form of criticism, Richard proves his tender wings. He introduces a critical narrative about the prodigal poet who repents his youthful folly, turning from the toys of poesy to serious forms of national service, church or state. Yet Richard's story about the generational failure of the Elizabethan prodigal was so haunting it cried out for a sequel—in particular, an explanation for the emergence of Spenser.

In the 1983 *Self-Crowned Laureates*, Richard invents a second form of criticism, which features the break-out figure of the laureate poet, and this time he singles out three: Spenser, Jonson, and Milton (although he includes brilliant cameos of Daniel, Drayton, Chapman, Davenant, and Cowley). In his first installment of the "epic" form of criticism, Richard makes a greater flight. He argues that the Elizabethan laureate invents himself by responding to the failure of the prodigal amateur, exchanging hapless repentance for national duty. For the first time in England's history, poets can be said to have a literary career. And as Richard memorably reminds us, the poets kept saying so. For the laureates did not simply "present . . . poems, masques, plays, and pamphlets": "they were always presenting themselves" (2). Self-presentation becomes if not a Helgersonian invention at least one of his most legible signatures.

Responding to the Barthesian "death of the author," Richard quickly emerged as one of our earliest—and arguably our most eloquent—spokespersons for what he calls the "readmit[ance of] the prematurely deceased author to life" (19). "In the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries," he writes, "a large number of the brightest and most energetic young Englishmen were drawn to the collective project of creating a national literature" (15). Perhaps we can say that in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, Richard Helgerson leads his generation in the collective project of creating an international criticism. He himself helps us make the connection. *Self-Crowned Laureates*, he says, "is itself a part of a collective project—a project that is engaging the energies of my generation of American literary scholars in something of the way that poetry engaged the generation of Elizabethan courtiers" (17). By looking in on the final sentence of this second book, then, we might find not just a record of the early modern laureate poet's most pressing question but a powerful sense of the burden that the modern laureate scholar comes to endure: "How in this generation can I respond to the laureate summons my talent imposes on me, and how can I make my high office known?" (282).

In the opening pages to the 1992 *Forms of Nationhood*, Richard authorizes us to think *formally* about his career when he speaks about the relation between this third book and the first two: "I had been working for some time on the authorial self-presentation of Spenser, Sidney, and the other young poets of their generation and had been struck by their evident anxiety and uncertainty. These were the men who got English poetry going again after nearly two centuries of only sporadic accomplishment. Yet the roles they assumed—the roles of lover, prodigal, and shepherd—revealed a tension between their literary undertaking and the claims of the state to whose service both their humanist upbringing and the exigencies of the 'new monarchy' had directed them." Richard goes on to describe how "the courtly amateurs" gave way to "poets of laureate ambition," and it is these poets who succeeded in forming a "national community" (1-2).

In this award-winning book, Richard invents a third form of criticism, which features the national leadership of a generation of Elizabethans who *write the nation*. Collectively, this generation produces six "forms of nationhood" in response to the Tudor nationhood of royal power: Spenser uses poetry to write an aristocratic form of nationhood; Coke takes on the law to write a subject-based form; Drayton, Camden, and Speed use cartography to write a land-based form; Hakluyt relies on overseas expansion to write an economical form; Henslowe's playwrights perform drama to write a nationhood of the common people; and Hooker turns to the church to write a Protestant form. Against these six, Shakespeare in his history plays alone radically privileges royal power. In this magisterial study, Richard finds "traces of the difficult, and, in England at least, never quite complete passage from dynasty to nation" (10) on the long road to the Enlightenment. In "writing England," he tells us, "the younger Elizabethans also wrote us" (18). As this last formulation intimates, we should probably not mistake Richard Helgerson for a "Renaissance" laureate scholar. He is all "early modern." His work does not pursue the classical or medieval origins of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Instead, this laureate scholar charts a historic line that reaches to us.

If *Self-Crowned Laureates* was enough of an epic enterprise to earn its author the garland, as everyone here knows *Forms of Nationhood* reinvents the idea of the early modern academic book. *Self-Crowned Laureates* is certainly more

expansive than *Elizabethan Prodigals*, extending its study from one generation to three, but both books at least remain within the pale of English literature. By contrast, in *Forms of Nationhood* something breaks loose; it is the prodigy of Helgersonian research, the laureate scholar's pioneering willingness to move beyond the pale. The result is a *book of books*.

In 2000, Richard publishes his fourth book, but in the contour we have just tracked *Adulterous Alliances* is something of a special case. For the first time, we might question whether we are witnessing a new form of criticism, since by then, as he himself says, other books on domesticity had appeared. As if our cue, the introduction this time does not explain how the book connects with his previous works. Instead, Richard reports on the book's origin, an idea generated during a London production of *Arden of Faversham*, and he adds that he put the project aside because he was "just beginning another book" (2). In these terms, Richard arrived quite early on the domestic scene, and *Adulterous Alliances* indeed invents a fourth form of laureate scholarship.

The subtitle makes this clear, while indicating just how the book overgoes *Forms of Nationhood*: *Home, State, and History in Modern European Drama and Painting*. Not simply does Richard turn to domestic space, but he migrates from England to Europe, and he augments his study of domestic drama in England, Spain, and France by discussing Dutch painting, crowning his long commitment to the written word with attention to the visual arts. The result is a critical narrative that spans European drama and Dutch painting: the state intrudes into the home, yet playwrights like Shakespeare in England and artists like Vermeer in Holland champion the authority of the home over the authoritarianism of the state. "Domestic drama and domestic painting," Richard writes, "emerged as a by-product of early modern state formation. . . . But whether the issue is municipal rights or the rights of man, the nonaristocratic home is made to figure as the privileged site of its representation, while the monarchic state is given a more dubious role as the external other from which . . . those rights must be won" (6-7).

Four monographs. Four forms of laureate scholarship. *Amateur authorship*; *laureate career*; *English nationalism*; *European domestic liberty*. *Author*, *career*, *kingdom*, *home*. These are the scholarly forms of Richard Helgerson's laureate career.

While we might acknowledge differences, the collected works of Richard Helgerson center on a career-long passion important to modern historical studies: *the author or artist's relation to the state*. For him, the forms of criticism chart a historical map about English and European early modernism: *the individual uses writing or painting to arrest the authority of the monarchical state, and in the process demonstrates the instrumentality of art and authorship to the emergence of modern political identity*.

Lest you fear I'm making the laureate forms of criticism up, let me remind you that the word "form" is important to Richard's own critical vocabulary, as evident in the very title *Forms of Nationhood*. In his Introduction, Richard pauses to classify his work and its methodology. "My literary training," he says, "may have made me a formalist, but I have tried, even when looking at literary texts, to be a historical formalist" (7). And so he is: the best. Just previous to this, he writes: "As a literary historian, I am more preoccupied with form than are other kinds of historians. I assume—an assumption that is tested throughout the book—that discursive forms matter, that they have a meaning and effect that can sometimes complement but that can also contradict the manifest content of any

particular work. Forms in this view are as much agents as they are structures. They make things happen. Given my sense of the importance of forms, of their part in constituting the nation, I attend as closely to them as I do to the texts that embody them." In this book, the forms turn out to be "chivalric romance," the "law report and institute," "chorography," "the voyage," the "national history play," and the religious "apology" (6). Back in *Elizabethan Prodigals* the form was prose romance fiction, while in *Self-Crowned Laureates* it was national epic, and in *Adulterous Alliances* domestic drama and painting. Richard has devoted his career to a wide range of literary, artistic, and cultural forms, yet I have been trying to suggest that his real distinction may lie in the modern invention of critical form itself. He is a scholarly storyteller of the first order, and what I prize is the presence of his *laureate voice*. He is every inch a laureate.

Two of the enduring stories to emerge from this calm and compassionate voice have been about the poet whose international society assembles here today. First came a story about England's originary laureate poet, a story that has since become the foundation for our profession's critical narrative about the emergence of modern English authorship, from Louis Montrose to Wendy Wall to Lukas Erne. In Richard's story, Spenser struggles initially against amateur repentance and later against his own political disillusionment, but out of the agon, waged publicly in the medium of print, comes the modern notion of the author, consolidated by Jonson and then Milton. Second came a story about a patriotic Gothic author of chivalric fiction who uses poetry to champion a nationhood of aristocratic power in opposition to the royal power of the Elizabethan state. In this story, Spenser's struggle to write the nation celebrates "a partially refeudalized English polity" (54); paradoxically, however, Spenser's reactionary impulse helps dislodge monarchy from its imperial perch, in preparation for Milton and the republican quest to translate "inner freedom" into "political freedom" (61). Today, Richard's Spenser is our Spenser. We are grateful to both for presenting themselves *historically*.

Yet just when we might claim to be a cartographer to Richard Helgerson's career, we discover a new course: a fifth book, published earlier this year—that gleefully swerving translation of du Bellay. While no doubt marking a shift out of literary criticism into textual scholarship, this edition does share one striking link with the earlier books, and I shall end with it. To conclude *Elizabethan Prodigals*, Richard talks about the defining event of Sidney's prodigal career: his turn from literature to "translation" (154), *Arcadia* to the Psalms (153). Late in his career, Richard turns to translation, raising the question whether this lifetime laureate might turn down the amateur track. Nothing could be further from the truth. Rather than translate Mornay's *On the Trueness of the Christian Religion*, Richard translates the very works that form the apex of du Bellay's laureate prowess. Instead of turning away from literature, Richard turns into it: to literature in the laureate form, to literature's hope for a civic role in history.

Finally, then, I am suggesting why there never could be that book on *Fowre Hymnes*; no last book will fly back to heaven apace. To the contrary, a sixth book, in press, is on Gascilaso and the New Poetry of Europe. It is the signature mark of Richard Helgerson's laureate career that during his illness he should join with us today, in a public forum, right within the city of liberty itself, to talk about Spenser. There's a form here, in the sense in which Richard defines it, a structure that makes things happen, including for us. It is a form not of repentance,

disillusionment, or anger, nor solely a paradise within, but rather the laureate form of scholarship, an unshakable civic joy.

38.05

David Lee Miller (U. of South Carolina),
"Rereading the Sensible New Historicist."

As you all recognize, my title comes from the funny and gracious opening of Richard Helgerson's reply to a snide review by Frank Kermode. "Having often heard myself called 'the sensible New Historicist,'" he begins, "I read Frank Kermode's review of my *Forms of Nationhood* [*NYR* June 25] with a giddy sense of arrival. Finally I'd entered the charmed circle of the radically unsound" (*NYR* September 24, 1992, p. 66). In its revised form—not "reading" but "rereading" the sensible New Historicist—my title also describes what I've been doing off and on since last summer, rereading Richard's work in order to see more clearly the sensibility inside his sensible self, seeking the special quality that distinguishes him from his contemporaries. It's an elusive task. The first person singular pronoun is not uncommon in his writing, but the ego associated with it is very unobtrusive. Like the poets he taught us to see as laureates—but with less anxiety—his individuality seems to be absorbed into the role he performs. There is nothing idiosyncratic in his style, none of the narcissism that can be so charming in the work of other critics. Even that fine phrase "the charmed circle of the radically unsound" manages subtly to shed its own flourish, as if such extravagance belonged rather to the rhetoric of academic cachet than to the sensible author who is here gently mocking it.

Richard's writing doesn't strive for cachet. He never tries to be prepossessing, and this is one reason he seems so sensible. The tone, diction, and syntax of his prose are all familiar, so comfortable that we hardly notice them. There is from the beginning an epigrammatic quality, as when he writes in *The Elizabethan Prodigals*, "'To thine own self be true,' said Polonius, but he meant, 'Be true to my precepts'" (37). The wit and compression are present, but they serve to clarify the assertion—here, the notion that "duty properly defines the self"—and unlike Polonius, they are content to remain stylistically transparent. In the later books this epigrammatic quality is more pervasive but no less transparent. My favorite example comes near the end of "Soldiers and Enigmatic Girls," the chapter in *Adulterous Alliances* on Dutch genre painting. "Houses," he writes, "were by no means the only subject of Dutch Realism, but they were a much favored subject. The real seems to have been more real at home" (118). That's the sort of line you really do have to reread to appreciate it fully. "The real seems to have been more real at home." There's a lot compressed into that observation, yet it couldn't be said more simply.

The use of metaphor is carefully unspectacular in just the same way. Early in his first book we find Richard explaining that although the patterns he is describing may be observed in other works and periods, the late sixteenth century is set apart by "the great number of examples crowded into such a few years" (12). To understand the special density and regularity with which the prodigal patterns are found in just these decades, he says, we need "to look outside the particular works for a part at least of their meaning. When we come on a lone dancer, we assume that his movements have significance in themselves; but when we find a whole village dancing, we look rather for a larger, communal meaning" (13). In context this analogy is so efficient, we might almost miss the muted wonder

evoked in the fantasy of coming upon "a whole village dancing," and fail to notice that Richard is dancing too.

I failed to notice it for decades. I've always been a close reader, tuned most especially to local effects. Richard is a literary historian. Close reading is not his *métier* any more than conspicuous phrasemaking is his style. His special elegance lies in the construction of arguments and especially in the pacing of the exposition. Anyone who writes criticism knows how difficult this is. Insights don't come to us in the right sequence; thinking tends to rush ahead, get bogged down in detail, proceed by association as much as by logic, take for granted what seems obvious to dwell instead on the nuances, stumble, leap, flutter, balk, and come to a dead stop. Finished arguments, including very good ones, often still bear the traces of such disorderly beginnings. What Richard does so well is to create arguments that move as thought ideally always would, never rushed or plodding, never trying to say too much at once, always preparing for the next turn, which always comes at the right moment. This kind of dancing, for all its grace and poise, can be invisible, or at least it has been to me, because it happens on a large scale, not where I'm used to looking for it. It can also seem invisible because its best effects have to do as much with what isn't there as with what is. By definition, the absence of obstacles or distractions is something one tends not to notice.

Rereading has let me see this dance repeated with variations on a steadily expanding scale—not from the individual dancer to the village, but from the individual book to the larger argument unfolding in stages across a series of books. The step from prodigals to laureates seems inevitable in retrospect; and indeed it is anticipated in a paragraph near the beginning of the first book that explains how Spenser became an exception to the pattern. *Self-Crowned Laureates* begins with a reprise of the prodigal theme and then moves seamlessly to a consideration of the laureate alternative, but as it does so it also expands the scope of the argument, setting both authorial roles in the broader context of the literary system, and reaching out past the Elizabethans to chart the history of this configuration across three literary generations. The next step, from writing the laureate self to writing the emerging nation, once again unfolds according to a dialectical logic, for the laureate poets were seeking not only to define themselves but also "to articulate a national community whose existence and eminence would then justify their desire to become its literary spokesmen" (*Forms* 2). And once again the argument's logical progression is accompanied by a decisive expansion of scope, returning now to the Elizabethans in order to place the literary system itself in a much larger context made up of whole discursive fields, each taking shape in its own way but each also carrying out that generational project of articulating the national community.

To describe the unfolding of Richard's overarching argument in this way does run the risk of making it sound a bit too schematic, as if its development had been inevitable because the whole pattern was simply predetermined. But the schematic clarity of Richard's thinking, which is one of its great strengths, is never static, and this is what makes it a strength. His arguments do not proceed by unfolding a diagram constructed in advance, for his thought is always in motion. There is a wonderful paragraph near the beginning of *Forms of Nationhood* in which he describes all the unexpected discoveries his argument forced upon him, the kind of paragraph only a true empiricist could write. "I neither expected nor wanted to make the argument concerning Shakespeare that the Henslowe plays

obliged me to make," he confesses. "Indeed, I had planned to say the opposite and still feel upended by the evidence" (9).

This ability to let himself be upended without really missing a beat is what makes Richard's dance so beautiful, and I believe it is also what has made his work so enabling. I call it that rather than "influential" because the special achievement of these books has not been to determine the shape of subsequent arguments but to open up space in which they can develop and to provide terms they can work with. This generativity—you can see that I'm trying hard to avoid the word "seminal" here—results from the combination of schematic clarity with the dynamic and open-ended movement of active thinking. Even when you want to disagree with Richard's argument, you will find that he has shown you how to do it by the self-correcting and self-qualifying movement of his own deliberations, their measured unfolding as a process of differentiation. The result is to prompt further thought, and Richard's first three books have done just that. Look around the field today and that's what you will see: a whole village dancing.

The move from nationhood to *Adulterous Alliances* shows this combination of qualities especially well. Once again the central theme of the preceding work, forms of nationhood, generates its dialectical partner, the domestic sphere. And once again, as in *Self-Crowned Laureates*, the argument expands along a chronological axis, reaching all the way forward now to the eighteenth century. But unexpectedly, it also branches out beyond England to Spain, Holland, and France. Each chapter focuses on a specific time, place, and genre; as always in Richard's work, the context he seeks for the forms he studies is resolutely local. But each of these localities is drawn convincingly into a much broader historical movement that sketches the interrelations, as the book's subtitle indicates, of "home, state, and history." This book has not been as widely read, yet, as *Forms of Nationhood*, but in it you will find as perfect a fusion of style and argument as I can imagine, and for all the formidable achievement of *Nationhood* I think *Alliances* is Richard's finest critical book. That's my opinion and I'm sticking to it until the next book comes out.

Of course, just as I was putting the finishing touches on this dialectical account of Richard's career, a new translation of du Bellay arrived in my mailbox and ruined the whole scheme. I checked the dust jacket photo to be sure: was this really the same Helgerson? His style has always been so vernacular, never peppered with foreign phrases designed to show off his learned sophistication—and now he's translating sixteenth-century French and Latin literary texts? It just doesn't seem right, and I must leave it to Anne Prescott to make some sense of this inexplicable breach of form.

For my own part, I take some comfort in recognizing that still, at the heart of this new work, there remains that tendency for the ego of the critic to be absorbed into his role. You be the judge. If you will refer to the handout I have provided,[1] you see there the jacket illustration—a sixteenth-century portrait of du Bellay—and beside it the author photo that I found myself consulting on the inside back flap. The text and translation that separate these images are printed on *facing* pages, and here in a perfect chiasmus we find the faces behind those pages.

The resemblance is intriguing, is it not?

Endnote

[1] Editor's Note: Because of the timing of our publication, we ask that you please see Helgerson's book jacket for these images.

38.06

Anne Lake Prescott (Barnard College, Columbia U.), **"Self-Crowned Prodigals: Homage to Richard Helgerson."**

Richard Helgerson is a laureate critic—not only prize-winning and Spenser-Society honored, he is even, as Patrick Cheney has said at this same session, self-crowned himself, self-mockingly self-crowned, that is, as "the sensible New Historicist." Sensible maybe, but also exhilarating (there must be some species of cross-bred laurel particularly appropriate to anyone who can be sensible and exciting both). Having begun with widely influential meditations on "Elizabethan Prodigals" and, a bit later, on "Self-Crowned Laureates," he has moved on to the *Forms of Nationhood* and the wonderfully titled *Adulterous Alliances*. From prodigality to adultery may or may not be progress, of course, and although I assume that the original Prodigal was not old enough to be adulterous, at least he must have wenched and gambled. In Elizabethan England, as Richard so adeptly shows, he also wrote verse and romance. Other writers, as he just as adeptly shows, aimed more openly at national wreath-claiming, if only, as Richard wittily puts it, to find themselves in the role of the Prodigal Son's older brother: "dutiful but ignored" (Laureates 52).

du Bellay swaggered as a youthful love poet and grew up to be not-quite-laureate in part because of an acquired modesty and in part, because his friend Ronsard grabbed the French bays and left only the Olive—the lady of his Petrarchan sonnet sequence *Olive*—for the author of the 1549 *Deffence et illustration de la langue françoyse*. But he has now been laureated by Richard's extraordinarily fine translation of his early *Deffence* and his late Roman poetry—the elegiac *Antiquitez* and *Songe*, earlier Englished by Spenser and the elegiac, satirical, and encomiastic *Regrets*, that brilliant set of sonnets never before translated into English in their entirety.
My praise of Richard's translation appears on the book jacket and, such is the corruption of our world, will also appear in a review. I'll just say that my one regret about Richard's translation of the *Antiquitez* and *Songe* is that honesty compels me to award the laurels to Richard's exquisite prose version and not to the verse of . . . um . . . Spenser.

I will not linger further to praise this lucidly crystalline and yet subtle translation, only urge you to buy and enjoy. It both Englishes du Bellay superbly and eloquently describes the pleasures he offers as well as his connections to Spenser. Rather, in gratitude to Richard's early books for giving me some conceptual tools with which to trace the dynamics of Elizabethan literature, and in delight at seeing this wonderful scholar/critic now turn to where Spenser began, with du Bellay, I will spend the rest of my time exploring some of the complexities generated when prodigality meets laureateship. After all, as Richard knows, there is such a thing as self-crowned prodigality (look at *me* wallowing in the pigsty and take *that*, Daddy). And laureates such as Spenser, as again we all know—and not least David Miller—can in their later years envy and even imitate the prodigal knight who leaves his quest for Mt. Acidale, or end the last published book of an epic with a snarl better suiting Roman verse satire than Virgil. The snarl that closes Book VI, I hope to show in a minute, also recalls du Bellay's last, or almost last, poem, *Le Poète courtisan, The Court-Poet*.

The early *Deffence* is a fine example of how prodigality (Richard's first book) can interact, intersect, interface, with self-woven wreaths (Richard's second). When du Bellay published this "Here I am and look at me exhorting the na-

tion" work in 1549 he was young enough to want what other young writers have sometimes wanted: both to irritate the old and to become famous as a cultural reformer, judge, icon, something that requires either the plaudits of the flexible old or a spell of time while the inflexible die off. The author of the *Deffence* is a self-crowned prodigal in that he thumbs his nose at the paternal generation and attempts to win for France and for himself the laurels that he thought as yet grew only south of the Alps and that all those dull old French versifiers who lived before him did not deserve, whatever their risibly old "floral games." It is possible, that is, to be a rebel and even a prodigal precisely by leaving the paternal home to head not for the taverns and brothels but for the almost as problematic Italy, if as yet only in imagination, and to set about reviving ancient ways of serving one's nation or *imperium*, ways undreamt of or rejected by the older generation.

du Bellay is now so canonized, if only as the "not-quite-Ronsard," that it can be easy for non-specialists to forget (not that Richard forgets) how much his *Deffence* vexed some who belonged to the pre-Pléiade literary system, a system still largely in place when du Bellay burst into print but whose ranking if recently deceased member, Clément Marot, is probably the only poet much read nowadays—and Spenser's E.K., you recall, was unsure that he even deserves the title of a poet. The terms in which du Bellay's tract was angrily denounced by a member of that older generation are in this regard quite telling—the Prodigal Son's father was more forgiving. Barthélemy Aneau's mean-spirited but often witty reply, published in 1550 under the pseudonym "Quintil Horace," denigrates the very initials under which du Bellay published: "I. D. B. A."—Joachim du Bellay, Angevin—in terms not wholly irrelevant to *The Shepheardes Calender*, the work Richard has called the "*defense et illustration* of the English language."[1]

The "D," admits Aneau, does suggest gentility (because doubtless representing a *particule* such as de or du), but in general the problem with going forth as initials is that the reader can think up phrases that you might not want. For example, he continues, consider SPQR, which the Venerable Bede, writing of the Goths, reinterprets as "*Stultus Populus Quaerit Romam*"—the foolish people seeks Rome. Or (and the note in Jean-Charles Monferran's recent edition of the *Deffence* notes the sarcasm's "irreverence") consider that the placard saying "I.N.R.I" (Jesus of Nazareth "Rex Judaeorum," of course) could be read as "*Ie n'y retourneray iamais*"—I'm never coming back. Or do you want your own personal tetragrammaton? Amazing. E.K., if not Immerito, should take notice, Aneau might tell him: read around in recent Spenser criticism and see what has been said about your initials: Edward Kirke? Edmund of Kent? "*Ecce*"?

More important for my self-crowned prodigal paradox are the generational claims by the man we might call France's New Poet, the one who also presents himself as France's New Critic by dismissing older poets. Aneau regularly scorns du Bellay for lexical gaffes, for inconsistent logic, and for what would appear as misunderstanding the nature of language to someone with late scholastic training. What seems to vex Aneau the most, though (and to put it in Spenserian terms), is the young upthrusting briar's impudence toward the oak bent with reverend eld. Some of this impudence involves importing Latin and Greek into the already illustrious French language and, perhaps worse, the mental trip south to find out new "*corruptions Italiques*" such as the show-off word "*patrie*" for the home-grown "pays." We all know about Italy, and why a youth should think twice about going there, and with what he might come back.

So stop denigrating French, which you claim to defend, by calling its products "vile and vulgar." And stop scorning older writers: "Thou wrongly accusest, and very ungratefully," says Aneau, "the ignorance of our elders," which "thou no less rudely callest simplicity." Aneau lists the names, from Guillaume de Lorris to Villon, and says that they wrote better in their own language and with more propriety than do we, and without peregrination. To tell a good translation, moreover, takes judgment, and judgment takes age and experience, which of course arrogant young whippersnappers lack. In any case, French as it is, the French used by jurists, ambassadors, scientists, preachers, governors, is just fine and useful for life in the community, which is more than one can say for "witty follies, stupid love-toys ("*sottes amouretes*"), and fables or the "subtle jangling of the greater part of poets"—the sort of poet Plato expelled from the republic. du Bellay is arrogantly wrong to suppose, moreover, that older French poets don't understand Greek and Latin as well as he does. You tell us to imitate Martial, but he was dirty, and Spanish, and a sickening flatterer. The elegies you admire are weepy, imitative, easy, and Italian. You tell us to write "odes," but we already do—we just don't call them that. You scoff at "epistles," but that form serves human sociability. You don't understand Marot's satires. As for romance and the round table, your condemnation is merely "envious." Some poetry you condemn, after all, is pure and Christian, unlike today's lascivious and paganizing poems—so don't undo others just to make your own sonnets dance.

In sum, du Bellay starts his career with moves—innovation, youthful arrogance in dismissing his cultural heritage, and Italianism—that could seem like prodigality to the generation born in the 1490s or 1510s even as du Bellay's own aim is to win laurels for a renewed nation, a reformed republic of letters, a new generation of poets who might do wonderful things—even be laureates. An irony I treasure, and one whose parameters I owe to Richard's early paired books and his recent translation.

The *Deffence* was published in 1549. A decade later (late in du Bellay's sadly short life) he published his *Poète courtisan*.[2] The composition date is not entirely certain, but the strong probability is that du Bellay wrote it toward the end of his stay in Rome or shortly after his return to France, the nation that in a better mood he had called the "mère des arts." This anti-court satire comes, then, about the same time in his career as the end of Book VI comes in Spenser's, although the latter went on to write somewhat more than did du Bellay. The grouchy little kick that concludes what we have of *The Faerie Queene* (omitting the Mutabilitie Cantos) takes up only a few lines, but the parallels with du Bellay's longer fit of ill temper, or the show of such a fit, remain interesting to ponder. After all, Book VI demonstrates considerable ambivalence toward the slippery arts of courtiership—Calidore's very name, in one etymology, recalls "callidus," or cunning. The sonnets in du Bellay's *Regrets* include biting satire, some of it anti-court, but his *Poète courtisan* is a venture into the sort of verse satire, albeit less Juvenalian, that young John Marston and Joseph Hall were to write in the 1590s before Hall, anyway, became respectable and a bishop. The end of Book VI might possibly hint, I have sometimes thought, that Spenser was becoming interested in the very genre through which a younger generation was demonstrating its prodigality by implicitly cocking a snoot at its epic and romance-writing elders—indeed, elders such as Spenser.

du Bellay's satire was published in 1559, a year before his death, together with his translation of Adrien Turnèbe's 1559 Neolatin "*Nouvelle*

manière de faire son profit des letters," cynical advice to the poet interested in cash and plaudits. Merge Mercury with Apollo, says Turnèbe, and poison souls with flattering speech. Learn the science of making yourself known to court ladies. But don't go into print—vulgarity will get you scorned—unless of course you arrange to be printed by others. If you do publish, omit your name, for that way you can size up the response without cost to yourself. Let it be said that you have a major work (I would assume an epic) in progress. Did Spenser, with his interest in du Bellay, ever read this?

Even more intriguing is du Bellay's own *Court-Poet*. Spenser's parting shot at self-serving other-flattering poetry is so brief that comparisons are difficult, but there is just a touch of lexical overlap that makes me wonder if the late Spenser was reading the late satirical du Bellay just as the early Spenser had exploited the late but not quite as late elegiac du Bellay. He is not Aristotle teaching the precepts of art, says du Bellay—rather, "the court is my author, my example, and my guide." And he will be brief, for long works bore the court (so much for epic—not that du Bellay wrote one). If you want to make it, start early in understanding the deceits and fashions of court. Be gallant—don't bite your nails, beat the table, dream, or have a brain boiling with thoughts so as to draw a wretched verse from your head. (If this sounds a little like the opening of Sidney's *Astrophil and Stella* that is because both poets are sacking Rome—look in thy heart and see what Horace wrote in *Satire* I.x ["Oft in the pangs of labour scratch his head, / And bite his nails, and bite them, till they bled"] or Persius in *Satire* I.) Follow your instincts, ignoring all those ancients—let the Court be your Virgil and Homer, for she alone is the mother of good wits.

Seek to gratify great lords and fill your coffers, du Bellay continues, by commemorating their victories, or celebrating some marriage or festival. Get your songs set to music and sung in the king's chamber—a relevant sonnet, a little epigram in honor of a prince or a great lady—but beware of using hard words or neologisms and bear in mind that the most "flowing verse" is the most perfect (sweet verse run softly, one might say). Avoid the suspicion that you might be envious, no matter what you feel. Be *agreeable*, and those who feel pleasure will give you something. And then, as du Bellay draws near his final ironies, he urges the would be court poet to be wise ("saige sois") by staying content with the judgment of those whom you *please* ("auquelz plaire tu veux") and who can advance you by, say, giving you income. Then among the learned you will reign like a monarch, welcomed by great lords, and give up the heritage of the muses—poverty—which is reserved for those who displease the court and to prolong their glory shorten their years. So: try to *please* (*plaire)* and be *wise* (*saige*), so as to win *treasure* (*riches* rewards); and do not seem to be friends with the blatant beast. "Seeke to please," in sum, "that now is counted wisemens threasure"—that threasure, as David Miller has so cleverly shown, that recalls the counting-house Secretary of the Threasury—censorious William Cecil of the furrowed brow.[3]

It would be wonderful to have a translation of the *Poète courtisan*—something to set next to the final stanza of Spenser's Book VI and other anti-court moments in Spenser's poetry. To juxtapose such texts is to see how a laureate and a not-quite-laureate poet, both exiles of a sort (and du Bellay the author of some "Joachim's Come Home Again" poetry) moved from unfinished epic and not-going-to-write but thinking about epic to late and ironic reflections on the poet's role—Spenser in a couple of lines and du Bellay

in a Horatian verse satire. A few laurel leaves (or not quite laurel leaves) have curled into poison ivy.

For us today, though, our honoree's laurels are greener and fresher than ever. His only prodigality in one sense of the word is his becoming ill, but we can at least rejoice in his being so given to that other form of prodigality—the generous lavishing of intelligent insights, and in such beautiful prose, too, on generations of grateful admirers.

Endnotes

[1] *Laureates* 68; my quotations from "Quintil Horace" translate comments from the text published with *La Deffence et illustration de la langue françoyse*. On poetic careers see also the work of Patrick Cheney, the most immediately relevant study being *Spenser's Famous Flight: A Renaissance Idea of a Literary Career*.

[2] Published in du Bellay's *Oeuvres poétiques*.

[3] "The Earl of Cork's Lute" in *Spenser's Life and the Subject of Biography*; my previous discussion of Spenser and du Bellay is in the same volume.

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38.07

Patricia Fumerton, Afterword

1. *The Elizabethan Prodigals*. Berkeley: U of California P, 1977.
2. *Self-Crowned Laureates: Spenser, Jonson, Milton, and the Literary System*. Berkeley: U of California P, 1983.
3. *Forms of Nationhood: The Elizabethan Writing of England*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1992.
4. *Adulterous Alliances: Home, State, and History in Early Modern European Drama and Painting*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2000.
5. Joachim du Bellay, *"The Regrets," with "The Antiquities of Rome," Three Latin Elegies, and "The Defense and Enrichment of the French Language": A Bilingual Edition*. Ed. and trans. Richard Helgerson. Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 2006.

And, as Donne would say, "there's more." What the panelists did not yet have access to in their wonderful encapsulations of Richard's expansive and resonant influence on Spenser and Renaissance studies is yet another book project mentioned briefly by Patrick, a book begun and completed since Richard's diagnosis of cancer. The book focuses on just one poem by Garcilaso de la Vega, "A Sonnet from Carthage," but it becomes simultaneously the reading of a single sonnet, a history of a poetic movement (the new poetry of the sixteenth century), a history of a cultural moment (in imperialism), a biography of a man (Garcilaso), and finally, in a very real

way, a culmination of an investigation into the many interconnected and often conflicting issues Richard has addressed throughout his career: issues to do with nationhood, laureates, personal identity, generational identity, place, gender, the cross-cultural, and modernity. It is truly a giant project in a small package, and will be available this spring from Penn Press. It is titled simply *A Sonnet from Carthage*.

Richard conceived of this book in a visionary moment (perhaps aided by the stimulating anti-nausea drug, Decadron, which he was taking to counteract the effects of chemotherapy), and a contract with Penn was instantly secured. I remember with sadly tinged amusement that soon after that, sometime in September of 2005, Richard informed his oncologist that he had a deadline of June for a new book, and that the oncologist's job was to keep him alive until that deadline was met. The doctor was none too comfortable making such a promise (patients of pancreatic cancer typically survive only 6-7 months post diagnosis), but Richard made it—the book is done—and the word deadline retains its metaphoricity. Richard is still actively engaged with the profession, with teaching and guiding and stimulating students, and with being simply the best colleague one could hope to have. And though his medical treatment prevents him from being here physically today, he graciously agreed to provide a videotaped presence.

38.08

Richard Helgerson (U. of California, Santa Barbara), **Response.**

Let me begin by thanking the International Spenser Society, of which I've been a member for many, many years, for sponsoring this session. (Clearly, this is one organization where keeping up with your dues pays off!) I also want to thank Paddy Fumerton for organizing and chairing the session, Patrick Cheney, David Miller, and Anne Prescott for their good papers, and those of you in the audience for coming out so early in the morning. I'm a little embarrassed at this unexpected attention—and am relieved that I can't be there to blush at it in person—but I do deeply appreciate the honor of the event. Over the years, as I have moved from book to book, I've had some sense—a sense that I haven't wanted to define too precisely—that the accumulating work has a certain coherence, that it's all part of a single critical project. It's nice to have that sense confirmed by Patrick, David, and Anne's papers.

But, as I read over these three papers, I can't help but be struck by how much each portrays me in a way characteristic of its author. The pictures may be of me, but the style of the brush strokes is very much theirs. In successive books on Spenser, Marlowe, and Shakespeare, Patrick Cheney has with great determination and clarity of focus been pursuing a kind of career criticism that finds a high degree of self-conscious deliberation in each of his chosen authors. Patrick sometimes generously credits me with providing a model for this mode of criticism, but he has done much more with it than I ever dreamed of, and now he does it with telling effect on me. David Miller has always been one of our best close readers, a critic who is especially alert to the finest nuances of style, and that's of course the sensibility he brings to my work with results that are, at least to me, as perceptive as they are at times unexpected, even unsettling. And among Spenserians and students of early modern English literature generally, no one has done more on English-French relations than Anne Prescott, so it's very much in Anne's usual vein to stretch some of my terms to discuss a French poet,

Joachim du Bellay, to whom both she and I have paid lots of attention. Thus as well as finding in these papers three perhaps excessively flattering likenesses of Richard Helgerson, we also find a Cheney, a Miller, and a Prescott—and pretty good examples of each.

I won't try to rival those portraits with my own sketch of my career, but I would like to make two brief comments. The first is that, though I appreciate the way the term has been used in this session, I've never seen myself as a laureate – certainly not in the way I used that term years ago to discuss Spenser, Jonson, and Milton. Whereas those poets aimed from the first at achieving a career of a quite distinctive and easily recognizable sort, I didn't. I began way back in graduate school with an observation about Elizabethan prose fiction, and from that starting point question led to question, author to author, discursive field to discursive field in quite unpredictable ways. When I began, I certainly never expected I'd one day be working on legal writing, on cartography, on overseas voyages, on religious controversy, on Dutch genre painting, on French and Spanish drama and poetry. The series of questions that did lead me in those directions and the persistent inclination to concentrate on formal structures and their relation to historical conditions may in retrospect give the work the coherence I like to suppose it has, but that is hardly a laureate coherence. In fact, the experience has been more that of a perpetual undergraduate, constantly taking interesting new courses and writing papers about subjects that months earlier I knew little about. It's one of the great things about our profession. We never have to graduate.

The other comment I want to make is that I've been very lucky to be part of a generation that, because of the political and cultural circumstances of the 1960s when we came of age, could hardly help but see literary texts differently than we had been taught to see them. We obviously had something to do. My contribution to that generational project developed initially pretty much on its own. Its hard to believe in this age when all our grad students attend lots of conferences and give lots of papers, that I never attended a professional meeting much less gave a paper at one until I was an associate professor with one book out and another well underway. But when I did start attending conferences, I had an immediate sense of community that has done much to sustain my career and keep me moving in the direction I was already taking. I wish I could talk individually of the many friendships I've made over the years since I became more directly and more actively engaged in the life of the profession—the members of this panel would all be high on the list—but the excitement of being part of what has often felt like a broadly shared enterprise, one that many younger scholars have joined in advancing, has made whatever contributions I could make feel far more rewarding than would otherwise have been possible. The audience for what we do may not often be large—a considerable understatement!—but it makes up in collaborative intensity what it lacks in size. And for that I'm very thankful.

This MLA session is itself an expression of the spirit of professional community that's so important to all of us. Thanks again to everyone involved for letting me provide the occasion for it. I'm sorry to duck out before the discussion—there are limits to virtual reality—but I look forward to hearing all about it.

So long—and have a great time in Philadelphia.

Note

38.09

Yulia Ryzhik (Harvard U.), **"Whose Blood?: A Note on Amoret and Lust"**

Amoret's encounter with Lust and her rescue from his clutches has a double allegorical significance. As a moral allegory, it shows married chastity assailed by lust and rescued by honor (Timias) and absolute chastity (Belphoebe). As an historical allegory, the episode recounts the scandal of Sir Walter Ralegh's affair with and secret marriage to Elizabeth Throckmorton, which caused his banishment from Queen Elizabeth's court. Putting the historical allegory aside for the moment, I would like to parse the physical details of the episode and the moral consequences of these details. Doing so will elicit a different interpretation than the standard one, which is too severe on Amoret, and will better coincide with Spenser's treatment of Amoret throughout the *Faerie Queene*. Such an interpretation will also coincide with the only response Spenser was likely to have had to the Throckmorton affair.

There is no doubt that in the scuffle that ensues between Timias and Lust, before Belphoebe arrives on the scene, Timias accidentally wounds Amoret. When Timias examines her injuries after the battle, "of his owne rash hand one wound was to be seene" (IV.vii.35). But there has been some confusion among readers as to when and how Amoret receives this wound and as to what kind of wound it is. The two stanzas in question are as follows:

> Thereto the villaine used craft in fight;
> For ever when the Squire his javelin shooke,
> He held the Lady forth before him right,
> And with her body, as a buckler, broke
> The puissance of his intended stroke.
> And if it chaunst, (as needs it must in fight)
> Whilest he on him was greedy to be wroke,
> That any little blow on her did light,
> Then would he laugh aloud, and gather great delight.
>
> Which subtill sleight did him encumber much,
> And made him oft, when he would strike, forbeare;
> For hardly could he come the carle to touch,
> But that he her must hurt, or hazard neare:
> Yet he his hand so carefully did beare,
> That at the last he did himselfe attaine,
> And therein left the pike head of his speare.
> A stream of coleblacke bloud thence gusht amaine,
> That all her silken garments did with bloud bestaine. (*FQ* IV.vii.26-7)

A. C. Hamilton locates the moment of Amoret's wounding in the second of these stanzas, which he glosses as an "implied allegory of sexual intercourse," and attributes the wounding to Amoret's being "overcome by lust" (IV.vii.27*n*). William Oram also sees the wound as a sexual one ("the effect of defloration"), and Martha J. Craig supports the same interpretation, citing the erotic imagery of the phallic spear and the Argument's "The Squire her loves."[1] Craig argues that the "color of Amoret's blood—'cole blacke'—indicates her . . . contamination," comparing it to the pollution of Shakespeare's Lucrece by Tarquin (333-4). The "sanguine red" blood that we saw Amoret shed in Busirane's castle (III.xii.20) is now infected with foul lust and black like the blood of Error and of the Dragon in Book I.

To interpret the instance of Amoret's wounding as occurring in the second, rather than the first, of these stanzas, and consequently to

interpret the wound as a sexual one, seems to me entirely wrong. The wound inflicted by Timias in the second stanza is inflicted not on Amoret, but on Lust. When Donald Cheney suggests as much, he is unnecessarily cautious: "if one can trust any single reading of Spenser's ambiguous pronouns" (22). It is true that the exigencies of the Spenserian stanza are not always conducive to pronominal precision. But that is not the case here. We never lose track of what each of the two combatants is doing. In the first of these stanzas, Timias is on the offensive, "greedy to be wroke" on Lust, while Lust defends himself using Amoret's body as a shield. That Lust breaks the puissance of Timias's intended stroke with Amoret's body cannot mean that Amoret is struck repeatedly, every time ("ever when") Timias thrusts. It is reasonable to suppose that, for most of these thrusts, Timias stops the spear before it touches Amoret: the power of the thrust breaks before her, not against her. Only a few times ("if it chaunst") is Timias unable fully to restrain the momentum of his stroke, and Amoret receives a "little blow." It is here, in the first of the two stanzas, that Amoret receives her wound, with no hint of graphic violence or sexual imagery. The gore that "gusht amaine" in the second stanza comes out of the body of Lust, when Timias "his hand so carefully did beare, / That at the last he did himselfe attaine, / And therein left the pike head of his speare." Timias stabs Lust, and the head of his spear is lodged in the wound (note that Timias removes no spearhead from Amoret's wound, which would have been the first order of business, had it been lodged there). It is Lust's monstrous, coal-black blood that gushes forth and stains Amoret's garments, not her own. The situation is surely made clear in the next stanza when we see Lust's enraged reaction to his wounding:

> With that he threw her rudely on the flore,
> And laying both his hands upon his glave,
> With dreadfull strokes let drive at him [Timias] so sore,
> That forst him flie abacke, himselfe to save... (IV.vii.28)

Had it been Amoret who was wounded, it would make no sense for Lust to drop her, since she has served him quite well for a shield. Lust drops his human buckler in a fit of rage because he is, for the first time, injured. His crafty, defensive, taunting style of combat will no longer suffice, and he needs the force of both his hands to drive Timias back. Although Timias cannot complete Amoret's rescue, he does manage to wound Lust and to make the monster let go of his prey.

The implications of this revised reading of the passage could be surprisingly far-reaching. For one, Spenser's portrayal of Amoret in this episode is more sympathetic that the traditional, sexual interpretation would have us believe. That the black blood is not, after all, hers clears Amoret of the guilt of internal contamination by Lust. As Thomas P. Roche says, her very encounter with Lust "need not be understood as a lapse in her own behavior" (116). Lust, in Amoret's case, is not so much an "interior quality" or a "psychological state," but an "external quality, more specifically, rape" (Roche 136-7). Unlike Lust's other captive, Aemylia, Amoret has no lustful intentions when she strays away from Britomart "for pleasure or for need." Amoret is instead the victim of another's lust. She is therefore inwardly untainted by Lust, and, with the exception of a few bruises and soiled garments, unharmed by his manhandling.

The most serious wound Amoret sustains is inflicted by honor, Timias. It is a blow to her *reputation* for chastity (Roche 137). Amoret has already been accused of faithlessness, by Ate, for keeping company and even sharing a bed with Britomart. After the Lust episode,

Amoret becomes more than ever vulnerable to harsh misjudgments of her virtue—to "misdeeming" by Belphoebe and later to defamation by Sclaunder (Cheney 23). She is not inwardly infected by Lust, but the stigma of Lust's black blood sticks to her. If we imagine for a moment what Belphoebe sees when she returns from her kill, her disdainful reaction to what she finds is understandable. She finds Timias on the ground, kissing and softly handling a "new lovely mate" who is covered head to foot in Lust's black blood. Timias himself is probably not much cleaner. Belphoebe, being absolute chastity, turns away disgusted, making no distinction between inward and outward contamination by Lust. The damage to Amoret's reputation is so severe that not even Arthur's all-healing balm of grace can cure it completely. Although Amoret physically recovers from her wound, she is still susceptible to Sclaunder's venomous speech, and remains so weak that she can barely keep her saddle (IV. viii.37). Spenser shows, as he does elsewhere in the *Faerie Queene*, a touching empathy for Amoret, on this occasion for her plight as a guiltless victim of slander and misdeeming—an empathy extending, surely, to the disgraced Elizabeth Throckmorton. It is ironic that Spenser's effort to portray Amoret's innocence in her encounter with Lust has elicited from his readers a conclusion opposite to the one he intended. The unflattering interpretation of Amoret's wounding as a sexual crime committed by Amoret and as a sign of her inward pollution by lust is yet another case of harsh misdeeming.

Endnote

[1] Oram 357, Craig 333. The antecedent of "her" in the Argument of IV.vii could be either Amoret or Belphoebe: "Amoret rapt by greedie lust / Belphebe saues from dread, / The Squire her loues . . . ."

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Article & Conference Abstracts

38.10

Paola Baseotto (IULM University of Milano), "Godly Sorrow, Damnable Despair and *Faerie Queene* I.ix." *Cahiers Élisabéthains* 69 (Spring 2006): 1-11.

This article provides a reading of the Despair Canto in Book I of Spenser's *Faerie Queene* as an artful dramatization of the paradoxical nature of religious despair in Protestant thought as both a prerequisite to salvation and a door into damnation. Redcrosse's religious despair and attempted suicide at I.ix is one of the climaxes of his progress towards holiness. The narrative of his crisis is reminiscent of, although, I argue, more powerfully evoked than, the spiritual dramas described in morality plays such as Skelton's *Magnificence* and in *artes moriendi* such as Tomas Becon's *Sicke Mannes Salue*. —Abstract provided by the author.

38.11

Alan Ford (U. of Nottingham), "The Irish Historical Renaissance and the Shaping of Protestant History." *The Origins of Sectarianism in Early Modern Ireland*. Eds. Alan Ford and John McCafferty. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2005. 127-57.

Focuses on first histories of Ireland inspired by "Renaissance humanism", including works by Catholics Edmund Campion and Richard Stanyhurst, and Protestants John Hooker, Edmund Spenser, Meredith Hanmer, William Camden, James Ussher and James Ware. Argues that a "distinctively Protestant historiography" emerged that co-opted the earlier Catholic works and was itself varied in purpose. Holinshed's *Chronicles* (containing work by Stanyhurst and Hooker and influenced by Campion and Giraldus Cambrensis) shows "the English imperialist approach to Irish history." Spenser's *View*, "part polemic, part learned discourse" belongs to the same vein of "*Kulturkampf*" and stresses the barbaric Scythian roots of the Irish although it "demonstrates a serious and subtle interest in the Irish past" and uses Irish sources in a "nuanced" fashion. Hanmer, Camden and Ussher are all seen as more accommodating to and cooperative with Catholic histories and contemporary politics than Spenser and Hooker. Analysis of Ware focuses on his editing of the 1633 *View*. Since Ware includes the histories of Campion and Hanmer in this edition, this shows that "Ware was seeking to make a point—that Irish historiography had progressed, that the nation had largely overcome the bitter divisions and hatreds chronicled, even fostered, by" earlier Protestant historians. —Abstract provided by Thomas Herron.

38.12

Thomas Herron (East Carolina U.), "Early Modern Ireland and the New English Epic: Connecting Edmund Spenser and Sir George Carew." *Eolas: Journal of the American Society of Irish Medieval Studies* 1 (2006): 27-52.

Argues that the significance of New English veteran and administrator Sir George Carew and his controversial cousin Sir Peter Carew to the colonial ideology and historical allegories of *FQ* (in particular the Maleger episode) is underappreciated, as is Sir George's own effort at epic, i.e., his partial translation of Ercilla's *La Araucana*. Studies preliminary connections between these works and authors as well as John Hooker's *Irish Chronicle* (in Holinshed) and

argues for an increased appreciation of the interconnectedness of New English historiography and poetry. —Abstract provided by the author.

Spenser at MLA

The following papers were delivered at the MLA Convention in Philadelphia, December 2006.

SPENSER'S ACOUSTIC WORLDS

Sponsored by the International Spenser Society. Heather James (U. of Southern California) presiding.

38.13

Kenneth Gross (U. of Rochester) and Lois Potter (U. of Delaware, Newark), **"The Sounds of Allegory: Readings."**

38.14

Carol V. Kaske (Cornell U.), **"Sound and Sense in Spenser's Alexandrines."**

FQ is so regular that irregularities stand out, often serving an expressive or mimetic purpose. Alexandrines (a regularly recurring irregularity) often mimic not only increases but also spaciousness in length, breadth, depth, and height. Onomatopoeia or mimetic sound animates about 1.5% of the 617 alexandrines in Book I.

38.15

Michael Niemczyk (CUNY, Graduate Center), **"'Much like the Sowne of Swarming Bees': Spenser's Sound Miniature."**

Asking about the role played by sound in Spenser's poetry may seem like an odd sort of inquiry, especially in light of what is usually observed about his art: namely, its pictorial quality. Is not FQ a kind of verbalized pageant or a gallery of emblems, an artwork whose author is painterly? Given its many icons and symbols, the sensuous surfaces and scenes that hover in the mind's eye, we tend "to look and to see the shows it represents" (C.S. Lewis). Is sound not bound to be subordinate to sight in a poem so full of spatial pattern and imagery, moral and meaning, ideas of order and fixity?

Yet once we begin to think about the qualities that poetry shares with music—chiefly, sound and rhythm—we realize that sound plays no little part of the experience of reading Spenser. One reason for our critical neglect of sound may have to do with the vast scale, as well as microscopic detail, of Spenser's allegory. As we focus our analysis upon the nuances of finite episodes, we are less likely to appreciate the larger parallel that exists between his narrative art and polyphonic technique. On the other hand, a purely structural overview lifts us above that local concatenation of pleasing sounds, which lends to his verse an almost hypnotic charm and led early readers to speak of "mellifluous Spenser." A theoretical bias inherited from the Romantics may further discourage us from tracing the relations between the allegorical mode and counterpoint in music.

Much of the resonance of Spenser's allegory derives from the apparent discord between its visions of timeless truth and fixity—emblematized by the temple-like "Houses of Instruction"—and the experience of flux or mutability, as reflected in the conduct of a labyrinthine and shifting narrative. Despite this oscillation, however, we note his narrative's movement away from the monolithic, parallel idea-structure of Books I and II towards an increasingly humanized and aesthetic representation of experience in Books III and IV—a 'progress' already foreshadowed in the action of Book I, Canto i.

We ought not, then, to consider the poet's

practice of endless thematizing apart from his insistence that we treat his poem as a sensory phenomenon. My paper attends to the specifically sonic properties of this sensorium. Borrowing the notion of a "sound miniature" from Gaston Bachelard's Poetics of Space, I offer a close reading of—a careful listening to—the soundscape produced by Spenser's Cave of Morpheus. In my talk, I suggest we can understand the poem's twin themes of open-endedness and closure in terms of the interplay of the auditory and visual senses. These themes, I argue, are instantiated, at the microcosmic level, in the swarming sounds made possible by Spenser's use of language and by the peculiarities of his stanzaic form.

38.16

Jeff Dolven (Princeton U.), **"Spenser's Native Hexameter."**

Considers alternatives to the usual epic or continental genealogies of *The Faerie Queene*'s stanza's long last line. That line is sometimes sententious, sometimes grand, but sometimes up to nothing more than pushing the story along: "She turnd her bote about, and from them rowed quite." The caesura in such lines—falling in the middle, as it does roughly two thirds of the time—can have the weight of an unstated beat, so that the line splits in two. What we hear then is not a long line, but two short, four beat lines, each with an unstated beat at the end: as though it were part of the (invented) quatrain, "She turnd her bote about, / And from them rowed quite, / And though the knight looked longingly / She vanish'd from his sight." This experiment exposes the hexameter's family resemblance both to the ballad stanza and to the first line of the couplet in poulter's measure: a homely, nativist, and often narrative origin which competes with ancient claims on the sound of those six beats.

Announcements and Queries

38.17

Spenser Society 2006 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Attending: Dorothy Stephens, President; Katherine Eggert, Vice President; Craig Berry, Secretary-Treasurer; Jeff Dolven; Barbara Fuchs; Andrew Escobedo; Ken Gross; Heather James; Anne Lake Prescott; Sheila Cavanagh, *ex officio* representing *The Spenser Review*; Joe Loewenstein, guest presenting on behalf of the editors of the Oxford Spenser.

Absent: Garrett Sullivan, Jennifer Summit, Bart Van Es, Chris Warley

President D. Stephens called the meeting to order at noon on 12/28/2006, Susannah Foo Chinese Cuisine, 1512 Walnut Street, Philadelphia.

Treasurer's Report

After President D. Stephens called the meeting to order, Secretary-Treasurer C. Berry began with the treasurer's report. The main noteworthy item was that expenses for 2006 exceeded income by roughly $800.00. This compared with a positive balance of $98.00 for 2004-2005 combined. The primary cause of a negative balance was the necessity of increasing Society funding for the *Review*. Funding had already been increased from the historical $10.00 per member per year to $12.00 for 2006, with a further commitment to increase the Society contribution to $14.00 for 2007. The shortfall posed no immediate problem thanks to the Society's current bank balance, but necessitated an increase in standard domestic dues from $25.00 to $28.00, with corresponding increases for student and overseas members.

There was brief discussion concerning the funds the Society has in reserve in an amount roughly twice that of the annual budget. C. Berry pointed out that without a plan for the funds, it is difficult to invest them properly (with the right balance of liquidity and growth). B. Fuchs suggested an interest-bearing on-line bank account, which pays roughly the same as a CD, and agreed to send details to the Treasurer.

A. Prescott asked what we are doing to increase membership. C. Berry admitted that we are primarily dependent on word-of-mouth at present, but suggested obtaining a mailing list from the MLA of graduate students in English expressing an interest in Renaissance literature and sending a mailing. B. Fuchs suggested reciprocal advertising with the RSA or other appropriate organizations. S. Cavanagh agreed that the *Review* would be open to such a reciprocal arrangement.

Spenser Review Status

Editor S. Cavanagh reported on *Spenser Review* status. The continuation of Emory funding is contingent on administrative decisions that will be made in February 2007 at the earliest. Discussion revolved around contingency plans if the funding were to stop suddenly (though there are no indications it will). The possibility of a hiatus until further funding could be obtained or spending down Society funding earlier in the year while seeking other institutional funding for later in the year were discussed. The importance of Emory funding became clear when S. Cavanagh and C. Berry agreed that the Society portion of funding covers something less than half the costs of producing and mailing the *Review*. Other *Review* concerns include the occasional (but hopefully not growing) reluctance of publishers

to provide the *Review* with a review copy of a book, and the number of overdue reviews.

MacCaffrey Prize
Vice President K. Eggert reported for the 2006 MacCaffrey Prize committee she chaired, a committee that also included B. Fuchs and J. Summit. Joe Campana's *PMLA* article is the winner of the 2006 award [subsequently bestowed in person at the member luncheon]. Next year's award will be a book award and H. James and K. Gross agreed to serve on the committee.

Committee Rotations
A. Prescott, B. Fuchs, G. Sullivan, and H. James rotate off the Executive Committee at the end of 2006 and were thanked for their service. One of these terms started after a mid-term resignation, so only three replacements are necessary for terms starting in 2007. Joe Campana, Jessica Wolfe, and Judith Anderson have agreed to serve and the nominations were unanimously ratified by the Committee [and all three were subsequently voted in by acclamation at the member luncheon].

2007 Chicago MLA
A very brief discussion resulted in the following two sessions, with CFPs to be submitted to the *MLA Newsletter* by C. Berry before 5 January 2007:
Spenser and the Continent, B. Fuchs organizer, A. Prescott chair
Open Session, J. Dolven, organizer and chair

Hugh Maclean lecture.
Gordon Teskey has agreed to give the 2007 lecture; K. Eggert collected suggestions for possible 2008 speakers.

Oxford Spenser proposal
J. Loewenstein presented a request to the Committee from the editors of the in-progress Oxford edition. The request was that the Society function as a trustee of the edition and provide a stewardship and gatekeeping function for annotations of and corrections to the electronic version. The driver for this request is an NEH grant requirement for a long-term curatorial commitment. A. Prescott asked for clarification that we would be incurring an obligation for Society members not yet born, and indeed this appears to be the case. The Committee was universally supportive of the work the editors are doing and agreed to consider the request, though no concrete requirements were stated and no decisions were made.

Spenserian Stanza Prize
D. Stephens announced that Terry Krier has agreed to judge the 2007 Spenserian Stanza Prize co-sponsored by the Society and Andrew Zurcher's Edmund Spenser Home Page. Submissions should go to A. Zurcher (aez20@cam.ac.uk) by 25 March.

International Spenser Conference 2010
D. Stephens asked whether anyone is working on the next conference and received a negative answer from those present. She then noted that past conference committees have largely done their work with only informal support from the Executive Committee.

38.18

International Spenser Society 2006 Treasurer's Report (as of 12/21/2006)
From Craig A. Berry, Secretary-Treasurer

Overview:	
Starting Balance	$ 15,665.24
Expenses	$ 6,595.60
Income	$ 5,801.96
Ending Balance	$ 14,871.60

Expense breakdown:	
Member Luncheon	$ 987.00
Spenser Review	$ 4,143.00
Awards & Honoraria	$ 650.00
Toronto Conference	$ 500.00
PayPal fees	$ 180.06
Miscellaneous	$ 135.54

Comments
- Expenses exceeded income by $793.64
- *Review* expense includes $1023 in catch-up from 2005

38.19

Spenser at Kalamazoo would like to announce the following panels in the Forty-First International Congress on Medieval Studies, 2007, organized by Clare Kinney (U. of Virginia), Ted Steinberg (SUNY Fredonia), and David Scott Wilson-Okamura (East Carolina U.).

Spenser at Kalamazoo I: Medieval into Renaissance
Presider: Jennifer Summit (Stanford U.)

Beth Quitslund (Ohio U.), Opening Remarks

F. W. Brownlow (Mount Holyoke College), "The British Church in *The Shepheardes Calender*"

Hannah Crawforth (Princeton U.), "*The Shepheardes Calender* and Early Old English Studies"

Michael Masiello (Rutgers U.), "*Novus Vates* and *Novus Poeta*: Spenser's "Ad Ornatissimum virum" and Harvey's *Gratulationes Valdinenses*"

John Watkins (U. of Minnesota), Response

Spenser at Kalamazoo II: Spenser's Shaping Fantasies
Rachel Hile Bassett (Indiana U.—Purdue U., Fort Wayne), "The Limitations of Concord in the Thames-Medway Marriage Canto of *The Faerie Queene*"

Marianne Micros (U. of Guelph), "Dancing in Delight: Dance as Indicator of Cultural Change in the Poetry of Edmund Spenser"

Andrew Wadowski (U. of Rochester), "Spenser's Ciceronian Defense of Exile: A New Argument for the Structural Unity of *Colin Clouts Come Home Again*"

Anne Lake Prescott, Response

Spenser at Kalamazoo III: Elizabethan Policy Debates
Presider: David Scott Wilson-Okamura

Joel Dodson (U. of Notre Dame), "Conformity and Confession in *The Shepheardes Calender*"

Bruce Danner (Skidmore College), "Back to the Future: Spenser's Retrospective Fictions of Authenticity in *Virgils Gnat*"

Scott Lucas (The Citadel), "Spenser's Poetry and

the Dream of the Godly Commonwealth"

Donald Stump (Saint Louis U.), "Spenser, Humanism, and Monarchy: Book V of *The Faerie Queene* as an Affront To Elizabeth"

Beth Quitslund, Closing Remarks

38.20

Formation of the Explorations at Kilcolman Committee

Arising from the International Spenser Society conference at Toronto (May 2006), it is proposed to assemble an international research committee that would oversee and pursue further geographical, archaeological and historical work in relation to Kilcolman Castle, County Cork, and its hinterland. Kilcolman was owned and occupied for roughly a decade by Spenser as part of the large-scale colonial directive known as the Munster Plantation (begun 1584). Eric Klingelhofer's recently published excavation of the site, while invaluable, was only a test excavation and far more must be done in terms of the site itself and Spenser's surrounding material culture and society. The EK ("Explorations at Kilcolman") Committee will concentrate initially on identifying courses of action and pursuing funding sources in Europe and North America. The long-term goals of the project include exploration of Spenser's social, cultural, historical, and geographical context as a planter in Munster. The current organizing group is presently composed of Eric Klingelhofer (Mercer U.), John Bradley (NUI-Maynooth), Sheila Cavanagh (Emory U.), Judith Owens (U. Manitoba), Willy Maley (U. Glasgow), Tom Finan (St. Louis U.), Christopher Burlinson (Emmanuel College, Cambridge U.), James Lyttleton (NUI-Cork) and Thomas Herron (East Carolina U.), and is looking for further members and input. Senior Spenserians, historians, and archaeologists with relevant grant-writing experience are especially encouraged to help. The International Medieval conference at Kalamazoo, MI would be a preferred place for the group to meet on an ad hoc basis or otherwise. All input and ideas welcome.

Contact: Thomas Herron, herront@ecu.edu, (252)752-6413

The Spenser Review
c/o Sheila Cavanagh
Emory University
Department of English
537 Kilgo Circle, Suite N302
Atlanta, GA 30322

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