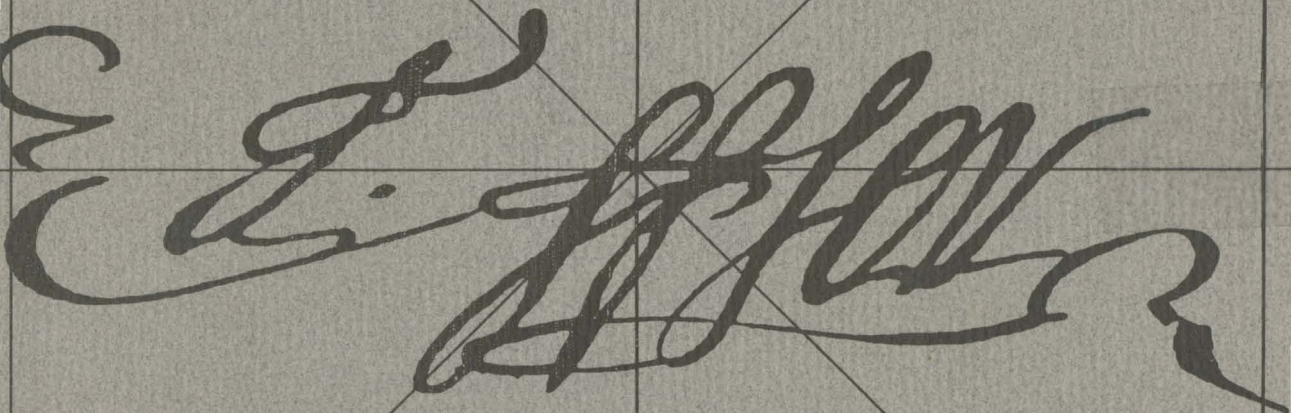


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CONTENTS

TO OUR READERS	55
BOOKS: REVIEWS AND NOTICES	56
Barkan, Leonard. <i>The Gods Made Flesh: Metamorphosis and the Pursuit of Paganism.</i>	56
Ferguson, Margaret W., Maureen Quilligan, and Nancy J. Vickers, eds. <i>Rewriting the Renaissance: The Discourses of Sexual Difference in Early Modern Europe.</i>	59
Greene, Thomas L. <i>The Vulnerable Text: Essays on Renaissance Literature.</i>	61
Sessions, William A. <i>Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey.</i>	63
ARTICLES: ABSTRACTS AND NOTICES	64
ANNOUNCEMENTS	72
SPENSER BIBLIOGRAPHY UPDATE, 1985	73
INDEX TO VOLUME 18	81

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

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TO OUR READERS

87.84 Perhaps it would be helpful if I mention here that our usual "Articles: Abstracts and Notices" section has been enriched in this issue by the recent appearance of an unusual number of volumes of essays devoted to Renaissance studies -- in addition to the two such volumes reviewed below. All contain work which is likely to be of great interest to Spenserians, even though most of the essays do not deal directly with Spenser. Since not all of the volumes have been conspicuously advertised, and since this issue of the *Newsletter* cannot accommodate material from all of them, here is the list of recent (or relatively recent) arrivals:

Garber, Marjorie, ed. *Cannibals, Witches, and Divorce: Estranging the Renaissance*. Selected Papers from the English Institute, 1985, ns 11. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987. (See items 87.96, 103, below.)

Heller, Thomas C., Morton Sosna, and David E. Wellerby, eds. *Reconstructing Individualism: Autonomy, Individuality, and the Self in Western Thought*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1986.

Kinney, Arthur F. *Studies in The Faerie Queene*. *ELR* 17, no. 2 (Spring 1987).

Lewalski, Barbara Kiefer, ed. *Renaissance Genres: Essays on Theory, History, and Interpretation*. Harvard English Studies 14. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986.

Parker, Patricia, and David Quint, eds. *Literary Theory / Renaissance Texts*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986. (See item 87.XX, below.)

Other recent books likely to be of special interest to many readers of *Spenser Newsletter* are:

Waller, Gary. *English Poetry of the Sixteenth Century*. Longman Literature in English Series. London: Longman, 1986.

Waswo, Richard. *Language and Meaning in the Renaissance*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987.

Waller's book, a "revisionist" history of sixteenth-century literature, provides a thorough guide to recent work classifiable as Marxist and "new historicist" in mode. Waswo's is an impressively learned treatment of Renaissance language theory, prepared by an author whose learning extends also to current movements in literary theory.

87.85 We welcome Mary Ellen O'Shields to the *Spenser Newsletter* staff. Mary Ellen brings to her position as editorial assistant not only learning in Renaissance studies and experience in editing, but extensive and welcome expertise in the use of computers and word-processing as well as database software. And we are happy to welcome back Deborah Price, whose experience in managing the day-to-day operations of the office is

again proving invaluable. Finally, we are fortunate to have begun to receive the contributions of Dr. Anthony M. Esolen, who will act as assistant editor.

BOOKS: REVIEWS AND NOTICES

- 87.86 Barkan, Leonard. *The Gods Made Flesh: Metamorphosis and the Pursuit of Paganism*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986. xvi + 398 pp. 38 black & white illustrations. \$30.00.

The aim of this ambitious volume is to describe the history and meaning of the metamorphosis in Western culture from antiquity to the Renaissance. Certainly this is, in Barkan's words, a "Big Subject," but is it, any more than stasis, a manageable one? Barkan's elusive subject manifests itself in poetry and painting, history and philosophy, theology and anthropology. *The Gods Made Flesh* makes brief excursions into these fields, but the book deals primarily with three texts -- Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Dante's *Divine Comedy*, and Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* -- and related artworks. As an art historian, Barkan believes that the history of pagan metamorphosis reflects the history of artistic inspiration from the age of Dante to that of Velazquez. Barkan lavishly demonstrates the peculiar fascination transformed bodies held for the Renaissance. *The Gods Made Flesh* is a wide-ranging, even daring work of synthesis, integrating artistic and literary masterpieces in a rare overview of the Renaissance imagination. In tracing his "history of artistic inspiration," however, Barkan leaves out the kind of immediate pressures underlying even the most inspired masterworks. Scholars interested in particular authors and works, including Spenserians, are liable to find many of Barkan's readings reductive, as local cruxes are consumed by the overarching concern with flux.

The organization of *The Gods Made Flesh* is as diverse as its subject. Because he believes that "the imagination evolves with a mysterious genetics," Barkan avoids a simple linear, chronological approach. Instead, in his six chapters Barkan adopts a variety of divergent approaches to metamorphosis: close readings, studies of intertextuality, cultural histories. The dominant mode, however, is structuralist. Barkan is concerned to show that metamorphosis reflects fundamental, recurrent patterns in Western culture. Thus individual artists often struggle with past masters -- Titian repaints Bellini and Shakespeare rewrites Ovid's fables -- but these encounters express underlying similarities of thought. Interestingly, Barkan's fine essay "Diana and Actaeon: The Myth as Synthesis," (*ELR* 80), proceeded on the assumption that "a myth ... has its own structure and its own history of interpretation," but in his book Barkan has abandoned the logic of tracing matters historically. The diverse approaches he applies seem more fashionable than illuminating, often drawing attention away from the works being discussed.

The opening chapter, "Tapestry Figures," is a case in point. Barkan isolates the weaving contest between Arachne and Minerva in *Metamorphoses* VI as a "paradigm of metamorphosis." The story presupposes a layered universe -- divine, human, and animal -- in which metamorphosis is the vehicle whereby individuals move among the layers. Arachne's fluid, metamorphic artwork is aesthetically superior to Minerva's formal, moralistic one; and while Arachne's art will come to typify the metamorphic tradition,

her pride and weakness before the goddess bring about her immediate degradation into a spider.

Having aptly highlighted the structure of this episode, Barkan immediately turns to the seventeenth century to illustrate the fable's afterlife. He daringly proposes that the subject of Velazquez's *Las Hilanderas* (The Spinners), recently identified as the virtuous Lucretia, is actually the fable of Arachne. This identification enables Barkan to resolve a number of enigmas about the painting. Thus the tall, helmeted figure becomes Minerva, raising her arm to threaten Arachne; the scenes, layered from background to foreground, enable the artist to modulate self-consciously from static myth to its recreation and reception; the innermost figure of Europa, depicted within this legend as in Ovid's, becomes the counterpart of Arachne. Europa's appearance leads to various speculations on Europa's preeminence among classical figures depicted during the Renaissance. Themes glimpsed in Europa's story -- ekphrasis or extended description indicating the instability of matter, exogamy or sexual union as necessary for growth, and etiology as the union of a psyche and its manifestation (Europa as land mass) -- will reappear in Barkan's discussion of other fables. In tracing these themes, Barkan summarizes the classical aesthetic as "an aesthetic of metamorphosis." (For the view that Ovid's sensibilities represent a break with the classical aesthetic, see W. R. Johnson, "The Counter-Classical Sensibility," *CSCA* 70.)

As this introduction indicates, Barkan is nearly as skilled as Arachne in weaving together diverse subjects into a fluid web. Yet as his argument unfolds, Barkan too often depends on generalizations, metonymy, and allegorical readings -- all forms of abstraction away from details. It seems harmless to generalize, as Barkan does, that normally metamorphosis originates in unexplained sanctity, has violence as its mode, operates through a mirror stage, involves exogamy, and results in expansion of human identity. But his conclusion that homosexuality, equally with incest and self-love, is a "deviation" representing "a refusal to affirm the world outside the self" shows the harm in establishing normative patterns. At the same time, Barkan's idiosyncratic method of associating ideas too often strains the reader's belief. Barkan devotes his second chapter to tracing through the *Metamorphoses* the paradox that the natural world appears as magical and the magical world natural, a paradox he claims is at the heart of all poetry. He asserts that, together with the Deucalion and Pyrrha episode, the Phaeton story "completes Ovid's basic description of our world and the world of the poem": Why, then, continue the poem for twelve more books? While reducing Ovid's poem to such allegories, Barkan misses the poet's wit, for instance, in the familial humor between the adolescent Phaeton and his permissive father Sol. Barkan bases his claim that cannibalism is the ultimate crime of metamorphosis on the story of Erysichthon, a cartoon-like figure whose all-consuming appetite threatens to engulf continents.

While Barkan's readings tend to be reductive, his strengths as a critic emerge in his ability to synthesize widely scattered material. Barkan's chapter surveying the reception of the *Metamorphoses* during the Middle Ages is simply the best available account of this bizarre history. He skillfully shows how Augustine's view that Demons could create *images* or phantoms (not real entities) of transformed bodies worked in two powerful ways: theologically, it allowed the pagan gods to coexist with the God of Israel; artistically, it located the metamorphic gods within an intermediate realm of phantasms, dreams, and immateriality -- in short, of the imagination. With help from Ambrose,

Boethius, Lactantius, and others, Christian artists were free to associate pagan forms of change with the prodigious fantasies familiar to all sinners. Skipping over medieval artists, Barkan distinguishes the styles of various Renaissance painters -- the "melting sensuousness" of Corregio, the "weighty muscularity" of Titian, the "fleshly immediacy" of Michelangelo -- in fulfilling this possibility. And there are fascinating details about scenes from Ovid, primarily Apollo's pursuit of Daphne, carved into wedding chests, or *cozzoni*, for European brides.

When he turns to literary texts, Barkan's analyses seem thin. *The Divine Comedy* chiefly yields evidence of mirror relationships reflecting exchanges of identity between humans and beasts. Barkan suggests that Petrarch, by describing himself as a shell in the *Rime*, is translating the allegorists' *integumentum*, their way of disposing of the profane covering of Ovid's tales. Ronsard turns metamorphosis into mere fantasy, or wish-fulfillment. Shifting to a feminist approach, Barkan shows how Shakespeare used the Philomela story in *Titus Andronicus* and *The Rape of Lucrece* to condemn the silencing of women. Barkan strains in attempting to prove that the love-juice in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is "an original etiology in the Ovidian mode" rather than a folk or romance motif, such as the love potion in *Tristan and Isolde*. Overall, Barkan's rapid coverage leaves out too much to be fully convincing. Thomas Greene's treatment of these authors' imitation of pagan classics in *The Light in Troy* remains a far fuller, richer account.

Spenserians will find in *The Gods Made Flesh* some teasing generalizations and one promising new idea. *The Faerie Queene* presents "the complete operation of Renaissance metamorphosis and the revival of paganism," Barkan proclaims, but he supports this claim with a brief analysis of only two episodes: The House of Busirane and the Mutabilitie Cantos. Barkan's notes refer readers to the essential scholarship up to 1976, but they do not mention crucial recent works by Richard Ringler, John Guillory and others. Nevertheless, Barkan brings a fresh perspective to Spenser studies. He proposes that the "Antickes" in the House of Busirane refer specifically to Nero's Golden House, unearthed in the early sixteenth century and widely imitated thereafter. By Spenser's time the *grotteschi* or grotto style could be seen as the grotesquerie of multiple, changing pagan art. On a first reading, Barkan's conclusion sounds helpful: the Spenserian tapestry shows that "[w]hat most essentially characterizes the Renaissance is a metamorphic aesthetic." On reflection, one is left wondering exactly what that metamorphic aesthetic is and does.

Overall, *The Gods Made Flesh* is uneven. It is most unsatisfactory in Barkan's dubious, grandiloquent generalizations, for example: "What pervades every moment of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is visible ... throughout the length and breadth of Shakespeare's works: Ovid, metamorphosis, paganism, and antiquity." It is innovative yet debatable in some of Barkan's particular claims. But it is most helpful and useful in providing a learned synthesis of Renaissance literature and art, joined by their peculiar pursuit of the wonder and power of the pagan gods made flesh.

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87.87 Ferguson, Margaret W., Maureen Quilligan, and Nancy J. Vickers, eds. *Rewriting the Renaissance: The Discourses of Sexual Difference in Early Modern Europe*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986. xxxi + 426 pp. \$50.00, cloth; 15.95 paper.

The three editors of *Rewriting the Renaissance*, Margaret Ferguson, Maureen Quilligan, and Nancy Vickers, facilitate and to a degree complicate the reviewer's task by providing both an informative introduction to the topic their volume treats, namely, expressions of the sex-gender system in Europe during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and judicious summaries of the bearing on this topic of each of the eighteen essays included (xv-xxxi). Rightly objecting to Burckhardt's claim that upper-class women of the Renaissance "'stood on a footing of perfect equality with men,'" the editors first emphasize the impact of capitalism, or the conditions of production, on women's lives and, in particular, a growing separation between the workplace and the home and the displacement of domestic production by wages earned outside the home (xvii). They add that the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries witness the now-familiar redefinition of "women's work": the bourgeois woman in the home is essentially a wife and mother; her work "is not considered real [economically significant] because it does not directly contribute to capitalist production"; the proletarian woman's work, such as spinning, likewise "becomes increasingly invisible" to social and economic history (xviii-xix).

According to the editors, "The Rise of the Nuclear Family in Early Modern England," as Lawrence Stone described it, intersects with the effects of capitalism on the position of women. They recapitulate three of Stone's points: (1) the increasing, exclusive importance of the nuclear family; (2) the increasing importance of affective bonds within it and, correlatively, its decreasing importance as a unit of production; (3) the strengthening of "the pre-existing patriarchal aspects of internal power relationships within the family" (xviii). In passing, I might add that there is virtually nothing in the volume proper about the greater importance of affective bonds within the conjugal family, while there is extensive space -- indeed by far the longest of three sections -- devoted to "the Politics of Patriarchy." For the editors, at least, patriarchy is the abiding theme of the volume, serving also as a subtitle for the second and third sections. Surprisingly, however, the essays in the first section, which examines patriarchy directly and focuses almost exclusively on England, display little sense of the preexistence of patriarchy and its relevance to historical interpretation. One looks in vain for sustained comparisons with earlier periods that could confirm and further define a specifically Renaissance phenomenon. The single-mindedness of the editors' engagement with patriarchy thus suggests a lack of balance in an otherwise useful and sometimes fascinating book.

Single-mindedness is a characteristic, moreover, of a number of the ideologically focused essays in *Rewriting*, which tend to ignore the established possibility of alternative readings: for example, when Coppelia Kahn overlooks the possibility that Cordelia is not entirely flawless in her initial encounter with Lear ("The Absent Mother in *King Lear*," 40); or when as accomplished a cultural analyst as Louis Montrose overlooks the possibility that there might be other, less selfless ways of interpreting Oberon's jealousy of Titania's "lovely boy" besides seeing it as an "attempt to take the

boy from an infantilizing mother and to make a man of him" ("A *Midsummer Night's Dream* and the Shaping Fantasies of Elizabethan Culture," 74).

One of the strengths of *Rewriting* is the interdisciplinary and international nature of the collection. Three essays concern art history, two social history, and three French and Italian literature; ten concern English literature. For me, perhaps because I was often less cognizant of the subjects treated, the essays outside the field of English literature were among the most impressive. Two that proved especially memorable are Merry Wiesner's "Spinsters and Seamstresses: Women in Cloth and Clothing Production" in sixteenth-century Germany, which tends to corroborate Marxist and feminist views in the introduction of this volume, and Judith Brown's discussion of "Women's Work in Renaissance Tuscany," which tends to challenge them. Another of note is Sheila Ffolliott's essay on Catherine de' Medici's use of the ancient figure of Artemisia, also a widowed queen, to legitimate her political aims; Catherine's strategies parallel those of Elizabeth I, as described by Frances Yates and Roy Strong. The essays on English materials not mentioned elsewhere in this review include Jonathan Goldberg on Stuart family portraits, Stephen Orgel on "Prospero's Wife," John Guillory on *Samson Agonistes*, Peter Sallibrass on "The Body Enclosed" (with a couple of paragraphs on Britomart), Marguerite Waller on Shakespeare's *Richard III*, and Constance Jordan on "Elyot's *Defense of Good Women*."

Two of the essays on English literature -- Lauren Silberman's on "Androgynous Discourse in Book 3 of *The Faerie Queene*" [SpN 87.11] and Clark Hulse's on "Stella's Wit: Penelope Rich as Reader of Sidney's Sonnets" -- could have been included in most collections of essays on the Elizabethan period; while they are not misplaced in this volume, they seem out of key with the more single-minded interrogations of patriarchy in literature. Hulse argues that *Astrophil and Stella* derives from the authority not only of Sidney but also of Penelope Rich and that she is "the virtual coauthor of the sonnets," insofar as she "exercises authority by her *virtu* (273, 279). Rejecting any hegemonic model -- whether of the Elizabethan court or of power itself -- Hulse finds in the struggle for control over the sonnets a pattern characterizing the political milieu of the court (273, 285-86). Silberman focuses on Britomart, Amoret in the House of Busirane, and the Gardens of Adonis to argue that Spenser challenges Petrarchan and Platonic assumptions in a genuinely "revisionary" way (260, 263). In Britomart he asserts the active female role that Petrarchanism excludes, and in the Gardens, "the female and physical components of procreation" that Platonic dualism subverts (263, 268-71).

Although the editors of *Rewriting* consider all its essays feminist, they locate their challenge to the canonical tradition primarily in the interpretation of "canonical texts, generally by men, in heretical ways" (xxi). Often, they continue, feminists using Marxist, psychoanalytic, or deconstructive methods can expose what is "suppressed or consigned to the margin by the dominant ideological discourses" of the society (xxii). Then, referring to the anamorphic skull of Holbein's painting *The Ambassadors*, they observe that some objects cannot properly be seen "unless the viewer adopts an oblique ... perspective on the picture" (xxii). Admirable in these statements are the openness and self-awareness of the obliquity of the preferred method. Granting its assumptions, as in theory I am willing to do in reading this book, I balk at such a radical, though ingenious, application of it as Richard Halpern's argument that in *Comus*, the real menace is to the male poet rather than to the Lady: in fact, since Comus is the son of Bacchus and

Bacchus-Dionysius is associated with maenads who are in turn responsible for the dismemberment of Orpheus, an event known to have haunted Milton's imagination, and since Comus' mother is Circe, another threat to chaste manhood, the true villain of the piece is none other than the Lady herself, and the threat to patriarchy is Milton's unrecognized but fundamental concern (89-93). Does obliquity have *any* limits? If we stand far enough to the side or squint hard enough does the picture disappear? Halpern's careful and inventive essay represents the provocative issues the heretical approach can raise.

In contrast, Carla Freccero's equally feminist essay, "The Other and the Same: The Image of the Hermaphrodite in Rabelais" is direct and compelling and, incidentally, of interest to Spenserians because it demonstrates that the hermaphrodite is potentially an image "*in malo*" for the Renaissance (151), as some would regard it in the canceled ending of Spenser's Book III. Freccero argues that Gargantua's medallion or *impresa* (*Gargantua*, ch. 7) is an image of "erotic sameness," "an androcentric reading of the hermaphrodite," rather "than an androgynous reconciliation of erotic differences" (152-53). She is unflinching in her rebuke of "the blind complicity of ... (masculine) interpreters, who find in the image of Rabelais' hermaphrodite a symbol of human totality" (158).

I would suggest two points in concluding. First, *Rewriting the Renaissance* is more mixed in quality, method, and principle than a polemical introduction, however helpful, necessarily implies. Second, it is a tribute to the editors that their selections demonstrate a number of ways in which a feminist outlook is more diverse and individual than any single ideology or theory would make it.

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87.88 Greene, Thomas L. *The Vulnerable Text: Essays on Renaissance Literature*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1986. 254 pp. \$32.50.

In *The Vulnerable Text*, Thomas L. Greene gathers essays, formerly appearing elsewhere, on various Renaissance authors -- Erasmus, Montaigne, Rabelais, Shakespeare, de Sceve and others. All share the theme that language and texts are vulnerable -- to time, to the pressures of the social or psychological mediation the text is called upon to perform, to the instability of meaning itself. The best essays are those on Petrarch, Castiglione, Machiavelli, and Shakespeare's *Love's Labor's Lost*. There is no essay on Spenser's work, but for Spenser scholars, the most suggestive essay is "History and Anachronism," in which Greene describes five kinds of historical misunderstanding or deliberate juxtaposition of different historical styles. The degree of Spenser's self-consciousness of the anachronism of romance at the end of the sixteenth century needs careful description for many reasons, not the least because of the artificial supports for chivalric literature in the social practices of Elizabeth's court.

The textual "vulnerability" that Greene describes makes the effort of writers to create linguistic order a heroic one, and to some readers Greene may have made his authors sound a little too heroic by deconstructively romanticizing the darkness of the "chaos" (abyss, end of discourse, crisis, aporia) that their texts assault. But if

romanticization of meaninglessness is the price one has to pay for criticism that still holds to the connection of literature with a consolation of philosophy and that is beautifully and often wittily written (Greene calls one of the classical metaphors for *imitatio* "mellification" [p.219]), then I am willing to grant Greene his romantic inclinations. These essays are a great pleasure to read.

I am especially willing to grant Greene his romantic inclinations because they are tempered by respect for the historical otherness of a text and by the belief that such respect produces self-knowledge and self-discipline ("Anti-Hermeneutics: Sonnet 129," pp. 168-9). Nevertheless, some aspects of Greene's historical interpretations might need scrutiny. How much does Greene exaggerate Petrarch's self-conscious subjectivity when he meditates on Petrarch's use of *umbra*? Greene quotes a letter from Petrarch to his brother Gherardo, a Carthusian monk, in which Petrarch describes the life of a poet: "Some see you journeying in the open, others in secret, avoiding open ground and preferring shadows; they wish not to be sullied by contact nor to attract scorn by too loose familiarity, but rather to be seen by few and approached with difficulty" (p. 30). Greene uses this passage to show Petrarch's awareness of the shadowedness of poetry. But the unmistakable echoes of Horace's *ut pictura poesis* suggest less that the passage shows Petrarch's individualized consciousness of language than the general dependence of Renaissance writers on classical texts as grids for mapping experience.

Another aspect of Greene's historical understanding that might need scrutiny is his assumption that the chaos surrounding a text is a universal and terrible truth of life. But even chaos itself needs to be historicized. For instance, in the essay on Castiglione's *Courtier*, Greene argues that Bembo's mysticism at the end of Book IV "constitutes the supreme denial of the company, the game, and the society behind them" and creates "a moment of sublime silence that is a terrible silence, a moment when the collective heartbeat has stopped, when the game is no longer being played." Emilia Pia's gentle teasing of Bembo, according to Greene, restores conversation, "and the crisis has passed" (p.60). But surely Giuliano's subsequent references to St. Francis, Mary Magdalene, St. Paul, and Christ establish the fundamental Christianity of this society and make Cesare Gonzaga's remark that "it is already day" a reference to the morning of the risen Christ, a morning which limits any crisis and terror. In certain historical periods, chaos is the darkness of the Christian pit, ultimately circumscribed by God's power, a power that is so fundamental to Urbino's little society that it is the very ground of its gaiety and game-playing. Does Greene's failure to take into account the Christian references at the end of Book IV reveal a silent assumption that respecting the historicity of a text in the interest of self-knowledge and self-discipline does not go so far as respecting the text's religious assumptions? And might the quality of the game playing in Castiglione's *Courtier* be better understood as a form of the medieval *debat*, deriving from the classical schools of declamation, in which the writer at the end acknowledges a larger context demanding more serious moral judgment? (See the discussion of Andreas Capellanus' *Art of Courtly Love* in Wesley Trimpi, *Muses of One Mind: The Literary Analysis of Experience and Its Continuity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), pp. 334-5.)

Finally, as Greene's preface shows, he knows his criticism is vulnerable to New Historicists. Indeed, some of these tough-talkers will regard one of Greene's stylistic habits -- syntactical parallelism that is also semantic parallelism with subtle variations in meaning -- as a sure sign of humanistic *bel canto*, a lyric criticism that betrays an

author's neglect of the complicity between literature and struggles for power. In the opening discussion of Greene's *Light in Troy*, the critical school that had to be answered was deconstruction, and Greene's defense of taking *imitatio* seriously essentially came down to the power of civilization to stabilize meanings. I would have liked to hear in *The Vulnerable Text* an answer to the New Historicist's charge that "civilization" is merely the academy's word for "institutions that maintain entrenched power." In fact, the power of institutions to stabilize meanings is a crucial argument, though not necessarily one in defense of *imitatio* so much as reexamination of the deconstructionists' assumptions. For in the same way that the playful inconclusiveness of the medieval *debat* depended on and often confirmed the stability of autocratic power and theological dogma, the deconstructionists' instability of meaning can be regarded as the playfulness of a modern *debat*, both depending on and confirming the rigidity of the bureaucracy and modern dogmas.

Whereas Greene's answer to the deconstructionist in *The Light in Troy* was to observe that institutions do in fact stabilize meanings, his answer to the New Historicist must be to *defend* the civilizing meanings that institutions stabilize, and perhaps to acknowledge that not all the meanings that institutions stabilize are civilizing. Greene's answer to the New Historicist is, however, simple denial. He cautions that the New Historicist's demystifications produce remystification but fails to explain how. Moreover, he asserts that a text "if it is worth studying, will in its own turn remystify itself, positively, productively, after its dissection" (p. xv). I suspect that this argument ultimately comes down to a position enunciated by both Plato and Aristotle that virtue is defined by the actions of a virtuous person, the assumption being that we agree about who is virtuous even if we cannot define virtue. Greene assumes that we agree what works remystify themselves even if we cannot define what remystification is.

I am not as unhappy with this position as some might be. I simply wish Greene would pursue the argument a little further, because a full answer to the New Historicist must be a defense of the potential of literature to civilize, and what "civilization" means will come down to an argument about human nature and the polity, as Plato's and Aristotle's discussions of virtue show. A defense of the connection between literature and civilization might come from Hannah Arendt, to whom Greene refers in the essay on Castiglione. It is a testimony to the power of Greene's prose, his learning, his respect for these texts, that he makes one want such a defense from him in particular, if only to have a better rejoinder to the cat-callers in the balcony than that they are being rude.

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87.89 Sessions, William A. *Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey*. Twayne's English Author's Series 429. Boston: G. K. Hall, 1986. xvi + 172 pp. \$19.95.

In 1557 when he published the miscellany properly called *Songes and Sonettes*, Richard Tottel shrewdly added on the title page that the pieces were "written by the ryght honorable Lorde Henry Haward late Earle of Surrey, and other." The prominence given to Surrey bespoke his notoriety as a scheming politician at the court of Henry VIII and to a lesser extent his accomplishments as an innovative poet. Tottel's miscellany was kept continuously in print until 1587, going through at least eight more editions; and during

the course of the century, Surrey's reputation as a poet overcame his failure in the struggle for political power. Among poets writing in English, he was ranked by Elizabethans second only to Chaucer. In *The defence of poesie*, for example, Sidney mentioned but two English poets by name: Chaucer and Surrey.

In our own time Surrey has fallen into the shadow of his older contemporary, Wyatt. In this welcome study, however, Sessions makes a strong case for seeing Surrey as a major English poet, in terms both of his later influence and of his poetical achievement. Sessions begins with a biography of Surrey, scion of the ancient Howard family and victim of the turbulent politics that accompanied the last years of Henry VIII. Next comes a chapter placing Surrey in the humanist movement, followed by five more chapters devoted to an examination of the poems themselves grouped according to their verse forms (sonnets, songs, other forms such as poulter's measure, elegies, and blank verse translations from the *Aeneid*). Every item in the canon receives its due.

The readings are seasoned and judicious, yet animated, disclosing the inherent drama of the poems. As a critic, Sessions is purposefully eclectic rather than doctrinaire, and he succeeds in revealing the craftsmanship that characterizes this courtly maker. The topics covered include the rhetorical strategy employed by the poem's persona, the subtleties of the actual language used, and the semantic implications of the metrical structure. Sessions also reveals the rich intertextuality of the poems, especially the reverberations from Vergil, Petrarch, Chaucer, and Wyatt. The treatment of the two Geraldine poems (62-66) exemplifies the dexterity and integrity of the analysis.

This study provides a comprehensive overview of Surrey's brief (ten-year) literary career. Because it scrupulously analyzes each of the fifty-eight items attributed to Surrey, it also serves as a handy reference for someone seeking an informed discussion of any given poem.

S. K. Heninger, Jr.
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ARTICLES: ABSTRACTS AND NOTICES

- 87.90 Allen, Michael J. B. "The Second Ficino-Pico Controversy: Parmenidean Poetry, Eristic, and the One." *Marsilio Ficino e il Ritorno di Platone: Studi e Documenti II*, Gian Carlo Garfagnini, ed. Firenze: Leo S. Olschki, 1986. 417-455.

Aristotelian at heart and heavily indebted to Thomism, Pico della Mirandola wished to unite the ontologies of Plato and Aristotle by asserting that Plato had, like his disciple, identified the One with Being. In his *De Ente et Uno*, Pico sets himself squarely against the Neoplatonists and his friend Ficino, all of whom maintain that Plato's *Parmenides* (wherein the One is said to be utterly transcendent) represents the pinnacle of his theological thought. According to Pico, that dialogue is properly understood as an eristic, a dialectical jeu d'esprit wherein nothing is positively asserted. Such a heretical reading of the *Parmenides* had long since been refuted -- or so they believed -- by the exegetically scrupulous Neoplatonists, and by Proclus in particular. But Ficino takes up

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Pico's challenge by acknowledging the playful element in the dialogue and then linking that playfulness with divine inspiration. For Ficino, Plato and the aged Parmenides are supreme dialectician-poets, "jesting in seriousness (*iocari serio*) and playing in earnest (*studiosissime ludere*)." In order to follow the weave of irony, etymological quibbling, and theological profundity in the *Parmenides* one must therefore prepare oneself with a proper combination of emotional sobriety and intellectual boldness. Ficino thus avoids both the reductionism of a purely eristic reading of Plato and the exegetical excesses of Proclus, whose failure to understand the poetic nature of Plato's expression caused him to search for divine mysteries in every clausula, and to conclude, too programmatically, that every quality which Plato denies to the One he implicitly assigns to Being (Mind). Ficino is more profound than Pico in his appreciation of the artistry and the intentions of "the greatest master in Greek of irony and intellectual comedy." (A.M.E.)

87.91 Archer, Mark A. "The Meaning of 'Grace' and 'Courtesy': Book VI of *The Faerie Queene*." *SEL* 27, no. 1 (Winter 1987): 17-34.

Seneca's *De Beneficiis*, translated by Golding, and Cicero's *De Officiis* help Spenser define courtesy as the ability to apply the precepts of gracious acceptance and bestowing of gifts to the circumstances peculiar to each situation. A benefit, says Seneca, is a good deed done for the pleasure in the doing. When the knights and ladies of *FQ* VI give from a desire to gain wealth or honor, or when they proudly refuse any gift which would make them beholden to another, they prefer the appearance of courtesy over the thing itself. Crudor and Briana exchange gifts in order to purchase each other's allegiance; their parody of courteous giving (which must always arise from free choice) reveals both their self-centeredness and their dependence upon outward tokens for proof of their own worth. Thus the discourteous person, always mistrusting the unique gifts which the Graces have bestowed upon him, subjects himself, like Mirabella, Disdain, Serena, and even the noble knights Calepine and Timias, to the opinions of others, and thereby blurs his individuality. Timias is vulnerable to the attacks of the Blatant Beast only because he depends so heavily upon reputation, a precarious foundation for the soul. Calepine's insistence upon legalistic adherence to the precepts of courtesy, regardless of circumstances, forces him to forgo the gifts of a badly needed horse, and to lose his wits whenever those precepts are violated, as by the villain Turpine. Calidore, however, does not exact punishment from discourteous villains. Instead he weighs "the twiggies and spriggies of the pettiest circumstances," to quote Spenser's teacher Mulcaster, and freely bestows whatever gifts he has to offer that can be accepted graciously by the offending parties. (A.M.E.)

87.92 Beecher, Donald. "Spenser's Redcrosse Knight: Despair and the Elizabethan Malady." *Ren&R* 23, no. 1 (February 1987): 103-20.

For Spenser, Despair is the characteristic disease of those spiritual warriors who, like Redcrosse, fight in the service of God with such unremitting zeal that they forget to feel any joy in the service. Joylessness itself becomes a subject of their introspection, and, as they compare the elation they know they should feel with the torpor which immobilizes them, their anxiety over the possibility of despair creates in their minds the very despair they fear. While Spenser probably did not read scholastic theology, his concept of despair, like the Elizabethan concept of melancholy, derives from the medieval identification of the sin of *acedia* as the will's failure to invest with joy the

monotonous labors of monastic life. During the late middle ages this sin and the state of mind it produces came to denote any sort of joylessness. Renaissance physicians looked upon melancholy, an innate disposition toward joylessness, as arising from an imbalance of bodily humours. Although, technically, we cannot say that Redcrosse suffers from *acedia*, since the concept had become obsolete at the close of the middle ages, nor that he suffers from melancholy, since sin must be willed, his character, "too solemn sad" (I.i.2.8), presents the medieval sin in the guise of the Renaissance disease. (A.M.E.)

(Editor's Note: The substance of this article appears, in somewhat different form, in the same author's "Spenser's Redcrosse Knight and His Encounter with Despaire: Some Aspects of the 'Elizabethan Malady.'" *CahiersE* 30 [October 1986]: 1-15.)

87.93 Cavanagh, Sheila T. "'Such Was Irena's Countenance': Ireland in Spenser's Prose and Poetry." *TSL* 28, no. 1 (Spring 1986): 24-50.

Spenser's conception of justice, far from being corrupted by a genocidal policy against the Irish, was deepened by his obligation to apply poetic ideals to an actual situation. Compared with the views of many of his contemporaries, including Davies, Campion, and Rich, that the Irish were naturally barbarous and impossible to subject to law, Spenser's *Vewe of the Present State of Ireland* appears remarkably moderate, insisting that Ireland's woes arise chiefly from abuses introduced by the English, and that the Brehon law, although now justly reviled, has degenerated from a once rationally-intended institution. Spenser never treats the Irish with jingoistic contempt, and he advocates violence only in the last resort and only as a means of removing the unreformable. Even the much-despised Irish kern, he believes, can be reintegrated into a just society and enjoy "sweetness and happy contentment." Spenser supports Lord Grey's massacre of the Spaniards at Smerwick because he honestly, and regretfully, believes that "reformation cannot begin until the rebellious leaders have been subdued" (35). In *FQ*, Artegall and Arthur personify this conflict between, or bifurcation of, Spenser's poetic vision of justice and the obstacles presented by a hostile and fallen world. Whereas Arthur's "successes mark him as an immutable focus of justice" (42), Artegall must, like Spenser in Ireland, study how to apply the immutable focus to the mutable reality, and meets with only limited success in his reformation of Belge and Irena. Nevertheless, his experiences with Radigund supply him with an insight into human affairs lacking in Arthur and Mercilla, who lean dangerously toward pardoning the incurable Duessa. (A.M.E.)

87.94 Craig, Joanne. "The Queen, Her Handmaid, and Spenser's Career." *ESC* 12 (September 1986): 255-68.

Spenser never reconciled the demands of a public literary career, devoted to the moral education of English aristocracy and the praise of Elizabeth, with "the impulse to write from and about private experience for one's own pleasure and the pleasure of one's readers." Two subjects of adoration -- the Queen and the handmaid -- represent for Spenser the often mutually exclusive claims of public duty and private love, and vie for predominance throughout his poetry. In *The Shepherdes Calender* Spenser alienates himself from his persona, the lovesick Colin Clout, in order to transcend the pastoral genre and announce his ambition to be an English Vergil, a prophet for his nation. Spenser shows that Colin cannot love Rosalind and Elisa equally without forfeiting his

poetic gifts and rendering himself useless to society. This "renunciation of the private voice for the public one" is retracted, however, in *Colin Clouts Come Home Againe* and *FQ VI*. In both of these late works, which present "a partially satiric treatment of the court," Colin's love for Rosalind, once a source of infirmity, inspires him to sing of the "mightie mysteries" of love. Spenser acknowledges, tentatively, "that perhaps poetry and public life are separate spheres and that his own muse in any case is a private one." But the acknowledgment is only tentative: in *Amoretti* and *Epithalamion*, his most private poetry, Spenser still must apologize to his Queen and to his conscience for delaying the completion of his epic and for reserving "this one day" of happiness to himself. (A.M.E.)

87.95 Fowler, Alastair. "The Beginnings of English Georgic." *Renaissance Genres: Essays on Theory, History, and Interpretation*. Ed. Barbara Kiefer Lewalski. Harvard English Studies 14. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986. 105-25.

Because discussions of the georgic have normally been undertaken from the perspective of eighteenth-century studies, it remains conventional to assume that the kind developed late in England, flourishing only after Dryden published his translation of Virgil's *Georgics* (1697). This belatedness has been attributed (recently by Anthony Low) to "aristocratic prejudice against demeaning labor." Genre history shows, however, that the idea of georgic's late appearance in England is a misperception. Augustan poets and scholars classify as georgic only imitations of Virgil's *Georgics*. But such close lexical imitation was itself a development of the late seventeenth century. "[P]re-Augustan critics seldom refer to a single georgic model." Their "unfocused conception of georgic" was akin to Sidney's "'second kinde'" of poets, who "'offer the sweet food of sweetly uttered knowledge'" and concern themselves with moral, natural, astronomical, and other sorts of wisdom. Valuing Hesiod more highly than the Augustans could, Elyot and Chapman remark particularly on the variety characteristic of georgic. "Around 1600 the idea of georgic ... was of a digressive poem containing precepts, instruction in an art, or meditation on the good life. It might touch on labor and the retired life of the country; comparison of historical periods; seasonal change; or landscape description."

This conception of the kind "allows us to recognize many pre-Augustan appearances of georgic," beginning with Gavin Douglas' "Prologues" to his *Eneados* (1513) and including Chapman's *Georgicks of Hesiod* (1618), Drayton's *Poly-Olbion* (1612, 1622), Marvell's *Upon Appleton House*, and Milton's *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*. Furthermore, William Sessions (*ELR* 10) "is right to think that Virgil's combative georgic ideal -- *labor omnia vincit* -- is close to the thematic center of *FQ* (as it is to that of the *Aeneid*)." Spenser "also uses georgic to humble the pretensions of epic, and in book 6 particularly, to redefine pastoral." In *The Shepherdes Calender*, moreover, pastoral is extensively modulated by georgic. The "expected pastoral stasis" is "made subject," for instance, "by the addition of a calendar, to georgic seasonal variety." (D.J.G.)

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- 87.96 Hollander, John. "Spenser's Undersong." *Cannibals, Witches, and Divorce: Estranging the Renaissance*. Ed. Marjorie Garber. Selected Papers from the English Institute, 1985, ns 11. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987. 1-20.

Prothalamion "descants upon itself obliquely, but with a sad power that not even Spenser's earlier *Epithalamion* ... could summon up." *Prothalamion*'s refrain, its "undersong" (l. 110) as the poet once describes it, expresses the "more anxious concerns" of a poem which is "a forerunner of romantic crisis lyrics," and "*undersong* is one of those Spenserian coinages that, reechoed and redoubled by subsequent poets ... emerges from a private life in the poetic ear into the more general air." Meaning only "refrain" in its first appearance in English (*SC Aug 128*), *undersong* gains resonance from the etymologies of the related word "burden," for "Willye's undersongs [are] both refrainlike and dronelike." In *Daphnaida* (11.245), "the undersong is 'made' of ... Colin's ... sobs, and the flow of tears. Together they make up the essential Spenserian occasion of eloquence, music 'tuned to' the sound of water." *Prothalamion* "tunes its own utterance to the water's fall, although always in full cognizance of the greater power of the river: its audible volume, physical force, and long, long duration, both backward, preexisting Spenser's poem as an almost natural trope of poetic discourse ... and forward, outlasting any human voice that, like Spenser's, could speak to, or of, or for it." (D.J.G.)

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- 87.97 King, John N. *The Faerie Leveller: A 1648 Royalist Reading of The Faerie Queene*, V.ii.29-54. *HLQ* 48, no. 3 (Summer 1985): 297-308.

Artegal's victory over the egalitarian Giant was subjected to royalist topical interpretation during the Second Civil War (July 1648). Published as *The Faerie Leveller*, the episode is presented as a prophecy of Charles I's defeat of Cromwell. This restores the original "royalist bias" of the poem, apparent to earlier readers (e.g., Drayton, Jonson, Dekker). It also interprets Spenser's project of fashioning a gentleman as an argument favoring the king and the gentry. Also during the Second Civil War, however, John Milton (*EIKONOKLASTES*, 6 October 1649) adapted the episode from *FQ* V.ii to the uses of Puritan propaganda, and Cromwell himself praises Spenser for "'eminent deserts and services to the Commonwealth.'" (D.J.G.)

- 87.98 King, John N. "Spenser's *Shepherd's Calender* and Protestant Pastoral Satire." *Renaissance Genres: Essays on Theory, History, and Interpretation*. Ed. Barbara Kiefer Lewalski. Harvard English Studies 14. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986. 369-98.

Scholarly concern with classical or Italian influences has led us to overlook the degree to which Spenser's *Shepherd's Calender* represents an innovative, inclusionist mixture of generic kinds. Spenser's "fundamental contribution to pastoral is ... the infusion of the spirit of classical literary models into forms that are intrinsically English and Protestant." His decision to employ the pastoral eclogue links his debut as England's public poet not only with the careers of previous epic poets but with proponents of religious reform such as Petrarch and Mantuan. Spenser's reshaping of the eclogue results in "a form that seems intrinsically English and Protestant" because of its conspicuous admixture of "[s]cripturalism, hostility to the Roman church, and imitation

of the British vernacular tradition." This imitation of the vernacular tradition -- its "forging [of] an extremely homely voice for pastoral," its allusions to medieval English estates satire, and its use of "a native tradition of 'georgic' satire" -- constitutes, paradoxically, an innovation at a time when Sidney, Puttenham, and others promoted an "exclusionist denigration of native conventions and techniques." (D.J.G.)

87.99 Krier, Theresa M. "'All suddenly abasht she chaunged hew': Abashedness in *The Faerie Queene*." *MP* 84, no. 2 (November 1986): 130-43.

Spenser uses the motif of abashedness to signal the gap between the private, hidden lives of his characters, and the public lives to which they are called by their confrontations with others. Abashedness -- the discomposure that occurs when either a stranger or a strange emotion violates one's inner sanctum -- forces Spenser's characters to become painfully aware of themselves, and perhaps to discard their previous notions of who they were and how they were to behave. Throughout book three, for example, Britomart's education into her own awakening sexuality depends upon moments of embarrassment. Her blushes upon discovering that Merlin knows all about her condition show us both her capacity for love and how precariously she stands between the worlds of childhood and adulthood. Such self-awareness is not always salutary: Malbecco's frail inner life consumes itself in efforts to make sure that no one sees him for what he is, a sexually impotent old man married to a young wife who will certainly cuckold him. But when reality thrusts itself upon him -- when Malbecco sees that ring of lusty satyrs enjoying the favors of his wife -- he turns his consciousness inward upon himself with such self-loathing that he becomes an emblem of seclusion, selfish privacy, and shame. Spenser implies that abashedness offers an opportunity to throw oneself outward into wholesome sexuality, marriage, and all the liveliness of human relationships, or inward into false security and death. (A.M.E.)

87.100 Levy, Dore J. "Female Reigns: *The Faerie Queene* and *The Journey to the West*." *CL* 39, no. 3 (Summer 1987): 218-35.

The Journey to the West, a long Chinese allegory dating from the sixteenth century, recounts the adventures of three Buddhist monks, one naive and otherworldly, one crafty and resourceful, and one crudely sensualistic, in their common quest for spiritual enlightenment. During their travels they arrive, as does Artegall in *FQ* V, at a city where the orthodox relationships between men and women do not exist. In their escape from these cities the protagonists must learn far more than the proper role of sexuality in society: they learn to recognize the consequences to society of implementing personal ideals of justice or of purity. Artegall judges well when he has no stake in the litigation, nor any connection with the society he restores to order; but when, having defeated the Amazon Radigund, he sees in her face the resemblance of his true love Britomart, Artegall mistakes pity for equity and yields her the victory. In doing so he misconstrues his role as a judge, for pity is the caprice of authoritarian rule, whereas equity is a principle built into the law itself in order to mitigate the harshness of the law. Artegall has failed to achieve the judge's proper balance between emotion and restraint, and has failed to foresee the suffering and cruelty which his misplaced leniency would cause for himself and others. (A.M.E.)

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87.101 Loewenstein, Joseph F. "Echo's Ring: Orpheus and Spenser's Career." *ELR* 16, no. 2 (Spring 1986): 287-302. ✓

Spenser models his persona on Orpheus in the *Epithalamion*. Here Orpheus figures the scientific poet whose work embodies essential cosmological structures; the poem's echo-refrain figures a significant concord between the poet's song and the created world. But both Orpheus and echo have darker aspects, for Orpheus is also a failed epithalamist, unable to protect his bride from death, while echo also typically circumscribes the power of human utterance. Published in 1595, the marriage volume in which the poem appears interrupts the epic, attempting an extra-curricular reformation of that amatory culture which is at point of crisis within the epic. At the same time the *Epithalamion* interrogates the relation of private, extra-curricular poetry to the public poetry of the Vergilian career. Here too Orpheus is a significant model, for he is Vergil's patron of generic boundaries. (J.F.L.)

87.102 Martin, Ellen E. "Spenser, Chaucer, and the Rhetoric of Elegy." *JMRS* 17, no. 1 (Spring 1987): 83-109.

For Spenser, Chaucer was a kindred spirit, a fellow poet who meditated upon loss, and who understood that grief over the mutability of this world is the essential topic of poetry. In his elegy *Daphnaida*, Spenser draws on Chaucer's *Book of the Duchess* in order to show the analogy between a bereaved lover and the poet who must love a changing world.

Critics have mistaken the aesthetic purpose of both poems, reading the *Book of the Duchess* as a tactful admonishment against excessive grief, and *Daphnaida* as a simplistic indulgence in it. These critics, like so many throughout history who have resisted elegy's frank placement of the reader in the midst of inconsolable grief, fail to acknowledge the inconclusiveness of Chaucer's poem. Spenser, however, saw that inconclusiveness helped to spur imaginative creation, and that only through the therapy of devising fictions could the mourner see loss as not afflicting himself only but the entire universe. By expressing his melancholy in metaphors (themselves predicated upon the inadequacies of language), in flights of rhetoric, in symbols that trail off into thin air, Chaucer's narrator and the grieving knight re-create themselves and "establish melancholy as a potentially visionary mode of thought." Though unrelievedly gloomy in tone, Spenser's *Daphnaida* likewise shows how, in expressing dismay at mutability, Alcyon relaxes any fixation upon personal occasions for grief, and begins to make sense of change. Spenser's message is not that change will thereby vanish or cease to cause grief, but that only through such fictions can we come to terms with change, and that change provides the impetus for fiction. This lesson pervades *FQ* also, where a character's confident sense of selfhood is often shaken by loss or absence of a desired object. (A.M.E.)

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87.103 Parker, Patricia. "Suspended Instruments: Lyric and Power in the Bower of Bliss." *Cannibals, Witches, and Divorce: Estranging the Renaissance*. Ed. Marjorie Garber. Selected Papers from the English Institute, 1985, ns. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987. 21-39.

The "idle instruments / Of sleeping praise" at *FQ* II.xii recall not only the familiar iconography of Venus and Mars but also the "lyric context" of Psalm 137, where "[h]anging up one's instrument stands ... as a sign of resistance, a refusal to hire out one's voice." The "multiple predecessors" of the motif include the suspended instruments of pastoral figures like Sannazaro's Pan, "an emblem of the interval before a new poet" turns idle instruments "into the instruments of his own potency." The context of the Bower of Bliss gives the motif phallic implications: "Verdant's suspended 'instruments' are also clearly *male* instruments" which betoken "sexual as well as martial or lyric" impotence.

Spenser's scene also recalls a series of previous instances of female dominance and male submission (Hercules and Omphale, Samson and Delilah), and it echoes the "severed instruments" of Attis. Recollections of Verdant's submission to Acrasia in Artegall's subjection to Radigund are at one point (V.v.25) directly linked to "Spenser's ruling Queene, the exceptional female dominant over her male subjects." This dominance implies that "the vogue for Petrarchan lyric in the era of Elizabeth was inseparable from the structure of a politics ... in which Elizabeth's courtiers related to their queen as Petrarchs to an often cruel mistress, and in which the male poet was 'subject' in both the political and in the Petrarchan lyric sense. Petrarchism was not just a lyric but also a dominant cultural form." The Petrarchan poet employs mastery of his art to counter his own subjection, and in *FQ*, Spenser overgoes not only Ariosto but Petrarch. In so doing, he may also reverse his own dependence, as "a gentleman by education only," on "the patronage system manipulated by the queen." A similar reversal occurs in Guyon's violent mastery of Acrasia and his "destruction of the Bower as a place of dangerous female dominance." (D.J.G.)

87.104 Weatherby, Harold L. "What Spenser Meant by Holinesse: Baptism in Book One of *The Faerie Queene*." *SP* 84, no. 3 (Summer 1987): 286-307.

Critical wisdom identifies the Well of Life and the Tree of Balm, which aid Redcrosse in his battle against the dragon (*FQ* I.xi), either with the only two sacraments recognized by Elizabethan Protestants, Baptism and Holy Communion, or with those infusions of grace which characterize all moments of spiritual victory. But the events of the battle -- Redcrosse's symbolic death on the first day, his "harrowing" of the dragon, and his entry into Eden -- suggest, in their resemblance to the *sancrum triduum* of Christ's passion, that the balm represents the chrism with which catechumens in the early Church were anointed on the Easter Vigil in order to help them combat the enemies of the faith.

Spenser could have learned of the old baptismal rite from the Sarum Manual, from his own experience in Catholic Ireland, or from the banned Tridentine Missal. Most probably, however, his ideas concerning the role of baptism in the Christian's life and the power of baptismal chrism stem from patristic sacramental theology, widely available in England. According to many of the Fathers, the catechumen prepares himself during

Lent as a spiritual athlete training for the "holy contests in which, with Christ as judge, he will take part" (Dionysius). The chrism not only provides him, according to Cyril of Jerusalem, with Paul's breastplate of righteousness, but enables him to partake of the divine nature itself, to become Christ. Redcrosse's instruction in the House of Holinesse, then, may symbolize the Lenten preparation and purgation of the catechumen. His baptism in the Well of Life entails more than the remission of those sins which he had already confessed in the House of Holinesse: the Fathers, unlike the Reformers, considered baptism as spiritual and physical regeneration. Penitence and spiritual struggle are its prerequisites; baptism helps the Christian to conclude the victory. In showing how Redcrosse actually becomes Christ, Spenser attempts to free his readers from the Protestant notion that holiness is not to be had in this life, and to remind them of the implications of the ancient connection of baptism with Easter. (A.M.E.)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

87.105 Patrick Cheney, Managing Editor of the newly restructured *Comparative Literature Studies*, wishes to encourage Spenserians to submit comparative essays in Renaissance literature. A. Owen Aldridge will continue as Editor, along with Stanley Weintraub; together, they have formed a new Editorial Board, consisting of 25 distinguished critics and scholars from the United States, Canada, Europe, and Asia (including Earl Miner, Patricia A. Parker, and Anne Lake Prescott). The new *CLS* will publish comparative articles in literary history, the history of ideas, critical theory, relationships between authors, and literary relations within and beyond the Western tradition. Please address correspondence to the Department of Comparative Literature, 433N Burrowes Building, The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA 16802.

87.106 Spenserians will be glad to learn that the University of California Press will soon (probably Spring 1988) publish Charles Ross's translation of Boiardo's *Orlando Innamorato*. Here is an excerpt from the press release:

Matteo Maria Boiardo invented a new genre, the romantic epic, by imposing the love themes and magic of Arthurian romance on the military world of Charlemagne, whose greatest knight was Orlando. Written for the cultivated Este court of Ferrara, a conservative political center in northern Italy that encouraged an artistic avant-garde, Boiardo's *Orlando Innamorato*, first published in 1483, originates the story that Ariosto concluded in his *Orlando Furioso*.

This translation, the first ever of Boiardo's masterpiece, transmits the learning and care that underlie the Count of Scandiano's pose as a popular romancer. A line-for-line rendering in tetrameter verse captures Boiardo's respect for chivalry while retaining the speed of his story telling. Jacob Burckhardt praised the richness of Boiardo's invention, C. S. Lewis delighted in Boiardo's pell-mell jollity, and Michael Murrin has called Boiardo the great creative allegorist of the early Renaissance. A major purpose of the present translation is to allow readers of Spenser's *Faerie Queene* a chance to experience the beginnings of an allegorical mode known in Italy a century before.

87.107 The annual luncheon of the Spenser Society will be held on Tuesday, 29 December, at 12:00 noon in the Yosemite Room of the Four Seasons Clift Hotel, 495 Geary Street, San Francisco. The speaker will be Professor Annabel Patterson of Duke University. Her talk is titled "Jogging Round the Interpretive Trail."

87.108 Because a number of participants work also in Spenser studies, and because the topic extends beyond the confines of the Shakespearian theater, a Shakespeare conference to be held at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, March 24-26, 1988, may be of interest to Spenserians. The conference, titled *Signification and Society in the Shakespearean Theater: Representations of Authority*, will focus on the work of Robert Weimann, visiting Hanes Professor at UNC, Chapel Hill. Other participants include: Alan Dessen, Stanley Fish, Darryl Gless, Fredric Jameson, Richard Levin, Colin MacCabe, Steven Mullaney, Leah Marcus, Louis Montrose, and Annabel Patterson. For information, write or call Professor James Thompson, Department of English, CB# 3520 Greenlaw Hall, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC 27599; 919 962-5481.

SPENSER BIBLIOGRAPHY UPDATE, 1985

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

The following checklist includes Spenser items published during 1985 plus a number of earlier items not included in previous updates. Items reviewed in the *Spenser Newsletter* are referred to by year and item number; 85.10 refers to the tenth item in the 1985 volume.

I. Biography

1. Chainey, Graham. *A Literary History of Cambridge*. Cambridge: The Pevensey Press, 1985, 272pp, pp. 22-24.

II. Bibliography

2. Moore, John W., Jr. "Spenser Bibliography Update, 1983." *Spenn*, 16 (Fall 1985), 76-84. 85.86

III. General Spenser Criticism

3. Conrad, Peter. "Two Versions of Pastoral: Arcady and Faeryland," pp. 58-75; "The Arcady of the Poem," pp. 76-92; "The Sonnet: History of a Form," pp. 93-100; and "Spenser's Garden," pp. 111-25. In his *The Everyman History of English Literature*. London and Melbourne: Dent, 1985. x + 740pp.

4. Fujii, Harukiko. "Spenser in Japan." *Spenn*, 16 (Winter 1985), 16-19. 85.30

5. Gleckner, Robert. *Blake and Spenser*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1985. xi + 403pp. 87.04

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1985

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BV
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1985

INDEX TO VOLUME 18

Numbers refer to pages, not to items.

- | | | |
|--|--|--------------------------------------|
| Aldridge, A. Owen 72 | Brim, Sandra Byrd 74 | Cutts, John P. 76 |
| Alexander, Susan Perry 74 | Brooks, Richard A. 74 | Dasenbrock, Reed Way
11, 80 |
| Allen, Michael J. B. 64 | Brown, Judith 60 | Davidson, H. R. E. 76 |
| Alpers, Paul 13, 27, 79 | Brownlee, Kevin 77 | Davies, Rowena 79 |
| Anderson, Judith H. 21,
22, 25, 26, 27, 61, 76 | Bruce, Donald Williams
77 | Davies, Stevie 30, 31, 32,
33, 34 |
| Appleford, Arlen James 76 | Bulger, Thomas Francis 74 | De Marly, Diana 77 |
| Archer, Mark A. 65 | Burchmore, Susan 29, 50 | Dees, Jerome 27, 28, 47 |
| Arculus, Margaret Joan 76 | Caldwell, Ellen M. 10, 34 | DeGrazia, Margreta 23 |
| Arthur, Marilyn B. 34 | Cameron, Averil 34 | DeNeef, A. Leigh 51, 54 |
| Barkan, Leonard 56, 57,
58 | Cantarella, Eva 34 | Derrida, Jacques 26 |
| Barnes, Catherine 38 | Cavanagh, Sheila T. 20,
21, 25, 26, 53, 54, 66,
78 | Dessen, Alan 73 |
| Bassil, Veronica 77 | Chainey, Graham 73 | Dollerup, Cay 78 |
| Beecher, Donald 65 | Chatterjee, Achinta Kumar
77 | Donno, Elizabeth Story 35 |
| Beilin, Elaine 9 | Cheney, Donald 22, 27 | Dundas, Judith 1, 2, 3, 75 |
| Bellamy, Elizabeth Jane
18, 74, 77 | Cheney, Patrick 28, 43, 48,
49, 72, 78 | DuRocher, Richard J. 58,
75 |
| Benson, Pamela Joseph 1,
27, 28, 30, 46, 53, 77 | Cheyre-Bernard, Catherine
74 | Edwards, Karen L. 76 |
| Berger, Harry Jr. 51, 54 | Cixous, Helene 26 | Erickson, Wayne 29, 50 |
| Bergmann, Martin S. 77 | Conrad, Peter 73 | Esolen, Anthony M. 56 |
| Besses, Pierre 74 | Cook, Timothy 80 | Estrin, Barbara L. 3, 4, 75 |
| Bieman, Elizabeth 24 | Craft, William 40 | Farley, Kevin 30 |
| Billigheimer, Rachael V
43 | Craig, D.H. 38 | Farmer, Norman K. Jr. 29,
43, 50 |
| Blacker, Carmen 76 | Craig, Joanne 66 | Feinstein, Sandra 78 |
| Bornstein, Diane 9 | Cullen, Patrick 21, 22, 26,
27, 54 | Ferguson, Margaret W. 13,
59 |
| Bowers, John Edward 74 | | ffolliott, Sheila 60 |
| Breitenberg, Mark 10 | | Fischer, Sandra K. 9 |

- Fish, Stanley 73
 Fiskens, Beth Wynne 9
 Fogleman, Bruce 44
 Fowler, Alastair 67
 Freccero, Carla 61
 Freer, Coburn 39
 Fruen, Jeffrey Paul 75
 Frye, Northrop 6, 18, 31,
 32, 34
 Frye, Susan 16
 Fujii, Harukiko 73
 Fumerton, Patricia 11, 21
 Gaffney, Carmel 80
 Garber, Marjorie 55, 68,
 71
 Garfagnini, Gian Carlo 64
 Gleckner, Robert 5, 6, 7,
 73
 Gless, Darryl J. 54, 73
 Godshalk, William 38
 Goldberg, Jonathan 60
 Gorsch, Robert Earl 75
 Greenblatt, Stephen 12, 52
 Greene, Roland 53
 Greene, Thomas L. 58, 61,
 62, 63
 Greenfield, Sayre N. 18,
 19, 28, 47
 Gross, Kenneth 21, 75
 Guillory, John 58, 60
 Gutierrez, Nancy A. 76
 Hager, Alan 37
 Halisky, Linda Hawley 75
 Hall, A. D. 63
 Halpern, Richard 60
 Hamilton, A.C. 29, 38, 51,
 52
 Hannay, Margaret
 Patterson 7, 9, 27,
 28, 47, 54, 81
 Hardison, O.B. 37
 Hawkins, Peter S. 76
 Heath-Stubbs, John 76
 Heberle, Mark 28, 47
 Helbig, Doris 30
 Helgerson, Richard C. 16,
 21, 27, 29, 50, 54
 Heller, Thomas C. 55
 Heninger, S. K. Jr. 24, 30,
 64
 Hieatt, A. Kent 25, 26, 28,
 29, 47, 53, 80
 Hill, Eugene D. 37
 Hollander, John 68, 74
 Howard, Jean E. 12
 Hughes, Merritt Y. 3
 Hulse, S. Clark 16, 17, 18,
 21, 60
 Hyde, Thomas 35, 36, 37
 Iser, Wolfgang 79
 Jacobs, Edward C. 80
 Jacobs, Karen R. 80
 Jameson, Fredric 73
 Johnson, Lynn Staley 54
 Johnson, W. R. 57
 Jordan, Constance 60
 Kahn, Coppelia 59
 Kaske, Carol 48
 King, John N. 9, 17, 44,
 54, 68, 75, 79
 Kinney, Arthur F. 37, 38,
 39, 40, 55
 Kinney, Clare Regan 79
 Kirk, Elizabeth D. 54
 Klein, Lisa M. 28, 49
 Krieg, Joann Peck 74
 Krier, Theresa M. 69
 Kuhrt, Amelie 34
 Kurnit, Jeffrey Alan 78
 Labriola, Albert C. 19
 LaCharite, Raymond C. 74
 Lamberton, Robert 40, 41,
 42, 43
 Lanham, Richard 38
 Lefkowitz, Mary R. 34
 Leslie, Michael 3, 78
 Lethbridge, Julian 30
 Levao, Ronald 39
 Levin, Carole 9
 Levin, Richard 73
 Levy, Dore J. 37, 69
 Levy, F.J. 37
 Lewalski, Barbara Kiefer
 9, 10, 55, 67, 68
 Lewis, C. S. 35, 37, 39, 72
 Lincoln, Bruce 34
 Lindheim, Nancy 39
 Lindsay, Alex 76
 Lockerd, Benjamin G., Jr.
 28, 48, 75
 Loewenstein, Joseph F. 70
 Lomax, Marion 44
 Loris, Michelle Carbone
 78
 Low, Anthony 79
 Lupton, Julia M. 53
 MacCabe, Colin 73
 Maclean, Hugh 22
 MacQueen, John 74
 Mallette, Richard 54
 Maltz, Minna Herman 77
 Mandlebaum, Allen 76
 Marcus, Leah 73
 Marengo, Franco 38
 Martin, Ellen E. 70
 Marx, Steven 79
 McCoy, Richard M. 39, 54
 Meyer, Russell J. 21, 27
 Miller, David L. 17, 18
 Miller, Jacqueline T. 12,
 21, 27
 Mills, Jerry Leath 5, 30
 Miner, Earl 72
 Montrose, Louis Adrian
 12, 29, 51, 52, 54, 59,
 73
 Moore, John W. Jr. 73
 Moretti, Walter 75
 Morgan, Gerald 44
 Mullaney, Steven 73
 Murrin, Michael 72
 Nelson, T. G. A. 75
 O'Shields, Mary Ellen 55
 Olson, Paul A. 43
 Oram, William 19, 20, 21,
 27, 28, 47
 Orgel, Stephen 60
 Pahisson, Christer 79
 Panja, Shormishtha 79
 Parker, Patricia A. 55, 71,
 72
 Patterson, Annabel 54, 73
 Peck, Russell A. 54
 Petronella, Vincent F. 45

- Piepho, Lee 80
 Pigman, G. W., III 79
 Porcheddu, Fred 26
 Prescott, Anne Lake 8, 21,
 27, 28, 49, 72, 74, 80
 Price, Deborah 55
 Prior, Mary A. 28, 47
 Quilligan, Maureen 13, 23,
 59, 76
 Quint, David 55, 77
 Quitsland, Jon A. 9, 27, 81
 Rae, Patricia 18
 Rajan, Balachandra 75
 Rapaport, Herman 78
 Rees, Joan 77
 Revard, Stella P. 45
 Rigaud, Nadia J. 74
 Rinaldi, M. T. 75
 Ringler, Richard 58
 Ross, Charles 72
 Rossi, Joan Warchol 77
 Sacks, Peter J. 80
 Salmom, June 75
 Schoeck, R. J. 76, 80
 Schotter, Anne Howland
 76
 Schulman, Samuel E. 74
 Sessions, William A. 63,
 64, 67
 Shaver, Anne 26
 Shore, David R. 80
 Silberman, Lauren 13, 60
 Sinfield, Alan 40
 Smith, A. J. 78
 Sokol, B. J. 77
 Sosnam, Morton 55
 Spearing, A. C. 80
 Spencer, Theodore 37
 Stallybrass, Peter 60
 Steppat, Michael Payne 77
 Stillinger, Jack 38
 Stillman, Robert E. 29, 51,
 52, 53
 Stone, Lawrence 59
 Strong, Roy 60
 Strout, Nathaniel 76
 Stump, Donald 27, 28, 46
 Suleiman, Susan Rubin 34
 Swaim, Kathleen M. 77
 Taylor, Anthony Brian 45,
 78
 Tempera, Mariangela 75
 Teskey, Gordon 13, 28, 49
 Thaon, Brenda 76
 Thickstun, Margaret
 Olofson 76
 Thompson, Charlotte 81
 Thompson, James P. 1, 30,
 73
 Thorne-Thomsen, Sara 19,
 20, 28, 48
 Tobin, J. J. M. 78
 Trimpi, Wesley 62
 Tromly, Frederic B. 46
 Tylus, Jane Cecilia 80
 Ulreich, John C. Jr. 20, 21,
 38, 39, 40
 Van Dyke, Carolynn 78
 van Hook, J. W. 29, 50, 51
 Verbrugge, Rita 8
 Vickers, Nancy J. 13, 59,
 Vidal-Naquet, Pierre 34
 Wall, John N., Jr. 27, 46,
 77
 Waller, Gary F. 10, 18, 39,
 55
 Waller, Marguerite 60
 Waswo, Richard 55, 74
 Wayne, Valerie 8
 Weatherby, Harold L. 71
 Webster, John M. 28, 47
 Weimann, Robert 73
 Weiner, Andrew D. 38, 39,
 80
 Weintraub, Stanley 72
 Wellerby, David E. 55
 Wentersdorf, Karl P. 46
 Wiesner, Merry 60
 Wiggins, Peter DeSa 28,
 48, 49
 Willard, Thomas 22, 23
 Williams, Donald Thomas
 79
 Williamson, Colin 39
 Wimsatt, W.K. 41
 Wofford, Susanne 54
 Woodbridge, Linda 46
 Woods, Susanne 29, 51,
 74, 78
 Yates, Frances 60
 Zeitlin, Froma I. 34
 Zitner, Sheldon 28

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