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Book Reviews

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Book Reviews


Auctorial folly may provide a sufficient explanation for the writing of *Chaucer and the English Tradition*, but what is the name of the folly of the Cambridge University Press in publishing it? I am reminded that in a recent review of another book on Chaucer published by Cambridge, the reviewer was led to wonder how it could have gotten by the readers for the Press. Distrust of university presses being endemic to the academic profession, one might suspect a plot against Chaucerians. Being myself of an open and unsuspicous nature, I hypothesize that *Chaucer and the English Tradition* was given to the fiction editor who published it as science fiction.

He saw possibilities, I suppose, in Mr. Robinson's dramatic narrative of a "meeting" between Eleanor of Acquitaine and St. Bernard:

Both Eleanor and Bernard were perhaps at a loss in this meeting of temperaments from different worlds: Bernard found a lady not in awe of him (she had perhaps as little idea of that kind of sanctity as most modern women) and Eleanor met a man wholly insensitive to feminine charm.

Eleanor did more than any single person to discredit the crusading movement. (p. 26)

On this structure Mr. Robinson builds an elaborate fiction in which Eleanor having turned the crusade "into a courtly game" did the same with "the love poetry of the troubadours," who "all seem to have been in love with her." (p. 27) "Her frivolity was a comment" on the Church. "Anything we can see as a serious development of culture at Eleanor's court had to take a frivolous form." (p. 29) Frivolity thus dominates the poetry of her own and succeeding centuries; witness, Chrétien de Troyes, who "never quite rises into a criticism of life." Chaucer, too, was her victim, until he breaks the chains in the *Parlement of Foules* where he finds that love is "wonderful." Thus, triumphantly, "The Parliament of Fools" belongs rather with D. H. Lawrence than with the modern critics." Sadly, Chaucer has a relapse in the *Troilus*, "a great failure," (p. 73) but finally in the *Canterbury Tales*, finds what he has stumbled on in the *Parlement*.

It is a maimed and hacked Chaucer that Mr. Robinson presents to the "common reader" (videlicet, "silent majority") whom he wishes, with Agnewesque fervor, to save from Chaucer critics (videlicet, "egg-heads"). In his last ninety pages Mr. Robinson adds for the common reader the bounty of a synoptic view of Langland, *Gawain*, the Scottish Chaucerians, Boccaccio, Dante ("I conclude that Dante is really a genius of fits and starts who never achieved the final sincerity of knowing it."), and of Chaucer criticism; he finally explains why Chaucer is the father of English literature ("by creating its form.")

"Namoore of this, for Goddes dignitee." A book which should not have been...
published, should not be read. It follows that it should not be reviewed, except by a masochist, "And, lordynges, by youre leve, that am nat I."

BERNARD HUPPÉ

SUNY Binghamton


The explicit purpose of Professor Reuben Brower's book on Shakespeare and the heroic tradition of classical antiquity is twofold: to describe and define the latter; then to read, hopefully to illuminate, a number of Shakespeare's plays in terms of the tradition. Much attention goes, by the way, to Elizabethan poetic idiom and the epic style, treated as prolegomenary to and informing Shakespeare's style and perceived as a domesticated version of the heroic literature of Greece and Rome. As the purpose is executed successfully, "the reader may see more clearly what Shakespeare was about."

I think the book will prove valuable to students of classical and Renaissance literature, though partly in ways incidental to the author's purpose. I do not think the book does what it aims to do. The flaw is in the assumption that to delineate the (possible) background of a work of art is to perform a critical act. For example: Chapman's *Homer*, taken as a recension of the Graeco-Roman heroic ideal, is examined at length for comparison and contrast with Shakespeare. The examination is interesting in itself. One learns how Chapman's "thought" affected his transformation of the classical hero and, more generally, Homeric tragedy. But demonstrable relevance to Shakespeare seems pretty thin. Maybe Chapman is a matrix for Shakespeare, maybe not. The tenuity and hypothetical nature of the connection denote an old-fashioned kind of scholarship.

The comment holds of the sustained discussion of epic theory and poetry as humane learning, from the sixteenth-century Italian critics through Spenser and Sidney; and then, resuming the past, from Virgil (whose revision of Homeric psychology and style is acutely described) through Ovid and Seneca and Plutarch. Precise influence on Shakespeare is mostly to seek; but one begins to understand that this is not really, or not at best, a book about influence at all. It is a fine evocation and appreciation of the Graeco-Roman past; or, as in the commentary on North's Plutarch, a shrewd and erudite discriminating between the classical temper and that of the Renaissance. It is not often what it sets out to be, a bringing to bear of the ancient heroic image on the composition of *Julius Caesar*, or of Ovid (as rendered by Golding) on *Lear*, or of the stoicism of Seneca on *Hamlet*.

In the chapters entitled "Hamlet Hero" and "The Deeds of Coriolanus," the governing idea is that recollection of the tragedy of Achilles, as reinterpreted by Chapman, North, and others, helps us to define more exactly the character of Shakespeare's plays. But, as Professor Brower reminds us, Hamlet's last word, and Shakespeare's, is "silence." Questions of provenance and literary history
do not much explicate work of the first rank, unless to cast it in relief. Shakespeare is himself alone. Professor Brower says so much, but pro forma. With the idiosyncratic nature (the proper locus of criticism) of a play like Coriolanus, he does not really grapple. Shaw, who is quoted as remarking of this putative tragedy that it is Shakespeare's "finest comedy," illustrates how quick irreverence puts down insistent good sense; and incidentally how slender is Shakespeare's debt to his sources in first and last things. So with the essay on Antony and Cleopatra, the complexity of which "lies beyond the reach of research." Why then so much "research" and footnoted "documentation"?

Sometimes the assiduous connecting of past and "present" rewards and illuminates. The Shakespearean panache is there in the death of Dido: "I have lived, and the course that fortune gave I have gone through to the end, and now my great likeness will go beneath the earth." It is just right to say, after an excursus on Tudor translations of the Aeneid, that "the best Elizabethan translation of Virgil was a play like Antony and Cleopatra." But this is not to speak of sources, rather of the affinity of one great writer with another.

A sense of genuine affinity is infrequent in the detailed treatment of selected plays of Shakespeare in terms of their supposititious context. That Titus Andronicus derives from the Senecan tradition is not so important as that it is bad and mock-Senecan, to boot. To suggest that it looks forward to Shakespeare's Roman plays and the great tragedies (the affinity of early Shakespeare with late) is to assert nothing more than a linear or chronological progression: for Titus does not really look forward, is luckily sterile. Parallels with Coriolanus and Lear and Hamlet and Othello turn on verbal similarities, "the blackbird whistling," to quote one of Professor Brower's favorite authors, are not otherwise to the point, given the absolute difference in quality and kind. In the early play we have suavity, for Shakespeare is never less than a successful rhetorician; in the plays that follow, something different and felt. Aaron the Moor is not "very like Iago": the resemblance is superficies altogether and the criticism that underlines it is not helpful but misleading. Professor Brower is better in his comments on the "Grand Guignol" style of the stage villain, or on the lack of recognition Titus displays of his own barbarity: "it would be comic" to inquire after it, and necessarily, for Titus is only a cartoon.

The essay on Troilus and Cressida seems to me to sentimentalize, at least to overrate the characters of Troilus and Hector. Though Professor Brower is aware that the counsels of Ulysses come to nothing ("as for living heroically, his soldiers will do that for him"), he takes straight the famous speech on degree, reads it as the gauge by which we are to measure aberrant behavior, does not (I think) estimate sufficiently the way in which the magniloquent commonplace are qualified by the character of the speaker or his crafty purpose or the entail of what he says. The great paean to order—the "master idea inherited by . . . [Shakespeare's] age from the medieval past"—is enunciated elsewhere in Shakespeare: as by the devious Canterbury in Henry V, and the semi-comic Menenius Agrippa, by Rosencrantz in Hamlet and even by King Claudius. As that is so, one might query Shakespeare's point of view. There is no query here.

Though the book is elongated by much mere paraphrase and recapitulation of ideas and events, that is perhaps an inevitable part of its character as urbane "introduction." The author walks us through the plays, with sympathy and sensitivity, like a good teacher in the classroom but not like a luminous critic.
He offers an intelligent general survey of Shakespeare on one side, and much that is useful collaterally, like his treatment of Surrey as a Virgilian poet. But he adds little to one's perception of Shakespeare or the plays. His prose is unexceptionable; and in it such a line as one he quotes from Robert Frost burns a hole: "Something terrible happens, and no body is to blame." Here and there his reading is simplistic or wrong. Iago's "'Tis in ourselves that we are thus or thus" is likened to a "sermon on true virtue according to the best contemporary models, Platonic and Renaissance Christian." Cassius, who speaks in the same vein ("Men at some time are masters of their fates") is creditably "Stoic" in his "distrust of popular superstition." Brutus is wholecloth a hero. Dido's seduction of Aeneas "prefigures the Carthaginian danger to . . . Antony." Yes and no. Or, for an example of the other kind of exclusivism, like that of the World Well Lost: Shakespeare's partial reproving of Antony, the man who does not cleave to his duty—as does Aeneas—is missed in the reminiscence of Dido and Aeneas in Elysium. The closing speech in Coriolanus marks, unambiguously, "the death of a hero."

Countervailing comments: the analogy to music in the great scene in Troilus and Cressida when Troylus witnesses the perfidy of his mistress is excellently conceived. It is as if Shakespeare, like Verdi, has composed a "quintet" made up of Diomed and Cressida, Troylus, Ulysses, and Thersites. The emphasizing of the transcendent impression made by the hero as lover in the opening scene of Antony and Cleopatra is worth a hundred moral strictures (like those of Philo and Demetrius) on the hero's effeminacy. The suggestion that "Ovidian transformation is a constant in Shakespeare's imaginative world" really gets at the powerful though unconscious impinging on Shakespeare of the classical poet. But the study of metamorphosis in Shakespeare "belongs to another book."

RUSSELL FRASER

University of Michigan


John Long's study concludes (p. 268) with a statement with which we can all agree:

the study of performed music as a part of Shakespeare's dramatic craftsmanship should teach us to regard the music in the plays not as an addition made simply for the intrinsic pleasure music affords, not just to add to the excitement or emotional force of the action, but as an integral part of the dramatic structure.

Healthy differences arise in how we interpret this function of music as an integral part of the dramatic structure, differences as diverse as schools of critical opinions. To be sure, Long's studies over many years are fairer than most in keeping in mind the need to see music's dramatic function, but this, his latest book on Shakespeare's use of music, spends so much time in the guessing game
of circumstantial and conjectural evidence, suggesting this piece of program music in preference to that suggested by someone else, when there is no authenticated "original" music, that the excellent contributions which Long occasionally makes to the above-stated dramatic function of music are snowed under. The process tends to become somewhat tediously repetitious as Long's own words by p. 176 would seem to indicate after he has ingeniously tried through whole series of examples to fit trimly and snugly Shakespeare's ballad and song snatches to existing tunes:

of course, almost any text written in the common "tumbling meter" could be fitted with any one of many ballad tunes. I only suggest, in this case, that "Flying Fame" is the most likely tune, among many, to which Edgar sang the shepherd song, if indeed he sang the lines." (pp. 176-177)

"Flying Fame" has done Trojan service by the time it is sent winging on this. Selecting "program compositions which should be appropriate" (p. 119) obviously brings into play highly subjective judgments, but one can only stand aghast at the suggestions made with regard to the music played during the dumb show in Hamlet.

Although the instrumentation, a consort of hautboys, is given for the music played during the dumb show, there is no hint of the musical score or scores used by the hautboists. I would guess that two contrasting pieces were used—one during the scene presenting the player-king and his queen, the other during the pantomimed murder of the king. From a collection of popular instrumental pieces, Antony Holborne's Pavans, Galliards, Almaines, and Other Short Aires (1599), I have selected two program compositions which should be appropriate: no. 28, the anonymous "Ecce quam bonum," for the first half of the dumb show, and no. 31, "The funerals," by Holborne, for the second half (see figures 17 and 18). Only the cantus and bassus parts are available, but the inner voices can be realized without much difficulty. (p. 119)

In the first instance it is quite arbitrary to split the music into two contrasting pieces. The whole purport of the dumb show is surely to present the "argument of the play" as "miching mallecho," meaning mischief, but even if one were to grant this division into two, how could one dramatically have the time to perform two such pieces as are chosen unless the musical repetitions are cut and thereby no atmosphere can be created? In addition, the "funerals" is hardly atmospheric enough for the dumb show's concentration on poisoning and wooing of the widow. There is, to my way of thinking, the insuperable difficulty of asking an Elizabethan audience to watch any part of the dumb show to "Ecce quam bonum."

Psalm 133, Ecce, quam bonum

Behold, how good and joyful a thing it is, for brethren to dwell together in unity!
It is like the precious oil upon the head, that ran down unto the beard, even unto Aaron's beard, and went down to the skirts of his clothing.
Like as the dew of Hermon, which fell upon the hill of Sion.
For there the LORD promised his blessing, and life for evermore.

This Latin motet associated with “Inclina, domine, aurem,” “Deus misereatur nostri,” “Laudamus te,” etc. (such as we find in British Museum Add. MS. 36484, ff. 14-20) is certainly inappropriate for a twentieth-century scholar to foist on to a performance of an Elizabethan play. Only in the most perverse sense could precious oil upon the head, “that ran down unto the beard” do yeoman service for the Dumb Show’s portrayal of pouring poison in the sleeping King’s ears!

Long’s suggestion (pp. 103-104) of “Care charming sleep” for the song Lucius sings in Brutus’ text runs him into difficulties, however, that are more serious than widely divergent differences of opinion. He states that:

A song meeting the dramatic requirements and having an early musical setting is “Care Charming Sleep” (figure 16). Its text appears in John Fletcher’s Valentinian (1647), act 5, scene 2, where it is sung to the dying emperor. An anonymous musical setting with Fletcher’s text (and a few slight variants) is in Bodleian Library MS. Don. c. 57, page 36. The MS. song is among other songs by Robert Johnson, John Wilkes, Robert Ramsey, and some musical settings for sonnets by Sir John Suckling. (p.104)

This is astonishing in view of the factual information provided in La Musique de Scène de la Troupe de Shakespeare, The King’s Men, sous le règne de Jacques Ier, (which Long lists in his bibliography, pp. 288-289), pp. 35-38, Items 20, 20a, 20b, three music texts, pp. 140-142 where detailed information is provided of four manuscript versions of the same setting: Bodleian Library Don. c.57, 20(36), Fitzwilliam Museum 52D, ff. 109r, 110, Christ Church 87, f. 5r, and British Museum Add. 11608, f. 16r, where in the second and fourth manuscripts the attribution is made to “Robert Johnson.” Fletcher’s Valentinian is generally agreed [see A. Harbage, Annals of the English Drama (Philadelphia, 1940) to belong to 1614 so there is no need to list Valentinian only by the 1647 folio date. The musical setting by Robert Johnson has to date before 1633, the date of Johnson’s death.

Such cavalier treatment of acknowledged materials hardly inspires confidence. Robert Johnson seems to have been similarly slighted in Long’s use of his satyrs’ dance for the bacchanals in Antony and Cleopatra (p. 213) without attributing it to him, when evidence has already proved that Robert Johnson was indeed the composer [see “Robert Johnson and the Stuart Masque,” Music & Letters, 41.2 (April, 1960), 111-126, 117-118, and “Le rôle de la musique dans les masques de Jonson, et en particulier dans Obéron 1610/1611” Les Fêtes de la Renaissance, Paris, 1956, pp. 285-303, p. 292 particularly.] Surely the few musicians who can be solidly documented as having composed music for dramatic entertainment of the time in question are worth any number of anonymous composers randomly chosen.

I would personally question the propriety of using Robert Johnson’s setting of “Care charming sleep” for Fletcher’s Valentinian in Shakespeare’s Julius Caesar.
Long goes out of his way to find “Welsh” music for the Glendower scene in *1 Henry IV*, III. i:

Finding the type of music that graced this scene is not easy. Since the conversation surrounding the music centers on its Welsh character, we can believe that Welsh music, even that provided by the devil, was used. (p. 78)

He is on safe ground, of course, searching for a Welsh song for Lady Mortimer to sing since the stage direction specifies “Here the Lady sings a Welsh song,” but I am not at all convinced that Glendower’s early rejoinder to Hotspur:

I can speak English, lord, as well as you.
For I was train’d up in the English court,
Where being but young I framed to the harp
Many an English ditty lovely well
And gave the tongue a helpful ornament—
A virtue that was never seen in you.

would preclude the use of English court music the greater to confound Hotspur’s unmusical soul!

Compare this with Long’s very careful consideration (pp. 149-150) of all textual evidence in his confrontation of Ross’s theory that the “pipes” used by the musicians hired by Cassio to perform under Othello and Desdemona’s window, III. i., were bagpipes.

I would question, too, Long’s arbitrary decision not to include consideration of King John “because it contains insufficient music to warrant study.” (Introduction, p. ix) when he includes *Richard III* and can only devote a little over one full page to its use of music. *King John* calls for much trumpeting and battle music of French and English armies and this should have been worth study on the grounds of Long’s own statement (p. 8) that “National differences appeared in the marches: Markham observed ‘that diuers countries haue diuers Marches.’ The French marched to a slower step than the English.” Moreover it ought to be possible under the kinds of rubric suggested by Long “that the stage players practiced the combination of music and rhetoric, especially in those speeches whose subject and rhetorical style made musical augmentation appropriate” (p. 16) to consider the following passage heralding King John’s death in the orchard in Swinstead Abbey:

*P. Hen.* Let him be brought into the orchard here.
Doth he still rage?

*Pem.* He is more patient
Than when you left him; even now he sung.

*P. Hen.* O vanity of sickness! fierce extremes
In their continuance will not feel themselves.
Death, having prey’d upon the outward parts,
Leaves them invisible, and his siege is now
Against the mind, the which he pricks and wounds
With many legions of strange fantasies,
Which, in their throng and press to that last hold,
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Confound themselves. 'Tis strange that death should sing.
I am the cygnet to this pale faint swan
Who chants a doleful hymn to his own death,
And from the organ-pipe of frailty sings
His soul and body to their lasting rest. V.vii. 10-24


This surely deserves some serious consideration and is to my way of thinking every bit as important in its context as Long's claim for John of Gaunt's dying speech in Richard II in its context (p. 71). On p. 90 Long refers to J. W. Brown's printing of a version of "Mounsieur Mingo" from a MS dated c. 1637, without drawing attention to the fact that the MS, although lost to scholars since 1920-1, had recently been located in Carlisle Cathedral Library [see Edward Doughtie, "Ferrabosco and Jonson's 'The Houre-Glasse'," Renaissance Quarterly, XXII.2 (Summer, 1969), 148-150—not listed in Long's bibliography. The present writer has prepared a detailed description already page-proofed, of the whole manuscript for Musica Disciplina].

To dismiss from consideration the Q1 stage direction "Enter Ofelia playing on a Lute, and her haire downe singing," simply because there is no indication in the later texts that Ophelia plays a lute in her mad scenes as the Q1 direction requires, is begging the question, or rather ignoring evidence which does not support Long's interesting, but contestable theory that Ophelia is a "pathetic clown with her winks, nods, gestures, her unshaped speech and patches of ballads" (p. 116). Ophelia may at times "assume the role of Maid Marian in the folk plays" as Long points out, but unlike Perdita in The Winter's Tale who feels uncomfortable playing the role even though she believes herself to be a shepherdess, Ophelia is one of the court ladies.

Somewhat akin to this is Long's rather confusing use of knowledge that the King's men in taking over the Blackfriars inherited some of the richness of this theatre in a "band of adult cornetists" (p. 222) with his comment in the last paragraph of his conclusion that "Music was only one tool in his workshop, but it was effective, efficient, and popular. On a stage bare, for the most part, of scenery and lighting effects, the aural appeals of language and music were of prime importance." (p. 268)

Of the 19 plays which form the basis of Long's present study, over half (1, 2, 3 Henry VI, Julius Caesar, Troilus and Cressida, Othello, Macbeth, Antony and Cleopatra, Coriolanus, Timon of Athens, and Henry VIII) have first texts that date after the King's men taking over the Blackfriars, and these afford some of the most ambitious uses of music.

I find the most valuable part of Long's study to be the section on the ballad medley, pp. 55-67, because it genuinely purports to be opening new grounds for discussion and not reassembling as much of the book does information that has already been well promulgated elsewhere.

The University of Florida Press is to be congratulated for the excellent layout of this book and for the exceptionally clearly presented musical examples.

Oakland University

JOHN P. CUTTS
Excessive prosperity is rarely a sign of good health. The initial euphoria it occasions is often coupled with or soon followed by a certain malaise foreboding its imminent decline. So it is with the term Baroque. Despite the tremendous success it has enjoyed over the past two decades, it has lately been showing signs of weakness. The threat to its meaning and unity comes from two chief sources: the excessively liberal and indiscriminate use, leading to an inflated meaning, i.e., to non-significance, and the excessively dogmatic and narrow use, resulting in fragmentation by constriction. Some Baroque scholars have sensed this double danger, and attempted to ward it off. A case in point is Frank J. Warnke.

Approaching his broad subject-matter with both a relaxed pragmatism and critical rigourousness, Warnke sets out to identify certain unifying principles underlying the disconcerting diversity of the Baroque literature. He uses the term Baroque as a "conceptual tool" (p. 4), and defines it as "a period complex made up of a whole cluster of more or less related styles" (p. 1) dominant in the literature of Western Europe from the 1580s to the 1680s. Undaunted by the "seeming chaos of seventeenth-century styles and attitudes" (p. 12), yet unwilling to give in to undue simplifications, Warnke wisely postulates the Baroque unity to be "spiritual rather than technical" (p. 12).

Donne's art may be cerebral and paradoxical, and Crashaw's sensuous and phantasmagoric. Underlying their stylistic differences are "the contradictory vision and the attempt to capture absolute reality" (p. 23), which they have in common. The obsessive concern with the contradictory and illusory nature of the phenomenal world, and the compulsive search for the ineffable transcendent unity, shared in various ways and to varying degrees by most authors of the period, are at the root of the major Baroque spiritual preoccupations.

One of these preoccupations is art. Neither mimesis nor truth, art was conceived of by the Baroque writer as an analogy. Like the observed reality the work of art, whether affirming "the simultaneous validity of opposed experiences" or that of opposed propositions (p. 64), was thus itself contradictory. Not unlike that reality it was, "rather than a text to be paraphrased or a message to be decoded," something to be experienced (p. 64). It was, especially in the case of lyric poets, an intense passionate "Experience of Contradiction" (p. 52).

Though profoundly serious, this experience had also a jocular quality. Indeed, the Baroque conception of art was strongly marked by the concept of "Art as Play" (p. 90). Witness the conspicuous presence of the three chief constituents of the play-attitude: agon, make-believe, and levity. In one form or another, these appear in every genre of the Baroque literature: in nonfictional prose it is the creation of the self as a dramatis personae, in devotional poetry the outward dramatic projection of the self, in love lyrics the amorous avowal accompanied by ironic distancing, the dramatized formulation of poet's relations to the beloved, the use of comic hyperbole, and a sort of "amorous agon, or erotic flyting" (p. 99) resulting from the practice of insulting or aggressive behaviour toward the beloved.

The Baroque convictions that the phenomenal world is illusion found its
best expression in the theatrical metaphor asserting an identity between life and the stage: “the world is the theatre” (p. 70). Though conspicuously present in the dramatic literature of the time (in the form of the play-within-a-play motif, the motif of disguise, the theme of metamorphosis, the deliberate confusion of the levels of appearance and reality, theatre and life, etc.), the “World as Theatre” (p. 66) topos appears abundantly in all the other genres as well.

The major manifestation of the Baroque impulse toward transcendence in general, and the religious truth in particular, is the remarkable efflorescence of devotional poetry in the 17th century Western European literature. This poetry however “does not, characteristically, engage in either simple praise of the deity or simple exhortation of the faithful” (pp. 13-131). Nor is it a mystical exercise in self-annihilation prerequisite to the total absorption of the self in the divine. “Private rather than public in its manner, intimate rather than formal in its tone, dramatic rather than discursive in its structure” the devotional lyric of the period attempts to achieve “a personal intense relationship between the protagonist of the poem and God” (p. 131), a realization of the true self through a liberation from the self. It “celebrates union with God without sacrificing the sense of the individual personality” (pp. 156-157).

Although most characteristically expressed in drama, lyric poetry, and non-fictional prose, the Baroque age also produced a large body of epic poems. Of particular interest is the subgenre of the Christian epic, among other reasons for its concept of passive heroism. The latter, deriving naturally from the Baroque convictions of “the unreality of the phenomenal and the necessity of transcendence” (p. 201), is by no means confined to epos. In fact, a central embodiment of the Baroque vision, the theme of “The Sacrificial Hero” (p. 187) is the most striking feature of a typical dramatic genre of the time: the Baroque martyr-tragedy.

If we add the obsessive vision of the end of the world, a topos consistent with the pervasive belief in the illusory nature of the phenomenal world, we will have an approximate idea of the major themes and motifs which Warnke finds symptomatic of the basic spiritual preoccupations constituting the unity of the European literary Baroque.

Warnke’s study is a series of essays written over several years, some of which had already been published as articles. This probably explains a certain repetitiousness in it, as well as its apparent lack of unity (Warnke’s perspective shifts from theme to genre to character), and its somewhat rhapsodic structure. Its organization could however be viewed as an esthetic mimicry befitting its subject-matter. At any rate, the book is thematically coherent; it holds together well; and its basic contentions, made abundantly clear, stand solidly behind each and every theme and argument.

No one will argue with Warnke’s vision of the Baroque literature as that of a strong unity underlying a surface of a nearly chaotic diversity. His—successfully carried out—effort to grasp the former without sacrificing the latter, to account for all apparent complexities and incoherences while providing them with a coherent spiritual raison d’être, is certainly commendable. Less so is his attempt to subdivide Baroque into two major interrelated tendencies, High Baroque and Mannerism (defined respectively as the “spare, witty, intellectual, paradoxical” trend, and as the “ornate, exclamatory, emotional, and extravagant” one, p. 12). Fortunately, if one may say so, this distinction fades
progressively away after the “Introduction,” and generally plays a small role in the study as a whole.

Warnke’s approach is not only comprehensive, but also comparative. Whether to show similarities or differences, he constantly compares author to author, genre to genre, period to period. Most interesting are his comparisons between Baroque and Renaissance. On the other hand, of least interest are his attempts to label and classify certain authors, a practice he fortunately does not abuse. His analyses and demonstrations are ingenious, lively, and for the most part convincing. At times, as in the case with lyric poetry (for the treatment of which he relies heavily on his European Metaphysical Poetry. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961), they are brilliant.

Baroque, if anything, is an age of drama, a fact Warnke points out repeatedly. Yet he devotes relatively little attention to drama proper, while, ironically, discovering a wealth of dramatic elements everywhere else. A notable case in point is the 5th chapter which, its title notwithstanding (“Art as Play”), contains hardly any examples from dramatic literature. French 17th century dramatists in particular receive a rather skimpy and in part conventional treatment, which may be explained by the fact that Warnke’s French references are somewhat spotty, indiscriminate, and outdated.

Warnke’s latest book appears thus uneven in both interest and quality. Yet, despite its shortcomings, it remains on the whole, if not an exhaustive or definitive study on the subject, an undoubtedly interesting and worthy contribution to the Baroque scholarship as well as to the field of comparative literature.

Milorad Margitic

Wayne State University


D. H. Lawrence’s life and career were undeniably provisional. Possessing a remarkable sensitivity to sense of place, Lawrence never really belonged anywhere. Physically he was always, in Wright Morris’s phrase, lighting out for the territory ahead. Intellectually, too, Lawrence’s endless voyaging to the promised land, call it Rananim, was across turbulence. Understandably this makes for puzzles in his work, but few critics have been as willing to insist on obscurities where there are obscurities as Stephen Miko in Toward Women in Love, a study which confines itself to the first five novels.

Miko’s key word is struggle. In his “Introduction,” he says, “Throughout I try to relate aesthetic success and failure to Lawrence’s basic struggle to clarify attitudes and ideas.” Leading us into the conflicts of the novels, Miko seeks to trace out the heuristic thrashings of his author. The book’s strength is its honesty in suggesting how much more Lawrence was the tentative explorer than the cocky conqueror. In his “Conclusion,” Miko says: “With Lawrence the need for coherence does not lead to any simple set of answers. He accepts
willingly his phenomenal limitations and in fact seeks to transform them into new possibility."

One is left convinced more than ever that the rightness of feeling, not exposition, is what Lawrence is best at. Miko observes, during his analysis of *Women in Love*, that "in any given scene everyone speaking is likely to be partly right and partly wrong, and it is not always obvious how the arguments line up." And Miko rightly reminds us that "the value of talk is essentially the value of worrying things into consciousness."

Martin Green, in his consideration of Mark Twain in *Re-Appraisals: Some commonsense readings in American literature*, argues that we will never really grasp Twain until we see him always reaching for the effect of the moment—something of a stand-up comedian—prepared to ignore sustained coherence. With this conception Miko's illumination of the Lawrentian struggle bears affinity. And in such polemical works as "The Crown," Miko discerns Lawrence "vigorously defending his own struggle for verbal consciousness, which, he is careful to point out, is not superimposition of a theory." What Miko says of Lawrence's important characters applies as well to their author: "They seek some sort of vital stability but fear stasis; all of them think of their lives as open and full of possibility, but they are hardly free from old-fashioned struggle for identity." And subsequently he adds: "Lawrence cannot settle on any theory or belief which does not leave room for change, but the change remains a threat, a struggle, a fear of incoherence." So it is not surprising paradoxes are forever emergent in Lawrence. *Toward Women in Love* implies a further paradox: Lawrence may be filled with problems, but he need not be all that puzzling.

Although Miko finds merit in *The White Peacock*, likes *The Trespasser* more than most critics do, thinks highly of *Sons and Lovers* (he has some especially perceptive comments on this book), he sees *The Rainbow* as the initial novelistic triumph because "Lawrence succeeds for the first time in relating man, woman, and nature." How Lawrence earlier failed to do this and how in *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love* he manages to do so is the burden of much of this study. In the latter novel, naturally enough, Birkin, with his "conflicting attitudes," is the focus; interest in Birkin, Miko indicates, was in fact the starting point for the book.

Critics of Lawrence will be grateful that Miko has sought to streamline his work by circumventing so much that so many critics of Lawrence feel bound to mention as if each was writing the first or only study. As well as keeping his consideration of many central Lawrentian scenes brief, he has sought to discuss many scenes that are usually bypassed. This streamlining, of course, cuts two ways; this is not the book to recommend to neophytes.

Another problem is indeed troublesome though in a peripheral rather than a central way. Miko develops the bad habit of overusing the word "ontological," draining it of meaning and transmuting it into jargon. The word is scattered like grain through the book (Where was the Yale editor who should have cautioned him?) Here is the use of the word over a few successive pages: ontological dimensions; his ontological forces; the ontological realms; the ontological value; his "final" ontological criteria; into ontological patterns; the psychological-ontological movement; the ontological forces; an ontological framework;
still vital ontological forces; through ontology; the ontological reductions. These in just a few pages; but meaning aside, the word becomes simply ugly.

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ALLAN E. AUSTIN


The assumption that underlies the ambitious Twayne series of short books on individual authors (this is already the 123rd in the English Authors Series alone), that frequently neglected writers deserve serious critical consideration in a brisk and semi-popular form, clearly warrants respect. But the limitations of space, especially when combined with the apparent need to summarize enough of the plot to make the critical commentary easily accessible and the obligation to provide biographical and bibliographical material, can choke off the opportunity for developing extended and illuminating ideas about the author's work. In Allan Austin's treatment of Elizabeth Bowen, something close to one half of the 134 pages are devoted to plot summary and at least another twenty to other necessary apparatus. In some chapters, like that on the short stories, in which the stories are simply classified in one or another of three thematic categories and plots summarized to provide support, the use of space seems wasted. In other instances, like the section treating Elizabeth Bowen's most highly praised novel, The Death of the Heart, a long plot summary leads only to the conclusion that the adults in the novel, originally empty and complacent, may have been led to a possibly beneficial awareness of themselves by the actions of the sensitive child. Yet this perception is only the beginning of a critical account of the novel, only the entering wedge of what Miss Bowen is saying about sensitivity, betrayal, and the sense of morality that might operate in human relationships.

Mr. Austin begins with a point of view that could lead to a distinguished critical work, regretting that "the focus upon Miss Bowen as stylist has detracted from her as a commentator on life in the modern world." And he attempts to balance his enthusiasm with a discriminating sense of judgment. His judgment of other critics, summarized acutely in less than four pages, is sound, and he easily persuades me that only William Heath (in a book) and the late James Hall (in an incisive chapter in his The Lunatic Giant in the Drawing Room) have done justice to Miss Bowen's work. But Mr. Austin fails to sustain the range of his own beginning. He quotes Elizabeth Bowen's remarks, in Afterthought, on the necessity that a writer "feel" the subject, relates this rightly to her constant concern with human emotions, and then seldom connects this concern to the themes of those very novels in which it is most evident. He shows the elaborate quality of her later style, but, beyond naming it, fails to demonstrate what it suggests about her comments "on life" in the later novels. In quick reference, Mr. Austin is frequently perceptive, as on the function of the "devil" image in The Death of the Heart and on the themes of the dangers of innocence and narcissism in the early novels. Yet the perceptions seldom develop into an
illuminating perspective; they seem to leap out, then are stifled, sometimes reduced, to allow the author to rush to the next certainty or plot summary. Mr. Austin is invariably better at the start: a potentially insightful discussion of how Miss Bowen feels one can live meaningfully while involved in the modern "wasteland" is reduced and devalued by reference to her "sturdy British determination to carry on;" the whole complicated question of a conflict between morality and survival in Miss Bowen's world, a conflict about which the novelist is frequently ambivalent, is truncated, shunted into a neatly conclusive mold that doesn't follow or apply:

Thus, all of the Bowen novels are structured between two traumatic emotional events: the first discloses the reality of life; the second, the reality of love. (pp. 22-3)

A form of shorthand that Mr. Austin often indulges is the quick comparison of his subject to another writer. At times, this is effective, as in the quotations from James, Iris Murdoch, Emerson, and Frost that relevantly introduce chapters or in the soundly based although slightly developed comparisons of Miss Bowen's The Hotel to Jane Austen's Emma and the class structure of The Heat of the Day to that of Forster's Howards End (although Mr. Austin misses the chance to compare Miss Bowen's use of changing locales to that in Forster). Other comparisons, however, are both slighter and more eccentric, comparisons, like those made to Hawthorne, Virginia Woolf, Hardy's Jude the Obscure, and Amis's Lucky Jim, that seem gratuitous. Mr. Austin's favorite author for comparisons is D. H. Lawrence. At first, a few of the parallels add a dimension of insight. After the first six, however, especially those like the heroine of a short story who is "Miss Bowen's version of a figure treated frequently by D. H. Lawrence—the mind-oriented woman," the device resembles the form of advertising that seeks to ennoble the product by association with someone undoubtedly distinguished. Mr. Austin's name-dropping can degenerate into the purely silly classification, as in the following statement, meant to be conclusive:

It is not the right moment to be confident about Miss Bowen's position, but there are enough signs to suggest that she is a writer considered worthy of posterity. If she is not a George Eliot, neither is she a Marie Corelli; perhaps she is a Charlotte Brontë or an Elizabeth Gaskell. (p. 125)

This kind of triviality shapes a tone that diminishes the force of the insights in the book. Mr. Austin also speculates about the names Miss Bowen gives her characters: because a lady called Ernestine is portrayed as self-important, he adds parenthetically "the importance of being Ernestine?"; to a Mrs. Piggott his parenthesis adds "pig it?"; Eric, in Eva Trout, is a "heavy operatic" name in contrast to the "sturdy, fundamental name of Eva Trout." Sometimes, I just don't know what Mr. Austin's phrases mean. When he calls Miss Bowen a "concrete impressionist," I wonder what a non-concrete impressionist would be. At least one reference to the world outside of literature seems irresponsible. When describing the motives of the spy in The Heat of the Day, Mr. Austin says, "As with the card-carrying, fellow travelers pursued by McCarthyism, Robert has given up on democracy . . .," thereby making an assumption that would warm the hearts of any remaining McCarthyites but rather chill those of
most historians. And the many mistakes, not only typographical errors, but repeated mistakes in spelling names like Iris Murdoch, Gerald Crich, and James Hall (also the title of his book is wrong), reduce confidence in the author.

More important than these limitations of knowledge or sophistication or than the limitations attributable to restricted space are limitations of vision in Mr. Austin's perspective toward Elizabeth Bowen. Although I would not argue that *Eva Trout* is Miss Bowen's best novel, I think Mr. Austin needs to understand it better than he does in order to follow the conventional reviewing opinion and dismiss it as "hollow." He treats the book only on a literal level, pegs it as "Miss Bowen's contribution to the 'black humor' of the 1960's," failing entirely to see it as a metaphor about "presence," about dumb, inchoate existence in the modern world. In terms of more general themes, Mr. Austin is sometimes similarly inadequate. He compares Robert's mother, the cold, self-justifying, falsely sacrificial older woman in *The Heat of the Day*, to characters in the work of D. H. Lawrence and Katherine Mansfield, but he neglects entirely the similarly self-righteous, unloving, controlling horrors in Miss Bowen's other fiction, Mme. Fisher in *The House in Paris*, the dead Mrs. Quayne in *The Death of the Heart*. Mr. Austin's standards for art, at least as articulated in the book, unlike his frequently apt practical judgments, are also very limited. *Friends and Relations* and *The House in Paris* are inferior because they lack "tight integration," by which Mr. Austin seems to mean they both have "ten-year gaps between the first part of the narrative and the subsequent one." Solely for this reason, apparently, they lack "the esthetic integrity" of *The Death of the Heart*. Over and over again, artistic neatness is the mark of "perfection," of "success," as if the esthetic of the novel is only a matter of order seen in the most simplistic terms possible. Never, despite his preface and his aim, does Mr. Austin really demonstrate that *The Death of the Heart* is Miss Bowen's best novel because it seems to say most, most profoundly, about experience.

Clearly, the form of the Twayne series is not responsible for many of the faults of taste and vision in Mr. Austin's book. Yet, the narrowness of the form, the needs to save space, to insure semi-popular comprehensibility, and to include relevant information, does seem to encourage some of the faults of shunting and easy, rushed conclusion that most disfigure what might have been a helpful and genuinely critical book. Instead of a critical book, Mr. Austin has written an extended review of a literary career, one that is occasionally perceptive, full of judgments, placements, and comprehensible labels. Still, it is a review, not a critical book at all.

*University of Michigan*


Early in his analysis of *The Ambassadors*, one of the six works by James treated in his book, Philip Weinstein pauses to make a disclaimer: "... the book remains inexhaustible. The pages that follow are not so much a challenge to [previous]
critics as a fleshed-out reading of the particular drama—located among the many dramas indicated by others—that *The Ambassadors* seems most interestingly to embody: the fundamental relation between a character's imagination, the experience he seeks to interpret, and the experience he finally undergoes." Weinstein is not this modest in assessing the value of his interpretations of the other five James novels (*Roderick Hudson*, *The Portrait of a Lady*, *What Maisie Knew*, *The Sacred Fount*, and *The Golden Bowl*); nevertheless, his statement about *The Ambassadors* may be taken as indicative of the achievement of his painstaking and detailed analyses, formulated to display the ramifications of a basic imagination vs. experience conflict in James' fiction.

The "imagination-experience" terminology is original, but the sense of the basic dictotomy is not; therefore, even in his treatment of the works other than *The Ambassadors*, Weinstein's interpretations are more "fleshed-out readings" than innovative approaches. Yet they are readings that do justice to the source of that inexhaustible quality we find and value so often in James' writing (that quality that causes us never to be quite satisfied with any one critical approach to his work)—his ambiguity—because Weinstein's terminology allows him to treat James from a neutral, non-judgmental perspective. Innovative critics of the past have already established the dichotomy between the Jamesian character's presumptions about life and his later conflicting experiences with life as the core of James' fictional representations. They and their successors have approached this dichotomy from various angles: the technical, the psychological, the philosophical or moral; but the most substantial and lasting criticisms have tended to use such approaches to promote rather than obscure the fact of the basic ambiguity of James' fiction. Weinstein's treatment follows this tradition. He does not make us newly aware of technical values as, say, Percy Lubbock did; nor does he newly define psychological or moral values in the manner of an Edmund Wilson or a Quentin Anderson. Rather, he incorporates many of the values defined by such predecessors into an effectively new manner of explanation, which because of his particularly happy choice of the term "imagination," allows him to delineate themes and to assess James' strengths and deficiencies without ever diverging from an essential sense of what James' fiction tries to accomplish. "Imagination" is not in itself a totally convincing term. But then, no one term coined by any other critic to define the motive power of a Jamesian fictional character seems wholly satisfying either, and many such terms convey judgments which are inimical to James' ambiguity. Often a critic will see that the fictional character's preconceptions about life are inadequate to the situations he experiences, but too often the critic's terminology implies that the character is therefore at fault for this inadequacy, whether it be caused by cultural training, inhibited sexual desires, or distorted moral views. Weinstein feels, however, that in James' view, the individual's preconception is never adequate to the reality it encounters (or, more properly, that reality is never capable of satisfying the demands of the individual's preconceptions). Therefore, while other critics force themselves to make moral judgments about the character's attitude toward life, Weinstein is more properly able to concentrate on the real concern of James' fiction, the inevitable clash between the mind and reality, because he uses a term which implies no moral judgment: "imagination" is morally and psychologically neutral enough to allow him to focus on the interaction of mind ("imagination") and life ("experience") without having to
judge the moral efficacy of every Jamesian character's attitude. His belief that James' fiction centers on the imagination-experience conflict causes Weinstein to feel less than perfectly satisfied with it—his comment that one work possesses but "narrow beauty" reflects, I believe, his overall evaluation of James' work. At the same time, however, his own more neutral focus allows him to approach each work treated in a manner that very often throws new light upon some of its most difficult passages and sometimes offers what seems to be the most cogent interpretation to date.

In addition, by treating the six works selected, Weinstein is able to show the shifting focus of James' interest in the problems of the imagination, the nature of reality, the manner in which one accommodates oneself to the demands of reality, etc., over the span of the works, and he is further able to integrate some of James' major themes with this interest. In his treatment of Roderick Hudson, for example, he shows how James concentrates on the mind of the individual whose creative imagination prevents him from reconciling himself to the limitations and demands of everyday life, while he feels that The Portrait of a Lady demonstrates one way in which the imagination does—though not in a totally admirable way—successfully accommodate itself to the demands of experience. Throughout his treatment of the six works, Weinstein covers the successes and failures of the imagination, but he also shows how this basic concern is related to other well-known Jamesian themes. This explains what might otherwise seem an uneven choice of works to be analyzed. The topic of the artist's imagination, for example, which is introduced in his treatment of Roderick Hudson, receives its fullest development in his treatment of The Sacred Fount, where he deals with the exploitative vs. creative functions of the artist's mind. What Maisie Knew is treated predominantly in terms of a child's growing awareness and acceptance of sexual passion, a portion of reality that Isabel Archer is shown to deal less successfully with in Weinstein's treatment of The Portrait of a Lady. Weinstein's treatment of Rowland Mallet in his opening chapter on Roderick Hudson, begins a slowly developing treatment of the Jamesian theme of the self-conscious individual and his relation to a life of active participation or a life of passive contemplation; this treatment is nurtured through intermediate chapters until it blossoms into a very strong explanation for Lambert Strether's renunciation of Maria Gostrey in The Ambassadors. His reversal of that renunciation into a triumph of the imagination and his consequent condemnation of The Golden Bowl for what he feels is James' falsification of Maggie's reconciliation with the Prince certainly merit attention—and if not agreement, then at least appreciation.

A critic who can call James' art "slender though permanent" is certainly not a Jacobite; yet that fact seems to have worked to Weinstein's advantage, for he sees that the source of the slenderness is also the source of the permanency. Recognizing that "the relation between impoverished life and the active imagination is always potentially tragic in the Jamesian world," Weinstein goes on to trace, faithfully and meticulously, the implications of the conflicts James depicts in the hidden battlefields of the mind. He recognizes the realness of those conflicts, no matter how little they depend upon outward reality or how much they depend upon the products of the imagination; and although he acknowledges that much of life is left out of such narrow dramatizations, his book makes us more aware of the kind of dramatization James does present in his novels:
“[James’] fiction exhibits a radical separation between actual, inadequate relations and ideal impossible ones. The real experience of his heroes is the drama of their discovery of that separation, the drama of their illusions and their disillusionments. . . .” One might disagree with Weinstein’s terminology, or perhaps more vigorously with his tendency to see James’ conflicts as exclusively internal (“Passion and intimacy are imagined, not encountered, by James’s heroes . . .”); at the same time, though, one will recognize the value of his concentration on those internal dramas and his revelation of their qualities.

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EDWARD RECCHIA

Source and Meaning in Spenser’s Allegory: A Study of “The Faerie Queene”

Professor Hankins’ study consists of a series of notes, some long, some short, on the sources of The Faerie Queene and their bearing on the allegory of the poem. The book divides precisely into three parts. The first deals with possible sources for the organization of The Faerie Queene. One major aim of the first section is to argue that the definitive source for much of the ethical structure of the poem is Francesco Piccolomini’s commentary on Aristotle, the Vniuersa Philosophia de Moribus (1583). Spenser scholars have noticed the relevance of the treatise to The Faerie Queene before, but Professor Hankins develops the argument at least far enough to make it clear that when Spenser writes, in the Letter to Raleigh, that he has arranged the virtues “according to Aristotle and the rest,” Piccolomini’s work figures importantly among the “rest.” Other portions of the first third of the book deal with sources and precedents for the method of allegory, the quest motif, and the castles, forests, caves and waters which comprise the allegorical landscape of the poem. The second third of the book consists of notes on episodes in each of the six books of the poem about which Professor Hankins has new information. The final third is about the “physical allegory,” those sections of The Faerie Queene where Spenser seems to be representing contemporary notions about the structure and processes of the sensible world, especially the human body.

Throughout his study Professor Hankins’ approach to The Faerie Queene is, quite self-consciously, in the tradition of Spenser scholarship represented by and monumentalized in the Johns Hopkins Variorum Edition of Spenser’s works published between 1932 and 1949. Therein lie the study’s virtues, which are considerable, and its limitations. The Variorum is an immensely useful work, the starting point for any serious study of The Faerie Queene; but the conception of Spenser’s poem which the Variorum embodies is, typically, confused and distorted. Much of the scholarship reproduced in the Variorum is simply asking the wrong questions about Spenser’s work, especially about the related problems of “sources” and “allegory.” The huge, closely printed pages are too often occupied by scholars whose sense of the assumptions on which the study of
sources is based amount to nothing more considered than, "If I've read it, Spenser must have read it." Professor Hankins is considerably more sophisticated, though occasionally he seems to believe there is nothing in the poem without a source and nothing of value in it beyond the value of the source. One of the chief motivations for source hunting, in the Variorum and in Professor Hankins' study, is that sources are believed to confirm readings of the "allegory" of the poem. And so, handled with judgment, they do. But source hunting often serves to mislead readers of the poem as well, especially when it is mixed with allegory hunting. Like many of the scholars in the Variorum, Professor Hankins is an allegorist as well as a source hunter. That is, he believes that allegory, in its simple sense of personified moralizing, is the fundamental technique of The Faerie Queene. For Professor Hankins, whatever action is going on, whatever landscape is being described, whatever character is being talked about, the episode under consideration is an indirect representation of some other action, happening to some other character, in some other landscape. Accordingly, Professor Hankins' reader will often encounter formulations like this summary (p. 120) of the point of the "amour" between Red Cross and Duessa in Book I: "It is the union of holiness with deceit . . . resulting in the enslavement of holiness to pride. Whatever the sin committed, it is not one of fleshly lust." Professor Hankins uses the renaissance and medieval allegorical commentaries written on other epics, notably Tasso's on the Gerusalemme Liberata, to justify his interest in finding the truths hidden behind the poetry. He does so with perfect justice, and comments like the one quoted above are in their turn the logical outcome of finding contemporary precedent for the unveiling of hidden general truths. Such a technique will yield just such results. But it is grossly unfair to Spenser and his poem to suggest that The Faerie Queene is chiefly organized so that equation making will be its readers' chief response to it. Though we will always have less difficulty "allegorizing" The Faerie Queene than the Iliad, Spenser's poem has enough human richness about it to make such a pursuit less rewarding than reading the poem with an ongoing awareness of its concreteness and multiplicity. The allegorical equation is only one of Spenser's tactics. To his credit Professor Hankins frequently reminds his readers that personified moralizing is only one dimension of the poem. Nevertheless, the study's insistence on looking at psychomachia produces unhappy results. The conclusion that Red Cross and Duessa are not illustrations of the sin of lust, for instance, is simply and obviously wrong. Whenever, as in the episodes with Red Cross and Duessa, The Faerie Queene is up to something, it is up to a multitude of things. Spenser is the archetypal synthesizing poet. His chief moral axiom is that virtues and vices are related to one another. One virtue looks suspiciously like another; and vice often looks, to the unsuspecting, like virtue. Whatever Red Cross is in the episodes with Duessa, what we read about there is a man who leaves his bride-to-be in a fit of jealousy and takes up with the first woman he meets. Spenser seldom ignores the concreteness of an "allegorical" situation. Professor Hankins notwithstanding, Spenser's comment on Red Cross' first impressions of Duessa, as she is describing how she came to be riding with Sans Loi, is graphically pointed at "fleshly lust":

He in great passion all this while did dwell,  
More busying his quicke eyes, her face to view,  
Then his dull eares, to heare what she did tell. . . . (I.ii.26)
Spenser's comment begins by sounding noble: the heroic spirit can sympathize with noble distress. But the next lines are the more damning for the alternate interpretation they propose about Red Cross' "great passion." "Fleshy lust" is certainly not Spenser's sole concern in the Duessa episodes of Book I, but if a reader feels that he is being shown it, should he deny his perceptions for the sake of a formula?

Professor Hankins' concern with isolating the abstractions behind the poetry is more than an annoying appendage to the often valuable source material he has discovered. It also results in perspectives on the poem which are idiosyncratic, even perverse. In his discussion of the Bower of Bliss, for example, Professor Hankins appears not to have learned from Spenser what Milton learned from him, namely that virtue and vice often look alike. Surely one point of the episode is to show how wrenchingly attractive sensual pleasure can be. Yet Professor Hankins, determined to see a straightforward moral situation by finding sources and precedents—in this case for the fountain Guyon passes on the way to the inmost bower—observes that though "The pool seemed to be of clear water . . . this was only an illusion" and then concludes that Guyon's destruction of the Bower is merely a revelation "of the true nature of what was already there" (p. 84). True enough, but not adequate to the whole tenor of the episode. Like Red Cross, Guyon is the good man whom "many perils doe enfold . . . to make him daily fall" (Lviii.1), and his victory over Acrasia comes through struggle. Guyon's action is not so totally controlled, so angelic, as Professor Hankins suggests. Spenser, in fact, uses the pool, whose source Professor Hankins is hunting, to illustrate Guyon's human weakness, for the Knight of Temperance almost succumbs to the two naked damosels who are capering in it and must be reminded of his mission by the Palmer. Guyon is still subject to his own humanity. His heroism is defined by the dangerous weakness he must continually battle in himself as that weakness finds its expression in the attractiveness of Acrasia's evil pleasure garden. Through his attention to sources, Professor Hankins has sheared away both poetic and moral nuance. Elsewhere in the study, the strict allegorical line produces even greater derangements of the aims of Spenser's poem. The concluding episode of Book III, where Britomart rescues Amoret from the enchanter Busirane, has presented and continues to present difficulties of understanding and interpretation. It is a puzzling sequence, but Professor Hankins boldly assumes that here, as—according to his assumptions—almost everywhere else in the poem, his version of internal allegory is the prevailing mode. The upshot is that the passage is really about impulses toward sexual perversion. Amoret is the consciousness, the "real" person in whom all the other characters exist as impulses, guards, and directives. Busirane represents the impulse toward sexual perversion and Britomart the impulse toward chastity which save Amoret / Everywoman from a life of twisted sex. Professor Hankins hangs his identification of Busirane with fantasies about sexual perversion on almost no more evidence than his feeling that the enchanter "seems too sinister a figure to represent merely a bride's nervous qualms before her first sexual experience" (p. 162). What proofs he offers in addition consist of a reference to the De Planctu Naturea (because the work discusses sexual perversions and was "highly influential") and the observation that in the Psychomachia of Prudentius the opponent of Chastity is Sodomita Libido. Even Professor Hankins' descriptions of what such impulses toward perversion might consist of seem
problematical: At one point he describes it is "the attraction of a latent Lesbianism or homosexuality" (p. 163), though if Amoret is really a female character, as Professor Hankins believes, and not some impulse in yet another "real" person's brain, one is hard pressed to distinguish between Lesbianism and homosexuality in a female character. In the sequence which concludes Book III, the combination of source study and emphasis on "internal allegory," as practiced in this study, does not work.

Professor Hankins' method has its limitations. His work is the more eccentric for it. The allegorizing also takes up a good deal of unnecessary space, for the consistently most valuable parts of the work are the background materials which Mr. Hankins has investigated and which he often uses to good effect. The value of source study is particularly apparent in the last third of the book, the studies in the "physical allegory," especially in the long discussion of that other vexing sequence in Book III, the Garden of Adonis. Here Professor Hankins' habit of reading all characters as personifications also serves him well. The study presents a considerable amount of confused, but basically coherent evidence to support the idea that gardens are conventionally used in classical and medieval literature as metaphors for human genetalia and that mythological figures, Venus especially, are regularly allegorized in descriptions of the physiology of reproduction. The general picture of what Spenser is about in the Garden of Adonis episode, as Professor Hankins develops it—building on research gathered in the Variorum and elsewhere—, is an impressive one: The Garden of Adonis is at once the garden of this world and each of the particular, intimate sites within it since the creation of the world in which the processes of vegetable, animal, and human procreation have taken and are taking place.

The single most important requisite in appreciating *The Faerie Queene* is flexibility. Spenser's poem is an amalgam; it is more complicated than any of its sources or its meanings. If the student of Spenser chooses, as Professor Hankins has done, to pursue one perspective on the poem vigorously, he will have his reward. Detail and nuance will fall away; whole sections of the poem may become unrecognizable. But if the approach is plausible, work done from a single, uncompromising perspective will also discover design and inspiration unnoticed before. By insisting on the importance of sources and of the internal allegory, Professor Hankins has traded away some parts of *The Faerie Queene* to make our understanding of others the richer.

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*Jay B. Ludwig*