The sixteenth century: excluding drama after 1550: Sidney and Spenser

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2. Sidney

In an original collection of essays considering sexuality in prose fiction--usefully divided into three parts ('Gender, Genre, and Sexuality'; 'Queer Fictions'; and 'Textuality and Desire')--three chapters focused on Philip Sidney's Arcadia (old and new). In the first part Lisa Hopkins argues that in the Old Arcadia incest is central to the development of a personal and romantic identity (Hopkins 2004). Hopkins notes strong parallels between Sidney's treatment of the theme and that by John Ford in The Broken Heart. Moreover, incest is a recurring motif in other plays linked to Sidney's text "by a shared reliance on the oracle motif" (p. 72) including The Winter's Tale. References to incest in the Old Arcadia are brief and indirect but provide evidence of a conflict between family and the romance that develops between strangers. Hopkins concludes that Sidney's treatment of family and romantic love is closely connected to the experience of his own family, including "the language of incest" (p. 73) apparent in Sidney's dedication to his sister, the Countess of Pembroke. Also within part one of the study is Steven Mentz's essay which focuses on cross-dressing as an emblem for the instability of gender and desire in Sidney's New Arcadia (Mentz 2004b). As Mentz points out, much has been written on Sidney's experiments in genre but more remains to be said about his treatment of gender. Mentz argues that Pyrocles cross-dressed as Zelmane constitutes an exploration of the relationship between masculine and feminine qualities. Via reference to the sexual semiotics of clothing, Mentz considers key episodes where dress affects the text, arguing that in the resultant fusion of arms and eroticism, the figure has become neither male nor female but "an unstable mixture" of the two (p. 88). Robert W. Malen's essay appears in part 3 of the collection and is concerned with literary influence (Maslen 2004). Malen argues convincingly that Sidney's Old Arcadia is indebted to George Gascoigne's scurrilous prose fiction The Adventures of Master F. J. Via reference to Sidney's Apology for Poetry, Malen notes that the relationship between the two works has not hitherto been recognised because "Sidney has succeeded in convincing generations of scholars of his aristocratic disdain for the popular works of his English predecessors" (p. 221). Malen considers the links between The Adventures of Master F. J. and the Old Arcadia in detail and concludes that Sidney may have rewritten Gascoigne's romance in a heroic context for a specific reason: in order to vindicate his uncle Robert Dudley, earl of Leicester, "the knowing erotic machinations" of F. J. are transformed into a more flattering representation involving courageous political dissent.

Staying with Sidney's sources, Barbara Brumbaugh disputes the critical consensus that Torquato Tasso's Jerusalem Delivered was published too late to have influenced Sidney's New Arcadia in any substantial way (Brumbaugh 2004). Plotting the parallels that occur between the Italian epic and Sidney's text, Brumbaugh shows that there is clear evidence for extensive correspondences especially "in his transformation of the Tancred/Erminia/Clorinda subplot into the Amphialus/Helen/Philoclea subplot" both of which "involve a love triangle" (p. 340). However, as Brumbaugh notes, Sidney also creates deliberate contrast between the New Arcadia and his source. Sidney's imitations of Tasso make for a more allegorical text than the New Arcadia is usually considered to be and the contrasts demonstrate his desire to rework the Catholic epic in accordance with the tenets of Protestantism. Brumbaugh usefully provides an appendix which draws connections between Tasso's portrayal of Tancred's battle with Argantes and Sidney's version

involving Pyrocles and Anaxius. Also taking generations of scholars to task for their assumptions is Carol F. Heffernan who points out that although it is clear Sidney knew Heliodorus's Ethiopica, it is less clear that the text was necessarily a source for Sidney's Arcadia (Heffernan 2004). Heffernan makes a compelling case for Chaucer's Squires Tale being just as likely an influence. Chaucer's tale of the exotic East is "a native English example on the order of the complex structure with which Heliodorus worked" (p. 16) and, like Sidney's New Arcadia, was left incomplete. Moreover, Sidney refers approvingly to Chaucer several times in his Defence of Poetry and could well have read Chaucer in several editions.

Steven R. Mentz's focus is on the ancient topos of shipwreck in the New Arcadia (Mentz 2004a). Mentz points out that the three shipwrecks that occur in the text do so at critical junctures in the plot and the trope enables Sidney to explore "the relative merits of reason and faith in understanding human experience" (p. 1). Sidney's attitude toward Neo-Platonism and Calvinism is more complex in than some critics have hitherto assumed. As Mentz demonstrates, far from suggesting that wisdom is useless, Sidney shows that "human reason can be trusted only so far" and must be replaced "with a combination of reason and a partial perception of extrahuman Providence" (p. 8). Mentz concludes that, in religious terms, the unfinished state of the New Arcadia makes perfect sense since the conclusion "rests in divine hands", the end given over "to God and posterity alone" (p. 15).

This year's Sidney Journal (whose stated year of publication is 2003 but which was actually published in 2004) offered two essays engaging with the work of Philip Sidney. Like many of the articles on Sidney that appeared this year, Anne Sussman's is focused on the Arcadia (Sussman 2003). Sussman notes that although critics have recognised Philisides, the melancholy, love-sick poet, as Sidney's alter-ego, the role of Histor as alter-ego has received little attention. Histor, another Arcadian shepherd-poet, appears in only the first three eclogues of the Arcadia and not at all in the revised New Arcadia. Although usually considered only a narrator, Sussman argues that Histor is also an important source of reliable information about past events. Histor thus functions as the text's narrative memory and, since Sidney thought that "the poet should be something of an historian" (p. 43), he provides a crucial narrative and poetic voice but his "refusal to marry and to procreate coincides tellingly with the diminishment of his own generative powers as a storyteller" and that voice is gradually erased. According to V. L. Forsyth, Sidney was influenced by the Greek historian Polybius' Histories, which was the first work to describe the land of Arcadia (Forsyth 2003). Forsyth traces the "considerable similarities" (p. 59) between their descriptions of Arcadia, which have hitherto gone unnoticed by critics. The influence is not always straightforward, for example a major difference between the two Arcadias is climate: the source presents a land that is 'cold and gloomy' where Sidney's Arcadia is warm and sunny but, as Forsyth explains, perhaps Sidney wanted the reader to bear the source in mind "and be aware that this Arcadia is an illusion which upper class characters . . . can afford to impose upon the real Arcadia " (p. 62). As Forsyth makes clear, Sidney was indebted to Polybius' Histories but adapted it to his own vision and this essay provides a sensitive reading of the probable rationale behind the similarities and distinctions detected.

This year's Notes and Queries contained only one piece on Sidney. George Gomori points out that, while on a visit to Strasbourg, Philip Sidney signed the album

amicourm of George Freiherr von Hoffkirchen, a German nobleman who probably studied at an academy run by the educationalist Johannes Sturm. The album amicorum, a booklet in which the owner collected contributions from friends, acquaintances or famous contemporaries they knew, is now kept in the Austrian National library (Gomori 2004). It was also signed by Robert Sidney who followed the example of his older brother and left England for the Continent and whose journey Gomori traces. Gomori draws comparisons between the two brothers, noting that in a letter written by one of Robert's travelling companion it is clear that Robert was unable to learn proper German during his time abroad.

3. Spenser

Matthew Woodcock's monograph on fairy mythology in The Faerie Queene offers an indispensable guide not only to Spenser's poem but its relation to early modern conceptions of fairies and the figure of the fairy queen (Woodcock 2004). The book is divided into six main chapters, an introduction and conclusion. Chapter one 'Reading Fairies in Early Modern Texts' locates Spenser's poem within its cultural milieu, considering the fairy via the scepticism apparent in works of Protestant demonology while chapter two, 'Sources and Contexts', considers the relationship between Arthur and the fairy queen, the role of Queen Elizabeth, and the presence of the fairy queen in Elizabethan and Jacobean masques and entertainments. In chapter three the focus is on three specific episodes from Spenser's poem: Redcross's discovery of his true fairy identity (at mount contemplation); Arthur's vision of the fairy queen (1.9.9-16); and Guyon's reading of the chronicle 'Antiquitee of Faery lond' in the House of Alma (Book 2). Chapter four broadens out to the depiction of fairy land generally and its various fairy knights while in chapter five the focus is on its queen and how she relates to Spenser's reading of Elizabeth I. Chapter six returns to the Antiquitee of Faery lond in order to consider Spenser's mythological genealogy, used in the period to celebrate the queen and the Tudor line. This is an important contribution to the field of Spenser studies and Woodcock proves to be an well-informed and reliable guide to the poet's use of fairy.

Andrew Escobedo's monograph contains two chapters on Spenser (Escobedo 2004). The study considers the emergence of national consciousness in England, in particular how Renaissance writers negotiated between the recent and ancient past. As Escobedo points out, post-Reformation England's hostility to Catholicism problematised the notion of a shared national culture and encouraged the desire to forge a national identity from both partial historical fact and fictional speculation. Spenser is considered alongside John Dee in chapter two: 'Antiquarian History: Dee, Spenser, and the Tudor Search for Arthur' and alongside Milton in chapter four: 'Poetical History: Spenser and Milton Ornament the Nation'. Chapter two suggests that Arthur's Briton moniments from Book two of The Faerie Queene represents an effort to forge a link between the English past and present but there are "hints at the limitation of this figure. The monument's materiality, inevitably subject to decay in time, assured that it, like the past it signified, would some day be gone" (p. 48). Escobedo argues that the Briton moniments is a lost Welsh source written by Geoffrey of Monmouth which serves to underline the chronicle as materially transient. In Chapter four Escobedo explores the tension between partial history and

fiction suggesting that, contrary to the critical consensus, "Spenser takes early national history seriously as history" (p. 165) but recognised that some fiction was necessary to flesh it out; Spenser's "hybrid historical poetry" (p. 171) was the best means of filling the vexing gap between past and present.

A fascinating monograph by Jessica Wolfe on the interface between humanity and machines contains a chapter entitled "Inhumanism: Spenser's iron man' (Wolfe 2004). Talus, the iron man, is a good choice for such a project and Wolfe does an excellent job considering this under-studied figure whose "inhumanity is hostile to courtly ideals" (p. 204). Wolfe's most striking insight is that Talus resembles a sixteenth century gun (p. 224) and thus represents a modern militarism that threatens to supersede Spenser's chivalric knights. Ultimately, Spenser is ambivalent in his attitude to the iron man for he "recognizes both the appeals and dangers of Talus' capacity to strip war of its tactile nature . . . the insensate hardness that makes Talus a model soldier also inures him to pain and to pity, qualities central to the essentialist humanism of The Faerie Queene" (p. 235).

In a collection of essays focusing on the word-centeredness of the Tudor-Stuart Church, Carol V. Kaske attends to the influence of Psalms upon Spenser's sonnets (Kaske 2004). Kaske indicates the importance of the Psalms in Elizabethan culture, both religious and literary: Psalms were read in Church and also translated and paraphrased into metre by poets. Kaske is especially keen "to examine influences of the Psalter as a whole on the Amoretti and Epithalamion as a whole, on its mode, structure, and psychological function" (p. 33). As Kaske demonstrates, both collections contain an epithalamion, end with "unalloyed praise" (p. 34), focus on progress, employ similar repetitions as well as a 'naughty' tone, and "record a spectrum of emotions" (p. 41). Kaske traces these parallels with admirable attention to detail, successfully locating Spenser's sonnets within an important cultural tradition.

In another collection of essays, this time charting the early modern passions, Douglas Trevor considers Book one of The Faerie Queene (Trevor 2004). Trevor notes that sadness is a dominant emotion in the poem and is held in high esteem by Spenser, functioning as "a badge of sorts for the spiritually elect" (p. 240). Spenser's treatment of this emotion "not only creates a certain mood that is inflected with moral and religious righteousness" but also "designates Spenser as a Protestant poet whose doctrinal beliefs . . . [are] shaped by concerns that evade . . . ideological and theological categories" (p. 240). Trevor argues that Spenser distinguishes between sadness and melancholy, privileging the former as redemptive, a view that was not exclusive to Protestant thinkers and suggests that Spenser was influenced by Timothy Bright's A Treatise on Melancholie and Ralegh's Treatise of the Soul, which denied materialist theories of the passions, identifying the soul as entirely spiritual and not affected by the humours.

As noted in last year's review of Spenser Studies, it is not good enough for journals to present the personal reminiscences of senior academics, however interesting, as research. This year's Spenser Studies disappoints again by opening their volume with 'The Kathleen Williams 2002 Lecture' delivered by Lauren Silberman, printed without any revisions having been made for publication (Silberman 2004). There are no citations of the critics referred to in the text and the

informal, even chatty, tone of the lecture is all too evident, one example being Silberman's apparent joke "For a full discussion of the above, you can buy my book--please", which might prove entertaining in a spoken paper but is not appropriate in this format. Another example is the comment "I will need to pick up the pace, but please bear with me" (p. 6). It is not necessarily a problem that Silberman is on the editorial board of the journal but the publication of this unrevised paper raises the issue of peer-review. The editors of Spenser Studies have stated privately to this reviewer that all essays submitted for publication in the journal are peer-reviewed but the process is not blind. The editors might want to reconsider reconsider their position; blind peer-review is considered good practice by most serious scholars. If Silberman's article was reviewed by her peers then they should have requested its revision for publication and if they did not this responsibility lay with the editors. The paper itself makes the point that in Spenser's epic "various textual processes undercut, subvert, or criticize explicit assertions or narrative situations in the text" (p. 4) which sensible Spenserians already knew but might add 'not always', and insists that although "politically aware" criticism is welcome "politically reductive" criticism should be avoided, to which one might respond that, for some, the 'politically reductive' is merely that with which they do not agree and will go to any lengths to undermine.

Two essays on the Spenserian stanza appeared this year. Jeff Dolven (2004) argues that Spenser was influenced by the Protestant educational reformer Petrus Ramus and his use of method "as a means for bringing systematic order and concision to existing felids of study" (p. 18). Dolven considers one stanza in particular from The Faerie Queene, Arthur's advice to Una after Orgoglio's defeat, and states that a specific structure is discernable: the medial couplet providing a second thought and the final alexandrine a sententious closure. Like Dolven, Kenneth Gross's focus is on one stanza from Spenser's epic poem, that from the Garden of Adonis in Book 3 (Gross 2004). Both authors are interested in the mechanics of poetic technique, an aspect of Spenser's writing which recent critics, perhaps understandably, have tended to neglect in favour of the poem's arguably more exciting political allegory.

In last year's review of an article by Shohachi Fukuda which considered the numerological patterning of Spenser's Mutabilitie Cantos it was objected that Fukuda presented no evidence to support the assertion that certain numbers are significant, for example why 8 is "the number of rebirth" nor why, for Spenser, 19 should be the "number of evil" (Fukuda 2003, 19). The same objection can be raised against Fukuda's analysis of the first three books of The Faerie Queene (Fukuda 2004). For example, when Fukuda asserts that the numbers 1 to 10 "are called perfect numbers, all signifying a pyramid, the symbol of eternity" the reader is left to wonder why and to whom; a footnote indicating a debt to other numerologists is insufficient. It might well be that, as Fukuda oddly puts it "Spenser firmly believed in numbers" (by which we must infer that Fukuda thinks he believed in their signification beyond the obvious) but attributing meaning to numbers without explanation is not helpful to the interested reader.

Andrew Wallace considers Spenser's interest in the didacticism of Virgil's Georgics and the educational implications of its metaphors, an aspect of Spenser's writing that critics, concentrating on his epic poem as a critique of court culture, have

hitherto overlooked (Wallace 2004). As Wallace points out, georgic metaphors pervade the writings of early continental humanists including Erasmus whose "pedagogical georgic offers an important precedent for the flexibility with which Spenser explores this vocabulary in The Faerie Queene" (p. 69). Wallace focuses especially on the education of two protagonists from Book One of Spenser's epic poem: Redcross and Satyrane. The former "foundling-cum-plowboy" is "educated and repeatedly reeducated throughout Book 1, learning as much from failure as from success" (p. 75) whilst the latter "engages georgic as a means of testing the boundaries of analogy and gauging what might be learned from the act of subduing the wild intractability of natural savagery" (p. 76-77). The essay provides a useful reappraisal of Virgil's influence upon Spenser but is somewhat over-long and it would be helpful if all the section headings were descriptive of content rather than unattributed quotations.

Paul Suttie's essay is the first of three to focus on Book two of Spenser's Faerie Queene (Suttie 2004). In a nicely argued piece, Suttie suggests that the moral clarity evident in Book one of Spenser's poem gives way to a distinct ambivalence in Book two and a tension between two models of heroism: the 'froward' (self-restraint) and the 'forward' (passionate vengeance). Suttie believes the motive is as much political as religious: where Book one clearly denounces Catholicism, Book two "tests what might summarily be described as a 'Cecilian' Protestant Stoicism against a 'Dudleian' Protestant Militarism" (p. 132), thus highlighting the difficulties of steering a path between each rather than constituting a moral endorsement of either.

The episode featuring Maleger's attack upon Alma's castle is considered in the context of the physiological as well as the psychic by James W. Broaddus (Broaddus 2004). Via reference to the theories of Renaissance anatomist Helkiah Crooke and the philosopher Thomas Wright, Broaddus argues that Maleger's attack demonstrates Spenser's ambivalent view of the castle-body: its stability as well as its ephemerality. The reason Arthur and not Guyon, with the help of the Palmer, confronts Maleger is because "Guyon and the Palmer embody the physical weaknesses on which Maleger preys" (p. 148): the Palmer is an old man and Guyon has heart-problems, witnessed by the reader in an earlier canto when Guyon faints.

Staying with influences upon Spenser, Raphael Lyne's essay considers the episode from Book two's Bower of Bliss featuring Grill (the hog released from Acrasia's enchantment) in the context of his literary antecedents (Lyne 2004). The Gryllus episode in Plutarch, Montaigne, Erasmus, and others problematises straighforward interpretations of Spenser's allegory, in particular the easy moral presented by Guyon and the Palmer. The brief appearance and subsequent silencing of Grille in The Faerie Queene sits uneasily with earlier versions of the story where the hog has more to say, specifically in his defence of animal virtues. This is a timely reconsideration of Spenser's Grill, especially given the growing interest in human-animal relations in early modern culture as evidenced by Erica Fudge's excellent study (Fudge 2000).

There were two essays on Book 3 of The Faerie Queene. The first of these, by Alexandra Block and Eric Rothstein, focused on the book's structure (Block & Rothstein 2004). Block and Rothstein argue that Book three is divided into three interconnected sections and they provide a detailed analysis of its patterns and

linkages, its binaries and inversions. The list of connections is fairly exhausting and although some are not especially surprising--for example that the "vulnerable, loving Florimell, who is to be Proteus's prey, parallels Amoret, who is Busirane's" (p.182)--others are more thought-provoking, for example the linkage between Malbecco and Marinell which, they argue, prepare us for that between Busirane and Merlin (p.181-182). The essay serves to remind readers just how attentive Spenser was to this kind of detail when creating the fantastically complex world of Fairyland.

Jason Gleckman's essay has a narrower focus than that of Block and Rothstein, arguing that in Book three Spenser offers an examination of suffering via Britomart's experience of chaste love (Gleckman 2004). Britomart's love for Artegall "parallels the journey of the Christian saint as conceived by the Protestant church" (p. 210), a journey that initially, indeed necessarily, involves suffering. Gleckman detects criticism of Elizabeth I in the poem's virginal figures who "eschew heterosexual encounters . . . [and] also seek to avoid the violence of the male gaze, a painful element of life that, in The Faerie Queene, can only be dispensed with at the cost of isolation from the social world" (p. 216). Spenser challenges the avoidance of suffering but also the vice of lust, displayed by most of the poem's male characters and which masquerades as suffering "much akin to the self-mortification opposed by Protestants" (p. 220).

Tensions within Christianity is also the subject of Todd Butler's thoroughably readable and insightful essay which argues that Spenser's Faerie Queene is a product of the struggle to reinvigorate the Church of England after the Marian persecution of Protestants (Butler 2004). By examining Spenser's epic poem alongside contemporary sermons and treatises Butler seeks not to establish Spenser's own doctrinal allegiances (a seemingly fruitless task) but rather the challenges faced by his contemporaries in establishing a new religious polity. Butler considers three episodes from the poem: Una's encounter with Corceca and Abessa, her rescue by the Satyrs (both from Book one) and Artegall's encounter with the Communist Giant (from Book five). He argues that the first uses blindness as a trope "to describe the reluctance of many English subjects to become zealous Protestants" (p. 100), the second presents "a multitude whose impulses fitfully drive them toward a newly established church" (104), and the third a multitude which "possesses instincts that tend only to dissolution and outright violence" (p. 116).

The 'Gleanings' section of this year's Spenser Studies contained two articles. In the 2002 issue of Spenser Studies Frank Ardolino argued that throughout Spenser's Complaints run allusions to the English defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588 (Ardolino 2002). He returns to this event and its effect upon Spenser's writing again in 2004. As in his earlier essay, Ardolino presents a convincing argument that Spenser was influenced by the Armada's defeat in the gnat's underworld account of the storm and shipwreck that befell the Greeks returning home from military success against the Trojans. In the second article, Thomas Herron proves attentive to Spenser's use of dense wordplay in claiming that the satire of court corruption in the third episode of Mother Hubberds Tale, usually read as referring to the English court, constitutes an allusion in support of Nicholas Dawtry, the English Captain who served in Ireland and Scotland, as well as covert criticism of the powers granted to Thomas Butler, earl of Ormond (Herron 2004a).

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Moving away from Spenser Studies, the "filthy matter" referred to by Stephen Guy-Bray is the substance that oozes from the breasts of Duessa (Faerie Queene, Book one) and also, in some cases at least, Spenser's Protestant view of one of his most important sources, Torquato Tasso's Gerusalemme Liberata (Guy-Bray 2004). Guy-Bray rightly notes that critics tend to focus on either source-study or explication of The Faerie Queene but he brings the two together here in a consideration of the description of Acrasia's breasts (The Faerie Queene 2.12.78.1-4). Guy-Bray concludes that this description of Acrasia is indebted to the description of the ugly Duessa in Book one of Spenser's poem (1.8.47.6-8) as well as to Gerusalemme Liberata; unlike the witch Armida from Tasso's work, neither Acrasia nor Duessa can be redeemed.

Gerald Morgan argues that the "medieval background of reverence for Aristotle supplies a natural context for approaching the moral argument of The Faerie Queene" (p. 450), a view that has been disputed by most modern Spenserians (Morgan 2004). Morgan's focus is on Book one, the book of holiness, and he reads it via the Christianised Aristotelianism of the medieval Schoolmen and especially the series of commentaries on Aristotle by Aquinas. In this engaging essay, Morgan identifies Spenser's attitude to holiness not as narrowly sectarian but as specifically conservative with Spenser drawing upon his medieval inheritance: not only is the poet influenced by Aristotle via Aquinas but the "popular piety and simple patriotism of the Middle Ages" (p. 454) via Saint George, a figure who is the literary descendant of Langland's Piers Plowman.

Lorna Henry considers Spenser's use of prophecy in The Faerie Queene (Henry 2004). As Henry indicates, the prophetic and apocalyptic literature of the Bible, taken from the Old Testament and, in particular, the Book of Revelation, was central to the Reformation view of church history. Henry provides a reading not only of Redcrosse's adventures in Book one (the usual focus of studies engaging with Spenser's use of the Book of Revelation) but also Books three and four, in particular Merlin's prophecy which confers upon Britomart "both identity and destiny" (p. 62) and those prophecies given to Cymoent and Agape concerning their children. Henry concludes that "Spenser presents prophecy not as an opportunity for avoiding suffering but as a means of empowering the individual to participate willingly in the destiny ordained for him or her" (p. 69) which is in line with Reformation theologians who insisted on the inviolability of God's providential designs.

In a welcome study of Spenser's other poetry, Jonathan Gibson disputes the recent critical view that Spenser's Daphnaida (1591) is ironic (Gibson 2004). Gibson argues that there is no evidence to support the view, put forward by William A. Oram, amongst others, that the poem is an appeal for its protagonist Alcyon, based on Arthur Gorges, to cease excessive mourning for his dead wife. Gibson follows Helen E. Sandison in suggesting that the poem might rather allude to a legal dispute between Gorges and his dead wife's family over the inheritance rights of Gorges' child, Ambrosia. Gorges' in-laws insisted that their daughter had been enticed away and Gorges was not the child's father. Gibson regards the poem's "problematic features" (p. 26) explicable in the light of this legal matter. The poem's dedication stresses Gorges' aristocratic connections and the child as a pledge of the couple's love. Crucially, Gorges' grief, based on a manuscript sequence of love poems written by him to his wife, presents him as a victim deserving of sympathy while the

representation of Gorges as irrational and out of control challenges the view of his in-laws that he was a schemer.

This year's Notes and Queries contained only one piece on Spenser. Continuing his 'endless work' on Spenser and Ireland, Thomas Herron follows critics who identify Arthur, not just Artegall, as the conqueror and rescuer of Ireland in The Faerie Queene (Herron 2004b). Herron also identifies a source for what he terms "Arthur's heroic Irish purpose" (p. 255) in Book one: a late-medieval romance The Hystorye of Olyuer of Castylle, first printed in French in 1482 but later available in English. As Herron admits, the features of the French romance that he compares with Spenser's epic "are all typical to medieval romance" but he argues that influence is apparent, not only due to the widespread availability of the source text in English but by the "Irish milieu" of its motifs, "their rough coincidence with Arthur's action on behalf of the famished Red Crosse Knight" and use of "the identical name of Arthur" (p. 256).

Books Reviewed

Stanivukovic & Relihan 2004 (hard back, 304 pages, $65. £42.50 isbn 1403963886)

Woodcock 2004 (£37.50, $74.95. hardback, 172 pages, 0754634396)

Escobedo 2004 (£29.50, $45. hardback 280 pages, 0801441749)

Wolfe 2004 (318 pages, hardback, £45. $75. isbn 0521831873)

Doerksen & Hodgkins 2004 (price $62.50, £35.90. 368 pages, hardback, isbn 0874138434

Paster, Rowe & Floyd-Wilson 2004 (price £39, $24.95 hardcover, 376 pages, isbn 0812237609)

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