merely as a reflex of *Piers Plowman* B.xviii. There follow notes on 'The Abbess's *ABC*', by Josephine Koster Tarvers; and on 'Langland's Use of the Term *Ex vi transicionis*', by Cynthia Renée Bland—a lucid account of the nature and currency of the grammatical system of *regimen* to which the Latin phrase alludes (as first pointed out by R. E. Kaske in 1963).

Books covered by the reviews (besides Schmidt's, referred to above) are J. A. W. Bennett's posthumous *Middle English Literature*, which is surveyed by A. C. Spearing with his customary wit, sense, and elegance; and three further titles (*The Popular Literature of Medieval England; Social Unrest in the Late Middle Ages; The Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature*) which, like those of the articles, indicate that the editors of the *Yearbook* intend a wide interpretation of 'Langland studies'—a policy also followed in other comparable journals. The same scope is apparent in the closing Notices (of recent publications) and Annual Bibliography for 1987. And in fact the items in the present volume which I found most illuminating were those which were only partially or incidentally (or not at all) on Langland; and those which used him to contra-distinguish poems and persons often associated with him. But perhaps that may be because Langland is so controversial a writer that any scholar of his poem can only hope to command the assent of a fellow addict if he or she stays safely off the poem proper.

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**MYRA STOKES**


Professor Ferry's latest book is 'a kind of sequel' to her *The 'Inward' Language* (1983), but can be read independently of that and makes a valuable contribution to the study of sixteenth-century literature. To say that the book is valuable is not, however, to imply that it has no shortcomings. Undue concentration on those should not detract from her very real achievement; but they should be listed, and I hope that then the book's very positive qualities will stand out the more clearly.

In a book so learned, intelligent, and precise, it is surprising to see a number of very glaring errors in spelling or proofreading. Thus we find (I italicize the offending letters): 'I vor Winters' (p. 179), 'indispensible' (p. 4), 'underly' (p. xvi), 'Otto Jesperson' (p. 187). There is some fixation with certain kinds of theory which are not essential to what she wishes to say, and this creeps at times into the—otherwise clear and unpretentious—language: I came across the word 'predicated' seven times in the Preface alone, and too often afterwards. Ferry attaches great (perhaps exaggerated) importance, for the purposes of her argument, to reading sixteenth-century texts in their original versions, but her approach to this problem is confused. For example, on p. 189 she says that she quotes Wyatt from Tottel's Miscellany 'because it was in Tottel's version' that his poems 'were known to later sixteenth-century poets'. Officially, however, her period is not just that of the later poets, but of sixteenth-century poetry as a whole, and Tottel's versions are a travesty of superior ones to which access is often not very difficult: Ferry herself quotes 'Whoso list to hunt' from Richard Harrier's edition of the Egerton MS (which contains poems in Wyatt's hand, others revised by him, etc.) on p. 107.

A more serious difficulty is the delineation of the subject area. Ostensibly this book is concerned with all of sixteenth-century poetry, and it winds up with an over-ambitious generalization about 'poetry written in the first and second halves of the period of literary history called the English Renaissance' (p. 177). In truth, Ferry does not deal with the full panorama of the first half, or of what she so often refers to as 'the sixteenth century'. Crudely speaking, her interest is in the second half of the
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century (i.e. from Tottel's Miscellany on), and even then in certain poets rather than others—notably those in whom she can find examples of what used to be called the 'ornate' style, i.e. poets like Spenser and Sidney, both of whom are discussed often. And even then the approach is of course bound to be selective: it works well for Spenser, but less so for Sidney, whose Arcadia poems (and Psalms) are a profitable mine, but the interest of whose Astrophil and Stella often turns exactly on the tension between the ornate and the plain styles—a tension of which Sidney was at least partly aware, and which is no less absorbing where perhaps he was not.

In general, I found Professor Ferry more impressive in explaining the traditions/assumptions underlying her chosen examples than in explaining how a stylistic effect works in practice, and, although her approach from what is in fact a background to the poems has to an extent enabled me to understand their existence more fully, I do not necessarily now appreciate them as literature any more or less than I did before. I wish to stress, though, that I do think that what she does—even if that is more limited than I should like or she claims—is entirely legitimate in making us understand certain aspects of sixteenth-century mentality better.

The general contention of The Art of Naming would appear to be that the poems to which the title can successfully be applied are the product of a worldview which saw their creation as ultimately derived from Adam naming the creatures, and thus from God Himself. In other words, the poems are (even if concerned with secular subjects) part of the world of religion and ritual. Ferry certainly persuades me that she has got hold of one truth in this regard. For example, she demonstrates tellingly in her 'Afterword' that Sidney's Psalms are from her particular point of view more religious than Milton's whose language (not his content, of course) can definably be seen as more secular. The thesis is set forth in compelling detail in the body of her text. Thus she shows that the verb 'to read' had a different and more extended range of meaning in the sixteenth century than we would now assume. An interesting and revealing chapter on 'Parts of Speech' argues convincingly that the notion of 'naming' underlay what later grammarians categorized as quite distinct concepts, and she shows that set phrases like 'weary woe' can be understood as forming a single 'name' in which the adjective is inextricably bound up with the substantive. One may doubt that the poets were at all times aware of such a notion, and I continue to feel that many of the phrases quoted are merely repetitive formulae in the alliterative tradition, but Ferry's idea is novel, very plausible as at least one interpretation, and not incompatible with others. She has done a great deal of work, both within her book and obviously for it, to justify her argument concerning such a matter, and her evidence is both wide-ranging and well-chosen.

There is a particularly significant chapter on 'Translating or Borrowing' which is concerned with such concepts as we would now usually call 'metaphor' and 'allegory'. The chapter (and this is true of the book as a whole) does not make for light reading, but it rewards the patient reader's efforts, and one dares predict that it will often be referred to as original and important in what it does. I was particularly fascinated by analysis of special relationships between tenor and vehicle. Thus Ferry makes a striking comparison between 'Fame is the spur' from 'Lycidas' which Empson described as 'the tenor is the vehicle' and Sidney's 'My sheepe are thoughts' (p. 114) which looks like 'the vehicle is the tenor' though it is more easily explained as 'allegorical' if we read it as my sheep stand for thoughts (p. 116). This example leads to a discussion in which metaphor and allegory are discussed together, and from which it seems that on the one hand the poets involved (Spenser and some of his contemporaries) saw allegory as something separate yet on the other were also willing to describe it as a long and perpetual metaphor (p. 117). In general, Ferry writes best on Spenser, and she may be quite right in thinking that his Faerie Queene contains both
allegory and metaphor as we would now commonly understand them, while yet his (and his time's) mode of seeing them allowed a fluid interchange not generally granted today. This would explain ready shifts between such usages as the following:

Then Guyon forward gan his voyage make,
With his blacke Palmer, that him guided still.
Still he him guided ouer dale and hill.

(2.1.34)

which looks like 'allegory' in which the vehicle (the Palmer) stands for the tenor (Guyon's virtue), and

The true Saint George was wandred far away,
Still flying from his thoughts and gealous feare;
Will was his guide, and griefe led him astray.

(1.2.12)

where the tenor is the hero's 'will' compared to a tempter who is the vehicle (the tenor is like the vehicle, p. 123).

It is in the illumination of such sixteenth-century ways of thinking that I believe that Ferry's book, despite the aforementioned drawbacks, is something of a minor masterpiece.

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JOOST DAALDER


Both Women Writers of the Renaissance and Reformation and Redeeming Eve accomplish the important task of surveying a substantial amount of writing by women, much of it relatively unfamiliar even to an academic audience. The Wilson anthology, in particular, functions both as an introduction and as an incentive for further research. Far-ranging and ambitious in scope, Women Writers in the Renaissance and Reformation includes samples of works written by women from Italy, France, the Habsburg Empire, the Low Countries, Spain, Hungary, and England. A number of these texts have been translated into English for the first time. Each sample includes a biographical-critical introduction of varying length by a scholar in the field as well as a bibliography of primary and related works on that author. This useful format could perhaps have been rendered even more convenient by the inclusion of birth and death dates by each Renaissance author's name rather than in the bulky chronology at the back. It would also have been helpful to have included a short list of notable women writers, such as the renowned Italian humanist Laura Cereta, whose texts were not included in the volume. But these small lapses do not detract substantially from the very real merits of Wilson's collection.

The sheer number and variety of these texts accomplish one of the goals claimed for Women Writers of the Renaissance and Reformation in its introduction, to belie 'traditional assumptions concerning the homogeneity of women's literature' (p. xii). In these pages, religious figures jostle shoulders with a cortegiana onesta and a king's mistress; female philological scholars greet female political activists. Resisting simple stereotypes, this richness of contrast complicates possible conclusions concerning women writers in the Renaissance. Yet despite the difficulty of the task created by such a formidable array of material, Wilson's introduction makes a number of useful