imagination and mental transformation, fascinated by ultimate consummations yet sceptical, tough-minded, open to contingencies. Correspondingly we are here given a *King Lear* that "participates in . . . secular millennialism" (p.26), that "fires our temporal aspirations" (p.125), that involves an "apocalypse of mind," "a mind-transforming event" (p.33), and that "quarrels with all perspectives it countenances" (p.122).

It remains of course an open question whether this "apocalyptic humanism," to use Harold Bloom's term, resides in Shakespeare's conception of the play or whether it is a critical conception anachronistically imposed on it. Wittreich's reading is certainly no more anachronistic than the Beckettian conceits of the Jan Kott-Peter Brook school of interpretation, and, on the face of the evidence he presents and the logic of his argument, it is considerably less so. One could do worse, moreover, than to read *King Lear* by Romantically oriented lights. It was the Romantics after all who first appreciated the sense of Shakespeare's ending enough to restore it after a repudiation that originated in the same century in which the play was written. Much fine scholarship in the past generation - with Wittreich's work prominent among it - has devoted itself to showing the continuities of thought and sensibility that exist between the English Renaissance and the Romantic Movement and, in particular, the degree to which the visionary and mythopoeic impulses of the Romantics derive their strength from renaissance precursors. Thus, for instance, if Blakean formulations suit *Lear* it may be because Shakespearean perceptions, accurately intuited, inform Blake's own vision (echoes of *Lear* show up everywhere in Blake's Prophetic Books). Shakespeare studies, however, have tended to remain somewhat apart from this rediscovery of cultural continuities. If it does nothing else, *Image of that Horror* performs a signal service to Shakespeare scholarship by bringing the greatest of Renaissance masters into a common orbit with the other major phase of literary idealism in our heritage. Wittreich's approach to this project is unorthodox and speculative; his is a criticism that, as it were, speaks what it feels, not what it 'ought to say'; it is meant to open one mode of discussion on Shakespeare, not terminate other modes. In the process Wittreich eloquently demonstrates once again the apparently endless capacity of *King Lear* to generate new perspectives on fundamental issues; no matter how much we think we can see into its profundities, we shall never "see so much" as to obviate fine and original critical studies such as this one.

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Linda A. Stone-Ferrier. *Images of Textiles: The Weave of Seventeenth-Century Dutch Art and Society*. Ann Arbor: University Microfilms Research Press, 1984.

This book enriches our understanding of Dutch art in two ways. First, it offers the first investigation of the Dutch artistic interest in themes of textile manufacture and display. Second, in analyzing the Netherlandish adoption of sumptuous clothing in the 1650s and 1660s, the author addresses one component in the larger change of Dutch art from austerity to worldly display.

Chapter One discusses textile production in Leiden as a prelude to analyzing

paintings depicting the history of this production. Entrepreneurs advanced a self-serving praise of the wool industry, identifying it with Leiden and vice-versa. City historians in turn saw the hand of God in the prosperity of wool merchants: "The good God wants the same industries for his goodness and to maintain grace for a long time in his state. This, itself, extends to our blessedness" (p. 39). Stone-Ferrier shows how such official imagery, sanctifying the textile imagery and Leiden as a whole, underlies two groups of paintings decorating Leiden's linen and wool guildhalls. These pictures show no interest in the actual, wretched conditions of Leiden's textile workers; the figures are grand, heroic, and occasionally set into a mythological context. Here, the author's social evidence works well to elucidate the relatively simple meaning of this guild "propaganda."

Chapter Two explores single paintings of interiors with diligent weavers executed by Haarlem artists. Again, an important urban context is developed; Haarlem was an international centre for the weaving, bleaching, and sale of linen. According to Stone-Ferrier, the positive view of the weavers is unusual given the traditional comic or moralizing depictions of Dutch artists (p. 59). As explanation, she details the rise of a sixteenth-century Protestant work ethic, citing an anonymous Flemish *rederijker* play of 1540 where a pious weaver voices the new ideology. Rejecting the Catholic view of work as punishment for original sin, the weaver claims labour is a divine gift and sees God Himself as "the workman who delegates the work to us" (p. 73). Similar accounts are cited from Dutch books celebrating Haarlem, such as Ampzing's *Het Lof der Stadt Haerlem in Hollandt* (1621): "Due to our citizen's art and spirit, she [Haarlem] holds up her head, and with her name and fame bursts through the heavens, by which our city and citizens are known, as far on the globe as he [God] has sent his arts. . . . So Trademanship, here, was also pursued with fervour, and most of them there have weaving as their main concern . . ." (p. 72). This socio-religious context allows Stone-Ferrier to see the Haarlem paintings as parallel, visual celebrations of the diligent weaver and, more generally, the prosperous city. No doubt, such works would have appealed to a broad Netherlandish clientele, not just the Haarlem market suggested by the author (p. 79).

Chapters Three and Four are the least original and least interesting. Chapter Three discusses the varied feminine imagery of spinning, sewing, and embroidery. In relying almost entirely on Kelso's classic but outdated *Women of the Renaissance* for her discussion of spinning (p. 92), the author seems oblivious to the literature on the classical and medieval iconography of spinning and sewing.¹ Nonetheless, she shows how these activities expressed, in seventeenth-century Holland, the Protestant idea of sanctification through work. Her most valuable contribution here is in the accumulation of visual evidence. Similarly repetitive is her discussion of the erotic meaning of certain spinning scenes. Chapter three concludes with the "topsy turvy world" where women brandishing distaffs dominate foolish men. The author breaks new ground here only in distinguishing between the didactic meaning carried by paintings of spinning and those of embroidery, the former were invariably virtuous while superfluous ornamentation of the latter often gave it an immoral quality (p. 117).

Chapter Four discusses the many panoramic landscapes of Haarlem with its linen bleaching fields painted by the Haarlemer Jacob van Ruisdael. Again, an

urban industrial context is developed through texts and popular prints celebrating Haarlem for its famous linen industry and bleaching process. Stone-Ferrier rejects earlier allegorical interpretations based on contemporary emblems which conflated the linen bleaching fields with Biblical metaphors of bleached linen for the immaculacy of heavenbound souls (Rev. 19:7-8). In this emblematic/Scriptural context, the Haarlem views expressed the purification of the industrious human soul and the city. Stone-Ferrier proposes a supposedly secular, alternative model for these scenes: Dutch maps with their bird's-eye views. This ignores the fact that Dutch maps often carried moral and religious inscriptions, and discussions of maps dealt with similar matters. (E. de Jongh, review of S. Alpers, *The Art of Describing in Simiolus*, 14 [1984], 57-58. Walter Gibson discussed the humanistic meaning of sixteenth-century maps in a 1983 College Art Association paper.) Inviting a moral and spiritual contemplation of the *theatrum mundi* and of God's universe, the map was linked to the didactic worldscapes and religious vistas of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Northern art. With her map model drained of these rich traditions, Stone-Ferrier cannot help but see Ruisdael's Haarlem as mere celebrations of "the value and worth of a local community's industriousness rather than [as] general references to the purity of the human soul or of the city."

Given the author's own demonstration of the pervasive mingling of industriousness and sanctity in Dutch culture, such dichotomies are reductionist and anachronistic, arising more from modern, secular thinking. For Stone-Ferrier, the church on the horizon is merely a landmark for Haarlem, as are the bleaching fields. The vast panorama, in turn, is just the expression of a secular mapping tradition, an urban portrait without any larger sense of what the city might mean set deeply within God's creation. Strangely lacking is any sense of God's grace in the prosperity of Ruisdael's Haarlem. Emptied of its sacred content, the work ethic becomes merely a self-serving manipulation of God. In this way, Stone-Ferrier misses the complexity of seventeenth-century Dutch life with its uneasy reconciliation of worldly ambition and religious faith (Simon Schama, "The Dutch Master's Revenge," *New Republic*, May 14 [1984], 28-31). Rather than this "either-or" approach, it makes more sense to see the Haarlem views as an inspired harmony of opposites. On the one hand, the panoramic view allowed the artist to celebrate the city that "holds up her head, and with her name and fame bursts through the heavens" (Ampzing). On the other hand, by choosing such a low horizon and giving such attention to the majestic sky above, Ruisdael makes a typically Protestant comment on the lowliness of a fallen mankind before the overwhelming magnitude and mystery of mankind. In this sense, the Haarlem views invoke a purifying labour, not just because of the work ethic or because immaculate linen was a popularized Biblical metaphor, but because the visual structure of the paintings with their vast perspectives and domes of heaven located and sanctified both work and city within the totality of God's creation. To borrow from both the rederijker play and Ampzing's account cited above, God is "the workman who delegates the work to us"; Haarlem's fame circulates "as far on the globe as *He* has sent *His* arts." Ruisdael's perspective, then, both celebrates Haarlem's prosperity and discloses a transcendental realm of meaning. To understand the pictures in this way, one must be willing to interpret their ambiguous and complex aesthetic structures, a risky

business to be sure, but surely a fundamental task for the art historian. Curiously, Stone-Ferrier's book avoids almost any sustained aesthetic analysis. An exception is her sensitive discussion of Rembrandt's changing representation of rich draperies on p. 166. Other major works such as Rembrandt's *Syndics* (pp. 17-18) and Vermeer's *Lacemaker* (p. 100) are either discussed superficially or mentioned only in passing. Thus complex works of art become illustrations for social history. In anchoring her interpretation of the Haarlem views in the "facts" of social history, she misses the inherently unstable, ambiguous relation of social documents to works of art. In the end, the social history of Chapter Four offers a false security and leads to a distorted view of the art it helps "explain."

The final chapter, the best in the book despite significant flaws, explores the artistic display of silk and other luxury fabrics. Before 1650, the depiction of such fabrics outside religious and aristocratic subjects was invariably tied to sermons and tracts denouncing vanity and social presumption. After the mid-seventeenth century, such images and tracts fell off noticeably. At the same time, there was a drastic rise in the depiction of luxury costumes, particularly coloured silks. So too, Dutch art treatises began to praise well-painted, carefully discriminated, rich draperies as a delight to the eye and a source of fame for the artist (pp. 204-205). The ascendancy of this taste is clear when it became gratuitous, as in scenes of servant girls wearing silk dresses (p. 217) or genre paintings that sacrifice narrative drama to textile display. Stone-Ferrier explains this new imagery by citing various factors. First was the influence of French fashion, particularly at The Hague with its courtly, diplomatic, environment (p. 210). Even Huygens, who wrote a treatise attacking rich clothing, defended his own elegance as necessary for a diplomat (pp. 211-213). There was also the prosperity and upward mobility of seventeenth-century Dutch life. Since clothes were an important sign of wealth and social position, rich clothing was worn by almost all who could afford it, especially in the absence of sumptuary laws until 1672 (pp. 216-217). Finally, with the Dutch economy so closely tied to textile industries, and given the Dutch prominence in European textiles (p. 215), Stone-Ferrier sees both an individual and a nationalistic pride in the manufacture, wearing, and painting of rich silks. Less convincing is the author's claim that because black could be associated with Spanish and Flemish clothing, the new Dutch display was a rejection of Spanish oppression and Flemish Catholicism (pp. 225-227). Two problems arise here. On the one hand, she ignores her own detailed discussion of Calvinist austerity with its preference for black and white. The same austerity appears in Dutch churches, stripped of the "coloured garb" of Catholic art. So too, Dutch writers opposed a simply dressed Protestant style to the idolatrous "colours" of Catholic oratory. Two of the Dutch Calvinists who wrote treatises attacking sumptuous clothing, Huygens and De Decker, complained of just such ornate language in preaching and sacred poetry. Stone-Ferrier also neglects to distinguish between art and life with respect to Flemish influence. Though Flemish and Spanish aristocrats dressed in black, the paintings they collected were the most richly coloured in Europe. For these reasons, most observers have seen the splendid colours and draperies that swept Dutch art after mid-century as an imitation of Flemish painters like Van Dyck.

The change in the painting of draperies is best understood in the context of

larger changes of subject and style in midcentury Dutch art. The new silk imagery was accompanied by a flood of aristocratic subjects such as hunting scenes and game still-life, luxury good still-life, mythological scenes and mythological portraiture, neo-classical architecture and interior furnishings, oriental tapestries, and views of villas, gardens, and arcadian settings. To move from subjects to style, the new coloured silks participated in the larger shift toward a courtly aesthetic of rich colours and beautiful bodies. The *fijnschilder* aesthetic then was the response of a socially presumptuous, bourgeois genre painting, dressing itself up in the aristocratic splendour usually reserved for history painting. Set within this aesthetic context, the clothing topic regains its traditional value as a metaphor for style and ornament. Along with colour and cosmetics, clothing was in fact one of the three most common metaphors for style in Western discussions of poetry, rhetoric, and art since antiquity (Elaine Fantham, *Comparative Studies in Republican Latin Imagery* [Toronto, 1972], 166-167, 171). With her stronger background in social rather than literary history, the author never sees clothing on this more general level. Had she done so, the evidence she cites could have illuminated more fundamental changes in mid-century Dutch art. Despite such drawbacks, Stone-Ferrier's book is lucid, intelligent, and usually convincing. If future scholarship on Dutch art disagrees with some of her conclusions, it will have to build on many of her findings.

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Note

- 1 Madilyn Kahr, "Velasquez 'Las Hilanderas': A New Interpretation," *Art Bulletin*, 62 (1980), 376-384; Helen North, *From Myth to Icon: Reflections of Greek Ethical Doctrine in Literature and Art* (Ithaca, 1979), 52-54; idem, "The Mare, the Vixen, and the Bee: Sophrosyne as the Virtue of Women in Late Antiquity," *Illinois Classical Studies*, 2 (1977), 35-48, esp. 4144; Gerhard Rodenwaldt, "Spinnende Hetaren," *Archäologische Anzeiger*, 1932, 7-21; E. G. Suhr, *Venus de Milo, the Spinners, and Ancient Fertility Symbol* (New York, 1958); idem, "Winged Words," *Folklore*, 85 (1974), 169-172; Jeffrey Alan Hirschberg, "Noah's Wife on the Medieval English Stage: Iconographic and Dramatic Values of Her Distaff and Choice of the Raven," *Studies in Iconography*, 2 (1976), 25-40, esp. 30-32. Since Stone-Ferrier's book appeared, there is Eva Keuls, *The Reign of the Phallus* (New York, 1985), ch. 3.

The Medical Renaissance of the Sixteenth Century. Ed. A. Wear, R.K. French and I.M. Lonie. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985. Pp. xvi, 349. US \$59.50.

If the history of medicine is a drama, then this book is about the importance of spear-carriers.

A collection of articles edited by Andrew Wear, Roger K. French and Iain M. Lonie, *The Medical Renaissance of the Sixteenth Century* is the product of a September 1983 conference at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, which was sponsored by the Wellcome Trust. The avowed intention of conference organizers and editors alike was to emphasize the role played by less significant characters in sixteenth-century medicine. Too often, they claim, the history of medicine in the Renaissance