for "*Canzoniere*" (p. 6), "provde" for "provide" (p. 39), "condemmed" for "condemned" (p. 45), "Ruggerio" for "Ruggiero" (p. 48), "noms" for "mons" (p. 68, l. 5), "lascai" for "lasciai" (p. 128, n. 39), "Aristo" for "Ariosto" (p. 165), "moveover" for "moreover" (p. 178), "scritte" for "scritto" (p. 186), "né" for "ne" (p. 191, l. 1) and an italicization problem on p. 34, n. 22. Notwithstanding these minor problems, the author's prose style is lucid, and the volume's printing is noteworthy for its clarity.

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Jonathan Goldberg. *Endlesse Worke: Spenser and the Structures of Discourse*. Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981. P.p. Xv, 177. \$17.50 US.

The title of this book is taken from Spenser's apology following the great 'river-canto' in the fourth book of *The Faerie Queene*. When the magnificent procession of water-gods and nymphs attending the marriage of the Thames and the Medway has been described, the poet exclaims, "O What an endlesse worke have I in hand, / To count the seas abundant progeny . . . Then blame me not, if I have err'd in count / Of Gods, of Nymphs, or rivers yet unred: / For though their numbers do much more surmount, / Yet all those same were there, which erst I did recount." Those gods he has named in his catalogue were in fact there, he reports, but there were many more he could not describe, crowding the hall even up to the door, "Yet were they all in order, as befell, / According their degrees disposed well" (IV. xii. 1-3). To give an exact account of "the seas abundant progeny" (IV. xii. 1) lies beyond his powers, even though he has been assisted by the muse. The very possibility of attempting to do so in writing invokes a dream of a complete and accurate representation, after the pattern of those "records of antiquitie" that are "layd up in heaven above" and to which "no wit of man may comen neare" (IV. x. 10). But the actual experience of writing calls forth a 'topos of modesty' (*excusatio propter infirmitatem*) in which the poet seems uncomfortably aware of the limitations of his medium. Not so, paradoxically, for the less reliable medium of Homer whose invocation before the catalogue of ships (*Iliad* II. 485 ff.) lays down the claim that he has a tremendous array of detail exactly correct because of the divine help given him by the muses. For Spenser, however, the event he has attempted to describe constitutes in itself a full presence that cannot be adequately represented within the confines of his art: "How can they all in this so narrow verse / Contayned be, and in small compasses held?" (IV. xi. 17).

To contemplate a writing that would seek to fulfill the dream of total statement, in which no portion or feature of its object would escape representation, is to contemplate the prospect of an 'endless work' advancing forever toward the end it projects for itself while remaining unfinished forever: there would always be one last thing to be extricated from the folds, one last detail to work in, and the more words we spend attempting to exhaust what is there, the further we seem to be from a representation that can be said to be complete. When the artist himself recognizes this situation he must respond by striking some attitude toward it, let us say of

melancholy or exuberance. Either he can regard the "endlesse worke" of writing toward an unattainable goal as being exuberantly productive, like a Rabelaisian cornucopie, or he can regard it as being profoundly depressing, a hopeless rage for order that is always being unravelled and frustrated by the maddening slippages, complicated folds and shifting configurations of writing itself. The first, exuberant response we find, as Terence Cave has shown (*The Cornucopian Text*; 1979), in Rabelais, the second, melancholy response, in Robert Burton with his panicky Ramist designs and that 'extemporall style' which he compares to a running sore and a purging of infection, a writing that is always exiled from, or at best supplemental to, some fantasized 'normal state' of good health where words can be made to stand clearly and completely for things.

Which of these alternatives do we attribute to Spenser? For A. Bartlett Giamatti (*Play of Double Senses*; 1975)—at least with respect to the passage at hand—the inability of the narrow frame of Spenser's verse to contain the immense variety of "the seas abundant progeny" (IV. xii. 1) is greeted by the poet with joy as an act of participation in the larger work of great creating nature. Mr. Goldberg, on the other hand, takes the position that Spenser's mood, with respect to the incompleteness that is written into the centre of his dream of artistic fulfillment, is one of profound melancholy. In the final sentences of his book, Goldberg cites the passage from the correspondence with Harvey in which, by 1580, Spenser is confidently referring to a large corpus of works which are now lost, or were never written, or (perhaps) partially incorporated into *The Faerie Queene* which the poet requests Harvey to return to him so that he can get back to work: "I will in hand forthwith with my *Faery Queene*, whyche I praye you hartily send me with al expedition . . ." "This," Goldberg concludes, "is the poet's fantasy; he has these lost texts to himself. Giving them will empty him into the reality of loss" (p. 174).

There is ample room in Spenser, one feels certain, for both moods, and we are most likely to find them together in that final installment which William Blissett ("Spenser's Mutabilitie"; 1964) has aptly referred to as a "retrospective commentary" on the poem as a whole, one in which a melancholy awareness of the ruins of time is counterpoised by the goddess of Nature's "chearefull view" (VII. vii. 57), and by the spirit of one of Queen Elizabeth's preferred epigrams: "*per molto variare la natura bella*." The melancholy experience of loss that Goldberg sees as dominating the poem proceeds, he believes, from the expectation that a story can be made to complete itself in a definitive ending that has been foreseen by the poet at the outset and then accomplished by writing toward it along an orderly sequence of events. Thus the book is concerned with studying how *The Faerie Queene* seems to undo its fundamental assumptions, not with respect to its claims to allegorical meaning, but with respect to its presuppositions about the nature of stories.

It seems to me that there are two errors here: first, it assumes that a poet immersed in the tradition of romance would start out with such a naive assumption about the nature of stories and the process of narration, and that definitive endings, as opposed to elaborately devious variations, would be of primary importance to him; secondly, it chooses to examine what might be called the 'logocentrism' of

The Faerie Queene in terms of its narrative rather than its claims to allegorical meaning. To insist upon speaking of its narrative alone, independent of the claims made for that narrative as a system for representing ideas, is to over-simplify the issue by extricating the text from the circuit within which the reader transforms information into a structure of meaning, feeds that structure back into his perception of the text as he continues to read, and then re-configures it in response to new stimulus. It is a continuous process driven by the assumption that the frenetic circulation of commentary can be stabilized finally in the achievement of full understanding. Here, if anywhere, is where a 'deconstructive' reading of *The Faerie Queene* should begin.

Despite these reservations about its premises, the book presents a clear account of what it sets out to do that promises to hold our interest even if it does not win our consent: a "reading of Spenser" is offered in which the somewhat neglected fourth book of *The Faerie Queene* is focussed upon as typifying more fully than any other the peculiarities of Spenserian narrative which is characterized, we are told, by frustrating disruptions, retrogressions, incoherencies, subversions of narrative logic, and so on. It is a narrative, moreover, that is shot through with a profound sense of loss because of the incompleteness of all stories and perhaps, if I understand the final sentence correctly, the futility of an art in which, as Beckett puts it, there is nothing to say combined with the obligation to say it. "The only way to tell a story," Goldberg says, "is never to have it end" (p. 72).

The book is intended to contribute to knowledge in two ways: first, it reverses a tendency in criticism of *The Faerie Queene* to gloss over Book IV (which does not separate itself into a complete unit so conveniently as the others) by bringing it into the centre of attention and grounding an interpretation of the poem as a whole upon problems raised by it; and, secondly, it reverses the natural tendency of readers to unify the narrative, while suppressing or explaining away any inconsistencies, by setting forth these normally 'marginalized' snags in the fabric as being essential to the aesthetic experience of the poem: "Most often, when criticism takes stock of such traits of narrative, it considers them as problems that could only be elucidated by pointing to some principle other than narration . . . the frustrations of reading are thereby neglected, and so is something vital to the nature of Spenserian narration" (xi). Goldberg claims that this regressive and inherently frustrating movement he finds in Spenserian narrative is what energizes the creative process itself: "The generation of the text and its production is my subject" (xii).

Allowing for a degree of exaggeration which is perhaps necessary if any unusual approach is to catch our attention, this might suggest that an interesting book is to follow, especially when we encounter the promising remark that Spenser's poem "generates itself precisely out of its own instability" (xiv), for it seems right that there should be some vital relationship between the general 'looseness' of the narrative of *The Faerie Queene* and the mysterious creative forces that shaped and directed Spenser's creative project. Unfortunately, the book does not live up to this promise.

The problem lies partly in its theoretical pretensions which are shored up by an impressive list of authorities—Barthes, Derrida, Eagleton, Lucacs, Jameson, Foucault, Kermode, Lacan, Levi-Strauss, Said and Hayden White—all laid out

for us in mini-essays that appear in the notes: "Another crucial term that Barthes and I use is *supplement* . . ." (p. 10n.). Although Barthes is announced to be the most important of these because of his distinction between the 'readerly' and the 'writerly' text (the latter characterizing *The Faerie Queene* because the poem sets forth the problems of writing by frustrating the reader), the above list should indicate that Goldberg's theoretical approach is broadly eclectic, its purpose being simply to read *The Faerie Queene* in a new way and to express, incidentally, a general enthusiasm for the language of theory. The difficulty seems to arise with his management of theoretical ideas: "the meanings of words are determined *inside a text* as a matter of differences" (p. 24; emphasis mine). Such problems are magnified by the author's enthusiasm for lush overstatement, as in the following commentary on the epithet of Elizabeth as "dearest dred" (I. poem. iv): "this is the power that generates his desire, the desire to write, to be written, and to be destroyed in the process. Is this a consummation devoutly to be wished? The space of narration is, in a word, where loss and excess meet, where orgasm would be no different from castration . . ." (p. 24).

In addition to this, the book is not particularly strong as scholarship on Spenser. The author indulges, for instance, in the kind of naive 'readerly' construction he condemns when referring to Una's "symbolic lamb" (p. 7). The lamb is mentioned only once in our first view of Una (I. i. 4. 9), because of its presence in almost all versions of the legend of St. George; and it soon dropped out of sight because it served no symbolic function (*Variorum* I, 389-90). Elsewhere he states confidently—too confidently for anyone alive to the 'intertextuality' which makes the hunting of absolute origins problematic—that Chaucer's tale of Sir Thopas is an "undeniable source for *The Faerie Queene*" (p. 18), citing as his authority for this Hugh MacLean's abridged, undergraduate edition where the tale of Sir Thopas is much more cautiously noted as taking up the same theme as we find in Arthur's nocturnal vision (I. ix. 13). Apparently, Goldberg is unaware that MacLean follows Greenlaw's discussion of the problem (excerpted in *Variorum* I, 267-68), where it is pointed out that the elements we find in the Tale of Sir Thopas are common to "a rich body of traditional material" in Celtic folklore, and that Spenser must have seen it within a matrix of similar tales, none of which could be privileged absolutely over the others as a definitive "source" even for Arthur's dream, let alone the poem as a whole. It was Josephine Waters Bennet, in 1942, who presented the most vigorous argument for the centrality of Chaucer's tale in the scheme of *The Faerie Queene* as a whole, a readerly construction which Goldberg accepts without question (or acknowledgement) but which is by no means a settled issue.

Between an introduction and a conclusion, entitled "Pretexts" and "After-words" respectively, there are three main chapters: "Other Voices, Other Texts," in which the relation of Book IV to Chaucer's Squire's Tale is discussed, "Others, Desire, and the Self in the Structure of the Text," in which it is argued that it is really the text, not the lovers portrayed in it, that experiences desire, and a third chapter, better than these, entitled "The Authority of the Other," in which, in the manner of critics such as Orgel and Greenblatt, Goldberg discusses images surrounding Queen Elizabeth to situate Spenser's poem within a framework of

socially produced fictions that are instantialized in the text as figures of the 'Other' (capitalized to invoke current re-readings of Freud). This chapter has pictures.

In the introductory section, Goldberg takes up "the revisionary juncture between Books III and IV," arguing that "failed endings are part of the design of the poem" (p. 2) even though the first books give us, as he over-hastily asserts, the "pleasures of resolution" (p. 3). This concession is forgotten several pages later when he claims that the "radical disturbances of narration" in Book IV "lay bare the nature of narration throughout *The Faerie Queene* (p. 6). Pointing out that Book IV has its space in the poem opened for it by "the displacement of an ending" (the reunion of Scudamour and Amoret in the cancelled stanzas concluding the 1590 version of Book III), an ending which never finds its way back into the poem, Goldberg argues as follows: "the fundamental quality of narration . . . is . . . not a progression toward a conclusion, but a deferral, leaving an ending 'to be perfected' in 'another place'; the fundamental quality, as the narrator calls it, is 'endlesse worke' (IV. xii. 1. 9). Such work involves seemingly endless acts of undoing, denial and frustration. Because of it, narration is best measured in losses . . ." (p. 8). As a consequence, *The Faerie Queene* "is a 'writerly text' whose production entails an " 'endlesse worke' of substitution" (p. 11) in which "the problematization of writing" itself becomes central to the poet's concerns (p. 13 n. 6).

The difficulty with much of this is not primarily its suspect familiarity to what is central to *our* concerns: Spenser's poem does indeed raise questions about the creative process which might well be examined in the light of current thought about writing, difference, deferral, supplementarity, the distinction between inside and outside, and so on. But such an analysis should take into account, at some level, the question of intentions if only to show that, even in the case a poet who seems preoccupied with complete patterns and polished surfaces, the forces at work in the process of writing tend to distort, bend and re-configure those intentions in illuminating ways. It is reasonable to assume, for instance, that Robert Burton, as he worked on his extended treatise on melancholy, became increasingly fascinated by the counterforce of prolix disorder that he discovered to be inherent in the process of writing, and that he intentionally exploited its subversion of organized structure. His style therefore seems to proceed out of a carefully managed dialectic between a 'readerly' dream of perfect control over rational exposition and a 'writerly' fascination with the spirited proclivity of writing to take hold of the bit and run where it will. If we think of Burton doing this deliberately we are likely to have a rather different conception of the significance of disorder in *The Anatomy of Melancholy* than if we assume that he attempted throughout to impose order on his material, and failed.

It is simply not possible to avoid this question of intention when thinking about *The Faerie Queene*. In the 'Letter to Raleigh,' for instance, we have an almost obsessively explicit (and notoriously problematic) description of what Spenser, shortly after registering the first installment, seems to have thought he was doing. Did Spenser write the Letter in the same spirit that Burton may have produced his elaborate charts—to deliberately set up a dialectic between the chaotic disorder of writing and an impossible fantasy of meta-discursive control? Or did Spenser

candidly intend it to be a reliable aid, allowing the reader "as in a handfull [to] gripe al the discourse"? The reader of this book soon gives up hope that such questions will have a fair hearing, for Goldberg never tires of rhapsodic incantation on the 'writerly text': "It plays upon the void," he exclaims, "it occupies the place of loss—where Britomart's wound is extended to Amoret, where Amoret is 'perfect hole.' This is the space of text" (p. 11).

To substantiate the claim that *The Faerie Queene* is a 'writerly text,' much of this introductory section is devoted to a reading of the proem to Book I in which a reversal of priority occurs whereby writing takes authority over voice. These introductory stanzas are seen as disseminating into chains of substitution all positive terms that might have been used by a reader to stabilize the meaning of the text and to draw boundaries between inside and outside: the authorial 'I' and the 'Muse' are initially thought to be outside the poem, constituting its creative 'source,' while the corresponding pair of the 'Briton Prince' and 'Tanaquill' are inside the poem and give to the narrative its beginning; but because "the pattern of repetition and substitution has priority and undermines all beginning stories, all stable selves" (p. 17), "both Muse and poet are inside the text and nowhere else" (p. 16). This familiar move (which goes back to the 'new critical' refusal to acknowledge anything but words on the page), is contradicted a moment later when Goldberg claims that the "boundary" between inside and outside "has been explicitly violated," a state of affairs in which it would obviously be meaningless to speak of poet and muse being either inside or outside.

This is of more than incidental significance, for it is symptomatic of Goldberg's procedure throughout of mystifying—one might now say 'theologizing'—the word "text" as his critical mantra. One can only wonder, for instance, at the status of his metaphor of the text as a sphere (which is nothing if not a figure of closure) and his fondness for the locution "space of the text": "By the end of the first stanza of the poem, we may already suspect that to enter the space of the Spenserian text is to cross these boundaries to the loss of our security. The questions, and the reversals, drive us deeper into this textual sphere in which the inside is the outside" (p. 16). I am not sure that anyone's security is any longer at stake when confronted by intertextual conceptions of the literary work as a knotted vortex of codes, unless of course they cling to such metaphors as 'textual space' and 'textual sphere.'

The first chapter takes up the matter of the relation of Chaucer's Squire's Tale to Spenser's continuation of it in Book IV, arguing that Spenser's narrative "works by entering more and more deeply into loss" and that this negative principle for generating the text out of its own failures is observed most clearly in Book IV which "imitates the lacuna that the Chaucerian tale defines as the space of narration" (p. 44). Note the words 'imitate,' 'lacuna,' 'space,' and the active verb, 'to define.' This sentence can mean anything at all. Then we are told that "obliteration is the ending provided" (p. 44), that "loss is the principle of narration" (p. 47), that "community is reduced" (p. 47), that in the relationship of Artegal and Britomart "consummation is postponed because so much has been lost" (p. 47), and that Britomart's returning to where she lost Amoret (IV. vi. 47) is meant to figure *explicitly* the movement of the poem as a whole:

The poem's forward motion is explicitly announced as retrogression, retirement, withdrawal; and the earlier, flashback 'interruption; in which *The Squire's Tale* was first ended now has become a basic structure of narration. . . . Moving back, the text moves into itself, or refers to its own movement, for this return reveals explicitly that the text has been finding its voice only in reworking and unworking that ending with which it began . . . For the narrative to look ahead it looks back. Going forward, the narrative confronts the loss behind the text that generates it. (p. 48)

While this passage will give some idea of the appalling repetitiveness of the book—going nowhere, it goes nowhere—we can get an idea of the general level of critical discussion from the following analysis of the episode at the cave of Lust: "As Amoret and AEmylia 'did discourse' (20. 1), Lust appears in 'the mouth' (20.5) of the cave. He means to rape them and then to eat them. The place of desire is characterized by the equation of discourse and sexuality. Lust's cannibalism and rape are an extreme version of a pattern of substitution" (p. 57).

The chapter entitled "Others, Desire and the Self in the Structure of the Text" is ostensibly concerned with the pairs of lovers who move from Books III to V. Goldberg asserts that they are all "driven to their undoing" by "incestuous desire" (p. 117), but it soon becomes apparent that the sex-life of the text itself is much more exciting than theirs: "In the text, what the desire of the text does is enacted by what desire makes the characters enact" (p. 99). This seems to put the text into a state of anthropomorphic hyperactivity: it "quietly announces" (p. 79), it "comes to Belpheobe by way of Lust" (p. 157), it "satisfies itself in itself" (p. 117), it "engulfs itself" (p. 117), and it "arrives" at Marinell and Florimell where we observe the "submergence of the self in the desire of the text" (p. 119) etc., etc. What the text does with this desire is then explained in a note for those who have not quite got the point: "What I am urging is a freeplay within the text's own narcissism, which also leaves the text playing with itself and the reader defeated" (p. 116. n. 14).

The closest we come to a treatment of allegory is the following offhand remark: although Britomart might be read as an embodiment of married love "in some readers interpretation," to do so would replace "the actuality of the textual space in which characters move in *The Faerie Queene*" with "something supposedly outside it" (p. 75; cf. p. 76 n.). While Goldberg forthrightly declares himself opposed to replacing images in the text with meanings we might wish to find in it, it is clear that he will make some exceptions: Lust, for instance, "figures the economics of exchange that affects women, objects, and words" (p. 157), and, worse still, "male generativity" (p. 158). Would the author of the "Epithalamion" endorse this simplistic and entirely unwarranted equation? It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the text is allowed to refer to some things "supposedly outside it," and not to others.

I move forward now to Goldberg's discussion of the central moment of Book VI, the vision of Mt. Acidale in the tenth canto, for it provides the best example of the general competence and tone of this book. Let me begin with a brief account of the episode itself. The mount is described, with lavish Spenserian detail, as a *locus amoenus* instinct with fairies and nymphs, a sacred resort of Venus who prefers it

even to Paphos. Calidore, hearing the sound of piping and the tread of dancing feet, advances through the surrounding woods toward the "open greene" at the summit where he sees, from "the covert of the wood" (VI. x. 11), a vision of harmony and order that is at once thematically central to the book of courtesy and profoundly suggestive of the poet's conception of his art. One hundred naked maidens devoted to Venus, all "differing in honor and degree" (VI. x. 21), dance in a circle around the three graces who, in the configuration of their dance, are emblematic of "all the complements of courtesy" (VI. x. 23). A the centre of this circular pattern, "as a precious gem / Amidst a ring" (VI. x. 12), is a shepherd girl who is "there advanced to be another Grace" (VI. x. 22). The entire vision has been called forth, and is sustained from within, by the piping of the shepherd-poet Colin Clout who is the lover of the shepherd girl. The relation of the vision to the theme of courtesy is anticipated by the mention of differences of honour and degree among the hundred maidens, openly stated in the description of the graces, and placed within the larger context of culture by the remarkable simile of Ariadne's crown (VI. x. 13)—and image of social order emerging from the primal, 'uncultivated' energy of violence. It is more difficult to determine what kind of 'poetic signature' we are reading, whether it is introduced for largely biographical reasons, whether Spenser really did consider himself to be at the end of his creative project, with what degree of seriousness and finality we should read it and, most difficult of all, how much weight we are to give to the almost unavoidable impulse to see the vision itself as symbolizing the great creative work of *The Faerie Queene*. In short, the passage is nuanced and layered like few others in the poem and raises questions that are complicated even to phrase, let alone to answer definitely.

Goldberg does not find it complicated at all. He says that "Calidore stumbles into this scene of poetic reverie and loss," demanding an "explication of the text," and that the answer he receives from Colin, with its explanation of the iconography of the graces, is "learned baggage" (p. 170). For all his mystical communion with the word "text," he is remarkably careless about what the thing says. Calidore does not "stumble" into the open green but deliberately steps forward—a significant difference: "Therefore resolving what it was to know, / Out of the wood he rose, and toward them did go" (VI. x. 17). It may be a "scene of poetic reverie" toward which Calidore advances, but there is nothing in it of that "loss" which Goldberg is so eager to find because it is Calidore himself who causes the vision to disappear as soon as he comes into view. He has not seen loss but brought it with him—another significant difference. Finally, to dismiss the iconography of the graces as "baggage" may genuinely express how Goldberg feels about it personally, but it is an attitude that is quite out of tune with the aesthetic ambience of *The Faerie Queene* as a whole.

Then we have the interpretation of the critical moment in the episode when Calidore steps forward and the vision instantly disappears: "When Calidore separates Colin from his vision he is doing what he did when he stumbled upon Serena and Calepine in the bushes, interrupting coitus, making bliss bale, a 'lucklesse breach'" (p. 170). The crudeness of this, as criticism, hardly needs to be pointed out by citing the passage (VI. iii. 20) from which Goldberg fantasizes this lively picture of Calepine and Serena, or the later episode in which Serena is

deeply embarrassed by her nakedness because Calepine, who has rescued her from the cannibals, is not yet her husband (VI. viii. 50-51).

But there is still the simile of Ariadne's crown to be discussed and on this we are enlightened as follows: "Ariadne: won at a bloody feast, the emblem of cannibalistic civilization in Ate's house. Ariadne: won and lost, dismade [sic.], and had again as the pattern in the heavens. Ariadne: eternally lost and eternally there, the jewel in nature, text and nature at once. Ariadne: the heavenly scales, weighing words and gifts" (p. 171).

What are we to make of the existence of this tedious book? Is it an attack on the discursive principle of reason itself or a brilliant subversion of reactionary scholarly standards, not to mention competent prose? One feels on every page that the author is defining this position as one extreme in a simplified relationship of symmetrical opposition, flattening out complexity onto a single plane so that he requires an imaginary antagonist to get himself thinking—not unlike the synergistic hostility of Sans Loy and Huddibras, as Sean Kane has shown in the most important recent contribution to our understanding of Spenser's moral allegory ("The Paradoxes of Idealism: Book II of *The Faerie Queene*," *John Donne Journal*, vol. 2, no. 1). It is the old story of the sour traditionalist and the hyperactive radical, each needing the other as an image for what he denies in himself.

In short, this is a book that is too preoccupied with striking a pose to accomplish much else, fantasizing for itself a critical position which will exist only in so far as it is opposed by an imaginary other that is, as Goldberg puts it, "conservative in nature" (xi).

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Jacques Krynen. *Idéal du prince et pouvoir royal en France à la fin du moyen âge (1380-1440)*. Étude de la littérature politique du temps. Paris: Éditions A. et J. Picard, 1981, 341 p.

Ce livre de Jacques Krynen se situe dans la foulée des ouvrages édités depuis quelques années sur la fin du moyen âge français; on a vu, par exemple, B. Guenée s'intéresser à l'idée de nation, F. Autrand aux gens du Parlement de Paris, R. Cazelles, aux règnes de Jean II et Charles V pour ne nommer que ceux-là. Les historiens constatent en effet de plus en plus que cette période est la source de changements politiques profonds qui marqueront de façon très nette les siècles suivants.

À partir de plusieurs auteurs tels Jean Gerson, Philippe de Mézières, Jean de Terrevermeille, Jean de Montreuil, Christine de Pizan et des différents "Miroirs du Prince" dont le *De regimine principum* de Gilles de Rome traduit en français par Henri de Gauchi à la fin du XIII^e siècle, Jacques Krynen examine d'une part les conceptions médiévales de l'éducation du futur roi et les qualités morales qu'elle vise à lui communiquer, d'autre part, comment le moyen âge concevait les devoirs et les obligations du roi lorsque celui-ci accédait au trône. De tous les textes utilisés par Krynen, peu nous sont inconnus et tous ou presque ont déjà fait