

Germaine Warkentin (ed.). *The Queen's Majesty's Passage and Related Documents*. Tudor and Stuart Texts. Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2004. Pp 160.

Over the past ten years, a confluence of new historicist and feminist activity has produced a flood of work on political and cultural constructions of the persona of Queen Elizabeth I. Notable studies in the area include the books by Susan Frye and Helen Hackett and the series of articles by Judith M. Richards. Elizabeth's coronation entry in particular has been the object of scholarly attention over a somewhat longer period, beginning with Roy Strong, advanced by David Bergeron, and added to in recent years by Mark Breitenberg, William Leahy, and Sandra Logan. The culmination of all this activity (which may now have run its course, at least for a while) is the fine collected works of Queen Elizabeth edited for Chicago by Leah S. Marcus, Janel Mueller, and Mary Beth Rose. Germaine Warkentin's edition of the coronation entry of 1559 is a less weighty contribution than that, but a valuable one nevertheless.

Its value resides less in its text of *The Queen's Majesty's Passage* than in its thorough and well informed contextualisation. Warkentin's 59-page Introduction, including maps and well chosen illustrations, presents a masterful overview of the broad historical issues associated with the early modern royal entry, moving from the Roman *adventus* and its later European adaptations to the anthropological researches of Victor Turner on ritual, Clifford Geertz on political theatre, and Marcel Mauss on gift-giving. It skilfully reads the political equations of such events: 'Much depended on who had gained control of the ceremony: the city being entered, or the court of the monarch' (23). It shows an astute awareness of the social forces in play on 14 January 1559: 'the citizenry delighting in the colour and display but held back by barriers in the streets, the aldermen waiting with their purse of gold at the Little Conduit, the watchful courtiers riding by in their ranks' (22). It expounds the particular challenges facing a female monarch, and the way in which Elizabeth parlayed them into opportunities. It is alert to the varying roles and agendas of presenters, spectators, and monarch, and gently opens out the more rigid feminist readings of Elizabeth's situation and performance.

At a more detailed level, Warkentin gives revealing information about the planning of the entry, and the likely roles of Richard Grafton and Richard Mulcaster. She also touches on the place of this entry in historical mythology, in later reprints of the narrative itself, and in Thomas Heywood's *If You Know Not Me, You Know Nobody* (1605). All this is done in an eminently readable

and often elegant style, which in itself demonstrates the editor's finely tuned historical imagination, as in her summary of the queen's route

past lanes and alleyways full of the workshops of the various guilds, into the City's most important mercantile space, around the perimeter of its great cathedral, and past the houses and gardens of the new professional classes and the London homes of the nobility, following a route that allowed all the major social units of the citizenry an arena for display, and validating their place in the city as a whole. (49)

The editor's exposition is supported by a unique marshalling in one place of all the documents connected with the entry – records of the City of London, of court offices, and of others involved in planning the procession; the fairly accessible chronicles of Grafton and Holinshed; the more obscure records by Henry Machyn and Charles Wriothesley. A generous sample of these documents is reproduced in facsimile, albeit not always in satisfactorily legible form.

The most substantial and perhaps the most interesting of these ancillary documents is the description written by Aloisio Schivenoglia, in the Archivio di Stato di Mantua. Though Schivenoglia apparently draws in part on *The Queen's Majesty's Passage* itself, he also gives a good deal of independent information, and views the occasion in a different light – Catholic and courtly – from the inventors of the pageants and the writers of *The Queen's Majesty's Passage*, with their Protestant and civic-minded orientation. Who would have guessed from the English account that in the procession 'There must have been 1000 horses in all', or that it included 'Her Majesty's guard of 100 very fine archers, ... all dressed in a doublet of red cloth with two large stripes of black velvet four fingers wide, and two narrow sashes tied around the skirts of their doublets, the breast all embroidered with brocade of gilded silver'? This version of the event suggests a different power equation from *The Queen's Majesty's Passage*, yet Schivenoglia's narrative has hitherto been only incompletely available, and its origin inadequately understood. Both Susan Frye and Arthur Kinney, for example, call Schivenoglia the Venetian ambassador, an error that this edition corrects.

Warkentin's most valuable scholarly contribution resides in bringing all this material together, and especially in expanding and improving the only previous printing of Schivenoglia's important document, in the *Calendar of State Papers: Venetian, 1558–1580* (1890). Modest to a fault, Warkentin makes little of the fact that her new examination of Schivenoglia's report results in 'the first complete translation of this part of a narrative that is frequently cited' (103).

The text itself is presented in modernized form, in accordance with the policy of the Toronto 'Tudor and Stuart Texts'. This will limit its usefulness to scholars, but enhance its suitability for teaching purposes, also in accordance with the aim of the series. This aim becomes a little obtrusive at points in the introduction, with epithets like 'the fourteenth-century Italian poet Francesco Petrarca' or 'the famous Dutch humanist Erasmus', or when sophisticated interpretation is juxtaposed with an elementary outline of Tudor dynastic and religious history (28–9). Perhaps one should see this double purpose as an advantage: the editor wears her scholarship lightly enough to make the book approachable by students. As it happens, the teaching aim has been to a degree pre-empted by the recent appearance of *The Queen's Majesty's Passage*, also modernized, in Arthur Kinney's Blackwell anthology, *Renaissance Drama* (2000, 2nd edn 2005).

In her role as textual editor, Warkentin shows some inconsistencies, not all of them related to the double scholarly and educational brief of the series. On occasion she is willing to emend her copy text when it does not make sense (eg 90, last line), but she retains a number of errors in that text that were corrected in the four other early printed texts cited in the edition.¹

It may be that Warkentin made a decision to retain errors, as distinct from the omission that she has supplied, but in a modernized text this would be an odd decision, and one would expect the errors to be corrected at least in a note. Finally, in her textual analysis, using the letters by which she identifies the various early texts, Warkentin says that 'it appears that B and D differ only in their title pages; both descend from B' (142). Here she must mean not 'B and D' but 'D and E'. Apart from these blemishes, the editing is well handled and the text easy to read, and Warkentin raises interesting though tentative questions about the history of the early printings.

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Notes

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- 1 These are: 77, *Urbs tua*, line 7: huuc] hunc; 83, *Quæ subnixa*, line 6: relligine] relligione (religione in the two copies of *The Royall Passage* (1604)); 83, *Quæ subnixa*, line 8: Domiuorosque] Doniuorosque; 95, paragraph beginning 'When the child had ended', line 3: shooting] shouting. Also on 95, *As at thine entrance first*, line 2: an ampersand has inconsistently survived the modernisation process.