

Samuel C. CHEW: The Virtues Reconciled.
An Iconographic Study.

Toronto: The University of
Toronto Press, 1947

Chew's collection of essays examines the relationship existing between verbal and visual imagery and shapes the material into a study of the theme of the Pilgrimage of Human Life with particular reference to the complete and detachable episode of the story of the Way of the Soul from the City of Destruction to the City of Salvation, the Parliament of Heaven or Reconciliation of the Heavenly Virtues - as conceived in the imagination of the English Renaissance and expressed in Tudor and early Stuart literature.

"Whosoever loves not Picture is injurious to Truth and All the Wisdom of Poetry" - Chew uses Ben Jonson's assertion to illustrate the widespread views of Renaissance aesthetic criticism on the 'secret friendship' and affinity of Poetry and Painting. The Friendship of the Arts deals with the general problems of verbal and visual imagery, examines Ben Jonson's, Shakespeare's and Chapman's ideas about painting as well as the motifs in their works inspired by paintings, and gives a description of the places where the man of the Elizabethan and Stuart eras could come into contact with emblematic designs.

The collection focuses on one of the most popular emblematic descriptions which frequently occurs in literary sources as well. Truth, Justice, Mercy and Peace came together to decide about the fate of the fallen man. The debate took place within the Mind of God. Justice and Truth demanded satisfaction,

Mercy and Peace urged forgiveness. The reconciliation of the opposing principles was accomplished only when the Son of God offered himself as a redeeming Sacrifice. The Parliament of Heaven examines the roots and the development of the allegory of 'The Parliament of Heaven' /parliament in the sense of a court of law/ otherwise known as 'The Four Daughters of God' or 'The Reconciliation of the Heavenly Virtues'. It compares and contrasts the shifting emphases and different problems of the different versions: in what manner may Justice be satisfied; why should man obtain forgiveness while this be denied to Satan; why may an angel not be a sacrifice for sin; why is the Son of God rather than the Father or the Holy Ghost a fit offering? It takes into account the different roles of the characters: Truth may side with Mercy instead of with Justice; Peace, instead of being one of the disputants, may be the presiding judge in the case; the debate may involve only Justice and Mercy, or the number of characters may be enlarged with Innocence, Faith, Humility, Chastity and Necessity.

After the versions of the allegory Chew turns to the independent occurrences of the personifications.

Truth and Justice examines the English reception of the *Veritas Filia Temporis* formula, its application for the purposes of religious polemic and propaganda, the character and function of Truth and Justice as well as their relationship.

The gentle sisters, Mercy and Peace are the counterpoints of the stern and uncompromising virtues, Truth and Justice. Mercy and Peace deals not only with the different representations of the figure of Mercy - who is not always easily distinguishable from Clemency, Pity, Charity and Generosity - but with the representations of her works as described

in the Gospel of St. Matthew too. We can also read interesting analyses about the relationship of Peace to the other Virtues and of Peace and the cyclic philosophy of history in the Renaissance.

Chew's essays, starting from the central allegory and enlarging the scope of the inquiry in space and time, give an interesting and precise analysis of 'The Parliament of Heaven'.

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