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Eloisa Paganelli. *La Poesia di Drummond of Hawthornden*.
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It may be true that today little importance is given to the poetry of William Drummond. The opinion may have prevailed that his esthetic achievement as a Spenserian poet has won sufficient recognition without the emotion of a polemic. By many it is considered the product of a moment of transition or rather of an epigone.

Paganelli herself says of William Drummond: "He was an aristocrat and a conservative, close to the circles of the Scottish court, and he witnessed and participated in important historical events among which there was one of noteworthy importance also for the cultural repercussions; it was the Union of the Crowns of Scotland and England—an event of double impact that, if on the one hand it broke the isolation of Scotland, so often lamented by the poet, on the other it destroyed the native tradition".

The author of this study takes a rapid look at the historical and cultural setting, showing how the elements are actually interwoven in a situation that the solitary poet of Hawthornden had been unable to escape. The book is devoted to the thematic study of Drummond's poetry. It is divided into five chapters.

In the first chapter, we have a brief presentation of the poet. The important events of his life are succinctly evaluated with the intention of explaining how his personality and events led to his psychological and political isolation. Mention is made of the advent of the baroque style and of the fact that Drummond, while following the models of Spenser and Sidney, gave clear signs of enjoying a style open to the suggestions and to the general tendencies of what would later be defined "baroque taste." A great abundance of research has by now shed light on the fact that large part of Drummond's poetic work has followed English, French, Italian, and Spanish models, which did not prevent him from indulging in numerous paraphrases and translations of contemporary poets. Paganelli gives a rapid exposition of the results of this kind of research, in the second chapter, indicating the nature of this practice of imitation, a typically Renaissance practice. How was it manifested in Drummond? It is not a matter merely of imitation of themes, but also and above all of diction, of phrases, of images, and of linguistic elegance. These

observations serve as an introduction to her chapters III and IV, in which the *canzoniere* of Drummond is examined in its themes and in its forms, following the division *in vita* and *in morte*, just as the poet divided his compositions in imitation of the great example of Petrarch. The examination of the themes here runs the risk of becoming elementary inasmuch as, rather than analyze the aesthetic results in the vehicle of the English language, the author limits her discussion to observing them: love, nature, mythology, sleep, time, mutability, distance, joy, disappointment, *contemptus mundi*, etc. The two chapters give us, however, a good review of the *Poems*, including various points of interest on the influence, not only of Petrarch, but also of other contemporaries, such as Marino, Tasso, Guarini, and less in emphasis, the Frenchmen of the *Pléiade*.

Of special interest is the point in which (p. 79) she returns with insistence on the tight network of correspondences that bind together the two parts of the *canzoniere*: several poems of the second part represent a kind of variation on themes in the first part. Another interesting moment in this reading is the point where the motifs of inspiration of the two books are studied. The Laura of Petrarch, Paganelli rightly observes, had a redemptive mission of spiritual nature, whereas in Drummond the woman exhorts the lover to forget the world, love, and even herself. It is, in fact, observations of this kind that are useful and constitute petrarchism in its infinite variety and vitality.

The fifth and last chapter is entirely devoted to the spiritual poetry, where the Scottish poet, having refined his taste and style in long years of loving practice, reveals himself at his best, more vigorous, more mature. The religious inspiration can now develop with energy in its three distinct phases: concrete images, approach to God, conquest of the pure concept. Paganelli states that the poetic trajectory of Drummond develops along a gradual process of abstraction until it reaches a power of expression so independent that it comes very close to pure metaphysical concept.

The great variety of quotations makes the reading of this book very enjoyable, perhaps precisely because the author is so enthusiastic about her own discoveries and wants to pass them on to the reader, sharing with him the ecstasies of reading. "An Hymne of the Ascension" is quoted in full. However, the enthusiasm does not distort reality. The author likes to emphasize especially that the baroque

elements are evident in the dynamism of the images, in the theatrical sense of the metric structure, but they remain attached (and perhaps this is an advantage) to that sense of measure that earned for Milton the definition of "classical baroque."

An invitation to read William Drummond is always welcome and we can only be grateful to anyone who takes the trouble to indicate to the readers of today the precious moments of the past, to which, perhaps, only an unjust fashion has not granted their rightful, lasting place. At the end of our reading we may feel some doubt about the structure of this study. The quoting of the poems in the original language excludes the Italian reader whose English may be less than adequate, and vice versa. However, anyone fortunate enough to be able to read both languages will surely find the book very stimulating, and will certainly enjoy a veritable "rediscovery".

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