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JANE WHITAKER. *Gardens for Gloriana: Wealth, Splendour and Design in the Elizabethan Garden*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2019. Pp. 336. \$27.00 (cloth).

Jane Whitaker's *Gardens for Gloriana* is both readable and fluent. By interweaving social, cultural, and horticultural sources, Whitaker produces a vision of the lost gardens of the second half of the sixteenth century, thus trying to explain the use and appearance of the gardens associated with Queen Elizabeth I and her courtiers. The book takes its title from Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene* (1590), in which Elizabeth was referred to as "Gloriana," a name she had first been given in 1575 by Sir Henry Lee at Woodstock. During her forty-five year reign (1558–1603) she developed a habit for royal progresses in which the houses of her various courtiers were visited, many of whom were keen gardeners who produced lavish gardens. Following a short general introduction, Whitaker dives straight into the constituent parts of the Elizabethan garden, dealing in succession with knot gardens, mazes and arbors; fountains and water gardens; interspersed by a chapter on dining al fresco and banqueting; groves, wildernesses, mounts, and grottoes; then chapters on botany, medicine, and plant introductions; masques and royal entertainments. The chapters each start with a general statement reflecting modern perceptions of these period gardens, such as this at chapter 2: "Elizabethan gardens were created to delight all the senses, and one of the greatest pleasures of a garden was the enjoyment and appreciation of its fragrance" (17). Whitaker then explains the use of aromatic plants in knot gardens and mazes and how "these ornate creations satisfied the Renaissance fashion for symmetry and decoration" and their patterns "introduced order to the outside space and represented man's ability to control nature" (17). Then follow various details using generally well-known contemporary published sources, a pattern that is repeated in the subsequent chapters.

Whitaker provides an account that will be welcomed by a first-time reader for its lively manner and general accessibility. Until *Gardens for Gloriana*, the main source of reference that pulled much of the information together, made connections, and linked different forms of art and culture has been Roy Strong's *The Renaissance Garden in England* (1979). Produced primarily from an art historical perspective, Strong's book provided the basis of most scholarship since and has retained its value as a source of reference. Whitaker's approach is refreshing in that it does not come with any such baggage, but follows modern preconceptions. There are, however, disadvantages in the plight to seek accessibility to a larger readership: there is a lack of academic rigor; existing notions or concepts are not challenged; and from an academic point of view, it lacks depth. The text is based on limited sources, and more readily available material could have been consulted and scrutinized to provide a more up-to-date and wider perspective. Indeed, Whitaker references the special issue "Tudor Gardens" of *Garden History* (27, no. 1 [1999]), but does not subject it to critical reading as a basis for discussing some of the new ideas posed here. For example, David Jacques's article, "The Compartment System in Tudor England," in that issue (pp. 32–53) introduces an innovative analysis of the way gardens were planned and constructed, but Whitaker neither challenges nor adopts it.

In addition, many specialist sources that could have enriched Whitaker's material are not presented: there is no reference to the various pertinent articles, such as that by Kristina Taylor ("The Earliest Wildernesses: Their Meanings and Developments," *Studies in the History of Gardens and Designed Landscapes* 28, no. 2 [2008], 237–51), which would have been a useful source for more than one of the chapters. There also does not appear to have been any use made of the various published and unpublished archaeological reports that have produced evidence of Tudor (and Elizabethan) gardens, many of which can now be found online. The biggest omission, however, is the absence of any acknowledgment of Anna Keay

and John Watkins's *The Elizabethan Garden at Kenilworth Castle* (2013), which has interpreted and contextualized the information of one site, and provides much new scholarly information that either alters or refines earlier concepts and has helped us to better conceptualize and visualize the Elizabethan garden.

Whitaker includes a useful appendix of "Plants Grown in England in the Early Elizabethan Period," a compilation of plants mentioned in various contemporary sources, but which have been transliterated in a number of modern publications. This provides a flavor of the plants available at the time, but again, for example, modern reprints of a nineteenth-century republication of William Turner's *The Names of Herbes* (1548) are used here without further scrutiny. While this might be acceptable, it ignores the seminal scholarship of J. E. Dandy and William Stearn in a Ray Society publication of William Turner's *Libellus de Re Herbaria, 1538; The Names of Herbes, 1548* (1965), which, in addition to facsimile reprints provides extensive lists where historic plants names are transliterated into modern scientific names. Whitaker might here have benefitted from some assistance of a botanical expert in nomenclature to iron out some inconsistencies in what has been presented. However, her engaging publication opens up the topic for a new generation, who, once enthused, will be able to further their interest and scholarship through a wide range of additional specialist literature.

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