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# UCC

**University College Cork, Ireland**  
Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh

The Unity of Edmund Spenser's *Complaints*

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I declare that this thesis is my own work and has not been submitted for another degree, either at University College Cork or elsewhere.

David Roy

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## Acknowledgements

At some point around the middle of 2011 I met with Dr Andrew King to discuss some of the ideas that I had in relation to my MA thesis. At that stage I was trying to decide whether to write about patronage in the later works of Ben Jonson, or something to do with Spenser. When I went into the meeting I had studied *The Shepheardes Calender* and Book III of *The Faerie Queene*, but I found both to be quite intimidating and was not sure if I was up to the task of writing on them. As I expressed some of those anxieties, Dr King handed me a copy of Edmund Spenser's *Complaints*, and invited me to try that instead. It is safe to say that this project would not have ever happened if it were not for the guidance of Dr King. I wish to sincerely thank him for that guidance and the wonderful help and support he continued to give me well into this current project.

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Fig. 1: Watermark (pot with one handle) courtesy of the Bodleian Library, Mal. 617 (p. 17)

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## Abstract

Edmund Spenser's *Complaints* (1591) is a collection of nine poems; these poems are compartmentalized into four sections, each of which begins with its own frontispiece and contains a dedication to a lady. *Complaints* is an extremely problematic volume which prompts urgent questions, not hitherto adequately addressed, such as: How can *Complaints* be defined in terms of form, genre and structure? Is *Complaints* simply a collection of four separate pamphlets? Why does the volume not fit into any of the career trajectories proposed for Spenser? Why is fixing a date on the poems so difficult? Why is the authorship of the preface, entitled 'The Printer the *Gentle Reader*', so hard to define? *Complaints* has been regarded as a haphazard collection, thrown together by the publisher to capitalize on the success of the first part of *The Faerie Queene* (1590). The aims of this thesis are to address the above questions, while also arguing for the thematic, bibliographic, structural, numerological, cosmological and contextual unity found in the volume, and teasing out the implications of these various unities.

## Introduction

The aim of this thesis is to argue that Edmund Spenser's *Complaints. Containing Sundrie Small Poemes of the Worlds Vanitie* is a unified volume of poetry; that the poems that make up *Complaints* are placed purposefully in a specific order; are purposefully separated out into four distinct sections; and thematically linked with each other overall and within the four discrete sections. As studies into the unity of *The Faerie Queene* – which are as far reaching and diverse as Alastair Fowler's *Spenser and the Numbers of Time*, David Lee Miller's *The Poem's Two Bodies*, and Ronald Arthur Horton's *The Unity of the Faerie Queene* – illustrate, there are a number of ways in which the term *unity* could be approached. Along with the variety of ways in which the term *unity* could be applied, there are also varying degrees within the differing unities. While referring to formal unity within collections of poetry, Neil Fraistat points out that a '[purposeful] thematic iteration among the poems is in itself enough to establish an overall narrative pattern, [also termed] "plotless narrative"' (7). There is a '[stronger] formal unity [...] achieved [...] when the poems are organized so that each "follows" logically or temporally from the other: presenting a narrative, advancing an argument, or appearing in some pattern of serial arrangement (for example, calendrical, liturgical, numerological)' (Fraistat 6). At the very least, the acknowledgement in the title that the poems in *Complaints* will be dealing with the theme of 'the [world's] vanitie', along with 'The Printer to the Gentle Reader' explaining that the volume contains 'like matter of argument' and is made up of 'complaints and meditations of the worlds vanitie' (ll. 11-13), suggests that this volume is thematically unified. Through this thematic unity – revolving around 'the worlds vanitie' – *Complaints* can be seen to adhere to the rules of what Fraistat called plotless narrative. Yet, 'the worlds vanitie' is not the only theme that

binds the poems in *Complaints* together. The other thematic strains that run throughout the volume relate to the dynamics that exist between poets and their patrons, the stratification of Elizabethan society, reformation tradition, sleep, death, and the ascent of the soul through the Ptolemaic spheres. The thematic unity that exists in *Complaints* is complex and nuanced, but it is not the only type of unity that exists in the volume. There is also bibliographic, structural, numerological, cosmological and contextual unity to be found in *Complaints*. This thesis will tease out and explore the various unities that exist within the *Complaints* volume.

The idea that *Complaints* should be seen as a unified whole is not new; this stance has even become the new orthodoxy. Yet, those critics that have worked to establish this new orthodoxy, such as Mark David Rasmussen and Richard A. McCabe, foreground the paradoxical unity evident in *Complaints* by calling the work ‘a collection of miscellaneous short poems’ and ‘an anthology of [complaint’s] major kinds’ (Rasmussen 218; McCabe 580). The novelty of my approach is that I engage with multiple types of unity, rather than limiting my approach to just one, thus highlighting the repetitions, echoes and returns that occur throughout the volume. There has only been one other author, Richard Danson Brown, that has written a monograph that attempts to work with the volume as being unified – formally in his case. Adrian Weiss has written an article for *Studies in Bibliography* that argues for a bibliographic unity to *Complaints*, but does not deal with the poetry found in the volume. The vast majority of articles about *Complaints* deal with individual poems within the volume. The practice of analysing individual poems from the volume, rather than dealing with each poem as an integral part of *Complaints* that interacts with the other poems around it, dates back to the controversy surrounding the suppression of *Mother Hubberds Tale*, which occurred

shortly after publication. The Fourth Chapter will deal with the reception of the volume and how attempts at censorship resulted in the ongoing perception that *Complaints* is not unified; but the overall effect of the censorship debacle was, and is, the perception that *Complaints* is best defined as a miscellany, a hodgepodge of unrelated poems. By approaching the volume this way, critics have not been able to fully appreciate the bibliographical, thematic, structural, formal, numerological, cosmological or contextual unities that bind these poems together.

### ***Complaints* and Criticism**

The *Complaints* volume has a rich history of literary criticism that dates to the 1590s. Mark David Rasmussen's essay in *The Oxford Handbook of Edmund Spenser* (2010) helps to build on this history, while also establishing a new critical orthodoxy for the volume. In '*Complaints* and *Daphnaïda* (1591)', he identifies two factors that have led to *Complaints* 'discovering a more receptive audience [in recent years] than at any other time since its publication' (218). They are: 'the publication in 1989 of the Yale edition of Spenser's shorter poems, whose careful introductions and notes encouraged readers to consider the volume as an "integrated whole"' (218); and 'developments in literary criticism and Spenser studies since the 1980s' (218-9). Following Rasmussen's lead, I will begin with 'the Yale edition' and developments in literary criticism that occurred in the 1980s. My aim in constructing this review is to illustrate how other critics have approached the question of unity in *Complaints* in order to better situate my unique contribution to the area.

Ronald Bond, in his introduction to *Complaints* in *The Yale Edition of the Shorter Poems of Edmund Spenser* (1989), is critical of the approach that previous Spenser scholarship has taken to *Complaints* when he writes: '[it] is tempting to read

excerpts from the book as if it were merely an anthology of sundry poems' (222). Doing so is seen to be the easy way out: '[it] is more challenging and ultimately more useful to read the volume as an integrated whole that sheds light both on the themes and arguments important to Spenser and on various ways in which they might be pleasingly presented' (222). Bond sees a thematic coherence to *Complaints*. His argument is that this coherence can only really be seen when the volume is considered in its entirety, and he challenges future critics to engage with the volume as an 'integrated whole'. The introductions for the individual poems that follow continue in this novel approach. Richard Schell continues to explore the ideas of unity that Bond proposes when he writes in his introduction to *The Ruines of Time* that '[Spenser] further made his first poem in the *Complaints* an introduction to the larger collection' (225). William Oram, similarly, follows in this vein when he compares *The Teares of the Muses* to *The Ruines of Time* and explores how they both deal with the praise of poetry (263). Yet, despite the efforts of the editors to present *Complaints* as a unified volume, the formatting of the Yale edition emphasises the space between the poems by separating them with individual introductions. While treating the works as unified in their introductions and commentaries, they present the poems themselves as stand-alone pieces.

The first to respond to Bond's challenge to consider *Complaints* 'as an integrated whole' was Richard Danson Brown in his monograph, *The New Poet: Novelty and Tradition in Spenser's Complaints* (1999). At least one of the editors of the Yale edition, William Oram, acknowledged Brown's contribution when he wrote that '[he] opens up the connections between the poems in a book rarely considered as a whole, and [his] readings of those poems are acute and carefully argued' (4). Brown states that his 'central argument is that *Complaints* is a self-conscious

collection of poems linked formally by their evocation (and eventual transformation) of traditional literary forms, and thematically by their concerns with poetry and the role of the poet' (7). Throughout his work, Brown focusses on Spenser's 'new poetics' (256). He argues that '[the] major *Complaints* show Spenser transforming traditional complaint from stylized lament into a complex, self-reflexive meditation on the lament form' (256). The 'major *Complaints*' that he writes about are the 'original' poems that are found in the volume, namely: *The Ruines of Time*, *The Teares of the Muses*, *Mother Hubberds Tale*, and *Muiopotmos* (*Visions of the Worlds Vanitie* is also an original poem, but is not dealt with by Brown in any depth). These 'major *Complaints*' are then separated from the translations and the order of the poems is changed. Each chapter discusses a poem in the following order:

1. *Virgils Gnat*
2. *Ruines of Rome*
3. *The Ruines of Time*
4. *Teares of the Muses*
5. *Mother Hubberds Tale*
6. *Muiopotmos*

*Visions of the Worlds Vanitie*, *Visions of Bellay* and *Visions of Petrarch* are largely ignored. By changing the order of the poems, and where they are within the volume, the opportunity to analyse the juxtapositions of poems within *Complaints* is diminished – aside from the fact that three of the poems in the volume are just left out. Designating the 'original' poems as being 'major *Complaints*' also illustrates a misunderstanding on Brown's part of the way renaissance readers perceived originality. For Spenser's readers, innovation, and originality was achieved in the subtle changes in form, tone and emphasis that are apparent in all the translations.

For Brown, Spenser is far more interested in interrogating the poetic tradition than anything else. His approach is broadly formalist, in that he opts for close reading over historical context. His methodology leaves him open to criticism by Rasmussen, who writes that ‘Brown’s book is simply not in dialogue with the main body of Spenser scholarship over the past few decades, with its intricate contextualizing of Spenser’s life and work’ (2010: 222).

The second factor that Rasmussen (2010) identifies as pivotal to the shift in appreciation for *Complaints* is the way that literary studies and, as a result, Spenser studies evolve during the 1980s. He explains:

While readers in previous decades, trained by New Critical principles to admire linguistic complexity and formal coherence, had found little to engage them in [*The Shepheardes Calender*], new historicist critics like Richard Helgerson and Louis Montrose brought the volume to life by showing how its poems evoke in intricate detail the tensions of Spenser’s own experience as an aspiring poet in the Elizabethan cultural milieu.  
(219)

These new historicist critics did not just focus on the poems themselves, they also focused on the paratextual material, such as the woodcuts, the prefatory material, the distribution of typeface, and the glosses (219). This ‘career-and-volume-centred approach’ (219), as Rasmussen calls it, to *The Shepheardes Calender* was very successful, and has been a popular way of approaching Spenser’s canon.

Richard Rambuss identifies the problem with considering *Complaints* in relation to this career centred approach when he writes: ‘[*Complaints*...] resists assimilation to overly streamlined accounts of Spenser’s Virgilian laureateship and is

consequently often ignored or minimized in those accounts' (1993: 84). Patrick Cheney, for example, in his book, *Spenser's Famous Flight: A Renaissance Idea of a Literary Career* (1993), leaves both *Complaints* and *Colin Clouts Come Home Againe* out of his study because 'they do not belong to the generic progression organising the fiction of the New Poet's career' (3). Put another way, it just doesn't fit, so he is going to leave it out. But Richard Rambuss highlights the nuance: '[by] publishing these corrosive poems between instalments of his epic [*The Faerie Queene*], and hence interrupting in midcourse his path along the *rota Virgilii*, Spenser is also staging an implicit challenge to the example of Virgil as the normative model for a poetic career' (1993: 87). As such, *Complaints* can be read in relation to Spenser's career, it is just a more problematic, and in some ways more difficult, way of approaching the text. In fact, Katherine A. Craik (2001) even argues that '[the] effect of erasing *Complaints* from narratives of Spenser's career is to endow the volume with a higher degree of impenetrability than it perhaps deserves' (65). Craik's argument is that 'attempts to decipher [*Complaints*]' "impenetrability" are predicated on the assumption of a logical or linear progression of Spenser's literary career and his prolonged adherence to a coherent literary identity' (64-5). Approaching *Complaints* through the lens of the *rota Virgilii* makes the text 'impenetrable'. She goes on to write: '[such] a critical paradigm [...] limits the readings of *Complaints* to an index for Spenser's stalled relationships with his patrons and the Crown' (65). Craik offers Chaucer as a more viable candidate on which to model Spenser's literary career (78). In *Edmund Spenser and the Poetics of Patronage* (2002), Judith Owens continues with this career centred approach when she reads *Complaints* as enacting 'an important counteraction to the gravitational pull of court' (36).

Adrian Weiss (1999) focuses a little more on the paratexts than most when he adopts methods of analytical bibliography to date *Complaints* and *Daphnaïda*. Weiss examines five copies of *Complaints* held by the Folger Shakespeare Library and one copy that also has *Daphnaïda* bound with it, from the Huntington Library. He tabulates the watermark distribution of two of the Folger copies and the one Huntington copy, and shows that *Complaints* and *Daphnaïda* were part of the same job-lot. He goes on to argue that ‘each section [of *Complaints*] could have been tied up and marketed as a separate book, or all could have been purchased for binding into a complete set. *Daphnaïda* could have been included at the same time, as seems to be the case with the Huntington copy’ (131). Even though *Daphnaïda* could have been bound with *Complaints*, Weiss does not see *Daphnaïda* as being part of the same volume (148). He also believes that there is evidence to suggest that ‘Spenser and Ponsonby worked together on the preparation of the materials for the press’ (152).

Andrew Hadfield (2012) also cites the volume’s paratexts when he argues that *Complaints* ‘gives every indication of having been carefully planned by author and publisher’ (283). He returns to a more career centred approach when he writes: ‘*Complaints* is central to Spenser’s poetic career and his and our understanding of him as a writer. It cannot be seen as a sideshow or detour, even though the volume encourages the naive reader to think that this is the case’ (283). Hadfield does not take William Ponsonby’s preface at face value; he believes that ‘[it] is hard to imagine *Complaints* was thrown together by an unscrupulous printer searching for quick profits’ (273). One of the novel ideas put forth by Hadfield is that ‘*Complaints* was read as an attack on Leicester as well as Burghley’ when it was first published (276-7). As with Helgerson, Montrose, Rambuss, Craik, and Owens,

Hadfield engages in close reading that is interwoven with intricate explanations of context.

Returning to Rasmussen (2010), '[since] the 1980s, criticism of *Complaints* has taken two main directions, one primarily historicist and one primarily formalist in its orientation' (221). The historicist critics have generally read *Complaints* in relation to Spenser's career as a poet, where the volume is 'staging a deliberate turn away from the Virgilian model and its reliance on court patronage' (221). Formalist critics, as the name implies, have 'focused mainly on questions of form, and particularly on Spenser's use of poetic complaint' (222). Rasmussen identifies the historicist group as being the larger of the two, and singles Brown out as being representative of the smaller formalist group (221-2). As stated above, he criticises Brown, and other formalist critics, for focussing on close reading rather than engaging with 'Spenser scholarship over the past few decades, with its intricate contextualizing of Spenser's life and work'. Historicist critics '[suffer] from the opposite defect' (222), in that they do not fully engage with the poems themselves. So, for Rasmussen, the formalists do not engage enough with the historical context and the historicists do not engage enough with the primary text. As such, he poses this question as a challenge to those that are to work on *Complaints* in the future: '[is] it possible to combine the insights of historicist and formalist practices so as to bring the volume into focus "as an integrated whole"?' (223).

It is the aim of this thesis to respond to Rasmussen's challenge by engaging with the insights of humanist critics, while at the same time adopting the more formalist method of close reading, so that *Complaints* can be brought more fully into focus 'as an integrated whole'. This begins in this Introduction, where methods of analytical bibliography are used to analyse the 1591 editions of *Complaints* as

historical artefacts in and of themselves, thus building context for the chapters that will follow. This could not have been done without examining, in detail, nine actual copies of the 1591 *Complaints*, one of which is the Huntington edition, which was one of the three copies examined by Weiss. Where Weiss was completely limited to the Folger and Huntington Libraries, this thesis examines copies held in the Bodleian Library, Cambridge University Library, the National Library of Scotland, the British Library, Clark Memorial Library, and the Huntington Library. While not by any means a complete survey of all the 1591 editions of *Complaints*, this is the broadest thus far.<sup>1</sup> As such, my findings will be added to those of Weiss to broaden the current survey of the 1591 copies of *Complaints*. After the book as an artefact has been addressed, the Introduction moves on to how the association of frontispiece and the list of poems argue for unity within *Complaints*. The greatest obstacle inhibiting scholars from seeing these arguments as genuine is the preface, ‘The Printer to the *Gentle Reader*’, in which *Complaints* is portrayed as a miscellany. This thesis will work to problematise the long-standing tradition that William Ponsonby is the author of the ‘The Printer to the *Gentle Reader*’, while at the same time suggesting that Spenser and Ponsonby collaborated on this work.<sup>2</sup> Once the book has been examined as an artefact that itself argues for unity, this thesis will move on to the poems within this volume.

The First and Second Chapters both deal with the overall structure of *Complaints* and the way in which the poems are ordered. In so doing, both chapters adopt historicist and cultural materialist methods of enquiry, as they closely read the

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix 1.

<sup>2</sup> See Michael Brennan’s ‘William Ponsonby: Elizabethan Stationer’ (p. 96) and Adrian Weiss’s ‘Watermark Evidence and Inference: New Style Dates of Edmund Spenser’s “Complaints and Daphnaida”’ (p. 152) which both argue for close collaboration between Spenser and Ponsonby while *Complaints* was being printed.

poems. The First Chapter expands on the argument put forward by Richard Schell that *The Ruines of Time* can be seen as an introduction to *Complaints* as a whole. While Schell alludes to the idea that parts of *The Ruines of Time* can be linked to specific moments in *Complaints*, Chapter One argues that the four parts of *The Ruines of Time* – made up of the three narrative segments of Verlame and the visions at the end – link to the four specific sections of *Complaints*. The major links between the distinct segments in *The Ruines of Time* and the four parts of *Complaints* are thematic, but there is also an effort to show that Spenser has left linguistic markers to encourage the reader to make these connections. *The Ruines of Time* is only the introduction and is not the only organisational structure at work within *Complaints*. The Second Chapter argues that *The Teares of the Muses* also offers an organisational framework for the volume as a whole, proving that the order of the poems is by no means arbitrary – thus should not be changed as has been done by Brown – and could not have been decided by Ponsonby alone. Within this chapter it is argued that the complaints issued by each of the nine muses correspond thematically with the nine poems that make up *Complaints*. The linking of a specific muse to a specific poem in the volume is original to this thesis. Both the first and Second Chapters also focus on the symbolic movement that is apparent within *Complaints* from Earth to Heaven; they each offer a different means of gaining transcendence. In *The Ruines of Time*, the movement from Earth to Heaven occurs symbolically when the narrator shifts his gaze heavenward and has a revelatory experience; while in *The Teares of the Muses*, movement through the heavenly spheres is facilitated one muse at a time.

The final three chapters focus on the thematic juxtaposition of poems as they occur within the latter three sections of *Complaints* and the links that occur as a

result. The Third Chapter deals with the links that occur between *The Teares of the Muses* and *Virgils Gnat*, principally that of poet-patron dynamics. The ideal poet-patron relationship is described; as is what happens when this relationship breaks down. One of the (many) things that has baffled Spenserians is the riddle that occurs in the dedicatory sonnet, addressed to Leicester, that precedes *Virgils Gnat*. The Third Chapter offers an alternate reading that begins to 'reade [its] secrete' (l. 7). The Fourth Chapter examines the links between *Prosopopoia. Or Mother Hubberds Tale* and *The Ruines of Rome*. Within this section of *Complaints*, the failings of the various strata of Elizabethan society are interrogated, specifically those related to the military, religion, the court, and the monarch. Where *Prosopopoia. Or Mother Hubberds Tale* exposes the specific atrocities that are being committed by members of these segments of society, *The Ruines of Rome* shows what will happen if there is no reformation within Elizabethan society, by looking back at what Spenser sees as the very tangible evidence that has been left by ancient Rome. The Fifth and final Chapter highlights the narrative and thematic links that are present in the final section of *Complaints*. This section contains *Muiopotmos, or The Fate of the Butterflie*, *Visions of the Worlds Vanitie*, *Visions of Bellay*, and *Visions of Petrarch*. The narrative links that are seen to run through the final four poems relate to ecphrasis, sleep, death, dreams, creation, the fall, and apocalypse. The central argument that runs throughout this final chapter is that, as much as *The Ruines of Time* can be seen as an introduction to *Complaints*, this final section can be seen as the conclusion to the volume. Thus, it is in this final section where themes that have been addressed earlier in the volume find a resolution, specifically those that relate to the transcendence of poetry.

## Contexts, Texts, and Paratexts

In Faerie Land books can be life giving – as with the ‘Saueours testament’ presented to the Redcross Knight by Arthur that is ‘able soules to saue’ (I. ix. 19) – or they can be associated with death. Book I of *The Faerie Queene* begins with an encounter between the ‘Patron of true Holinesse’ and ‘Foule Errour’ (I. i. Argument). ‘Enforst to seeke some couert nigh at hand’ because of ‘an hideous storme of raine’ that has come upon them (I. i. 6-7), Red Cross, Una and the Dwarf have entered ‘the wandering wood’ (I. i. 13). After ‘[wandering] too and fro in waies vnknowne’ for a while (I. i. 10), they finally stumble across ‘Errours den’ (I. i. 13). Redcross pays little heed to the warnings of Una and the Dwarf, and ‘forth vnto the darksome hole he went’ (I. i. 14). It is in this darksome hole that Redcross does battle with Errour; when Errour is defeated by Redcross, her bodily secretions are likened to books, papers and ink: ‘Her vomit full of *books* and *papers* was’ (I. i. 20); ‘She poured forth out of her hellish sinke / Her fruitful cursed spawne [...] *black as inke*’ (I. i. 22); and ‘A streame of *cole black bloud* forth gushed from her corse’ (I. i. 24; emphases added). When Archimago is introduced later in the first Canto of Book I, he is said to have a book hanging from his belt (I. i. 29), from which he later chooses ‘out few words most horrible’ (I. i. 37). During this opening canto of Book I, books, papers, ink and words take on a nefarious function. The examples of Errour and Archimago remind the reader that words cannot always be seen as reliable. Spenser is constantly playing with the ambiguity of language; he strives to guide and at the same time prevent interpretation in all of his works (Timpane 64).

In *De Doctrina Christiana*, Augustine discusses the difficulty of interpreting allegory in scripture when he writes:

Sed multis et multiplicibus obscuritatibus et ambiguitatibus decipiuntur  
qui temere legunt, aliud pro alio sentientes. Quibusdam autem locis quid  
vel falso suspicentur non inveniunt: ita obscure dicta quaedam  
densissimam caliginem obducunt.<sup>3</sup> (II. 10)

The allegorical nature of Spenser's poetry, and the obscure words and phrases he uses, create a fog intended to force an encounter between the reader and 'Foule Error'. This makes the words he uses the most elusive element of his poetry. In an attempt to gain access to meaning in *Complaints* it is essential that any analysis of the volume begins with the books, paper and ink, on a bibliographical level. The real books, paper and ink are not quite as perilous as Redcross found them in his encounter with Error. Rather, when examined fully, they are far less ambiguous than the words that make them significant. In taking up this method of inquiry, the text that makes up the volume will be laid aside for a moment and an investigation into the unity of the book as an artefact will commence.

The work of Adrian Weiss is invaluable when thinking about *Complaints* as a unified historic artefact. In his article, 'Watermark Evidence and Inference: New Style Dates of Edmund Spenser's *Complaints* and *Daphnaïda*', he notes that 'each section [of *Complaints*] could have been tied up and marketed as a separate book, or all four could have been purchased for binding as a complete set. *Daphnaïda* could have been included at the same time, as seems to be the case in the Huntington copy' (131). Initially, physical examinations of *Complaints* seem to resist any ideas of the volume being unified. 'For', in the words of Harold Stein, 'it happens that the *Complaints* has the appearance of a collection of pamphlets rather than of a single

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<sup>3</sup> 'But casual readers are misled by problems and ambiguities of many kinds, mistaking one thing for another. In some passages they find no meaning at all that they can grasp at, even falsely, so thick is the fog created by some obscure phrases.' (Trans. By R. P. H. Green)

volume' (5). The idea that it can be seen as a collection of pamphlets has its origins in the four separate title-pages that begin each quire. Added to this, the text from S to S<sub>4</sub> seems to be more cramped than anywhere else in the volume to ensure *Ruines of Rome* fits into the quire, while L<sup>v</sup> is blank, showing that the printer is not concerned about space earlier in the quire. Another fact that seems to add to this argument of *Complaints* being a collection of separate pamphlets is that one of the copies in Cambridge University Library, Syn. 7. 59. 77, only contains the final quire. Syn. 7. 59. 77 runs from T to Z<sub>4</sub> and is made up of the four poems which follow the frontispiece for *Muiopotmos, or The Fate of the Butterflie*. At first glance it seems to be a self-contained whole that could have been sold separate from the rest of the volume. There is also a copy in the Bodleian, T. 217, that only has the first two quires, A-K<sub>4</sub>, containing *The Ruines of Time* and the two poems bound with the *The Teares of the Muses* frontispiece. The copy held in The National Library of Scotland in Edinburgh, H. 32. c. 29, is only made up of three poems from *Complaints*, and they have been reordered: *Muiopotmos*, *Visions of the Worlds Vanitie*, and then *Mother Hubberds Tale*. If the argument relating to *Complaints* as a collection of pamphlets is laid aside, there is also an argument that it can be seen as a collection of separate poems that can be bound together with other poems – all depending on the fleeting fancy of the collector or owner of the text. The copy at the Huntington Library, shelfmark 69576, is bound with one of the three extant 1591 editions of *Daphnaïda*. British Library C. 39. e. 5 is also bound with other poems. All of the above examples seem to oppose arguments about *Complaints* being a unified volume.

However, when the book is examined a little closer it becomes apparent that *Complaints* is bibliographically unified. Weiss's argument is that 'the placement of

the internal title-pages on the recto of the first leaf of their respective gatherings probably resulted from a marketing strategy rather than purely aesthetic concerns; that is, the three internal sections could be marketed separately' (149). The first piece of evidence that suggests that *Complaints* was intended as a single volume is the signatures. *Complaints* runs continuously from A-Z4. Stein argues that 'there is [...] no way of explaining the continuity of the signatures throughout the volume except by the assumption that the printer was printing one and only one book' (6). In the copies that are incomplete, such as Syn. 7. 59. 77 and T. 217, the signatures are consistent with the copies that are complete, illustrating that these copies were printed in the same job-lot as their missing parts, and we can expect to find the remaining fragments elsewhere. Even in H. 32. c. 29, where the order of the poems has been changed, the signatures are consistent with where they would be if the volume was complete.<sup>4</sup> Weiss believes that this 'fragmentation occurred at the point of purchase rather than being the result of the disintegration of previously whole copies' (131). The second piece of evidence that points to *Complaints* being printed as a complete volume, consisting of nine poems, is the paper on which it was printed. The printer chose to use at least two different types of paper in the printing of *Complaints*: pot with one handle and hand, or glove, pointing to a star.<sup>5</sup> Being bound as a quarto, these watermarks have a central orientation near the binding, as illustrated below.

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<sup>4</sup> Signature X3 is misprinted 'B3', but X2 is correct.

<sup>5</sup> Copies consulted: 3 British Library; 2 Bodleian Library; and 1 Cambridge University Library. Adrian Weiss makes the observation that a 'cuffed hand [or glove] pointing at star' watermark also exists in a Folger edition of *Complaints*. See Appendix 2 for Watermark Distribution chart.

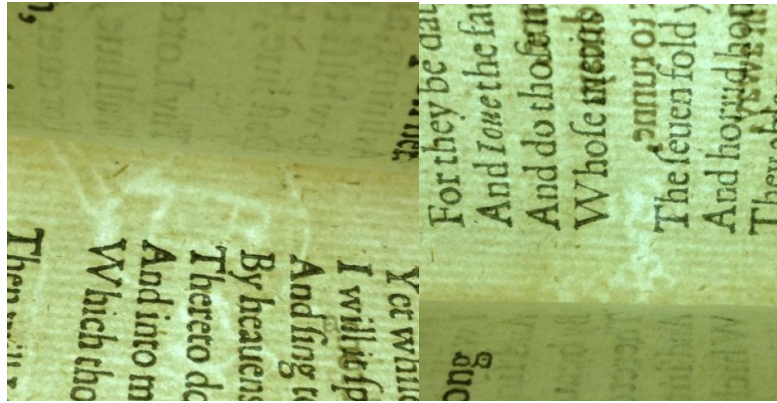


Fig. 1: Bodleian M. 617, C<sub>2</sub> and C<sub>3</sub> (pot with one handle)

The pot with one handle, as shown above, has a single flower with four rounded leaves that stands above smaller rounded flowers. It also has either the initials ‘L B’, ‘R B’, ‘GG’, or ‘EB’ on the middle of the pot. The hand-star does not have any initials, but there are slight variations in the shape, size and positioning of the fingers. The star has five points as shown below.

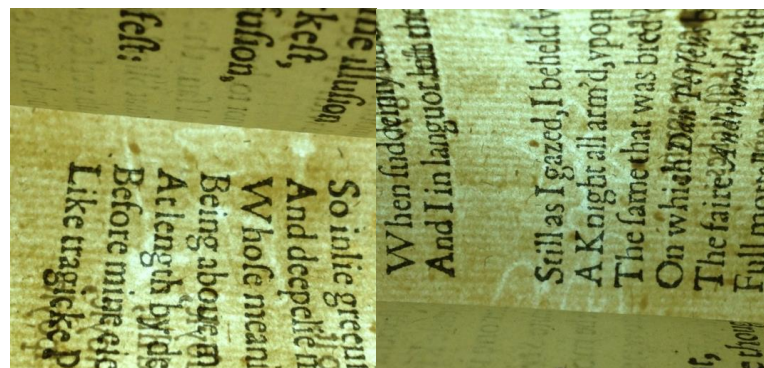


Fig. 2: Bodleian T. 217, D and D<sub>4</sub> (hand or glove pointing to a star)

In T. 217, sheet A is printed on pot with one handle, while the rest of this incomplete volume is printed on hand-star. British Library G. 11539 also uses a mix of the two. The mixing of paper is fairly common practice at the time, with more sturdy paper reserved for the front and back sheets – which were more likely to get damaged

when transported.<sup>6</sup> Whatever the case, the consistency of the watermark evidence suggests that *Complaints* was printed as an entire volume, in one job-lot.

When a closer examination of Mal. 617's binding is undertaken, it becomes apparent that this collection has been put together by either Malone or the library. In either case, the binding only dates to the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century. It is not uncommon to find that libraries have bound first editions together into collections, as the same has been done with Bodleian T. 217 and British Library C. 39. e. 5, where evidence shows that the works contained in these volumes arrived at the library separate and were later bound together.<sup>7</sup> Libraries binding manuscripts together is almost a commonplace for earlier medieval texts, as is unbinding and disarrangement – all of which is evident in the Auchinleck manuscript. Out of the nine 1591 editions of *Complaints* that were examined for this thesis, not one of them retained their original binding. As such, the most certain thing that can be said about their arrangement of the four sections that make up *Complaints* is that the printing process, as revealed through the watermarks and signatures, suggest that they were originally designed to be seen as one volume.

#### *Complaints*' Frontispieces and the List of Poems

The frontispieces that are found at the start of each quire of *Complaints* bring significant history with them. Graham Allen observes that 'texts, whether they be literary or non-literary, are viewed by modern theorists as lacking in any kind of independent meaning' (1). He also explains:

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<sup>6</sup> Cambridge University Library Syn.7.59.77, British Library 239.i.1 and Bodleian Mal.617 are all printed on pot no handle; British Library C.39.e.5 is printed on pot one handle. The Huntington, Folger, and Clark Memorial Library copies are all on mixed paper.

<sup>7</sup> The binding on Bodleian T. 217 dates to around the same period as the Malone copy. British Library C39.e.5 was bound during the eighteenth century and then worked on later by the British Library's bindery.

Works of literature, after all, are built from systems, codes and traditions established by previous works of literature. The systems, codes and traditions of other art forms and of culture in general are also crucial to the meaning of a work of literature. (1)

Hence, the readers' acquisition of meaning is completely reliant on the interactions of the text with pre-existing systems, codes and traditions. Meaning is not gained from a single text; it exists in the relationships between texts. For contemporary readers of *Complaints* the first interactions they would have had with the text would have been the frontispiece. As many of them would have noticed, the frontispiece was not original to *Complaints*. In fact, it was the frontispiece for at least eleven other works that were published from 1588-91. When the frontispiece appeared on *Complaints* it already carried with it the cumulative meaning of the other texts with which it was associated. When judging the book by its cover, contemporary readers probably would have expected Spenser's volume to be of a religious nature.<sup>8</sup> A survey of the other eleven works that bear this frontispiece reveals that seven are of a religious nature – being mostly scriptural commentaries or exegetical works – while two are secular dramas, one is a translation, and one addresses appropriate chivalric conduct in relation to the settling of quarrels.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> See Michael Saenger's *The Commodification of Textual Engagements in the English Renaissance* (p. 10), where he argues that '[religious] books constituted a full forty percent of the book trade. Since they were reliably in demand, it is also not surprising that publishers often cast their books in a religious or moralistic light'.

<sup>9</sup> Religious works: Anon. *Sophronistes* (1589); Bunny, Edmund. *The Coronation of Dauid* (1588); Fraunce, Abraham. *The Countesse of Pembrokes Emanuel* (1591); Gibbon, Charles. *The Remidie of Reason* (1589); Gifford, Charles. *A short Reply vnto the last printed books of Henry Barrow and Iohn Greenwood, the chiefe ringleaders of our Donatists in England* (1591); Kempe, William. *The Education of children in learning* (1588); Tanner, Thom. *A Short, yet sound Commentarie* (1589). Secular Dramas: Lyly, John. *Campaspe* (1591) and *Sapho and Phao* (1591). Translation: Fraunce, Abraham. *The Countesse of Pembrokes Yuychurch* (1591). Chivalry: Jones, Richard. *The Booke of Honour and Armes* (1590).

Given the history of this frontispiece and the association that it had with religious texts, it would not be surprising if contemporary readers associated the figures on the title-page with biblical counterparts. The man playing the harp could be associated with David, the Psalmist, especially because of the fact that this frontispiece is used on Edmund Bunny's *The Coronation of Dauld*, published in 1588. Bunny's work is the first one on which this frontispiece is used. The stone tablet and the light shining from the head of the other figure make it quite obvious that he is a representation of Moses.<sup>10</sup> The two horned characters that occupy the bottom of the frontispiece can then be seen as devils. It is quite significant that these devils are subdued under the feet of David and Moses, two of the largest contributors to The Old Testament. The two trumpets held by the winged figure, above Moses and David, can be associated with judgement. The Revelation of John the Divine reads:

And I beheld, *and* heard one Angel flying through the middes of heauen, saying with a lowed voice, Wo, wo, wo to the inhabitants of the earth, because of the soundes to come of the trumpet of the Angels, which were yet to blowe the trumpettes. (Rev. 8:13)<sup>11</sup>

The figure on the top of the frontispiece and John's angel both have the ability to fly. This is made apparent by the wings on the figure on the frontispiece and John's assertion that he 'beheld [...] one Angel flying through the middes of heauen'. Both angels also have a role to play in relation to judgement. The gloss to this verse in the Geneva Bible reads: 'Horrible threatening against the infideles *and* rebellious

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<sup>10</sup> Francis R. Johnson describes the frontispiece thus: 'within a woodcut boarder, with figures of David and Moses at the sides' (24).

<sup>11</sup> All biblical references are from the Geneva Bible because this is likely the version to which Spenser had access.

persons'. There is a link made in the summary of the eighth chapter between trumpets and divine judgement: 'The foure Angels blowe their trumpettes, and great plagues followe upon the earth'. Hence, the sounding of the trumpet is symbolic of the judgements that will be poured out upon infidels and rebellious persons. The figure at the top holding two trumpets is also reminiscent of the Greek god of winds, Aeolus, with his 'blake trumpe of bras' and 'hys trumpe of gold' (ll. 1637, 1678), seen in Geoffrey Chaucer's *House of Fame*.<sup>12</sup> In either case, he may be associated with divine judgement.

The frontispiece is quite obviously designed to market a product. Michael Saenger observes that '[advertising] became prominent in the later sixteenth century, as printing became more efficient and patronage more scarce' (9). Paul J. Voss likewise writes about how 'Elizabethan printers, publishers and authors developed the advertising arts to help offset the decline in literary patronage' (734). Nonetheless, Renaissance readers encountering this image for the first time would have built up expectations in relation to *Complaints* before they had even picked the book up from the stall. These expectations would have contributed to the fashioning of a 'gentle reader' – even before they read the prefatory material that is to follow – insofar as the reader's expectations of the work would have dictated to some degree the meaning they took from it. The contextual religiosity of the frontispiece would have highlighted passages that related to religion throughout the remainder of the text, such as Verlame's lament over the fall of Rome in *The Ruines of Time*, or the veiled criticism of the clergy that occurs when the fox and ape encounter the priest in *Mother Hubberds Tale*. The perceived religiosity of the work would also highlight instances in the text where the discussion of religion is far subtler – and may have

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<sup>12</sup> There will be more said about the links between Spenser and Chaucer in the later chapters.

otherwise gone unnoticed – such as the destruction of Rome’s theocratic structures in *Ruines of Rome*.

The first innovation of *Complaints* is the way in which the volume re-appropriates the frontispiece. *Complaints* is the only publication, of the eleven printed between 1588 and 1591, in which this frontispiece is used four times. The frontispiece is used to both introduce and separate the four segments that make up the volume. The placement of each of the frontispieces on the recto of the first leaf of each quire, the list of poems, and the running titles at the top of each page all add to the navigability of the volume. This increased navigability adds to the sense that if the reader ‘[...] list it nat yheere’, they can ‘[turne] over the leef and chese another tale’ (‘Miller’s Prologue’ ll. 3176-7). Or rather, in the context of *Complaints*, the reader is being encouraged to compare the separate parts that make up the whole – as if it were an encyclopaedia or reference text – to make the links between the texts more accessible, thus assisting the reader in gaining access to the cumulative meaning of the work. The text is then able to transform the meaning of the symbols on the frontispiece from being religious in nature to humanist. The transition from religious to humanist text results in the transformation of the David figure into a bard – possibly even an Irish bard – while the Moses figure becomes a courtier, the devils metamorphose into fauns, and the figure on top that is associated with judgement becomes Aeolus.

The only aspects of the emblematical title-pages that are original to *Complaints* are the words printed on them. The first frontispiece that the reader encounters reads: ‘*Complaints. Containing Sundrie Small Poemes of the Worlds Vanitie. Whereof the next page maketh mention*’. The etymology of ‘sundrie’ is quite interesting, as it has its origins in the Old English word *syndrig*, meaning ‘apart;

separate, distinct' (*OED sundry*, adj. 1), but had evolved to denote 'a number of' or 'several' (*OED sundry*, adj. 5). Thus, there is a degree of ambiguity surrounding whether the poems should be regarded as being separate and distinct, or whether they are being referred to collectively. The title also explains that these several poems that are contained in this volume are mentioned, or named, on the following page. As the reader turns the page they encounter 'A note of the sundrie Poemes contained in this Volume'. The fact that the title-page insists that all the poems within this volume relate to a common theme, as well as the fact that the title-page refers the reader to a list of poems that are 'contained in this Volume', would suggest to the reader from the outset that this work is both thematically and structurally unified.

The words that make up the title of the work are not the only ones of significance to be found on the title-page. This is the first of Spenser's works that describe him as author on the frontispiece. Of his previous publications, the translations found in Jan van der Noot's *A Theatre wherein be represented as wel the miseries & calamities that follow the voluptuous Worldlings* are anonymous, *The Shepheardes Calender* expertly veils the identity of the author, and *The Faerie Queene* (1590) only mentions 'Ed. Spenser' as author in a dedicatory preface that follows the frontispiece. The identification of 'Ed. Sp.' as the author of this volume on the frontispiece adds to the marketability of the product, as the 'fauourable passage of the *Faerie Queene*' has meant that he is in vogue, as illustrated by the granting of a royal pension by Elizabeth; the first payment of which was collected by Edward Blunt – Ponsonby's employee – on Lady Day, March 25<sup>th</sup>, of 1591 (Hadfield 265). Spenser's choice to be associated with this volume is also of significance. Following the identification of Spenser as the author, the place of publication is identified as London, then the following: 'Imprinted for William Ponsonbie,

dwelling in Paules Churchyard at the signe of the Bishops head'. It is clear from this note that *Complaints* is printed *for* Ponsonby, not *by* him. The observation that it is printed *for* Ponsonby would not have come as a surprise to anyone associated with the history of this frontispiece, in that they would have known that this woodcut was owned by Orwin, but it does highlight the fact that Ponsonby has taken up the role of publisher rather than printer on this occasion. The significance of Ponsonby as publisher will be taken up later on in this Introduction. The advertisement of where Ponsonby dwells is another marketing ploy intended to furnish him with more business, by informing potential buyers where they can purchase their own copy of *Complaints*. Finally, the year 1591 is found at the bottom of the title-page, indicating the date of publication. The words found on the next frontispiece in the volume are identical in all but the title; the title has been changed to *The Teares of the Muses*. The third frontispiece changes the title to *Prosopopoia. Or Mother Hubberds Tale*, while also adding the fact that this section is 'Dedicated to the right Honourable the Ladie Compton and Mountegle'. The final frontispiece changes the title to *Mviopotmos, Or The Fate of the Butterflie*. It also adds that this work is 'Dedicated to the most virtuous Ladie: the Ladie Carey'. Then it changes the publishing date to 1590.

The process of creating the frontispiece is exposed through close comparison.

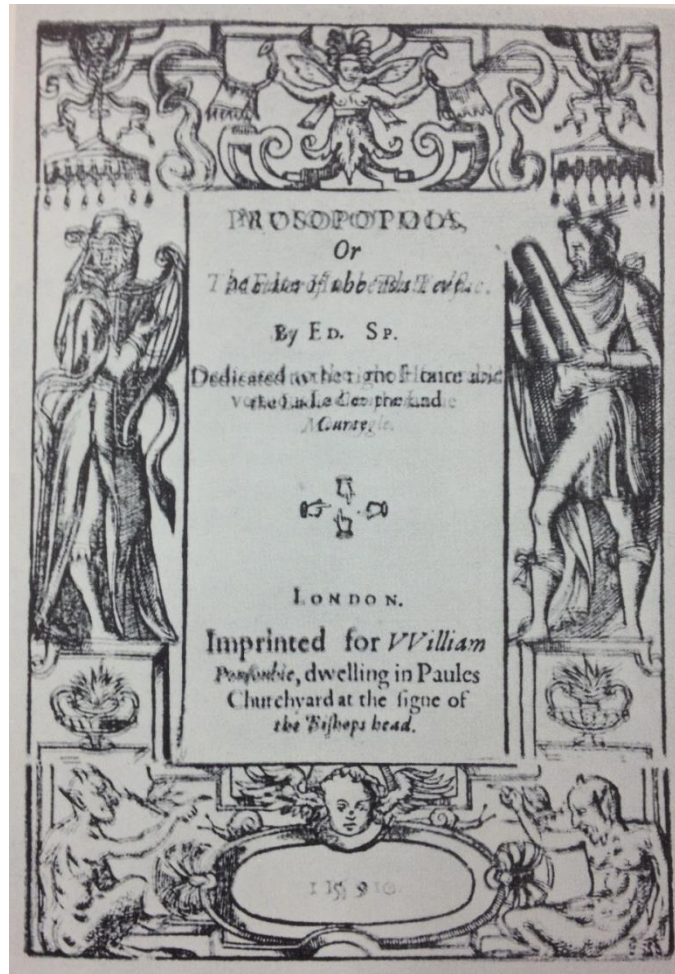


Fig. 3: Composite photograph showing title-pages of *Prosopopoia* and *Muiopotmos* (Stein 1934)

The above image examines the relationship between the frontispieces of *Mother Hubberds Tale* and *Muiopotmos*, thus illustrating the process by which they were made. It is clear from this image that exactly the same woodcut illustration is used in both and it is only the typeface that is changed. It also shows, as Stein observes, ‘the word “Dedicated” is set almost flush with the margin, a correct position for *Mother Hubberds Tale* but incorrect one for *Muiopotmos*; and, as a result, in *Mother Hubberds Tale* the spacing is proper, in *Muiopotmos* it is faulty’ (8). This mistake would suggest that *Muiopotmos* was printed after *Mother Hubberds Tale*, not before as has often been guessed. This mistake in the printing process also suggests that the type was not set separately for each frontispiece, as it would be if they were printed

separately. Rather, each frontispiece would have been printed one after the other and the type was only partially re-set. However, as Weiss observes, these assumptions about printing order do ‘not consider the implications of Orwin’s ownership and use of two presses’ (149). The reality is that the ‘sequence can be proven conclusively only by progressive damage to an identifiable typographical entity such as an ornament, initial, border, rule, or type which reappears in a sequence of states of an impression or in a sequence of impositions’ (Weiss 151). Weiss then goes on to analyse the degradation of the typographical features to show that *Muiopotmos* was in fact printed first. As Bland observes, ‘repetitions [reveal] process, identity, and expectation; difference describes history’ (5). Due to the attempted calling in of the volume, changes did occur when the volume was republished in the 1611 edition of *The Faerie Qveen: The Shepheards Calendar: Together with the other Works of England’s Arch-Poët, Edm. Spenser*. The woodcut is completely replaced by one of Mathew Lownes’ emblems. The title is the same and it still points the reader to the ‘svndry small poems [...] wereof the next page maketh mention’.

The most notable change that occurs in the 1611 edition is the omission of *Mother Hubberds Tale* from the list of poems and from the volume as a whole. The omission of this poem has huge consequences for the overall structure of the volume. *The Ruines of Time* still occupies the first section, but the second and third sections are combined. As a result, the volume is reduced from four sections to three, with the following makeup:

Section One: *The Ruines of Time*

Section Two: *The Teares of the Muses; Virgils Gnat; and The Ruines of Rome: by Bellay*

Section Three: *Muiopotmos, or the Fate of the Butterflie; Visions of the Worlds Vanity; Bellays Visions; and Petrarches Visions*

Even though the decision to remove *Mother Hubberds Tale* may have been out of necessity – given that this was the poem that is almost solely to blame for the calling in of *Complaints* – it was an editing decision that has continued to echo throughout the printing history of the volume. Even when *Mother Hubberds Tale* was printed again in the 1679 *Works*, it does not return to its place within *Complaints*, but rather occupies the space between *The Faerie Queene* and *The Shepheardes Calender*. Lownes’ decision to remove *Mother Hubberds Tale* from *Complaints*, coupled with Jonathan Edwin’s reprinting of it separate from *Complaints*, resulted in *Complaints* not being seen as a unified volume by early Spenser scholars. Although modern editions have seen *Mother Hubberds Tale* reclaim its place within *Complaints*, the same habit of singling out individual poems from the volume has continued into modern scholarship, to the detriment of seeing the volume as a unified whole.

‘The Printer to the Gentle Reader’

Mike Pincombe and Cathy Shrank explain that ‘one recurrent motif of prefatory addresses is the desire to shape the reception of the work, to mould readers into “friendly” or “gentle” ones’ (10). The ability to print a work – and the proliferation of texts that came with that – meant that writers did not have as much control over the distribution of their texts as they would over manuscripts. With the loss of control over distribution, writers did not know who would become their readership, or how potential readers would receive their work. The potential for ‘misreading was something they both perceived as a threat, and used as a defence’ (Pincombe and Shrank 10). *Complaints*’ prefatory material aims to fashion a gentle reader from the

outset. The title given to the preface is ‘The Printer to the *Gentle Reader*’. This title feigns belief in a gentle readership, while at the same time explaining to the reader their role. The fiction of the readership continues with the assumption that ‘the *Faerie Queene* [...] hath found fauourable passage amongst [them]’. Building on the premise that the current reader found *The Faerie Queene* favourable, they are told that this volume has been compiled ‘for the better increase and accomplishment of your delights’. Hence, the reader is being told that if they enjoyed *The Faerie Queene*, which it is assumed they did, *Complaints* would further ‘increase’ and better ‘accomplish’ their ‘delights’. Yet, as mentioned above in the Introduction, according to at least two contemporary critics *Complaints* had the opposite effect. Gabriel Harvey observed that ‘Mother-Hubberd in the heat of choler, forgetting the pure sanguine of her sweete Faery Queene, wilfully over-shot her malcontented selfe’ (1.164). Sir Thomas Tresham also wrote about how *The Faerie Queene* had been ‘so well liked, that her majestie gave him [Spenser] ane hundred marks pencion’ (transcribed by Richard S. Peterson – 8), but that pension was now being threatened because of his ‘medlinge with his apes taylor’ (8). Spenser even ‘got into Ireland’ to avoid the fallout that was sure to come from writing a work that was so politically contentious – and foolish, in Tresham’s view (8). Both Harvey and Tresham agree on the quality of *The Faerie Queene*; Harvey describes the epic as ‘sweete’, while Tresham makes the observation that the work has secured for Spenser a royal pension as well as the title of Poet Laureate. Both also agree that *Mother Hubberds Tale* has ‘wilfully over-shot her malcontented selfe’, putting at risk Spenser’s pension and title as Poet Laureate. As Andrew Hadfield observes, Tresham’s judgement is that Spenser has transformed himself ‘from poet laureate to poet lorrell (fool)’ by publishing *Mother Hubberds Tale* and risking his pension (268). Richard

S. Peterson claims that this ‘single memorable pun’ is ‘worthy of the poet himself’ (14). Even so, contemporary critics show that when *Mother Hubberds Tale* is placed beside *The Faerie Queene* it becomes clear that the gentle reader that the preface tries to fashion no longer exists.

The authorship of ‘The Printer to the *Gentle Reader*’ is extremely ambiguous. As observed above, *Complaints* was ‘imprinted for William Ponsonbie’ (emphasis added), not *by* him. The task of printing the work had been subcontracted out to Thomas Orwin. Thus, it is more accurate to state that *Complaints* was printed for Ponsonby by Orwin. When viewing the frontispiece, the only way a contemporary reader would be able to identify the printer would be if they had knowledge of his previous works.<sup>13</sup> Orwin’s decision to not print his name on the frontispiece may have been because he did not want to be associated with this potentially controversial work. Whatever his reasoning, it is clear that it cannot be assumed that Ponsonby, simply because of his name’s appearance on the frontispiece, penned ‘The Printer to the *Gentle Reader*’. Orwin has as much of a claim, if not more, to the title of ‘Printer’ by virtue of the fact that he was the agent through which the work was physically printed. Even so, the printer’s preface, as with ‘E. K.’ in *The Shepheardes Calender*, is an elaborate narrative construct that Spenser appends to the work. In *The Shepheardes Calender*, ‘E. K.’ offers an opening epistle, as well as a fairly comprehensive gloss. Both of these constructs work to inform the reader, as well as make the volume appear to be something that it is not. By adding a scholarly gloss, ‘E. K.’ is fabricating ‘a readerly pre-history for a brand new publication’

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<sup>13</sup> Johnson identifies six ornaments that appear within *Complaints*, besides the woodcut for the frontispiece that show that Orwin printed the volume: the head-piece on A2<sup>r</sup>, L2<sup>r</sup> and T2<sup>r</sup>; the head-piece compartment on A3<sup>r</sup>; the ornamental initial ‘S’ on A2<sup>r</sup>; the factotum on E2<sup>r</sup>; the initial ‘M’ on A3<sup>r</sup>, L2<sup>r</sup> and T2<sup>r</sup>; and the ornament of a mask with rings on A4<sup>r</sup> (28). Johnson goes on to state: ‘All of the ornaments appearing in the volume having now been traced to Orwin’s press, it is now possible to say with certainty that Thomas Orwin is the printer of Spenser’s *Complaints*’ (28).

(McCabe 467). Such glosses were reserved at the time for classical works; hence, by creating ‘E. K.’ Spenser is asserting a fairly lofty claim – that his text is a new classic – through a fairly elaborate form of self-praise. ‘The Printer to the *Gentle Reader*’ works in a similarly disingenuous way, but is not only interested in self-praise. Ronald Bond’s belief is that ‘Spenser himself must have realised that the time was ripe for making more of his work available to the public’ (217), and this is simply his way of doing that. However, Spenser also realised that he had to construct some sort of screen to avoid the possibility of censorship, which this preface does quite unsuccessfully (Rambuss 71). Stein offers another reason for the preface; he states that ‘noble authors did in point of fact keep their poems from the printers; with authors of Spenser’s rank, a decent concealment sufficed, and the publisher’s preface supplied that concealment’ (13). Hence, the printer’s preface is likely an authored fiction that attempts to conform to Elizabethan literary norms, as well as emphasise Spenser’s prestige as an author.<sup>14</sup>

The term ‘Printer’ can also be seen to be used here in a more generic way, making who the actual printer is quite irrelevant. What is more important is the use of Ponsonby’s name on the frontispiece, along with a woodcut that is becoming more and more associated with the Pembroke circle. Ponsonby obtained the licence for printing Sir Philip Sidney’s *Arcadia* in 1588, and continued to work in close collaboration with the Sidney family until the early 1590s. As Michael Brennan observes:

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<sup>14</sup> McCabe p. 580 (*Edmund Spenser: The Shorter Poems*); Bond p. 217 (*The Yale Edition of the Shorter Poems of Edmund Spenser*); Stein pp. 16-20 (*Studies in Spenser’s Complaints*); and Brown pp. 5-7 (*‘The New Poet’: Novelty and Tradition in Spenser’s Complaints*) all argue to one degree or another that Ponsonby authored ‘The Printer to the *Gentle Reader*’, but that Spenser was involved in the printing process. All the above see Ponsonby’s preface as disingenuous. Brennan goes so far as to say that ‘Ponsonby probably worked in [close] collaboration with Spenser to produce his *Complaints* in 1591’ (96). Jean Brink offers an opposing argument, asserting that Spenser played no part in the printing of *Complaints*, and that it was an unauthorised publication. She argues that we should take Ponsonby at face value.

Ponsonby's involvement with the Pembroke family brought him into contact with some of the authors who sought their patronage. In addition to Spenser's *Complaints* and *Daphanida*, Thomas Orwin printed for Ponsonby in 1591 Abraham Fraunce's two volumes of hexameter poems, *The Countess of Pembrokes Yuychurch* and *Emanuel*. It seems that the *Yuychurch* volume was drawn together from random sources, probably at the instigation of Ponsonby, to supply a growing market demand for books associated with the Pembroke circle. (96)

Both *Yuychurch* and *Emanuel* bear the same frontispiece as *Complaints*, and are likewise dedicated to Mary Sidney, the Countess of Pembroke. These works were, at the very least, attempting to appear to be part of a larger movement associated with the Pembroke circle. *Complaints* especially can be seen to explore what Julie Crawford notes as the core values those in the Sidney alliance were committed to, namely: a militant and international Protestantism; a limited or mixed monarchy, particularly the political rights of the aristocracy, including the right to counsel; and the value of what has been called "practically active" or "political" humanism' (8-9). She goes on to explain that '[its] members sought to share in monarchical governance, that is, rather than overthrow, and they sought to do so, in part, through the use of books' (9). The frontispiece and the association of the text with Ponsonby thus work to link *Complaints* with a political movement, where 'the great houses with which these women [Bedford, Pembroke, and now the Spencer sisters of Althorp] were associated are best understood as bases of operations' (Crawford 15).

The printer's preface is contradictory in the way it describes the unity, or lack thereof, of *Complaints*. The preface begins by relating how the volume came into existence. 'The Printer to the *Gentle Reader*' recounts:

Since my late setting forth of the *Faerie Queene*, finding that it hath found fauourable passage amongst you; I have sithence endeouored by all good meanes (for the better increase and accomplishment of your delights,) to get into my hands such smale Poemes of the same Authors; as I heard were dispersd abroad in sundrie hands, and not easie to bee come by, by himselfe; some of them hauing bene diuerslie imbeziled and purloyned from him, since his departure ouer Sea (ll.1-9)

According to this account, the only reason *Complaints* has come into existence is because of the commercial success of *The Faerie Queene*. A desire to capitalise on that success has driven the printer into a frantic search for ‘such smale Poemes of the same Authors’. The reference to the author here is a very real attempt to distance Spenser from the creation of the volume. This preface would have the reader believe that Spenser had nothing to do with the organising of these poems into what has become *Complaints*. However, the ‘Printer’ does claim to know Spenser’s intentions when he continues:

Of the which I haue by good meanes gathered together these few parcels present, which I haue cause to bee imprinted altoggether, for that they al seeme to containe like matter of argument in them: being all complaints and meditations on worlds vanitie; verie grave and profitable. To which effect I vnderstand that he besides wrote sundrie others [...] being all dedicated to Ladies; so as it may seeme he ment them all to one volume. (ll. 9-18)

Johnson argues that:

The table of variant readings for the different copies of *Complaints* shows very clearly that the text underwent very careful proof-reading and revision while it was going through the press. In many of the forms a number of important corrections were made and the nature of many of these is such that it seems highly improbable that they could be the work of any person other than Spenser himself. (27)

Johnson's observation is relevant, insofar as it shows Spenser's participation in, if not direction of, the printing process. It shows that he is not just a passive bystander that is letting Ponsonby collect and then publish some of his lost works. Johnson's observation moves Spenser from the periphery to the heart of the printing process.

There is an intertextual link that occurs between 'The Printer to the *Gentle Reader*' and the dedicatory note addressed to Anne Spencer that also shows Spenser's central role in the publication of this volume. 'The Printer to the *Gentle Reader*' mentions the 'setting foorth of the *Faerie Queene*' (l. 1), referring to the setting of the type in the printing process, while at the same time portraying the text in chivalric terms. This idea of 'setting foorth' is taken up again in the dedicatory note when Spenser writes:

I haue at length found occasion to remember the same, by making a simple present to you of these my idle labours; which hauing long sithens composed in the raw conceipt of my youth, I lately amongst other papers lighted vpon, and was by others, which liked the same, mooued to *set them foorth*. (ll. 4-9 emphasis added)

What are these other papers? Are they the other poems that make up *Complaints*?

The answers to these questions are elusive. But what is clear is that it was Spenser

that was ‘mooued to set them foorth’. In this dedication, Spenser is claiming responsibility for the ‘setting foorth’ of the section of *Complaints* that bears the signatures L-S<sub>4</sub>. The fact that this section bears the signatures L-S<sub>4</sub> proves that it is only a part of the larger printed book. Thus, Spenser’s admission of responsibility for this section has to also be seen to apply to the volume as a whole. Hence, the printing apparatus illustrates clearly that the ‘my’ found in the first line of ‘The Printer to the *Gentle Reader*’ is in fact Spenser himself.

### Dedicatory Material

According to ‘The Printer to the *Gentle Reader*’, there are two overarching principles that prove that the poems that make up *Complaints* are ‘ment [...] all to one volume’ (ll. 17-8). The first is that ‘they al seeme to containe like matter of argument in them’ (‘The Printer to the *Gentle Reader*’ ll. 11-2). The second is that they are ‘all dedicated to Ladies’ (‘The Printer to the *Gentle Reader*’ l. 17), thus connecting the female voice with the mode of complaint – a topic that will be taken up in more detail in the Fourth Chapter. The printer’s preface would have the reader believe that these are the only guiding principles that have been used in the construction of the volume. If this were the case, then *Daphnaïda*, which was also printed in 1591, should have been entered into the volume because it too is a ‘ruffull plaint’ (l. 4), and it too is dedicated to a lady. Although printed in 1595, *Astrophel* also fits the criteria of being a ‘dolefull plaint’ and being dedicated to a lady (l. 6). Hence, if the only requirements for a poem to be a part of *Complaints* are that it contains ‘complaints and meditations of the worlds vanitie’ and it is ‘dedicated to Ladies’ (‘The Printer to the *Gentle Reader*’ ll. 13-4; 17), then later editions of the volume would find far more of Spenser’s other works creeping into them. Even so, the fact that emphasis has been placed on theme and the dedicatory material within

the preface does begin to fashion the gentle reader by pointing them towards unifying factors within the volume. As this Introduction has dealt so far with an analysis of paratextual content, theme will be laid aside for a moment in favour of an analysis of the dedicatory material. McCabe postulates that

[internal] allusion indicates that *The Teares of the Muses* was revised as late as April 1590. The obvious inference is that Spenser fully co-operated with Ponsonby in capitalizing upon the interest aroused by the publication of his epic and wrote a series of new dedications for old material with a view to imminent publication. (581)

The very fact that Spenser wrote these new dedications illustrates his involvement in the publication process of *Complaints*. It also shows that the fiction created within ‘The Printer to the *Gentle Reader*’, of an enterprising printer searching out the embezzled and purloined works that make up this volume, is completely fabricated. The dedicatory notes are an integral part of the volume. They work together with the frontispieces to give structure to the work, further emphasising the separation of the work into four distinct parts. On top of all of this, they not only work to fashion a gentle readership, they work to reinforce the idea that there is an elite readerly circle, of which Spenser is a part. In so doing, Spenser reinforces his social status.

The first dedication within the volume is addressed to ‘the Lady Marie Countesse of Pembroke’. This dedication is the only one to a lady that does not directly follow a frontispiece. The emblematical title above it ensures that it is disconnected from the title page and thus from the volume as a whole.

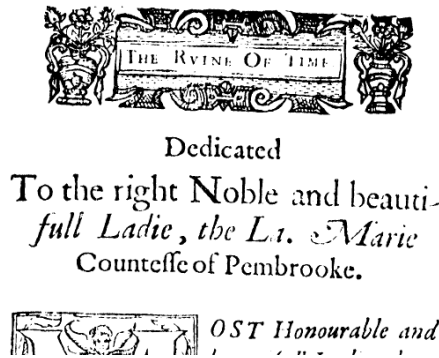


Fig. 4: Emblematic title above dedicatory note to the Countess of Pembroke. Care of EEBO.

Rather than being the dedicatory note for the entire volume, it is only associated with *The Ruines of Time*. The dedication itself claims affiliation with ‘this small Poeme, intituled by a generall name of the *worlds Ruines*’ (ll. 21-2). The dedicatory notes to Alice, Anne and Elizabeth Spencer, on the other hand, all follow immediately after a frontispiece. The dedications to Alice and Anne do not associate themselves with a single poem in the same way as the dedication to Mary Sidney does. Hence, these dedications can be seen to apply to the two poems that they each contain. Spenser’s reference to ‘these my idle labours’ in the dedicatory note to Anne reinforces the idea that there is more than one poem in this section (l. 6). The dedication to Elizabeth Spencer is a little more specific when it ‘[commends] to the world this smal Poëme’ (ll. 18-9). However, the note continues to urge Elizabeth ‘of *all things* therein according to your wonted graciousness to make a milde construction’ (ll. 19-21; emphasis added). Although there is a single poem referred to within the dedication, Elizabeth is reminded that ‘all things’ within this section – signatures T-Z<sub>4</sub> – need to be taken into account when attempting any sort of interpretation. This allusion to ‘all things’ reminds Elizabeth that there are more poems than one in this section, all of which have a bearing on the overall meaning. All of the dedicatory notes work to reinforce the idea that the four sections that make up *Complaints* are

self-contained and internally interrelated. Each of the four sections work to generate meaning within themselves as well as within the broader framework of the volume. The remainder of this thesis will demonstrate how these structural imperatives function in relation to *Complaints*' overall unity, by acknowledging both the progression that occurs throughout the volume as a whole and within the individual gatherings of the work.

## Chapter I *The Ruines of Time: Introducing the Complaints*

About two hundred metres to the north of Spenser's castle, at Kilcolman, there is a cave. While this cave is not situated in 'the wandering wood' – or in any wood at all – it is difficult not to think that it may have acted as the inspiration for 'Errours den'. On entering the cave, one is able to walk a few metres into the darkness before encountering a boulder that is blocking what is apocryphally the souterrain that Spenser used to flee the sacking of his castle. Although it is possible to climb over the boulder and crawl into the tunnel, it is more probable that those that dare to will encounter fierce badgers rather than 'Foule Error'. Travelling approximately three kilometres west – crossing fields, rather than following any roads – one would reach the western border of Spenser's land allotment: the River Awbeg. This is another site of significance when thinking about sites on or near Spenser's land that may have influenced his poetry. It is on this western border that the River Awbeg runs past the ruins of Buttevant Friary. Sitting on the eastern bank of the Awbeg – avoiding the nettles where possible – Spenser would have been able to look up at, what was even then, this crumbling Franciscan Friary in its faded grandeur and contemplate the power of time and the mutability of all that is sublunary.

This juxtaposition of river and architectural ruin works as an appropriate analogue for Verlame, the personified ruin of the Roman city of Verulamium, as she sits on the banks of the Thames in *The Ruines of Time*. When sitting on the banks of the Awbeg, looking up at Buttevant Friary, one is confronted with the same situation in which the narrator of *The Ruines of Time* finds themselves. The narrator, like the friary, finds himself in a state of stasis, while the river rushes forever onward. Within Spenser's poetry, stasis is often associated with death – which is the ultimate lack of movement. Hence, the narrator – or whoever finds themselves sitting on the bank of

the river – is just as mutable and subject to ruin as the friary on the other side of the river. As such, Verlame and Buttevant Friary act as mirrors that show what the narrator, or the observer, can expect of themselves, while the timeless river continues its forward movement. The significance of rivers and bodies of water will be addressed in more detail later on in this chapter. But as far as organization goes, this chapter is split into two parts. The first part will address the fictional nature of *The Ruines of Time*, and the second will discuss how *The Ruines of Time* works as an introduction to the larger *Complaints* volume. As far as the first part goes, there are three problems within the fiction of the work that need to be resolved: Verlame's voice, the space that Verlame occupies, and the conflicting historical traditions at play. The second part of the chapter utilizes the problematic nature of Verlame's voice to show that specific parts of *The Ruines of Time* can be linked to specific poems within *Complaints*.

### **The Fiction of *The Ruines of Time***

Many scholars have seen the fragmented voice of Verlame and the conversation she has with the narrator of *The Ruines of Time* as problematic.<sup>15</sup> McCabe observes of *The Ruines of Time* that there is a 'complex relationship between its various speakers' (582), thus emphasising the polyphonous nature of the poem. W. L. Renwick is far more critical when he states that the poem 'was not only late in appearing; it was hurried, and its conduct is disjointed [...] It is obvious also that the poem was written in fragments and pieced together in haste' (189). According to Renwick's reading, *The Ruines of Time* is a patchwork of various juvenilia that has

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<sup>15</sup> Women loom large over and in this volume, and gender issues are an avenue for expansion; as is the idea that complaints can be seen as a female genre. See Elizabeth D. Harvey's *Ventriloquized Voices: Feminist Theory and English Renaissance Texts*, and John Kerrigan's *Motives of Woe: Shakespeare and 'Female Complaint': A Critical Anthology*. The significance of female patrons will be taken up in Chapter Three.

been sewn together quite unevenly. Stein follows Renwick's line of thought when he argues that *The Ruines of Time* is 'uneven in quality' and that 'its transitions are awkward' (35). Again, drawing attention to the patchwork nature of the poem by emphasising its sloppy transitions. Although there is a consensus that the narrative voice of *The Ruines of Time* can be problematic, there is not as much agreement about how problematic. On the one hand, McCabe argues that the 'complex relationship between [the] various speakers' occurs because it fits the 'ethos of visionary complaint' (582), thus emphasizing the troubled nature of Verlame's mind; while Renwick and Stein are placing the blame for the perceived disjointedness of speech squarely on the shoulders of Spenser himself, accusing him of rushing the poem and pasting together many disjointed fragments of previously written poems. Richard Schell uses a different approach in addressing the problems with the various speakers. Although he admits *The Ruines of Time* may have been constructed by combining earlier poems, he argues that Spenser 'made this first poem in *Complaints* an introduction to the larger collection' (225). When *The Ruines of Time* is understood to be an introductory poem to *Complaints* as a whole, the disjointed nature of the voices within the poem becomes more manageable and the awkward transitions between the different sections of the poem work to emphasise the links between *The Ruines of Time* and the rest of the volume.

*The Ruines of Time* begins with the narrator finding himself 'beside the shore / Of siluer streaming *Thamesis*' (ll. 1-2). While standing on the banks of the Thames, the narrator meets the *genius* of the old Roman city of Verulamium. He describes her as '[a] woman sitting sorrowfullie wailing, / Rending her yeolow locks' (ll. 9-10). The narrator asks the reason for her vexation, at which point she, Verlame, begins her lament. Verlame's complaint can be split into three parts and makes up just

under two thirds of *The Ruines of Time*. Since each of the three parts will be discussed separately hereafter it might be useful to offer a summary of the themes discussed in each. In the first part, Verlame begins by recounting the fall and decay of Verulamium, proceeding to a broader analysis of the destructive power of time. Verlame goes on to ask about the fate of ‘th’Assyrian Lyonesse’, ‘the Persian Beares’, ‘the Grecian Libbard’ and the ‘great seuen headded beast’ (ll. 64-71). These references to the Assyrians, Persians, Grecians and Romans underscore the fragility of earthly empires, showing that even these great empires were susceptible to decay and ruin. Verlame speaks of how she was located on the shores of the Thames and then goes on to praise ‘Cambden’ – spelt thus to evoke both the university that Spenser attended and William Camden – the author of *Britannia*. But Verulamium was never situated on the banks of the Thames and it is Camden that refutes this myth. At this point in Verlame’s monologue there is an abrupt shift. She ends her lament over fallen empires and begins the second part, which goes on to lament fallen nobles. The necrology includes Robert Dudley, Ambrose Dudley, Anne Russell, Mary Dudley, Francis Russell, Edward Russell and Philip Sidney. There is then another abrupt shift in narrative to begin the third part, in which Verlame begins to discourse on the eternizing power of poetry. During this segment it is made clear that those who seek immortality must ‘of the Muses [...] friended bee, / Which vnto men eternitie do giue’ (ll. 366-7). The references here become more classical. Then ‘hauing ended all her piteous plaint, / With doleful shrikes shee vanished away’ (ll. 470-1). As soon as she has finished speaking she disappears, leaving the narrator to ponder over her words. There are both textual and thematic links between the three segments that make up Verlame’s complaint and the next three sections of *Complaints*; these links will be taken up later in this chapter.

It is clear that the disjointedness of the speakers is not the only problematic feature of *The Ruines of Time*; place and setting is the first problem:

It chaunced me on day beside the shore  
Of siluer streaming Thamesis to be,  
Nigh where the goodly Verlame stood of yore (ll. 1-3)

From these lines, the reader is made aware that the narrator spatially occupies a region beside the shore of the Thames, the same region that the ancient Roman city of Verulamium occupied. The narrator goes on to explain that he also saw at this site ‘[a] Woman sitting sorrowfullie wailing’ (l. 8). The woman that the narrator discovers is ‘th’auncient *Genius* of that Citie’ (l. 19). John C. Ulreich explains the two different types of *genius loci* as ‘either the guardian of a place or person, a daemon, as he is conceived by the ancients; or a universal deity of procreation, Nature’s Priest, as he was most often styled in the Middle Ages’ (327). An example of the *genius loci* in classical literature can be found in Virgil’s *Aenied*, where he uses a giant snake to represent ‘*geniumne loci*’<sup>16</sup> (V. 96), as Aeneas is making an offering on his arrival in Sicily. Jeremiah, in *The Lamentations of Jeremiah*, introduces the idea of the *genius loci* of Jerusalem being a woman:

How Doeth the citie remaine solitarie that was ful of people? She is as a widow: she that was great among the nacions *and* princesse among the prouinces, is made tributarie. She wepeth in the night, *and* her teares runne downe by her chekes (Lam. 1:1-2)

As with the *genii locorum* of Sicily and Jerusalem, Verlame is a representation of a real city that occupied a very specific space; yet the materiality of the city’s ruins is

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<sup>16</sup> The *genius*, or guardian, of the place.

brought into question by Philip Schwyzer and Ruth Helfer. Schwyzer speaks of the ‘all-but-invisible remains of Roman Verulamium’ (74), suggesting that there may be something there, but only just. While Helfer takes it a bit further when she states that ‘Spenser’s speaker sees nothing – only imagined, remembered ruins’ (139); thus, there are no material ruins, there are only those that exist in the memory or imagination of the speaker. For both, the ruins of Verulamium only exist within a cultural collective memory. Helfer goes on to argue that ‘[instead] of stones, “the ruins of time” represent poetry’s ruins: both the remains of a fallen house of fame and places for re-edification and remembrance. Rather than building an immortal monument, Spenser embraces the contingency of all structures’ (140). The ruins are to be seen as a metaphor for talking about poetry, rather than materially occupying a specific locale. In some ways, the materiality of Verulamium’s ruins is irrelevant, because Spenser’s handling of them tends to focus on their fictional nature. Verulam does very much work as a metaphor for poetry.

However, within *The Ruines of Time*, the fictional but material ruined-ness of the ruins and their region is also of great significance, in that they work as symbols of cultural memory. At first, *The Ruines of Time* does seem to support the argument for these ‘imagined [...] ruins’; especially when the narrator explicitly states that there ‘remaines no memory’ of Verulamium, ‘[nor] anie little moniment to see’ (ll. 4-5). But these opening lines are misleading; even if no one remembered Verulamium or raised a monument to the ancient city, there is no denying the city’s material reality. Verulam goes on to lament that she is ‘nought at all but ruines’ (l. 39), but ruins nonetheless. Despite the poem’s fiction, portions of Verulamium’s city wall still exist, along with its theatre. Part of the city wall is situated on the River Ver, and its locale is described in detail within *The Ruines of Time*, as will be shown

below. The *genii locorum* of *Complaints* – Verlame in *The Ruines of Time* and ‘the Romaine Daemon’ of *Ruines of Rome* (l. 376) – fall strictly into the classical sort, and as such are themselves a manifestation of the material reality of a ruined locale. These *genii* give voice to inner thoughts of the narrator when he comes face to face with the actual ruins of the place. Those found in Spenser’s other works have a more procreative, and Medieval, nature. In the prayer offered to the *genius* of *Epithalamion*, the narrator states:

And thou glad Genius, in whose gentle hand,  
The bridale bowre and geniall bed remaine,  
Withoute blemish or staine,  
And the sweet pleasures of theyr loues delight  
With secret ayde doest succour and supply,  
Till they bring forth the fruitfull progeny,  
Send vs the timely fruit of this same night. (398-404)

It is clear from this invocation that the *genius* of *Epithalamion* presides over the marriage bed and holds sway over the couple’s ability to procreate. This *genius* is to ‘ayde’ and ‘succour’ the couple by providing them with ‘fruitfull progeny’.

Likewise, the *genius* of the Garden of Adonis oversees the cycle of birth, death and rebirth (or regeneration) that occurs within that garden (*The Faerie Queene* III. vi. 31-3). The *genius loci* found in *Complaints* are not interested in birth or regeneration, they are apparitions that haunt ruins and bewail the downfall of empires. Carl J. Rasmussen argues that ‘Verlame is unreliable’ by demonstrating that she ‘is a literary device for meditation on mourning. The passions of woefulness arise from sin, and to give full voice to those passions, one needs a sinful speaker’ (159).

Yet, it is not just Verlame that is unreliable. The narrator is also unreliable, whether it be in remembering the correct locale that Verulamium occupied, or in how he is later influenced, or manipulated, by the lament of Verlame. One of the manifestations of the narrator's lapse in memory, possibly even his willed deceptiveness, is found in the contradictions that occur throughout the poem relating to the space that he occupies. Returning to the opening lines, the narrator announces that he is standing 'beside the shore / Of siluer streaming Thames [...], / Nigh where the goodly Verlame stood of yore' (ll. 1-3). The reference to 'siluer streaming' makes it clear that the narrator is situated at a point along the river where the water is flowing. It is also clear from the above quotation that Verulamium was located 'nigh', or close to, where the narrator is currently standing. However, when Verlame has begun her complaint, she says: 'There now no riuers course is to be seene, / But moorish fennes, and marshes euer greene' (ll. 139-40). She is explaining here that the course of the river has changed and that the Thames no longer flows past Verulamium. Hence, if they are standing where the Thames used to run past Verulamium, they must be standing next to 'moorish fennes' or 'marshes euer greene', rather than a 'siluer streaming Thames'. The flaws in this imagined space are further emphasised by Holinshed:

Furthermore, whereas manie are not afraid to saie that the Thames came sometimes by this citie, indeed it is nothing so; but that the Uerlume (afterward called Uere and the Mure) did and dooth so still (whatsoever Gildas talketh hereof, whose books may be corrupted in that behalfe) there is yet euident prooffe to be confirmed by experience. (*Chronicles* 192)

That ‘manie are not afraid to saie’ shows that even in Holinshed’s day it was popularly believed that the Thames ran past Verulamium. Not only does he point out that this belief is false, he goes on to give the name of the river that does flow past Verulamium and name Gildas as the source of the falsehood. Camden also blames Gildas for the erroneous idea that Verlame was once situated on the Thames when he says:

Neither left the Abbats<sup>17</sup> ought undone that might serve either use or ornament: who filled up with earth a mighty large poole under Verlam, which I spake of. [...] because certaine ankers were in our remembrance digged up, divers have verily thought (induced thereunto by a corrupt place in Gildas) that the river Tamis sometimes had his course and channell this way. (*Britannia* 411)

According to Camden, the ‘moorish fennes’ and ‘marshes euer greene’ that Verlame complains about in *The Ruines of Time* are man-made. The body of water was also large enough at some stage to accommodate ships, because there had been anchors ‘digged up’ around Verulamium during Camden’s lifetime, or ‘in [his] remeberance’. It is clear from *The Ruines of Time* that Spenser knew of Camden and his work, as he is praised by name:

Cambden the nourice of antiquitie,  
And lanterne vnto late succeeding age,  
[...] Cambden, though time all moniments obscure,  
Yet thy iust labours euer shall endure. (ll. 169-70,74-5)

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<sup>17</sup> Abbots

The above passage has been spoken by Verlame and her praise of Camden is telling. He is called the 'nourice', or nurse, of antiquity. As a lantern to succeeding ages, he is to cast a light on 'simple veritie', or simple truth. Finally, although time has obscured the ruins of Verulamium, Camden's work will endure and tell the truth about her. Camden's description of Verulamium is more accurate than any other antiquarians' according to Verlame. Yet, she insists that she was once situated on the Thames. There is a clear contradiction here.

There is further evidence that Spenser is aware of Camden's work when their descriptions of the body of water outside Verulamium are compared. Spenser states that 'the christal Thamys [was] wont to slide / In siluer channell, downe along the Lee' (ll. 134-5); he also refers to it as 'that wide lake' (l. 151). Camden describes the body of water thus: '[...] and Eastward [Verulamium is] watered with a Brooke, which in old time made a great Meere, or standing Poole' (408-9). In this context, a lee is a calm point along the river. Hence, Verulamium was situated on a calm portion of the river. Spenser's reference to 'that wide lake' is a little more complex: the word 'lake' could refer to an actual lake (a large body of standing water), or it could be an archaic reference to a stream (*OED*). That it is referred to as being 'wide' suggests that it is a large body of water rather than a stream. Taking Camden into account, both descriptions are accurate. Camden states that a brook, or 'small stream' (*OED*), made a 'great Meere, or standing Poole' on the eastern side of Verulamium. Hence, Verlame's description of the body of water situated outside Verulamium matches perfectly with that of Camden. The only difference is that Verlame insists that the ancient city was situated on the banks of the Thames and Camden refutes that.

The question that has to be raised is: why would Spenser associate himself with Camden's *Britannia* and yet position Verlame in a fictional space? In an attempt to try to understand some of the reasons for the above contradictions in the imaginative space that the narrator finds himself in, there needs to be an understanding of the traditions that surround Verulamium. *The Ruines of Time* offers an abbreviated history of Verulamium, which tends to focus on the military exploits surrounding it. Verlame states: 'I was that Citie, which the garland wore / Of Britaines pride, delivered unto me / By Romane Victors, which it won of yore' (ll. 36-8). Thus she traces her origins to when the Romans first arrived in England. It is almost a passing comment that she had been 'won of yore', raising questions about who originally occupied this city. She goes on to say: 'Ne Troynovant, though elder sister shee, / With my great forces might compared bee' (ll. 101-2). The announcement that Troynovant is Verulamium's 'elder sister' answers the question about its original occupants. Troynovant, or 'Troia Nova' according to Geoffrey of Monmouth, was the capital city of the Trojan exile Brutus. Hence, the 'Romane Victors' of *The Ruines of Time* have been victorious over the original inhabitants of that place: the Britons.

There are some breaks in Verlame's narrative from this point. The next events that are described are the seven year siege that Uther Pendragon undertook of Verulamium and Bunducta's sacking of the city. Both Pendragon and Bunducta are Britons. It seems from the narrative that Pendragon is unsuccessful in his siege and that it is Bunducta that finally defeats the Romans. The Britons are in turn 'conquered [...] / Of hardie Saxons' (ll. 113-4). According to Geoffrey of Monmouth, the enemies of Pendragon then 'went to the spring [outside Verulamium] and polluted it completely with poison, so that all the water which welled up was

infected. When the King drank of it, he died immediately' (211). Eventually, after 'some hundred men' had died in a like manner, the well was filled with dirt so that no one else could drink from it. Thus Verlame is able to speak of the 'perill felt' by Pendragon. According to Geoffrey, Pendragon's death only occurs after he has taken the city. Camden reaffirms that Buncta – or rather Banduica as he calls her – 'raised and destroyed' Verulamium (409), while being held by the Romans, because of 'her deepe love of her Country' (409). So there is a bit more ambiguity surrounding who occupies Verulamium than *The Ruines of Time* makes it seem. The to-ing and fro-ing that occurs in relation to Verulamium's occupants will be addressed in more detail shortly.

There is more to the history of Verulamium that makes it significant as the site of imaginative space in *The Ruines of Time*. According to Holinshed,

[...] but chéefelie in the Romans time, [Verulamium] was not onelie nothing inferior to London it selfe, but rather preferred before it, bi/cause it was newer, and made a Municipium of the Romans, whereas the other was old and ruinous. (191)

According to Holinshed, Verulamium was preferred to London during 'the Roman time', thus substantiating Verlame's boast in *The Ruines of Time* when she compares herself to Troynovant. Verulamium is also said to be the home of Saint Alban, in Gildas' *On the Ruin of Britain*. Gildas recounts the story of Alban saving a confessor that was being pursued by the Romans. Alban dons the clothes of the confessor, and finding himself trapped by the river outside of Verulamium, 'opened a path across the noble river Thames, whose waters stood abrupt like precipices on either side' (14). Eventually, Alban is captured and becomes one of the first martyrs in England.

Thus, when Verulamium is eventually rebuilt, it is given the new name of Saint Albans. Another significant event that occurs at Saint Albans occurs in 1433, where it is the site of the first battle of the War of the Roses. Hence, Verulamium is a crucial space in terms of British, Roman and Tudor history. It is a British town, but also a Roman town. The allegory of *The Ruines of Time* thus deals with issues of religious reformation, as well as politics in the Tudor court.

Spenser clearly uses this contested imaginative space to explore ideas of civic descent and English nationalism. As A. Leigh DeNeef argues:

Spenser may have intended to sketch a metaphoric lineage of civic descent (Rome-Verulam-Troynovant-London) which would give both direction and purpose to social history and a providential pattern of divine intervention within which both the contemporary city and its private inhabitants can locate their earthly responsibilities and obligations. (182)

By situating Verulamium on the Thames, Verlame is '[emphasising] the connection between the ancient city and Spenser's London' (Schell 226). As DeNeef points out, the emphasis is on locating responsibilities and obligations in an attempt to reform the individual and the body politic, with the warning that if this reformation does not occur, the same fate that Verulamium suffered will be suffered by London. This is where the to-ing and fro-ing of the occupants of Verulamium again becomes relevant. Richard Schell states:

[Verlame is] a deeply ambivalent figure, made suspect by her Roman associations. Many Elizabethan Protestants saw the English as a people chosen by God, the true successor to the Hebrew nation, and found in

Old Testament history a foreshadowing of their own. The nations whose fate Verlame laments – Assyria, Persia, Greece, and finally Rome itself – were all conquerors and overlords of the Hebrew people, and as such prefigure the Roman church’s menace to England as a former enslaver and present threat. (226)

Taking Schell’s observations into account, it is reasonable to assume that an Elizabethan audience would see the struggles of Pendragon and Buncta with the Romans as a symbolic battle between English Protestants and Catholic Rome, which continued as a major threat to the country in the 1580s and 1590s. The moral and political battle-lines are frequently blurred, however, throughout this history, between civilised and conquered, native and newcomer, even between city and city (Roman Verulamium versus Roman London): a reformation can also be a destruction. The significance of any one place is highly contested over time as it rises and falls to ruin.

### ***Ruines as an Introduction to Complaints: Links between Poems***

Returning to the idea that the primary function of *The Ruines of Time* is to act as an introduction to *Complaints*, William Nelson observes:

As if to insist upon the unity of *The Ruines of Time*, Spenser binds the whole together by a numerical device. The main part of the poem consists of seventy stanzas of seven lines each; the two sets of visions are comprised in twenty-eight stanzas, in each set six visions followed by an envoy rejecting the vain world and looking to heaven. Six are the days of this mutable world; on the seventh God rests and change ceases. (68-9)

The intricacies of this numerical device seem to be at odds with a poem whose ‘conduct is disjointed’ (Renwick 189). On the one hand the reader is presented with a poem that has a polyphonous and fragmented narrative; yet on the other, they are presented with a poem that is intricately and carefully constructed. The carefully constructed numerical device indicates that the fragmentary nature of the poem is also a construct of the poet. By purposefully highlighting the transitions between fragments of such a carefully constructed poem, Spenser is inviting the careful reader to explore these fragments. But first, one has to decide how many fragments actually exist. Schell and Stein disagree over how many fragments, or sections, there are in *The Ruines of Time*. Schell says that there are ‘three episodes’ (225), while Stein says that there are ‘four loosely articulated sections’ (35). The difference of opinion occurs because Schell does not count the two sets of visions as a section, while Stein does. There are at least two different ways in which the poem could be split into distinct sections: by speaker and by theme. When *The Ruines of Time* is divided up by speaker, it can be separated into seven distinct parts, which are articulated by three speakers: the narrator, Verlame, and a disembodied voice. Verlame is by far the most dominant voice, with almost sixty-four stanzas – the narrator has only thirty-four, and the disembodied voice almost has one. Verlame’s largest continuous piece (ll. 34-469) can be split into a further three sections by theme, as has been demonstrated above. When the entire poem is divided up by theme, it can be split into four sections that are organised as follows:

1. ll. 1-173: History of Verulamium established
2. ll. 176-343: Necrology
3. ll. 344-490: Eternizing power of poetry
4. ll. 491-686: Transcendence

These four sections correspond with the broader themes in the four parts of *Complaints*; these broader themes will be dealt with in greater detail in the final three chapters of this thesis, where I focus on the thematic links that occur within the four parts of *Complaints*. The remainder of this chapter will show how specific sections of *The Ruines of Time* introduce, both thematically and linguistically, the three parts of *Complaints* that are to follow. It will be shown that when the linguistic links are considered, there is a slight change in how *The Ruines of Time* is to be divided. The first episode relates to the destruction of Verulamium; the second, to the deaths of Leicester, Dudley and Sidney; and the third, the transcendent power of poetry, including the two sets of visions. Splitting *The Ruines of Time* into these distinct sections is useful, as they each correspond with the following three segments that make up *Complaints*.

*The Ruines of Time* ll. 1-175, *The Teares of the Muses* and *Virgils Gnat*

The first section of *The Ruines of Time* is preoccupied with history and the multitude of other themes associated therewith – such as the fall of empires, memory, mutability, and destruction. History and its ancillary themes, as discussed in the opening portion of *The Ruines of Time*, introduce what will follow in *The Teares of the Muses* and *Virgils Gnat*. While Spenser aimed to ‘[follow] all the antique Poets historicall’ in *The Faerie Queene* (Letter to Raleigh l. 13), in *The Ruines of Time* there is a far more apocalyptic leaning. After revealing her name to the narrator, Verlame adopts the ‘traditional *ubi sunt* topos’ in her lament over fallen empires (McCabe 585):

What now is of th’ Assyrian Lyonesse,  
Of whome no footing now on earth appeares?

What of the *Persian* Beares outragiousnesse,  
 Whose memorie is quite worne out with yeares?  
 Who of the *Grecian* Libbard now ought heares,  
 That ouerran the East with greedie powre,  
 And left his whelps their kingdomes to deuoure?  
 And where is that same great seuen headed beast,  
 That made all nations vassals of her pride [...] (ll. 64-72)

As noted above, each of the animals mentioned by Verlame is associated with a specific empire: the lioness with the Assyrians, the bear with the Persians and the leopard with the Grecians. Although not mentioned in the above quotation, the seven headed beast is later associated with Rome. There is a precedent found in the Geneva Bible for these associations. The Geneva Bible's gloss for Daniel 7: 4-8 states: the lion signifies 'the Assyrian and Caldean empire' (4c); the bear 'the Persians, which were barbarous and cruel' (5d); the leopard 'Alexander, the king of Macedonie' (6h); and the beast with iron teeth 'the Romain empire' (7l). Likewise, the gloss for Revelation 13:1-2 reinforces these associations.<sup>18</sup>

The evocation of Daniel and Revelation gives Verlame's lament an apocalyptic leaning that offers to make sense of its perceived disjointedness. To better illustrate the apocalyptic ethos of her complaint, it is necessary to compare the way in which the above empires are described in *The Ruines of Time*, Daniel and Revelation. Unlike the narrator of *The Ruines of Time*, 'Daniél sawe in dreame [...] visions in his head' (Dan. 7:1). In Daniel's words:

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<sup>18</sup> The beasts are mentioned in reverse order – Leopard, Bear, and Lion – and all are parts of the seven headed beast.

I sawe in my vision by night, and beholde, the foure windes of heauen  
stroue vpon the great sea: And foure great beastes came vp from the sea  
one diuers from another. (Dan. 7:2-3)

The four beasts in Daniel's dream are said to be 'divers from another'. The word 'divers' denotes different in character and likeness, as well as separate and individual in form. Verlame's list of empires also offers beasts that are 'divers from another'. The first beast in Daniel is a lion that has eagle's wings (v. 4); the second is a bear that has 'ribbes in his mouth betweene his teeth' (v. 5); the third is a leopard that has four wings on its back and four heads (v. 6); the final beast is unnamed, with iron teeth and ten horns with eyes on them (v. 7-8). Although there are slight variations in the outer forms of the beasts, the first three beasts mentioned by Daniel are in the same order as those mentioned by Verlame. Although the final beast in Daniel does not have seven heads, its ten horns with eyes on them link it to the seven-headed beast of Revelation.

The beast that is mentioned in Revelation is slightly different, in that it is a composite of all four beasts. John states:

I sawe a beast rise out of the sea, hauing seuen heads, and ten hornes, and  
vpon his hornes were ten crownes, and vpon his heads the name of  
blasphemie. And the beast which I sawe, was like a leopard, and his fete  
like a beares, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave  
him his power and his throne, *and* great authoritie. (Rev. 13:1-2)

Just as with the beast described by Daniel, John's beast came up out of the sea. Yet, instead of there being four beasts, there is only one. For John's beast, the lion is associated with its mouth, the bear with its feet, and the body of the beast with the

leopard. The gloss in the Geneva Bible states: ‘By these beastes are signified the Macedonians, Persians *and* Chaldeans whom the Romaines overcame’. As such, John’s beast is a composite of all previously defeated empires. Rome has simply absorbed what has come before.

*A Theatre for Worldlings* observes that ‘this beast was like a Leopard, spotted and blemished, tokens of inconsistancie [...] and temeritie. His feete like the Beares feete, fearful and horrible [...] signifying crueltie, stubbournesse, stoutnesse and uncleannesse. And his mouth as the mouth of a Lion, declaring heereby the [...] wickedness of those Prelates’.

(McCabe 513)

The accounts of Daniel and John are clearly sources for the way in which Verlame describes past empires. As Carl J. Rasmussen argues: ‘By her own admission, Verlame is a miniature Babylon, a miniature Great Whore, on England’s shores’ (161). By lamenting her own downfall, as a specifically Roman city, Verlame is emphasising the providential rise of the Reformed English Church. The composite beast that is spoken of in Revelation 13 is reminiscent of the composite statue of a man described in Daniel 2. The statue that Nebuchadnezzar dreams of has a head of ‘fine golde’ (v. 32), ‘breast and armes of siluer’ (v. 32), ‘bellie and [...] thighs of brasse’ (v. 32), ‘legges of yron’ (v. 33), and ‘his fete were parte of yron, and parte of clay’ (v. 33). The gloss in the Geneva Bible states: ‘By golde, siluer, brasse, and yron are ment the Caldean, Persian, Macedonian, *and* Romaine kingdome’ (gloss q for Dan. 2: 32). This being the case, the head of the statue represents the Chaldeans, the breast and arms the Persians, the legs the Macedonians and the feet the Romans. According to the Geneva Bible’s gloss, history is structured into four constituent parts, as is *The Ruines of Time* and *Complaints*. There is unity gained within *The*

*Ruines of Time* by the allusion to this statue that occurs in the visions at the end of the poem.

The theme of memory – and the lack thereof – is connected to these ideas of history that run throughout *The Ruines of Time*, and also provides a link between the first three poems of *Complaints*. It is said of Verlame: ‘now remaines no memorie, / Nor anie moniment to see’ (ll. 4-5).<sup>19</sup> Not only is there nothing but ruins left of Verulamium (l. 39), the city has also seemingly been forgotten by the contemporaries of the narrator. The accusation of forgetfulness is also levelled at Spenser himself; as he explains in the dedicatory note to the Countess of Pembroke, he has been upbraided because he had ‘not shewed anie thankfull remembrance towards him [Sidney] or any of them [other fallen nobles]; but suffer their names to sleep in silence and forgetfulnesse’ (ll. 18-19). Spenser goes on to state that one of his intentions in writing *The Ruines of Time* is for ‘the eternizing of some of the chief of them late deceased’ (l. 24). Later in *The Ruines of Time* the narrator explains that it is the Muses who ‘vnto men eternitie do giue; / For they be daughters of Dame memorie, / And Ioue the father of eternitie’ (ll. 367-9). The parentage of the Muses is significant; given that their mother is Memory and their father is Jove, who is also the ‘father of eternitie’, as their offspring they are the embodiment of eternal memory. In his dedicatory note to the Countess of Pembroke, Spenser refers to his poems as his ‘young Muses’ (l. 10). Hence, *The Ruines of Time* can be seen as a monument to Sidney, constructed to ensure his eternal memory. The theme of forgetfulness is continued in *The Teares of the Muses*. During her complaint, Clio – the Muse of history – laments that she finds ‘nothing worthie to be writ, or told’ of

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<sup>19</sup> For more on Spenser and memory, see ‘Memory’ by Maurice Evans in *The Spenser Encyclopedia*. For a more general handling of memory in the early modern period, see Andrew Gordon’s *Writing Early Modern London: Memory, Text and Community* and Andrew Hiscock’s *Reading Memory in Early Modern Literature*.

that current generation (l. 100). As a result, she foresees that ‘succeeding ages [shall] haue no light / Of things forpast, nor moniments of time’ (ll. 103-4). Despite the assertion made in *The Ruines of Time*, there is a refusal here by Clio to record the deeds of those who profess ‘Nobilitie’ (l. 84). Similarly, Calliope – the Muse of epic poetry – has chosen to rend her ‘golden Clarion [...] / And will henceforth immortalize no more’ (ll. 463-4). By having the Muses refuse to immortalise, Spenser raises questions about the ability of poetry to immortalise. *Virgils Gnat* offers an attempt at memory in the shepherd’s construction of a monument to the gnat. The closing lines replicate the inscription on the monument as follows:

To thee, small Gnat, in lieu of his life saued,  
The Shepheard hath thy deaths record engraued. (ll. 687-8)

As with Sidney, the monument that conveys the gnat’s ‘deaths record’ is the poem itself. Just like *The Ruines of Time*, *Virgils Gnat* is a monument. The first three poems of *Complaints* all deal with memory in their various ways: *The Ruines of Time* offers poetry as a means of providing eternal memory, *The Teares of the Muses* questions the claims of *The Ruines of Time*, and *Virgils Gnat* renders the vanity of eternal memory absurd by offering it to an insect.

Rivers are used to introduce the theme of mutability, which is associated with both history and memory in *The Ruines of Time*. Rivers then work as another link between *The Ruines of Time* and *The Teares of the Muses*, which both begin on the side of a river. *The Ruines of Time* begins, as stated above, ‘beside the shore / Of siluer streaming *Thamesis*’ (ll. 1-2), while *The Teares of the Muses* begins ‘[beside] the siluer Springs of *Helicone*’ (l. 5). Spenser’s repetition of the word ‘siluer’ signals

an intertextual link between these two poems, specifically illustrating that both occur on the banks of a river. W. H. Herendeen observes that in *Complaints*,

Spenser learned how to juxtapose river and architectural ruin, or other images of human achievement, in order to locate his ideas about the effects of mutability and time, and about human access to a timeless dimension. (607)

*The Ruines of Time* and *The Teares of the Muses* both deal with different aspects of mutability, which are signalled by the positioning of the narrator at different points along the course of the respective rivers. In *The Ruines of Time*, Spenser decides to place the narrator at a point down the Thames that was ‘streaming’, or at a point where the river is in full flow. While at this point of full flow, the narrator observes the lament of Verlame, the genius of the ancient Verulamium. Hence, the juxtaposition of the timeless element, the river, with that of the finite, the ruin, works to emphasize the effects of mutability. This emphasis on the effects of mutability is enhanced when it is realized that, within the fiction of *The Ruines of Time*, the Thames has changed its course from when it once ran past Verulamium<sup>20</sup>; thus pointing out that even the timeless element is mutable. *The Teares of the Muses*, on the other hand, begins with the narrator at the ‘Springs of *Helicone*’ (l. 5), or the source of the river. Unlike *The Ruines of Time*, the source of the Helicon is not juxtaposed with a mortal, and thus mutable, city; rather, timeless element (the source of the river) meets timeless element (the Muses). The bringing together of two

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<sup>20</sup> See ‘Lurid Shorelines: Mapping Spenser’s Queen Elizabeth in Ariosto’s Hebrides’ by Elizabeth Jane Bellamy, in her *Dire Straits: The Perils of Writing the English Coastline from Leland to Milton*, where she adopts an ecocritical approach to address Early Modern perceptions of nationhood. Bellamy argues that ‘[the] waters that assault both coasts with indiscriminate force are neither inherently Irish nor English. Elizabethan courtiers may have often regarded Ireland as “oversees”, but *Colin Clout* reminds us that the two islands’ coastal borders share the topography of antiquity’s *apeiron*’ (69). This argument shows that perception and imagination can carry as much force as geographic reality.

timeless elements makes an examination of the effects of mutability very difficult. Rather, the source of the rivers' placement alongside the sources of learning begins an examination into the sources of mutability. In any event, in both poems the narrator is in a state of stasis. In *The Ruines of Time*, the narrator is standing on the other side of the Thames from Verlame listening to her complaint. The only time he moves is when he shifts his gaze 'to the other side' (l. 587), after seeing the first set of visions. This shifting of the narrator's gaze only requires the turning of the head rather than the moving of his body; he has far more in common with Verlame – who refuses to move – than the river. There is similarly a lack of movement on the part of the narrator in *The Teares of the Muses*. The lack of movement in both cases works to emphasise the fact that the narrators of both are still subject to mutability themselves, even though they are working to immortalise their patrons. As Carl J. Rasmussen argues: 'Verlame [...] seems to recognize that poetry exists only in time, that it can only be perpetual, not eternal. Because it only exists in time, poetry has as its function the inspiration of mortals with imitations of true immortality' (168). The mortal, and mutable, nature of both the narrator and author ensure that poetry can only ever offer an imitation of the eternal.

The mutability of all that is sublunary is further exposed in *The Ruines of Time* and *The Teares of the Muses* through the soundscapes of destruction that are conjured in both poems. Verlame describes her ruin as follows:

Where my high steeples whilom vsde to stand,  
On which the lordly Faulcon wont to towre,  
There now is but an heap of lyme and sand,  
For Shriche-owle to build her balefull bowre:  
And where the Nightingale wont forth to powre

Her restles plaints, to comfort wakefull Louers,  
 There now haunt yelling Mewes and whining Plouers.  
 And where the christall *Thamesis* wont to slide  
 In siluer channell, downe along the Lee,  
 [...] There now no riuers course is to be seen,  
 But Moorish fennes, and marshes euer greene. (ll. 127-40)

Euterpe adopts similar language in her description of the destruction of the Muses' bower:

Our pleasant groues, which planted were with paines,  
 [...] They haue cut downe and all their pleasaunce mard,  
 That now no pastorall is to be hard.  
 In stead of them fowle Goblins and Shriekowles,  
 With fearfull howling do all places fill;  
 And feeble *Eccho* now laments and howles,  
 The dreadfull accents of their outcries shrill.  
 So all is turned into wilderness,  
 Whilst ignorance the Muses doth oppresse. (ll. 276-88)

Verlame and Euterpe both associate the presence – and the sound – of the ‘Shriche-owle’, or ‘Shriekowle’, with destruction, as the screech owl is ‘regarded as the harbinger of death’ (McCabe 586). The word ‘Mewes’, in *The Ruines of Time*, is an important pun. ‘Mewes’ is another word for gulls (McCabe 586), while at the same time being a play on the word Muse. The play on the word Muse becomes more significant when it is realized that Euterpe, at the end of her complaint, ‘wayled with exceeding woe’ (l. 295); Verlame states of Verulamium, ‘[there] now haunt yelling

Mewes' (l. 133). It is no coincidence that Verulamium is haunted by 'yelling Mewes', while the Muses haunt their destroyed bowers at Helicon; this is a purposeful intertextual link. Further, Verlame's account tells of how the 'lordy Faulcon' has been displaced by the 'Shriche-owle', the nightingale, 'Mewes' and 'Plouers'. The haunting yells of these birds, which are associated with death, is the only sound to be heard in the now desolate 'Moorish fennes, and marshes euer greene', where Verulamium once stood. Euterpe chooses to use similar imagery. It is the sound of 'Goblins and Shriekowles' that fills the dreadful wilderness, where the Muses' 'arbours [...] have [been] cut down'. The superimposition of 'yelling', 'whining', 'howling' and 'outcries shrill' onto otherwise desolate landscapes successfully conjures an atmosphere of the otherworldly, which is both familiar and terrifying. Verlame and the Muses, thus, construct a soundscape of complaint that is distinctively desolate. For Verlame, the desolation of the landscape is associated with the idea that '[there] now no riuers course is to be seen'. As stated previously, rivers are associated with cities, as well as with ideas of civic descent. Spenser uses the names of rivers and cities interchangeably throughout his poetry. However, he uses Verlame to further develop the idea that the separation of the city and the river can be seen as a symbol of destruction. When the river is seen as the unchangeable, or immortal, aspect and the city the mutable, or mortal, aspect within the union, it is the separation of the immortal and the mortal that brings death. This idea of death being the separation of the mortal from the immortal is taken up again in both *Muiopotmos, Or the Fate of the Butterflie* and *Visions of the Worlds Vanitie*.

The shepherd of *Virgils Gnat* finds himself in a bower, similar in some ways to those described by Verlame and Euterpe. In *Virgils Gnat*, there is a long list of trees that make up the 'pleasant bowre' (l. 187), followed by this description:

But the small Birds in their wide boughs embowering,  
 Chaunted their sundrie tunes with sweete consent,  
 And under them a siluer Spring forth powring  
 His trickling streames, a gentle murmure sent;  
 Thereto the frogs, bred in slimie scowring  
 Of the moist moores, their iarring voices bent;  
 And shrill grasshoppers chirped them around:  
 All which the ayrie Echo did resound. (ll. 225-232)

The use of the words 'siluer Spring' are an implied echo to the Thames and the Helicon in the two preceding poems, even though there is no specific name given to the river in *Virgils Gnat*. However, this is not the only connection. Again, the idea of a 'pleasant bowre' is conveyed, reminiscent of the bower the Muses inhabited previous to its destruction, as well as Verulamium itself. That the bower is at this point not yet destroyed is evidenced by the fact that 'the ayrie Echo did resound' (l. 232), unlike in the Muses' bower where 'feeble *Eccho* now laments and howles' (*Teares* l. 285). Hence, at this point in *Virgils Gnat*, the bower is bustling with the merriment of life, while the bower in *The Teares of the Muses* is being haunted by death. In this respect, the bower in *Virgils Gnat* has more in common with London and Cork than with Helicon or Verulamium. However, as both London and Cork are presented as coming from the same line of civic descent, it is only a matter of time before they share the same fate.

*The Ruines of Time* ll. 176-343, *Mother Hubberds Tale*, and *The Ruines of Rome*

The second section of *The Ruines of Time* is concerned with lamenting the deaths of Leicester, Dudley and Sidney. While lamenting the death of Leicester in particular, Verlame utters the following:

He now is gone, the whiles the Foxe is crept  
Into the hole, the which the Badger swept. (ll. 216-7)

The *Variorum*, Yale, McCabe and Renwick editions of *Complaints* all agree that the fox here is William Cecil, Lord Burghley, and that the badger is Leicester. All of the above editions observe the rivalry that existed between Leicester and Burghley, noting that Leicester's death enabled Burghley to 'further consolidate his power on council' (Oram et al 242). McCabe emphasises the insult that is intended by these two lines with a quote and an explanation:

'The foxe doth fight with the Brocke [badger] for dens, and defileth the Brockes den with his urine and with his dirte' (Bateman 385). Leicester's death benefited his arch-rival William Cecil, Lord Burghley, figured here as the fox. The insult is considerable. (587)

The insult intended for Burghley in *The Ruines of Time* is expanded out into a whole poem in *Prosopopoia: Or Mother Hubberds Tale*, which depicts a fox and an ape.

There seems to be a general consensus in modern scholarship that the fox is a depiction of Burghley, especially in the fox's role as courtier in the final two episodes of the poem. Edwin Greenlaw, while commenting on the historical allegory of *Mother Hubberds Tale*, argues that the ape is a composite of the French Duke D'Alençon and his envoy, Simier (119). What is clear from contemporary accounts is that the publication of *Mother Hubberds Tale* caused such uproar that the

*Complaints* volume was called in. However, McCabe notes how unsuccessful this recall was by stating that ‘the number of extant copies suggests that public curiosity largely frustrated such efforts’ (581). Regardless of the success of the calling in of *Complaints*, the two offending lines in *The Ruines of Time* and the whole of *Mother Hubberds Tale* were left out of the 1611 edition of *The Faerie Queene: The Shepherds Calendar: Together with the Other Works of England’s Arch-Poët, Edm. Spenser*. Again, the two offending lines in *The Ruines of Time* and the whole of *Mother Hubberds Tale* were left out of the 1617 edition. It is not until the release of *The Works of that Famous English Poet, Mr. Edmond Spenser*, in 1679, that *Mother Hubberds Tale* is again published, though not in *Complaints*; yet the two lines that had been changed in *The Ruines of Time* are not restored to their original. Mark Eccles argues that the reason *Mother Hubberds Tale* was not printed in the 1611 edition was because Burghley’s son, Robert Cecil, was still alive until 1612 (122). However, his death made it possible for the poem to be republished in the 1679 edition. What is clear from contemporary accounts is that *Complaints* caused an uproar because of two lines in *The Ruines of Time* and the last two sections of *Mother Hubberds Tale*, which resulted in an unsuccessful calling in and an effort at censorship. The ensuing controversy has been highlighted in modern scholarship and has become a focus of study. While usefully illustrating the intertextual links between *The Ruines of Time* and *Mother Hubberds Tale*, as well as pointing out one of the ways that *The Ruines of Time* introduces *Mother Hubberds Tale*, this focus on Burghley has meant that other intertextual links have gone untapped.

*The Ruines of Time*, *Mother Hubberds Tale* and *Ruines of Rome* are all interested in the appropriation of space. Within *The Ruines of Time*, Verlame states in reference to Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester: ‘I saw him die, I saw him die, as

one / Of the meane people, and brought foorth to beare, / I saw him die' (ll. 190-2). Verlame's statement that she saw Leicester die is not possible. As with Verulamium being on the banks of the Thames, the idea that Leicester died in or near St Albans (Verulamium) is just not true. McCabe points out, '[he] died at Cornbury Lodge in Oxfordshire' (586), which is over one hundred kilometres to the west of St Albans. McCabe says that this error is a 'rhetorical exaggeration' on the part of Verlame (586), and thus a way of transitioning into the necrology that is to follow. The appropriation of space is continued in *Mother Hubberds Tale* and *Ruines of Rome*. In *Mother Hubberds Tale* there is an inversion of space. The court is moved into the forest, where beasts are its occupants. Cornbury Lodge can be seen as a royal space that was situated in a forest and wherever Elizabeth was situated can be properly regarded as the court. As such, *Mother Hubberds Tale* can be seen to criticise the wandering monarch. *Ruines of Rome* is more severe in its appropriation of space:

So when the compast course of the vniuerse  
 In sixe and thirtie thousand yeares is ronne,  
 The bands of th'elements shall backe reuerse  
 To their first discord, and be quite vndonne:  
 The seedes, of which all things at first were bred,  
 Shall in great *Chaos* wombe againe be hid. (ll. 303-8)

Boccaccio's *Genealogia* offers thirty-six thousand years as the 'time which marked the return of all of the heavenly bodies to their point of origin' (McCabe 627). As stated in 'Sonnet 22' of *Ruines of Rome*, it is at this point that '[the] bands of th'elements shall back reuerse' and all will return to discord and chaos. The movement of the court to the forest in *Mother Hubberds Tale* can be seen as a similar reversal – with the movement from civilised to beastly – with the result being

a movement towards chaos. Hence, unlike the appropriation of space in the first part of Verlame's complaint where it is linked to the ennobling concept of civic descent, the second part of her complaint, as well as *Mother Hubberds Tale* and *Ruines of Rome* offer more dissident readings.

Another linguistic link between *The Ruines of Time* and *Mother Hubberds Tale* lies in their references to the flight of Astraea. While lamenting the loss of Philip Sidney, Verlame proclaims:

His blessed spirite full of power diuine  
And influence of all celestiall grace,  
Loathing this sinfull earth and earthlie slime,  
Fled backe too soone vnto his natieue place [...] (ll. 288-91)

In *The Faerie Queene*, Astraea has '[return'd] to heauen, whence she deriu'd her race' because 'the world with sinne gan to abound' (V. i. 11). For both Sidney and Astraea, their flight to heaven is the result of the sinful nature of the world. For both, their journey to heaven is a returning: Sidney has '[fled] back [...] vnto his natieue place', while Astraea has '[return'd]'. These sentiments are continued in *Mother Hubberds Tale*, using very similar language:

It was the month, in which the righteous Maide,  
That for disdaine of sinfull worlds vpbraide,  
Fled back to heauen, whence she was first concieued [...] (ll. 1-3)

As with the description of Sidney in *The Ruines of Time*, 'the righteous Maide' has left the earth and journeyed to heaven 'for disdaine of sinfull worlds vpbraide'. She too has '[fled] back', or returned, to heaven. By using such language, Spenser is creating links between these poems, while at the same time linking Sidney to

Astraea. Both of them have been lost to the world because of the world's sinful state. By linking Sidney to Astraea, Spenser is emphasising the enormous loss that has occurred with his death, while also alluding to the fact that he will at some stage return.

The link between Sidney and Astraea is not the only linguistic link in this section of Verlame's complaints. The Sidney family is linked with the Muses and with the Spencers of Althorp. Verlame points out that Mary Dudley 'eke did spring / Out of this stock, and famous familie [...] And foorth out of her happie womb did bring / The sacred brood of learning and all honour' (ll. 275-6). The opening lines of *The Teares of the Muses* speak of the 'sacred Sisters nine, / The golden brood of great Apolloes wit' (ll. 1-2). Both the progeny of Mary Dudley and that of Apollo are described as 'sacred' and both are referred to as being their 'brood'. The other broods spoken of in *The Teares of the Muses* include the 'accursed brood' of Ignorance and the 'saluage brood' of poets that are Spenser's contemporaries. The dedication appended to *Mother Hubberds Tale*, addressed to 'Ladie Compton and Mountegle', Anne Spencer, also refers to 'that House, from whence yee spring' (l. 4). Just as with the broods of Mary Dudley and Apollo, Anne Spencer 'spring[s]' from a famous 'House'. Throughout *Complaints* there is a concern with patronage and Spenser is constantly attempting to associate himself with the 'House' of the Spencers of Althorp.

#### *The Ruines of Time* ll. 344-686, *Muiopotmos*, and the Visions

The final two episodes of *The Ruines of Time*, dealing with the eternising power of poetry and transcendence, are directly associated with the final section of *Complaints*, containing *Muiopotmos*, or *The Fate of the Butterflie* and three visions.

Carl J. Rasmussen suggests ‘that the two sets of visions that conclude *The Ruines of Time* constitute a true *consolatio*’ (173), as opposed to the ‘perverse *consolatio*’ of Verlame in the earlier part of the poem (159). This final part of *The Ruines of Time* then introduces the overall movement towards transcendence that applies to *Complaints*. At this point in *The Ruines of Time*, the poem has already dealt with the destruction of Verulamium, as well as the deaths of Leicester, Dudley and Sidney. These two previous episodes have already illustrated quite convincingly that ‘all that in this world is great or gaie, / Doth as a vapour vanish, and decaie’ (ll. 55-6). The first six ‘tragicke Pageants’ continue to drive this point home (l. 490): first, a large golden statue crumbles to the ground because of the gradual bombardment of ‘showers of heauen and tempests’ (l. 501); second, a great tower that reached ‘nigh vnto Heauen’ falls ‘sodainlie to dust’ because it has been built on a foundation of sand (ll. 507, 517); third, a ‘pleasant Paradize’ is ‘wasted quite’ (ll. 519, 529); fourth, a conflation of Goliath and the Colossus at Rhodes falls ‘into the deepe Abisse’ (l. 545); fifth, a bridge ‘made all of golde’ (l. 547), because of ‘one foote not fastened well’ (l. 557), ‘[gan] faile, and all the rest downe shortlie fell’ (l. 558); and finally, two milk white bears are crushed by a collapsing cave. Following these six visions, the distraught narrator is summoned to ‘the other side’ (l. 587), by a disembodied voice. While on ‘that famous Riuers further shore’ (l. 589), the narrator sees another six visions that change the trajectory of the poem: first, a swan, being warned of his imminent death, flies to heaven and becomes ‘an heauenly signe’ (l. 601); second, a harp is rescued from the river and taken to heaven to become another constellation; third, a ‘curious Coffe made of *Heben* wood’ is transformed (l. 618), by angels, into a star; fourth, a sleeping virgin vanishes, along with her bed, when her bridegroom approaches; fifth, ‘a winged steed’ transports a mortally wounded knight to heaven

(l. 646); and finally, a golden ark is taken by Mercury to live in heaven. In each instance, the objects of these final six visions are transported into the heavenly sphere. Where the first six visions are concerned with failure and death, the second six sonnets are concerned with immortality and transcendence. This movement from failure to transcendence in *The Ruines of Time* is one that governs *Complaints* as a whole. *Muiopotmos* ends with the death of the butterfly, mirroring the failure portrayed in the first six visions of *The Ruines of Time*. However, *Visions of the Worlds Vanitie* begins with a ‘spirit, shaking off her earthly prison’ (l. 2), mirroring the six visions in *The Ruines of Time* that deal with transcendence. *The Visions of Bellay* reiterates that it is only through God that transcendence can be attained:

So I that know this worlds inconstancies,  
 Sith onely God surmounts all times decay,  
 In God alone my confidence do stay. (ll. 12-14)

The ideas that are portrayed concerning transcendence will be dealt with in greater detail in Chapters Two and Five. However, at this point it is necessary to highlight that *The Ruines of Time*, functioning as an introductory poem for *Complaints*, marks out the path that Spenser is planning to tread: *Complaints* will deal first with failure, but will move towards a form of artistic escapism by discussing ideas of transcendence. The words of the narrator at the end of *The Ruines of Time* seem to echo the feelings of Spenser when he says of the swan that has become a heavenly sign, ‘[there] now the ioy is his, here now the sorrow is mine’ (l. 602). In this movement from failure to transcendence, the narrator of *The Ruines of Time* is merely a spectator, his circumstances have not changed. Hence, in speaking of transcendence, Spenser is seeking a form of escape from the unrelenting forces of mutability.

This chapter began with a discussion about the narrative of Verlame's complaint, highlighting specific criticism that has been levelled at the uneven and, often, disjointed nature of this narrative. This criticism was juxtaposed with the intricacies of the numeric device that seems to bind up *The Ruines of Time*. The solution that has been offered is that Spenser has made the transitions in Verlame's narrative purposefully disjointed to highlight the different sections that make up her complaint. By dividing Verlame's complaint into three parts, and concluding with two sets of visions, Spenser has mimicked the structure that occurs in *Complaints* as a whole – in that it too is split into four sections by frontispieces and dedicatory notes. But the connections do not end there. There are thematic and linguistic links that run throughout, and this chapter has attempted to illustrate how some of these work. Yet, the organizational scheme that has been offered in this chapter is not the only organizational scheme that is available to the reader. *The Teares of the Muses* offers the reader another way of organizing *Complaints*, as the next chapter will show.

## Chapter II: *The Teares of the Muses*: Structuring the *Complaints*

While the previous chapter has used *The Ruines of Time* to divide *Complaints* into four parts, this chapter will argue that *The Teares of the Muses* highlights a purposeful ordering of the poems within the volume. In so doing, it will be argued that the poems that make up *Complaints* are not simply organised into thematic groups, but that the specific order of the poems re-enacts an overall movement from earth to heaven. In the words of Mark David Rasmussen, ‘*The Teares of the Muses* has been perhaps the least commented-upon of [Spenser’s] minor poems’ (139). Rasmussen, in his article entitled ‘Spenser’s Plaintive Muses’, goes some way towards engaging with this text, but there is still a severe gap in the scholarship surrounding *The Teares of the Muses*. It is quite ironic that the poem that is mourning the defeat of the Muses by Ignorance and his ‘base-born brood’ is in fact the least commented on of a fairly neglected volume (l. 392). Rasmussen offers a reason for the lack of scholarly interaction with *The Teares of the Muses*. He argues that initially the poem can be ‘unrelievedly doleful in mood and numbingly repetitive in subject matter – not a poem likely to bring new readers to Spenser’ (139-40). However, when *The Teares of the Muses* is considered within the context of *Complaints*, it becomes an indispensable tool in comprehending the volume as a whole. This chapter builds upon Rasmussen’s observation that *The Teares of the Muses* ‘touches on some of the main concerns of the *Complaints* volume as a whole’ (140). However, where Rasmussen reorders the various laments of the Muses into ‘a roughly concentric structure’ because of previously unrecognized ‘thematic connections’ within the poem (141), this chapter focuses on how the order of these laments interact with the order of the poems in *Complaints*.

It is no coincidence that there are nine Muses making ‘piteous plaints and sorrowful sad tine’ (l. 3), as well as nine poems that make up *Complaints*. In the dedicatory letter attached to *The Ruines of Time*, Spenser refers to his earlier poems as ‘[his] young Muses’ (l. 10). He then goes on to say that with the death of Sir Philip Sidney, ‘their hope of anie further fruit was cut off’ (ll. 10-11). Spenser is giving the reader a key to understanding *The Teares of the Muses* in his dedicatory letter to *The Ruines of Time*; he is explaining here that poems can be referred to as Muses, and that the fruitfulness of both the poetry and the poet is determined by patronage. Spenser expounds on the importance of patronage in his dedicatory note to *The Teares of the Muses*; he explains to Alice Spencer ‘that by honouring you they might know me, and by knowing me they might honour you’ (ll. 12-13). Hence, the patron-poet relationship is designed for mutual gain. The chapter that follows will deal with patronage in more detail, as it is the main theme that runs through the second section of *Complaints*, which is made up of *The Teares of the Muses* and *Virgils Gnat*. The order in which the Muses are presented in *The Teares of the Muses* is the focus of this chapter, as this is of great significance to the order in which poems are presented within *Complaints*. Rasmussen has pointed out that in *The Teares of the Muses* Spenser has used the same order as ‘some Latin mnemonic verses, *de Musarum inventis*, that were printed in [Natale Conti’s *Mythologiae*] and in the 1542 Dumaëus edition of Virgil’ (‘Spenser’s Plaintive Muses’ 141). Gabriel Harvey’s *Smithus vel Musarum Lachrymæ*, which was published in 1578, follows the same ordering of the Muses. Given the title of Harvey’s work, along with his close friendship with Spenser, Harvey is a more likely source than Conti or Dumaëus – even though Spenser does depend quite heavily on Conti as a source elsewhere. Hesiod is the first to name the nine Muses, but other than naming Calliope as the

oldest, classical authors do not stick to a rigid order when listing the Muses. Spenser definitely knew of Hesiod, as he refers to him in *Virgils Gnat*, as ‘that Ascræan bard’ (l. 149). Yet his choice not to use the original order of the Muses, as set out by Hesiod, in favour of those found in the Latin mnemonic verses in Conti, Dumaeus’ Virgil and Harvey, may have been because the latter fit better with his ordering of poems within *Complaints*.

In the same way that *The Ruines of Time* tracks the movement of the narrator’s gaze from Earth to Heaven, *The Teares of the Muses* creates a cosmological system through which the reader can ascend.<sup>21</sup> This cosmology can then in turn be superimposed over *Complaints*, in that the volume not only moves from Earth to Heaven – as happens in *The Ruines of Time* – but also through concentric spheres – as illustrated in *The Teares of the Muses*. To fully grasp this movement through the spheres, from the mutable Earth to the immutable Heaven, the Ptolemaic universe needs to be explained and then related to *The Teares of the Muses*. As S. K. Heninger states:

Like most of his contemporaries, Spenser accepted a description of the universe recorded by Ptolemy late in the classical period and interpreted by a long line of Christian exegetes, most importantly by Augustine and Bede. This cosmology places the Earth at the centre of the Universe and surrounds it with a series of concentric spheres which carry the planets and fixed stars. (192)

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<sup>21</sup> In *Spenser and the Numbers of Time*, Alistair Fowler argues that in Book IV of *The Faerie Queene* ‘most of the numerology is astronomical in character’ (24). Similarly, he argues that throughout *The Faerie Queene* ‘the astronomical symbolism is matched by an elaborate formal accomplishment in the poem’s numerology’ (63). There is also evidence in *Complaints* that suggests a strong link between numerology and cosmology, especially within these two opening poems.

Within this geocentric universe, the concentric spheres are split into two categories: the *primum mobile*, and the *empyrean*. The *primum mobile* is made up of the seven movable planets: the Moon, Mercury, Venus, the Sun, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn. While the *empyrean* is where the fixed stars are to be found, and is the domicile of the Judeo-Christian God. Thus, when Troilus is slain, in Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*, '[his] lighte goost ful blissfully is went / Up to the holughnesse of the eighthe spere' (V. 1807-9). In Troilus' case, he makes that ascent through seven spheres that make up the *primum mobile* to the eighth sphere – the *empyrean* – where God dwells. Within this universe, the Earth is a perfect sphere, made up of four elements – fire, water, air, and earth – the combination of which accounts for the innumerable multitude of objects found in nature. In the words of Heninger:

According to Pythagoras and his followers, including Plato and Aristotle, the four elements are defined also in a theoretical way and arranged schematically in a stable yet constantly changing system of contraries and agreements known as the tetraktys, or quaternity. This tetrad pattern with its concordia discord allows for both permanence and transience, and underlies the Elizabethan concept of mutability. (192)

Thus, everything that is found on the Earth – and which in turn is sublunary – is subject to change. It is significant then that *The Ruines of Time* has been organised into a quaternity, especially given Verlame's lamentation of the transience of all that is on the earth and the permanence offered as the narrator looks heavenward. In this system it is only when the individual ascends through the spheres and enters the *empyrean* that they are able to gain access to immortality. However, this ascent is usually a spiritual, rather than a temporal ascent. As with Troilus, it is the 'goost', or spirit, that is to make this journey to the abode of God, while the physical body

crumbles to dust on Earth. There are also specific conditions that have to be met for the ‘goost’ to make the ascent. In the case of Troilus, he sees ‘with ful avysement / The erratik sterres, herkenyng armonye / With sownes ful of hevenyssh melodie’ (V. 1811-3). In other words, the ‘errarik sterres’, or *primum mobile*, need to be in harmony with one another; and when they are in harmony with each other, there is a ‘hevenyssh melodie’ that can be heard coming from them. In the Ptolemaic universe, each sphere plays its own music, which in turn harmonises with the other spheres – creating a heavenly melody.

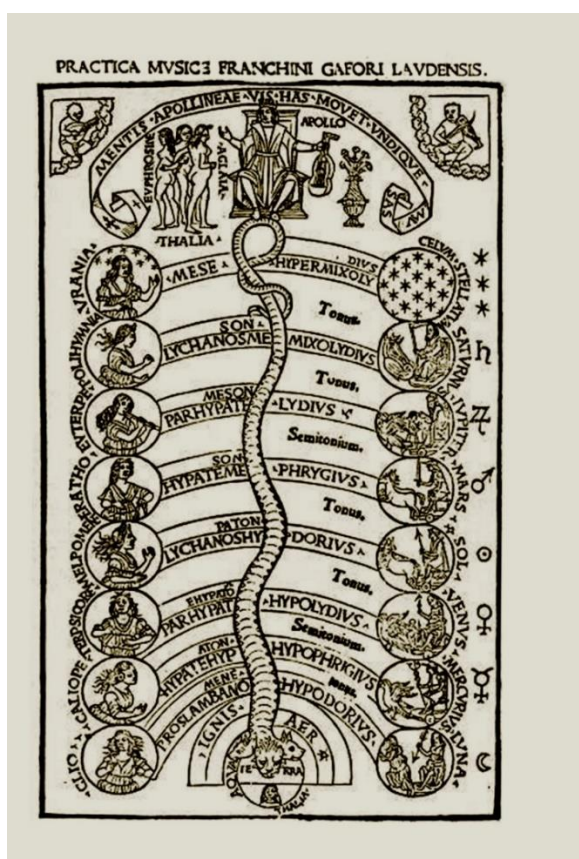


Fig. 5: Franchini Gafori's *Practica Musice* (1496)

This same unity – in which each sphere emits its own sound, which in turn harmonises with the whole – can be seen in *The Teares of the Muses*. This unity is best illustrated by the Italian music theorist, Franchini Gafori, in his *Practica Musice*

(first published in 1496). Within this work is a woodcut that shows the connection between the spheres and the Muses. Gafori's universe is based on the Ptolemaic universe, in that it is still geocentric; but in Gafori's system, there are eight spheres that all correspond to their own Muse, and Apollo/God is outside of these spheres. The spheres and the Muses are linked as follows: Luna/the Moon and Clio; Mercury and Calliope; Venus and Terpsichore; Sol/the Sun and Melpomene; Mars and Erato; Jupiter and Euterpe; Saturn and Polyhymnia; and *celum stellatum* and Urania. Apollo and Thalia are then positioned together above, or outside of, the other eight spheres. Thalia is also linked to the Earth, which is connected to Apollo by a three headed snake, suggesting that it is possible to move through these spheres between the Earth and Heaven. Apollo is seen to be sitting on his throne, with a stringed musical instrument, intimating that harmony within the spheres moves from the top down. In any event, this image shows that it is possible to link the Muses to the spheres that make up the Ptolemaic universe. Thus, another way to look at *The Teares of the Muses* is as a text that attempts to guide the reader through the spheres, on a moral journey back to God. In turn, the links between each of the nine segments of *The Teares of the Muses* correspond to the nine poems that make up *Complaints*. The rest of this chapter will argue that the way we read the nine complaints of the Muses both influences and is influenced by the nine poems that make up *Complaints*, thus highlighting the importance of the order of the poems in the volume; while also interrogating the obstacles that stand in the way of the reader in their search for transcendence.

Spenser uses the first three Muses in *The Teares of the Muses* to emphasise how *The Teares of the Muses* is to influence the reader's perceptions of the first three poems in *Complaints*. The first Muse to issue her complaint is Clio, the Muse of

history. She introduces the idea of a battle between '[the] sonnes of darknes and of ignoraunce' and 'the brood of blessed Sapience' (ll. 67, 72). This battle is a central theme that is taken up by the other Muses. She goes on to state:

So shall succeeding ages haue no light  
Of things forpast, nor moniments of time,  
And all that in this world is worthie hight  
Shall die in darknesse, and lie hid in slime:  
Therefore I mourne with deep harts sorrowing,  
Because I nothing noble haue to sing. (ll. 103-8)

Clio's words here seem to echo those of Verlame in *The Ruines of Time* when she states that 'all that in this world is great or gaie, / Doth as a vapour vanish, and decaie' (ll. 55-6). These ideas of mutability that are spoken of by Verlame and Clio are all the more poignant because of the situation in which they find themselves: Verulamium, the imperial Roman city and abode of Verlame, has been destroyed without trace, while the Muses' bower has been destroyed and overrun by Ignorance and his brood. When speaking of contemporary society, Clio speaks of how

[in] th'eyes of people they put all their praise,  
And onely boast of Armes and Auncestrie:  
But vertuous deeds, which did those Armes first giue  
To their Grandsyres, they care not to atchiue. (ll. 93-6)

The complaint here is not that contemporary society chooses to focus on their coats of arms or genealogical ties, but rather that they are unwilling to perform the same brave acts that gave their families renown in the first place. Clio is stating here that there is no one living '[that] of the Muses [...] may friended bee' or '[whose] merits

they to glorifie do chose' (*The Ruines of Time* l. 366, 371). Although not explicitly stated in *The Teares of the Muses*, the content of Clio's complaint informs the reader about how to approach the opening poem of *Complaints*. It is no mistake that Clio is the first of the Muses to speak and that *The Ruines of Time* is the first poem in *Complaints*. Although not explicitly stated in the poem, it is clear that Clio is the Muse that presides over *The Ruines of Time*. Clio is the Muse of history and *The Ruines of Time* is completely obsessed with history.<sup>22</sup> *The Ruines of Time* focuses on the genealogies of both cities and families, and Verlame specifically praises 'Cambden the nourice of antiquitie' (l. 169). Hence, Clio's account of '[the] sonnes of darkness and of ignoraunce [...despising] the brood of blessed Sapience' (ll. 67, 72), should inform any reading of *The Ruines of Time*.

Melpomene is the second Muse to issue her complaint. Of all of the complaints found in *The Teares of the Muses*, Melpomene's is the most repetitive. Throughout the nine stanzas that make up the complaint, as well as the one stanza refrain, the words 'wretched', 'wretches' and 'wretchednes' are used nine times. The repetition of these words are most noticeable in the repetition of 'wretched' in the second stanza, and the uneasy rhyming of 'wretches' and 'wretchednes' in the sixth stanza. This repetition emphasises the tragic situation in which Melpomene finds herself. Melpomene goes on to explain:

But none more tragick matter can I finde  
Than this, of men depriu'd of sense and mind.  
For all mans life me seemes a Tragedy,

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<sup>22</sup> Spenser invites scepticism in the reader by having the *genius* of the ancient city of Verulamium recount historic events. Rebeca Helfer argues that 'Spenser tacitly engages Verlame in dialogue, challenging her view of poetic immortality by locating it in another place – that is, within the ruins of time, and within the cycles of ruin and re-edification that mark both history and poetry' (140). Clio's pessimism, as the Muse of history, could be seen as encouraging such a reading of history.

Full of sad sights and sore Catastrophees;  
First comming to the world with weeping eye,  
Where all his dayes like dolorous Trophees,  
Are heapt with spoyles of fortune and of feare,  
And he at last laid forth on balefull beare. (ll. 156-162)

Melpomene is challenging the reader's perceptions of tragedy when she states that there is nothing more tragic than 'men depriu'd of both sense and mind'. This statement moves the genre of tragedy from literature and the stage into real life. There is no need to represent tragedy with hollow forms and shows because, for man, it is an ever-present part of daily experience. From the time man comes into the world to the time he is taken out of it, he is bombarded with 'sad sights and sore Catastrophees'. Melpomene's complaint moves tragedy out of the rhetorical sphere into reality. Real tragedy for Melpomene has come as a result of the rise of Ignorance and his brood, and their defeat of the Muses. In the same way that Clio is linked to *The Ruines of Time*, Melpomene's complaint is vital to the understanding of *The Teares of the Muses*; the reader is encouraged by Melpomene to find real world applications for the tragedy that is being addressed in *The Teares of the Muses*. The Muse of tragedy presides over the recounting of real tragedy, of which *The Teares of the Muses* is a type.

Just as Clio's complaint in *The Teares of the Muses* informs a scholarly reading of *The Ruines of Time*, and Melpomene's *The Teares of the Muses*, Thalia, the Muse of comedy, informs how the reader perceives *Virgils Gnat*. *Virgils Gnat* begins by stating that the poet will be '[tuning his] song vnto a tender Muse' (l. 2), who is identified in the pseudo-virgilian *Culex* (of which *Virgils Gnat* is a translation) as Thalia. However, this is not the only link between these poems. The

underlying theme that is brought up by both Thalia and the gnat is that of patronage – which will be taken up in more detail in the next chapter. Thalia continues the idea of the battle between Ignorance and the Muses by expanding it into the human realm.

She states:

And him beside sits vgly Barbarisme,  
And brutish Ignorance, ycrept of late  
Out of dredd darknes of the deep Abysme,  
Where being bredd, he light and heauen does hate:  
They in the mindes of men now tyrannize,  
And the faire Scene with rudenes foule disguise. (ll. 187-92)

The image of ‘vgly Barbarisme’ and ‘brutish Ignorance’ creeping out of the dark abyss is a menacing one. That their hatred of light and heaven has driven them to take up residence in the ‘mindes of men’ says more about the men they ‘tyrannize’. The implication here is that there is no sign of light or heaven within the minds of men, thus making them acceptable habitations. Although the minds of men have been overrun and occupied by these invading forces, they were already in an appropriate state to make them habitable for Barbarism and Ignorance. Likewise, in *Virgils Gnat*, it is because the shepherd is sleeping – and thus inattentive – that the serpent can invade the pleasant bower to seek his destruction. This idea of the invasion of the bower will also be taken up in more detail in the next chapter. However, the final death blow to Thalia seems to come with the death of the unidentified Willy, ‘with whom all ioy and iolly merriment / Is also deaded, and in dolour drent’ (ll. 209-10). The death of this patron figure makes comedy impossible in *The Teares of the Muses*. However, in *Virgils Gnat*, it is the patron figure’s

recording of the deeds of the gnat that helps the gnat gain transcendence, and move out of hell.

In *Mother Hubberds Tale*, the narrator states in the narrative frame that ‘[no] Muses aide me needes heretoo call; / [because] base is the style, and matter meane withall’ (ll. 43-4). This is the first indication that Spenser might be deserting the strict structure that he has adhered to in the first three poems. Even though the narrator decided not to invoke the aid of a Muse, *Mother Hubberds Tale* is tied by its content to the complaint of Euterpe, the Muse of pastoral poetry. In *Mother Hubberds Tale*, Mother Hubberd tells a beast fable about a fox and an ape.<sup>23</sup> In doing so, she uses the fox and the ape to portray instances of the failings of different kinds of shepherds. As McCabe observes, ‘[the] fox and the ape first abuse their position as shepherds (ll. 303-40), then as pastors or spiritual “shepherds” (ll. 431-574), and finally as courtiers or political “shepherds” (ll. 1205-22)’ (609). The pastoral imagery that is evoked through Mother Hubberd’s story of shepherds and their flocks in *Mother Hubberds Tale* is sufficiently appropriate to link this poem with Euterpe. However, pastoral imagery is not the only thing *Mother Hubberds Tale* and Euterpe have in common. In both, the way in which Spenser portrays the idea of urban decay is significant. Mother Hubberd tells of how the Fox ‘his owne treasure he encreased more’ (l. 1172), ‘[the] whiles Princes pallaces fell fast / To ruine’ (ll. 1175-6), ‘their auncient houses to let lie, / And their old Castles to the ground to fall’ (ll. 1178-9). The fox, as the king’s adviser, is to blame for the onset of urban decay. It is his negligence and greed that leads to the ruin of princes’ palaces, as well as the

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<sup>23</sup> Spenser’s use of a fox – especially one named Reynold – in *Mother Hubberds Tale* directly links the text to the medieval Reynard cycle, which had by this stage been adopted as a fabular paradigm in Reformist literature (John N. King 27). Thus, the type of pastoral that is adopted here in *Mother Hubberds Tale* would have been seen by Spenser’s contemporaries as being specifically protestant in form.

impoverishment of nobles. Euterpe complains of the invasion of the Muses' bower by Ignorance and his brood. She begins by recounting that Ignorance was 'begot amisse / By yawning Sloth on his owne mother Night' (ll. 262-3). She then states that Ignorance and his brood:

[...] our chast bowers, in which all vertue rained,  
With brutishnesse and beastlie filth hath stained. (ll. 269-70)

According to Euterpe, it is the oppression of the Muses by Ignorance that has caused the destruction of their bower. Ignorance and the fox have in essence been the instruments through which the paradisiacal worlds of each poem have become fallen worlds where death and decay are the most prominent features.

Terpsichore is usually depicted as the Muse of dance. William Oram argues that '[the] image of dance [...] is here remarkable for its absence. Instead, Terpsichore tells of a usurpation' (265-6). McCabe also notices the lack of a reference to dance in Terpsichore's complaint when he observes that she is instead 'championing the value of true art against its abusers' (596). Renwick puts Terpsichore's lack of a reference to dance down to Spenser's misunderstanding of the function of the Muse. He states that 'Terpsichore seems to have puzzled the staid scholars of the Renaissance, and she usually appears [...] not as the Muse of dance, but as *inventrix humaniorum literarum*' (212). According to the text, the desolation of the Muses' bowers has led them to become wanderers of the land that are 'carefull comfortlesse' (ll. 348). As wanderers and vagabonds, they state that they have been '[from their] owne native heritage exilde' (ll. 341). Terpsichore, then, is unable to speak of dance because it is her native heritage. The dislocation of Terpsichore from her function as Muse of dance has repercussions in how her complaint correlates

with *Ruines of Rome: by Bellay*. However, *Ruines of Rome* works to implicate the Muses in their own downfall. The story that is conveyed in the thirty-three sonnets that make up *Ruines of Rome* is that of the destruction of ancient Rome. The reasons put across for Rome's downfall are fairly standard throughout. Sonnet three states:

*Rome* now of *Rome* is th'onely funerall,  
And onely *Rome* of *Rome* hath victorie (ll. 37-8)

This sentiment is echoed in sonnet six:

*Rome* onely might to *Rome* compared bee,  
And onely *Rome* could make great *Rome* to tremble (ll. 79-80)

Hence, it was only Rome that could have defeated Rome, and it is Rome that is responsible for its own downfall. With Terpsichore being exiled from her native heritage, and '[blind] Error, scornfull Follie, and base Spight, / [holding] by wrong, that [the Muses] should have by right' (ll. 517-8), the Muses have lost their ability to inspire men. Inspiration, or lack thereof, is left to the usurping powers of Ignorance and his brood. As a result, at this juncture in *Complaints*, the paradigm is turned on its head and *The Teares of the Muses* ceases to dictate how readers perceive the volume as a whole. Rather, the poems in *Complaints* dictate how the readers perceive the complaints issued by the Muses in *The Teares of the Muses*. It is at this point that the poet usurps the authority of the Muses in order to move towards a more politically volatile ending to the volume. This turn begins to raise questions about whether the transcendence that is later promised by Urania and Polyhymnia, wherein they 'redirect the movement of withdrawal upward into one of flight', will also be achieved in *Complaints* as a whole (Rasmussen, 'Spenser's Plaintive Muses' 156).

*Muiopotmos* is the most complex of the poems found in *Complaints*, in relation to how it interacts with *The Teares of the Muses*. *Muiopotmos* begins with a reference to Melpomene, the Muse of tragedy. The invocation of the ‘mournfulst Muse of nyne’ is appropriate because of how the poem ends: with the death of Clarion (ll. 10). However, Melpomene is not the only Muse invoked. The fact that the butterfly in *Muiopotmos* is called Clarion forces the reader to think of the complaint of Calliope, the Muse of epic poetry, who rends her ‘golden Clarion’ (ll. 463). Hence, both Clarion as butterfly and clarion as trumpet are rent. The rending of the trumpet is of great significance within Spenserian iconography. Colin Cloute, in *The Shepheardes Calender*, ‘fynding himselfe robbed of all former pleasaunce and delights, hee breaketh his Pipe in peeces, and casteth him selfe to the ground’ (‘Argvment for Januarye’). It is this precise feeling of disenfranchisement that leads to Calliope rending her trumpet. However, as is said of Clarion in *Muiopotmos*:

Suspition of friend, nor feare of foe,  
That hazards his health, had he at all,  
But walkt at will, and wandered too and fro,  
In the pride of his freedom principall:  
Litle wist he his fatall future woe,  
But was secure, the liker to his fall.  
He likedt to fall into mischaunce,  
That is regardless of his governaunce. (ll. 377-84)

Hence, the fate of the butterfly was decided by his own carelessness. In this instance, the rending of Clarion came about because he was blissfully unaware of the danger that lurked in the shadows. Yet, as is implied in the above lines, it was because Clarion was ‘regardless of his governaunce’ that he was killed. In a like manner, as

argued above, the Muses were equally culpable in the destruction of their bower as Clarion was for losing his life.

The links between *Muiopotmos* and *The Teares of the Muses* are not limited to the Muses of tragedy and epic poetry. As with the previous poems, *Muiopotmos* as the sixth poem in *Complaints* is also linked to the sixth Muse: Erato. The intertextual links between these two pieces relate to their handling of Venus and Cupid.

*Muiopotmos* conveys a version of the Cupid and Psyche myth. In this embedded narrative, the story that is conveyed is of how Venus' nymphs conspired, because of jealousy, against Astery. The nymphs told Venus of how Cupid had helped Astery to collect flowers and, remembering Cupid's love affair with Psyche, Venus punished Astery by turning her into a butterfly. Hence, by giving credence to the nymph's falsehoods, Venus becomes a malevolent force by punishing the innocent. Erato says of Venus:

Faire *Cytheree* the mother of delight,  
And Queene of beautie, now thou maist go pack;  
For lo thy Kingdome is defaced quight,  
Thy scepter rent, and power put to wrack;  
And thy gay Sonne, that winged God of Love,  
May now goe prune his plumes like ruffed Dove. (ll. 397-402)

As with Verlame and her 'broken rod' (l. 13), Venus' sceptre is rent, the symbol of her authority has been broken. With the loss of authority, or political power, comes the defacing of her kingdom. *Muiopotmos* offers a reason as to why Venus has lost her authority. Venus' sceptre has been rent because of her listening to advisers that

are feeding her false information. Put in the words of Terpsichore, Error, Folly and Spite have filled the schools

[...] with fond newfangelnesse,  
And sway in Court with pride and rashnes rude;  
Mongst simple shepheardes they do boast their skill,  
And say their musicke macheth *Phæbus* quill. (ll. 327-30)

Hence, Venus had allowed herself to be overthrown by Ignorance and his brood, by allowing unreliable advisers into her inner circle. Just as with the fox and the ape in *Mother Hubberds Tale*, the kingdom has been allowed to fall into ruin because of the negligence of a monarch. This is a stinging rebuke aimed at Elizabeth in relation to the advisors she has chosen to surround herself with, especially Burghley.

*Visions of the Worlds Vanitie*, another of Spenser's original works, is the first of the three 'visions' that end *Complaints*, and links with the lament of Calliope. *Visions of the Worlds Vanitie* is interested in the overthrow of the great by the small; as such, it contains ten sonnets that convey examples of this type of overthrow. These examples are framed by one sonnet that introduces the series and one that sums them up, and include: a gadfly depriving a bull of its ease; a bird, 'cal'd *Tedula*' (l. 34), constraining a crocodile; a beetle harassing an eagle, depriving it of offspring; a sword-fish slaying '[the] huge *Leviathan*' (l. 62); a spider poisoning a dragon; a worm destroying a cedar; an ant forcing an elephant to '[cast] downe his towres' (l. 109); a fish, 'that men call *Remora*' (l. 121), stopping the course of a ship; a wasp drawing blood from a lion; and a goose awakening Rome to the threat of the attacking Gauls. Although there is no explicit reference to any Muse in *Visions of the Worlds Vanitie*, all of the examples of the overthrow of the great by the small can be

seen as heroic, thus linking this poem with Calliope. However, the heroes of the above examples are not ‘of Joves progenie’ (*The Teares of the Muses* l. 429), nor do they ‘strive in vertue others to excell’ (*The Teares of the Muses* l. 452). The six insects, two fish and two birds more closely resemble the ‘Parasites and Sycophants’ spoken of by Calliope (l. 472). Bearing *Visions of the Worlds Vanitie* in mind, Calliope offers another example of the overthrow of the great by the small, when recounting her own downfall. Even Calliope, who has the power to deify mortal men (l. 460), has been forced to rend her ‘golden Clarion’ (l. 463), ‘[and...] immortalize no more’ (l. 464), because she can

[...] no more finde worthie to commend  
 For prize of value, or for learned lore:  
 For noble Peeres whom I was wont to raise,  
 Now onely seeke for pleasure, nought for praise. (ll. 465-8)

Calliope, the Muse of epic poetry, is explaining here that she, as one of the great, has ultimately been undone by the small ‘Parasites and Sycophants’ that infest the Elizabethan court.

*The Visions of Bellay*, like the lament of Urania, works off the premise that ‘[sith] onely God surmounts all times decay, / In God alone my confidence do stay’ (ll. 13-14). This premise, that only things built by God can survive the ravages of time, binds the complaint offered by Urania in *The Teares of the Muses* and *The Visions of Bellay*. Urania states that ‘[by] knowledge wee do learne our selves to knowe, / And what to man, and what to God wee owe’ (ll. 503-4). Hence, knowledge allows man to determine what is made by man and what is made by God, thus

enabling him to understand what can be relied upon, being unchangeable, and what cannot. Urania expands on this argument when she states:

And there with humble minde and high insight,  
Th'eternall Makers maiestie wee viewe,  
His love, his truth, his glorie, and his might,  
And mercie more than mortall men can vew.  
O souraigne Lord, ô souraigne happinesse  
To see thee, and thy mercie measurelesse:

Such happinesse haue they, that doo embrace  
The precepts of my heauenlie discipline;  
But shame and sorrow and accursed case  
Have they, that scorne the schoole of arts diuine,  
And banish me, which do professe the skill  
To make men heauenly wise, through humbled will. (ll. 511-22)

Urania is here promising transcendent joy and happiness to those who embrace ‘[the] precepts of [...] heauenlie discipline’ (l. 518), while at the same time promising shame, sorrow and a cursing to those who do not. It is interesting to note the word used for God is *maker*. The use of a capital letter would create associations with deity; however, ‘maker’ was also an appropriate title for a poet at the time. Hence, there is a resonance here with the idea of God as supreme Poet: God as poet decides what will be eternal and what will be mutable. *The Visions of Bellay* is then a study of the mutability of human creations. As such, this series of sonnets refuses to offer transcendence. Although *The Visions of Bellay* does engage with Urania, it is more a study of ‘what to man, [than] what to god wee owe’ (*The Teares of the Muses* ll.

503-4), because Ignorance, which has come to reign at court, '[the] mindes of men borne heauenlie doth debace' (ll. 498).

One of the most commented upon sections of *The Teares of the Muses*, where comment can be found, is in relation to the complaint of Polyhymnia, concerning Queen Elizabeth. It has been noted by McCabe that this praise was 'intended to arouse emulation among her courtiers while obliquely castigating the current lack of courtly patronage' (593). Oram argues that this praise was 'of course a picture of Elizabeth as her poets and learned men would have liked her to be, not as she was, and it attempts by mirroring her ideal self to persuade her to live up to it' (266). Both are convincing observations as to why this break in lament occurs in the speech of Polyhymnia. However, the praise that is heaped on 'Divine *Elisa*', by Polyhymnia, whatever her reasons may be, is severely undermined when *The Visions of Petrarch* are taken into account. The first sonnet in the sequence is about a hind which is being pursued by two dogs, one black and one white. While the dogs are able to wound the hind, she is ultimately unobtainable, as she dies under a rock. The second sonnet in the sequence is of a ship that is caught up in a storm. The ship strikes a rock and is sunk before it can reach the port. Being a translation of Petrarch's *Rime* 323, the hind and the ship are representations of Laura. However, the hind and the ship can also be seen as representations of Elizabeth. In Thomas Wyatt's sonnet 'Whoso list to hunt', the hind is Anne Boleyn, Elizabeth's mother. While in John Dee's *General and Rare Memorials Pertayning to the Perfect Arte of Nauigation Annexed to the Paradoxal Cumpas*, Elizabeth is at the helm of the ship called *EYPQPH*, trying to bring her safely into port.

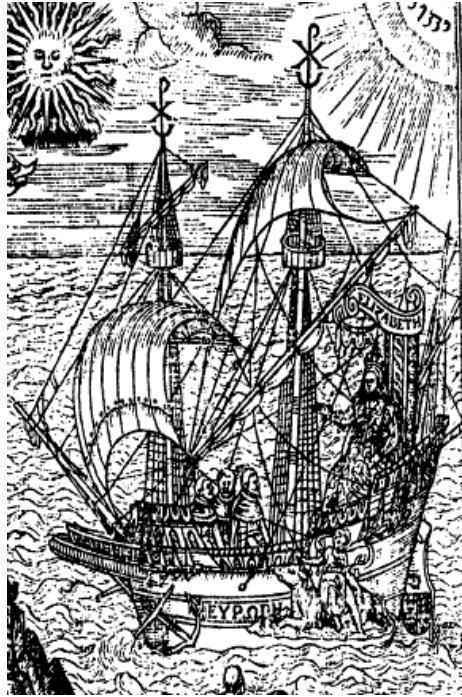


Fig. 6: From the Frontispiece for John Dee's *General and Rare Memorials Pertayning to the Perfect Arte of Nauigation*.

In relation to Renaissance depictions of unrequited love, the idea portrayed by Spenser and Wyatt of the untouchable hind, as well as Spenser's portrayal of the ship that sinks before it reaches the harbour, are almost clichéd. In all of the above instances, the object of the poem is unable or unwilling to engage in sexual relations. In the first sonnet of *The Visions of Petrarch*, the hind hides '[vnter] a Rocke' (l. 11), which the Yale edition states has 'overtones of Christ' (453). While the hind in Wyatt's poem is untouchable, 'for Caesar's [she is]' (l. 13). In both of the above poems, the hind is unobtainable because of an outside male influence. While the ship does not make harbour because of bad weather, combined with inept navigation. As the Virgin Queen, there is extreme anxiety about the lack of an heir and the political instability that could ensue following Elizabeth's death. Elizabeth herself has become the unobtainable object because she is unable to fulfil her kingly duty to provide an heir. While she might be the ideal Laura figure that brings transcendence

rather than sexual gratification, the lack of sexual engagement is potentially detrimental to the continuity of the State.

At first glance, *The Teares of the Muses* may seem ‘unrelievedly doleful’ and ‘repetative’, and may not be the poem that will win a new reader over to Spenser (Rasmussen 139-40). But when *The Teares of the Muses* is read with the rest of *Complaints* it becomes clear that that this poem has a significant impact on the structure of the volume. This is a poem that is ‘far more complicated, and far more interesting, than it initially appears’ (Rasmussen, ‘*Complaints and Daphnaïda* (1591)’ 226). *The Teares of the Muses* reorders the universe, as had been set out by Gafori, in its reordering of the Muses. The new combinations of Muse and Ptolemaic sphere are as follows: Clio and the Moon; Melpomene and Mercury; Thalia and Venus; Euterpe and the Sun; Terpsichore and Mars; Erato and Jupiter; Calliope and Saturn; Urania and the *celum stellatum*; with Polyhymnia occupying the same space as God. Thus, history – of which Clio is the embodiment – is the most mutable of the heavenly disciplines, while rhetoric – of which Polyhymnia is the embodiment – is seen as the most divine. Rhetoric is also seen as the most effective method of instructing the monarch, as it is only in Polyhymnia’s complaint that ‘[diuine] *Elisa*’ is mentioned by name (l. 579). As has been shown above, the reordering of the universe is not limited to the world of *The Teares of the Muses*, but spills forth into all of the poems that make up *Complaints*, offering an overall structure and unity to the work. The narrative trajectory of *The Ruines of Time*, *The Teares of the Muses*, and *Complaints* tracks an overall movement from the Earth to the Heavens – although it could be argued that *The Teares of the Muses* never achieves this desired transcendence, the main complainants having been overcome by Ignorance and his brood. The overcoming of the complainants by Ignorance and his brood becomes

even more evident when the links between *The Teares of the Muses* and the other poems in *Complaints* seem to break down – or more specifically, the other poems in *Complaints* begin to dictate how *The Teares of the Muses* is read rather than the other way around. In *The Defence of Poesy*, Philip Sidney puts forward the argument that ‘the ending end of all earthly learning [is] virtuous action’ (220). Spenser posits a similar sentiment in the *Letter to Raleigh*, where he writes of *The Faerie Queene*: ‘The generall end therefore of all the booke is to fashion a gentleman or noble person in vertuous and gentle discipline’ (ll. 7-8). In a like manner, *The Teares of the Muses* teaches the reader how to read *Complaints* in such a way that it will encourage virtuous action and gentle discipline.

### Chapter III: Patronage in *The Teares of the Muses* and *Virgils Gnat*

Wayne Erickson writes that '[patronage], the engine behind much Elizabethan political and economic power, was dispensed by the Queen or, more frequently, by the Queen's representatives in the aristocracy, the government, and the military' (107). Thus, patronage is seen, during the reign of Elizabeth, to flow outwards from the queen through a specific hierarchy. The most notable – and constantly commented upon – act of patronage during the life of Edmund Spenser was the granting of his pension. On 25 February 1591, Elizabeth awarded Spenser a life pension of £50 a year, which he would receive in four equal instalments on Lady Day (25 March), the Nativity of John the Baptist (24 June), Michaelmas (29 September), and Christmas Day (Hadfield 235). As Hadfield points out, '[we] do not know what the pension was awarded for' (235). He argues that Spenser has either been rewarded for his service to the crown, or it has come as a result of his poetry – specifically *The Faerie Queene* (235-6). Whatever the reason, the granting of this pension is an impressive act of patronage, unparalleled in Spenser's lifetime. Yet, for Spenser it is not enough. He has begun to realise

[...] the dizzying possibilities of promoting himself and his writing through the new medium of print, which in the 1590s held out the possibility of providing a career [...thus], freeing someone of his class from the need for an absolute dependence on patrons. (Hadfield 123-4)

Rather than depending on one wealthy patron, he could cultivate a 'gentle' readership that would purchase his works. As Richard Helgerson observes:

In the 1570s, when Spenser began to write, his fellow English poets were all amateurs. By the 1590s, when Jonson got started, the situation had

changed. The expansion of the literary market [...] had brought into existence a small but active group of professionals, men who depended on writing for a livelihood, and Spenser's own, still uncompleted career was providing an English example of that quintessentially humanist construct, the laureate poet. (*Self-Crowned Laureates* 22-3)

Spenser blazed a trail that would be followed by the likes of Jonson and Drayton, yet he knew first-hand the perils faced when the poet-patron relationship was dysfunctional and/or collapsed. This is one of the key links that binds *The Teares of the Muses* and *Virgils Gnat* together. This chapter will begin by showing the ways in which poet-patron dynamics are interrogated in *The Teares of the Muses* and *Virgils Gnat*. The specific patrons that are discussed are the Althorp Spencers, Leicester, and Elizabeth; this is followed by showing that Spenser – being disenfranchised with the traditional system – also works to offer alternatives to these more traditional poet-patron relationships. It is then argued that the conceit of destruction of bowers is employed to highlight the most extreme consequences of the breakdown in poet-patron relations.

Before I focus specifically on how the theme of patronage is dealt with in *The Teares of the Muses* and *Virgils Gnat*, it is important to acknowledge where this chapter will build upon previous scholarship in this area.<sup>24</sup> Erickson points out that royal patronage most often 'yielded cash, offices and positions, titled and honors, grants and leases of land, patents and monopolies, pensions, and wardships' (107). Continuing this line of thought, he adds: '[Spenser's] initial appointment as the Lord

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<sup>24</sup> Two notable works on patronage that are referenced in this chapter are: *Enabling Engagements: Edmund Spenser and the Poetics of Patronage*, by Judith Owens, and *'Ungainfull Arte': Poetry, Patronage, and Print in the Early Modern Era*, by Richard McCabe. Owens's work engages with all of Spenser's works and how they discuss patronage, while McCabe's work is more general to the period. Both were invaluable to this chapter.

Deputy's secretary was probably facilitated by Leicester or Sir Henry Sidney, [and was] one of the most influential acts of patronage in the history of English literature' (111). It was that advancement in office and position that made possible Spenser's leasing of his land grant at Kilcolman, affording him the financial peace of mind and the space in which he could write the majority of his works. While Erickson does acknowledge the giving of 'offices and positions' and 'grants and leases' as acts of patronage, he does not really elaborate on Spenser's acquisition of lands. Instead, he identifies people that offered monetary assistance and encouragement over the course of Spenser's career. Thomas Herron is more sensitive to the granting of land as an act of patronage: '[whether] or not the queen directly patronized Spenser with lands (as she did later with a large pension), she was an idealized guardian – an Augustus – that Spenser could appeal to' (113). Herron argues that in *Colin Clout Come Home Againe*, Spenser is appealing to Elizabeth to extend her grace to him. In this context, grace has 'implications of equity, or the power of the monarch to administer by royal fiat and overrule common law' (114). For Herron, *Colin Clouts Come Home Againe*, most especially in its Bregog digression, deals with disputes over Spenser's land. This chapter aims to use *The Teares of the Muses* and *Virgils Gnat* to build on the work that has been done by Erickson and Herron by emphasising the concerns that Spenser had over his land in Munster. It will be shown that, for Spenser, the loss of his lands at Kilcolman would have the same consequences as the Muses losing their home, as well as political implication for the plantation of Munster.

### Poet-Patron Dynamics

Spenser's obsession with poet-patron dynamics is nowhere more obvious than in his handling of *The Teares of the Muses* and *Virgils Gnat*, the two poems found in the

second gathering of the *Complaints* volume – running from E<sub>1</sub><sup>r</sup>-G<sub>4</sub><sup>v</sup>. Richard McCabe cautions that ‘dedicatees are not automatically, or even generally, to be regarded as patrons, and a catalogue of dedications, however exhaustive, does not constitute a history of patronage’ (*Ungainfull Arte* 1). Yet, in the case of this part of *Complaints*, it seems as though the intended dedicatee has performed an act of patronage.

The first patron that is addressed in this part of *Complaints* is ‘THE RIGHT HONORABLE the Ladie Strange’; she is addressed in positive terms, and she is tutored in the implicit rules that govern ideal poet-patron relations. ‘Ladie Strange’ is in fact ‘Alice Spencer, [the] daughter of Sir John Spencer of Althorp and wife to Ferdinando Stanley, fifth Earl of Derby’ (McCabe 593).<sup>25</sup> According to the dedicatory note, Spenser has already been in receipt of Alice Spencer’s ‘particular bounties’ (l. 7), suggesting that she has, at some stage, offered him some sort of remuneration for his work. He goes on to say that Alice Spencer has also ‘[acknowledged] some priuate bands of affinitie’ (ll. 8-9), which is probably a reference to her verifying the veracity of Spenser’s claims of kinship. The editors of *The Works of Edmund Spenser: A Variorum Edition* point out that Spenser ‘asserted his kinship with the family of Sir John Spencer of Althorp’ on five different occasions within his works (8. 310), three of which occur in *Complaints* (the other two being *Colin Clouts Come Home Again* and *Prothalamion*). Concerning these claims of kinship, W. H. Welply argues that

[it] is idle to suppose that anyone of Spenser’s eminence as a poet and merit as a man would run the risk of incurring the ridicule which such

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<sup>25</sup> See Louis A. Knafla’s ‘Spencer, Alice, countess of Derby (1559-1637)’ in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

pretensions of affinity, openly announced, must surely bring upon him unless he were confident that they were well founded and generally accepted. (110)

Welply then goes on to offer a possible family tree for the Spencers of Althorp, in which the common ancestor of John Spencer and Edmund Spenser is Henry Spencer of Badby and Everdon who lived in the fifteenth Century. Spenser's efforts to associate himself with the Spencers of Althorp, thus ennobling himself through his association with this *nouveau riche* family, is not all that different to what the Spencers of Althorp were then attempting. According to Hadfield:

[the] family, in an attempt to establish their pedigree and to fit in with aristocratic norms, applied for the rights to bear the arms of the ancient Norman family, the De Spencers, in 1504, but research proved that that ancient family had died out and the application was denied. (21)

Given their own efforts to establish their name as something other than successful farmers, and their failure to do so, it does not seem likely that they would allow Spenser to claim kinship with them without some sort of tangible evidence. Yet, even if they are not related, the fact that Spenser has received material aid from the Althorp Spencers suggests that they did acknowledge their kinship as legitimate.

Spenser accordingly adopts the humility topos in his assertion that he 'devised this last slender meanes, both to intimate my humble affection to your Ladiship and also to make the same uniuersallie knowne to the world' (ll. 10-12). The printing process takes what would usually be a private gesture, associated with the circulation of private manuscripts, into the public sphere. This is not the first time that Spenser has placed what seems to be a private note into the public sphere.

In 1580, he published *Three Proper and Wittie, Familiar Letters: Lately Passed Between Two Universitie Men: Touching the Earthquake in Aprill Last, and our English Reformed Versifying*. This publication consists of ‘familiar’ – and implicitly private – letters passed between Gabriel Harvey and Spenser. Among other things, these letters work to identify Spenser as the *Immeritô* of *The Shepheardes Calender*; thus they act as promotional texts. By making his affections for Alice Spencer ‘uniuersallie knowen to the world’, Spenser continues the construction of an imagined readership that he begins earlier in *Complaints*. As already highlighted in the First Chapter, the construction of an imagined readership begins with the preface (‘The Printer to the Gentle Reader’), where it is emphasised that the complaints found in this volume are ‘all dedicated to Ladies’ (l. 17).

When Spenser was writing *Complaints*, the genre of complaint was considered to be feminine. John Kerrigan notes that while being largely written by men, ‘complaint fosters impersonations of the feminine’ (20). Thus, ‘[feminine] complaints might be dedicated to woman’, as we see here with *Complaints*, ‘or be recommended to their attention by authors and translators’, but still, as a genre, they maintained a ‘broadly male readership’ (Kerrigan 17). Spenser, being aware of these generic expectations, no doubt saw the possibilities of using the genre of complaint to appropriately cultivate prospective female patrons. As has already been argued in the Introduction, the frontispiece of the volume had already been used on works associated with the Pembroke circle. The women that made up this alliance were ‘a crucial part of what has been called the “metaphorics” of a “discontented nobility”, and like many metaphors, they found their logical home in books’ (Crawford 11). By the 1570s, ‘the Sidney’s and their allies controlled over two-thirds of the property in England’ (Crawford 16). When Spenser praises the Countess of Pembroke in the

dedicatory note that precedes *The Ruines of Time*, he can be seen to be appealing both for patronage and to join her political faction. Spenser expands outwards from the Pembroke circle when he continues the construction of his imagined readership in the dedicatory notes that are addressed to the three Spencer sisters from Althorp: Alice, Anne, and Elizabeth. Spenser goes on, in his address to Alice Spencer, to offer his vision of how the ideal poet-patron relationship should work when he states: ‘that by honouring you they might know me, and by knowing me they might honor you’ (ll. 12-13). The poems that follow the dedicatory note within this section of *Complaints* are specifically designed to advertise to the world the affection that the poet has for his patron. As the poet gains notoriety through his work, he is also gaining notoriety for his patron; but this should also work the other way: the notoriety of the patron should bring notoriety to the poet. The ideal poet-patron relationship is reciprocal; they both function to promote the other. Yet, this section, containing *The Teares of the Muses* and *Virgils Gnat* is far more interested in emphasising the ways in which this relationship breaks down.

The next poet-patron relationship that is explored is that of Spenser and Elizabeth I, through the persons of Jove, Apollo and Venus. Both *The Teares of the Muses* and *Virgils Gnat* use these powerful figures to interrogate the hierarchical structures that are associated with courtly patronage and what happens when those structures stop functioning. One of the ways in which hierarchical structures are challenged is illustrated in Spenser’s revisionary handling of the parentage of the Muses. An account of the parentage of the Muses should begin with Jove. Jacqueline T. Miller says that Jove is ‘also called Jupiter though never by Spenser’ (412). Boccaccio and Conti both agree that Jupiter/Jove raped Latona, who then gave birth to Apollo and Diana (*Genealogy of the Pagan Gods* 4.20; *Mythologiae* 4.10).

However, this consensus disintegrates as Conti states that it is Apollo that is the father of the Muses, while more classical writers, such as Hesiod and Cicero, say that Jove is their father. Spenser's works mirror the inconsistency that is present in his sources. In *The Ruines of Time* and 'June' in *The Shepheardes Calender* the Muses are said to be the daughters of Jove, while in *The Teares of the Muses*, *Virgils Gnat*, and 'Aprill' in *The Shepheardes Calender* they are the daughters of Apollo. At first glance it may seem as though Spenser conflates Jove and Apollo throughout his works, but this would be to oversimplify what he is doing. In *The Teares of the Muses*, Clio adopts a certain level of ambiguity in addressing both Jove and Apollo, playing on this inconsistency. Her complaint begins:

Heare thou great Father of the Gods on hie  
 That most art dreaded for thy thunder darts:  
 And thou Syre that raignst in *Castalie*  
 And mount *Parnasse*, the God of goodly Arts:  
 Heare and behold the miserable state  
 Of vs thy daughters, dolefull desolate. (ll. 55-60)

Clio is in fact calling on two personages. The 'Father of the Gods' and the 'Syre' that are referred to are two distinct individuals. Miller points out that Jove 'is often shown wielding a thunderbolt' (412), linking to the above reference in which he is 'dreaded for [his] thunder darts'. As such, the 'Father of the Gods' is Jove, and the 'Syre that raignst in *Castalie* / And mount *Parnasse*' is Apollo. The final line of the stanza, referring to 'vs thy daughters' seems problematic, as this could be addressing both Jove and Apollo. Yet this stanza exemplifies the way in which the ideal poet-patron dynamic should work. The complaint is addressed to Jove, but it is to be passed on to him through Apollo. As such, Apollo acts as mediator for the Muses in

addressing the wrongs that have been brought about by Jove's misrule. Clio implicates Jove in the destruction of the Muses' pleasant bower by stating that he is the one that placed '[the] sonnes of darknes and of ignoraunce' in positions of power (l. 67). Terpsichore adds that the 'accursed brood' of Ignorance now occupy the Muses' 'royall thrones' (ll. 315, 313). This 'accursed brood' has been 'by [Ignorance] begotten of fowle infamy' (ll. 315, 316), and they include 'Blind Error, scornful Follie, and base Spight' (l. 317). She goes on to say that '[the] schools they fill with fond newfanglenesse, / And sway at Court with pride and rashnes rude' (ll. 326-7). For both Clio and Terpsichore, Jove is at fault insofar as he has placed Ignorance and his brood in positions of power. Destruction is not wrought by Jove directly, but rather by those that he has carelessly appointed to positions of power within the court. Erato offers a warning about the possible consequences of letting Ignorance and his brood continue to rule at court:

Faire *Cytheree* the Mother of delight,  
 And Queene of beautie, now thou maist go pack;  
 For lo thy Kingdome is defaced quight,  
 Thy scepter rent, and power put to wrack (ll. 397-400)

In this instance, Venus' kingdom has already been 'defaced quight' by '[the] base-borne brood of blindness' (l. 392). Yet, Polyhymnia pauses within her complaint to praise 'Diuine *Elisa*' as the 'most peereles Poëtesse' (ll. 579, 577). This act of praise, in which the queen is specifically named, seems at first to soften the criticism of Jove and Venus, who can both be seen as symbols of Elizabeth. According to Clio, Terpsichore and Erato, Jove and Venus can be seen as negative examples, such as those found of monarchs within *The Mirror for Magistrates*, and, in the words of Polyhymnia, Spenser can be seen as instructing Elizabeth through praise.

Yet Spenser's representation of Elizabeth as the 'most peerless Poëtesse' is not quite as full of praise as it first seems. In relation to Polyhymnia's praise of Elizabeth, William Oram observes that this is an idealisation of the monarch; this is how poets and learned men want her to be rather than reality (266). This is done to encourage her to live up to the praise that is given. Just as Mercury wakes 'the sleeping Lion in *Mother Hubberds Tale*, Spenser attempts through the Muse of rhetoric to remind Elizabeth of her true nature' (Oram 266). The act of mirroring Elizabeth's ideal self, in an attempt to persuade her to live up to it, is not original to *Complaints* – it is most obviously seen in the philosophical discussions that centre on Chastity in *The Faerie Queene*. The proem to Book II reads:

And thou, O fayrest Princesse vnder sky,  
In this fayre mirrhour maist behold thy face  
And thine owne realms in lond of Faery,  
And in this antique ymage thy great auncestry. (II. Proem. 5)

Hamilton explains that "“this fayre mirrhour” is the poem itself, which does more than reflect but reveals by its transparency' (158n). Elizabeth is here being invited to see in the poem reflections of herself, her realm and her ancestry. However, these reflections, as Hamilton observes, also reveal ways in which she can improve. As with other mirror texts from the period, this text is designed to instruct the queen.<sup>26</sup> Both the 'Letter to Raleigh' and the proem to Book III explain to Elizabeth that she can view her reflection in Gloriana and Belphebe. McCabe argues that Mercilla and

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<sup>26</sup> See Debora Shuger's 'The "I" of the Beholder', in *Renaissance Culture and the Everyday*, for a more extensive discussion about how mirrors are used, and approached, in early modern literature. In her chapter, she argues: 'What Renaissance persons *do* see in the mirror are [...] saints, skulls, friends, offspring, spouses, magistrates, Christ. The mirror reflects these figures because they are images of oneself; one encounters one's own likeness only in the mirror of the other. Renaissance texts and emblems consistently describe mirroring in these terms, which suggests that early modern selfhood was not experienced reflexively but, as it were, relationally' (37).

Lucifera are also reflections of Elizabeth (*Spenser's Monstrous Regiment* 16-7).<sup>27</sup>

Added to these, Britomart, the hero of Book III that relates to Chastity, is also a reflection of the queen.

There are two episodes in particular that allude to Elizabeth's virginity as being inappropriate to her role as queen, and in so doing attempt to instruct her in 'vertuous and gentle discipline' ('Letter to Raleigh l. 8). In the first episode

Merlin bewrayes to Britomart,  
The state of Arthegall.  
And shews the famous Progeny  
Which from them springen shall. (III. iii. Argument)

The success of the vision which Merlin reveals to Britomart is predicated upon the fact that Britomart and Artegall will procreate. Hence, the form of chastity which Britomart is to aspire to here in Book III is that of married love, as opposed to virginity. Yet the vision that Britomart is given of her progeny all comes crashing down when it gets to Elizabeth, that 'royall Virgin'. The argument could be made that the vision ends here because it has reached the time period in which *The Faerie Queene* was written. However, an equally valid argument can be made that the line ends during the time in which 'a royall Virgin [shall] raine' (III. iii. 49). The second episode that emphasises the threat that Elizabeth's virginity poses to her empire is the description of Belphœbe. The passage in Book III that praises Belphœbe's virginity ends with this stanza:

To youre faire selues a faire ensample frame,

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<sup>27</sup> In *Spenser's Monstrous Regiment*, McCabe writes: 'Had Elizabeth sat for one of her later portraits the disparity between image and reality would have been intolerable. Yet this is precisely what happens in *The Faerie Queene* where the 'image' of Gloriana is repeatedly juxtaposed with suspiciously familiar, if officially malign avatars. Lucifera [...] is a case in point' (16).

Of this faire virgin, this Belphebe fayre,  
To whom in perfect loue, and spotlesse fame  
Of chastity, none liuing may compayre:  
Ne poysonous Enuy iustly can empayre  
The prayse of her fresh flowering Maydenhead;  
For thy she standeth on the highest stayre  
Of th'honorable stage of womanhead,  
That Ladies all may follow her ensample dead. (III. v. 54)

Belphebe is here held up as an example to be emulated, being a 'faire virgin'. As a virgin, it is stated that 'in perfect loue, and spotlesse fame / Of chastity, none liuing may compayre'. Using Belphebe as a reflection of Elizabeth, this passage seems to be praising Elizabeth's virginity as well as her perfect chastity. One sense of '[following] her ensample dead', can then be to follow it exactly. But there is another more significant sense in which it can be applied. If all women were to follow the example of Elizabeth and choose not to procreate, it would mean that death would be the final outcome for the human race. Given that Britomart is the hero of Book III, as well as the fact that she will have to engage in the procreative act for her vision to become a reality, Elizabeth does not seem to be living up to the ideal of chastity set forth. Although Elizabeth is chaste, she is not achieving the right kind of chastity. Within the context of Polyhymnia's complaint, Elizabeth is 'a peereles Poëtesse', but she is negligent in her duties as a patron because of those that she has raised to positions of power within the court.

*The Teares of the Muses* was published twelve years after John Stubbes' *Descouerie of a Gaping Gulf*.<sup>28</sup> In the same year that Stubbes' work was published, Spenser addressed these anxieties – albeit in a far subtler way – in *The Shepheardes Calender*. As McCabe writes of 'Aprill': '[read] in historical context the lay may be seen to express as much anxiety as admiration. It reminds the Queen of the importance of her public image at a time when her proposed marriage to an "alien" was threatening to alienate the people from the crown' (685). By the time *The Teares of the Muses* is published, the anxiety over succession is still there, but its focus has changed. The anxiety that is vocalised within *The Teares of the Muses* is not over whether or not Elizabeth will marry a Frenchman, but rather what will happen when she dies – having not provided an heir. When Stubbes' *A Gaping Gulf* and Spenser's *The Shepheardes Calender* are published in 1579, Elizabeth is 46 years old. There is still some hope that she can provide an heir. However, when *Complaints* is published in 1591, she is 58, and an heir is not looking very likely at all; thus the change in emphasis.

The dedicatory sonnet that introduces *Virgils Gnat* continues the examination into the power dynamics that exist between poet and patron, specifically between Leicester and Spenser. The note that precedes the dedicatory sonnet reads: '*Virgils Gnat*. / Long since dedicated / To the most noble and excellent Lord, / The Earle of Leicester, late / deceased.' From this note it seems that Spenser intends for his translation of the pseudo-Virgilian *Culex* to be dedicated to Leicester. J. P. Collier says of this,

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<sup>28</sup> The full title of Stubbes' work is *The Descouerie of a Gaping Gulf vvhherinto England is like to be svvalloved by another French marriage, if the Lord forbid not the banes, by letting her Maiestie see the sin and punishment thereof*.

[the] expression in the heading of the introductory sonnet, that it had been “long since dedicated” to Lord Leicester, is not, we think, to be understood to refer to any formal printed edition, but only to mean that it had been addressed in manuscript to the Earl, in order to qualify his anger, if it failed to move his displeasure. (1. lxxxix)

Following this line of thought, *Virgils Gnat* would have to be seen as part of Spenser’s juvenilia, being originally circulated in manuscript form. Thus, the work is intended for private use, but has been found and appended to the *Complaints* volume by Ponsonby. Bruce Danner offers a different perspective when he argues that

[the] poem’s retrospective self-presentation [...] stands as an antithesis to the actual conditions of its production: not an early, but a late work, not Virgilian, but of unknown authorship, written not with intimate, but with public motives. (216)

Danner’s view is that ‘*Virgils Gnat* is not a product of Spenser’s early career, but of the *Complaints* anthology’ (215). Given the fact that there are no extant manuscript copies of *Virgils Gnat* that predate *Complaints* and that Spenser is in the habit of retrospective fiction making, this makes for a compelling argument. Whether or not Spenser dedicated *Virgils Gnat* to Leicester in a manuscript copy before his death in 1588 is not as relevant as the fact that he has left this note in even after the poem has been rededicated to Alice Spencer. By so doing, Spenser successfully re-contextualises both the sonnet that follows and his translation, or adaptation, of the *Culex*.

In the sonnet that follows the note, the narrative (whether fictional or not) deals with a poet that has angered his patron and is attempting to gain forgiveness through gift-giving. The opening lines of the sonnet read:

Wrong'd, yet not daring to expresse my paine,  
To you (great Lord) the causer of my care,  
In clowdie teares my case I thus complaine  
Vnto your selfe, that onely priuie are (ll. 1-4).

Hadfield offers two possible readings for these lines. The first is that 'there was a real falling-out between the poet and the earl, and [...] their rift was Leicester's fault' (279); the second, that 'it is also possible that the secret advertised here is not a real one and that the lines, yet again, mean the opposite of what they ostensibly state' (279). Both of these readings are based on the premise that the 'great Lord' and the 'your selfe' quoted above are referring to Leicester. However, Leicester being both is quite problematic. The language that is used is deliberately obscure. As mentioned above, in relation to the 'great Father of the Gods' and the 'Syre' addressed in Clio's complaint (ll. 55, 57), the 'great Lord' and the 'your selfe' that are spoken of can be seen as two different people. Especially given he is unwilling to 'express [his] paine' to the 'great Lord', while Leicester is 'priuie' to the 'clowdie teares' that have been shed while he has issued his complaint. It is no coincidence that 'great Lord' and the reference to Augustus have been placed in parentheses. By placing both in parentheses, Spenser highlights the possibility that the 'great Lord' being referred to is comparable to Augustus in power, and is a reference to Elizabeth. Thus, in the same way that Clio turns to Apollo to act as a mediator between her and Jove, Spenser has turned to Leicester to be a mediator between him and Elizabeth. However, this is yet another idealisation of the poet-patron dynamic. The death of

the patron in this case has caused a breakdown in this dynamic, and has left the poet without a voice to plead his cause. By drawing attention to the ‘riddle rare’ (l. 8), the sonnet works to advise the reader that there is a more political reading that can be applied to the following poem, where the aggrieved is not so much a Virgilian laureate as an ‘Ovidian outcast’ (McCabe 599). The outcast status of the poet comes as a result of the death of the patron. The juxtaposition of the dedicatory note, addressed to Alice Spencer, and the dedicatory sonnet, addressed to Leicester, works to inform the reader that, ideally, the patron and the poet will both work for the other’s social advancement; but when that relationship breaks down, the poet becomes a social outcast, moving into a state of exile. Although the dedicatory note to Alice Spencer portrays the ideal poet-patron relationship, the stories contained in the poems of this section never reach this ideal.

The poet’s relationship with Elizabeth and Leicester is interrogated further through the use of ‘impes’ as a metaphor for the politically vulnerable poet or scholar. Clio evokes the idea to illustrate the dynamics at work within Elizabeth’s court (l. 75):

The sectaries of my celestiall skill,  
That wont to be the worlds chiefe ornament,  
And learned Impes that wont to shoote vp still,  
And grow to hight of kingdomes gouernment  
They vnderkeep, and with their spredde armes  
Doo beat their buds, that perish through their harmes. (ll. 73-8)

According to the OED, an ‘impe’ is ‘a young shoot of a plant or tree’, or a ‘graft’. As such, this metaphor describes one that is in a position of power hindering the growth,

and even taking the life, of one that is, while in its infancy, in its most vulnerable state. In the above excerpt, the 'Impe' is described as 'learned' and is associated with the 'sectaries', or disciples, of Clio. Clio herself fills the role of advocate, as it is she that has approached Jove, the 'great Father of the Gods' and monarch of heaven (l. 55), through Apollo (l. 57), to plead the cause of the 'Impes'. The metaphor of the 'learned impes' is taken up again in *The Faerie Queene* IV. xi. 26. In this canto, it is clear that the 'learned impes, that shoote abroad, / And with their braunches spred all Britany' (IV. xi. 26. 5-6), originate in 'the double nursery' of Oxford and Cambridge (IV. xi. 26. 8-9). This being the case, the 'learned impes' within these passages are a specific reference to the scholars, or wits, that have attended Oxford and Cambridge universities and are now looking for opportunities for social advancement. Within the metaphor, Jove can be seen as the Queen and the 'sonnes of darknes and of ignoraunce' as those that are in positions of power at court that are insuring that the 'Impes' cannot flourish.

This metaphor of the small being oppressed by the great is turned on its head, later on in *Complaints*, within *Visions of the Worlds Vanitie*. In this sonnet sequence, found in the final quire of the volume, Spenser offers examples of the great being overcome by the small. Hence, within the overall movement of *Complaints* there is a shift, where the small are oppressed by the great in the opening poems, and the great are oppressed by the small towards the end. The reason that the small and the weak are able to get to a point where they overcome the great and the strong is because a suitable nursery is found for them, in which their rebellion can be nurtured. In Book V of *The Faerie Queene*, Spenser presents 'Belge', or the Low Countries, 'with her sonnes prostrated low / Before [Arthur's] feete' (V.xi.16). Belge addresses Arthur thus:

[...] O most redoubted Knight,  
The which hast me, of all most wretched wight,  
That earst was dead, restor'd to life againe,  
And these weake impes replanted by thy might [...] (V.xi.16.4-7)

A. C. Hamilton notes that '[in] the political allegory, [Belge] offers Leicester sovereignty of the Low Countries, which Elizabeth had refused in 1584, and was outraged when he accepted in 1586' (586). In this instance, the 'weake impes' have been 'replanted' in a place that is far away from the great that are found at court. As such, they have been able to flourish unchecked under an alternative source of patronage: Leicester. This passage suggests that for the sectaries of Clio's divine skill to flourish, they need to be replanted away from the court. For at least one of Spenser's contemporaries, Thomas Tresham, Ireland was seen as a suitable incubator for these tender 'impes'. In Tresham's mind, writing shortly after the publication of *Complaints*, Spenser has fled to Ireland to escape the repercussions that must surely follow the publication of *Mother Hubberds Tale* (Peterson 8).

According to the allegories of both *The Teares of the Muses* and *Virgils Gnat*, Elizabeth is found not only to be negligent in her role as patron, but as facilitating the destruction of her poets. Within *The Teares of the Muses*, while being portrayed as Jove, she is responsible for the destruction of the Muses' bower because she has raised Ignorance and his brood to positions of power and then let them run riot. Within *Virgils Gnat*, in the guise of shepherd, she has let sleep oppress her, and then killed her faithful servant when he has come to warn her of danger. The implicit contract that binds poet to patron – 'that by honouring you they might know me, and by knowing me they might honor you' (ll. 12-3) – has been broken by the queen; it is

because of this breakdown in the poet-patron dynamic that Spenser works to offer alternatives to monarchical or courtly patronage.

### Alternative Sources of Patronage

Throughout *Complaints*, Spenser works to offer alternatives to courtly patronage.

‘Spenser’s perennial “dislike and distrust of the court and courtly life”, as noted by C. S. Lewis long ago, suggest a less than enthusiastic desire on Spenser’s part to take up life at court’ (Erickson 109). Spenser is not a court poet; *Complaints* voices a general scepticism, and even contempt, for court. As Owens observes:

Spenser’s *Complaints* does represent an alignment with noble houses as an important counteraction to the gravitational pull of the court; does extol as patrons figures who preserve detachment from the court; and does censure Leicester for excessive attachment to court and Queen. (36)

This alignment with noble houses is nowhere more evident than with the dedicatory notes which precede each of the four sections. The grouping together of these dedicatory notes within the volume creates a sense of sociability between the texts.

Hadfield states: ‘Spenser, as we know from the *Letters*, claimed to be a member of a group called the Aeropagus’ (106). According to Spenser, this was a tightly knit group of poets that advocated the ‘generall surceasing and silence of bald Rhymers’, while working to ‘prescribe certaine Lawes and rules of Quantities of English sillables, for English Verse’ (*Works* 635). Hadfield states that ‘[the] group was probably a casual symposium of individuals that Spenser made seem more formal, perhaps even leading to its dissolution by making it public in the *Letters*’ (108).

Whatever the reality of the group, the picture that Spenser paints is one of a group that is focused on literary reform, through experimentation with metre, and was

associated with the Leicester circle. In the same letter to Harvey, Spenser advertises his connections with Sidney and Dyer, who are also associated with this group. By advertising the Aeropagus, Spenser is offering an alternative to the traditional methods of procuring patronage. In this instance, there is patronage to be gained through membership in a secret literary society. Owens suggests that the guild structure in London offered another alternative power base to that of the court. She argues that '[for] many Londoners, guild courts, rather than the royal court, regulated the pressing matters of day-to-day life' (78). Thus, the city guild structure can be seen as another source of income for the poet, and one that the Aeropagus could be modelled after.

These social groupings are something that Spenser attempts to represent, and in some ways recreate – even if only in a fictional way – within the texts of *Colin Clouts Come Home Againe* and *The Shepheardes Calender*. In *Colin Clouts Come Home Againe*, when Colin returns to Ireland Hobbinol refers to 'the shepherds nation' as the group of shepherds that suffered a great loss when Colin left them (ll. 16-7). This sense of community is further enhanced when the other works bound with the 1595 edition of *Colin Clouts Come Home Againe* are considered. The poems that are found in this volume, directly following *Colin Clouts Come Home Againe* are: *Astrophel. A Pastoral Elegie Upon the Death of the Most Noble and Valorous Knight, Sir Philip Sidney*; *The Mourning Muse of Thestylis*; *A Pastorall Aeglogue Upon the Death of Sir Philip Sidney Knight*; *An Elegie, or Friends Passion, for his Astrophill*; *An Epitaph Upon the Right Honourable Sir Philip Sidney Knight: Lord Gouvernor of Flushing*; and *Another of the Same*.

The editorial history of these poems is all included in *Spenser: Poetical Works* (edited by Smith and De Selincourt) but only *Colin Clouts Come Home*

*Againe* and *Astrophel* have been left in *The Shorter Poems* (edited by McCabe) – all the others have been omitted. It seems as though they will all be included in the forthcoming *Oxford Works of Edmund Spenser*, but their omission from McCabe's edition sufficiently illustrates the problems that are encountered when trying to attribute some of these works to Spenser. In any event, whether these are authored by Spenser, or by others that wanted to suitably lament the passing of Sidney, there is very much a sense in this volume of a community of writers that share their work within their creative circle and work together to have it published. The presentation of such a community in print can be seen as the end product of all previous portrayals of a writerly community: the fictional shepherd nation that is referred to in *Colin Clouts Come Home Againe*, the nation of shepherds presented as the speakers in *The Shepheardes Calender*, and the previously advertised *Aeropagus*.

Spenser's poetics from as early on as *The Shepheardes Calender* see him distancing himself from centres of power. His note 'To His Booke', which imitates a famous passage from Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*, begins:

Goe little booke: thy selfe present,  
As a child whose parent is vnkent:  
To him that is the president  
Of nobelesse and of cheualree (ll. 1-4)

Spenser's portrayal of himself as an exile is further enhanced by the 'Januarye' woodcut.<sup>29</sup> In this woodcut, Spenser's alter ego, Colin Clout, is shown to be standing well outside the confines of the city wall, tending his sheep. Aside from the sheep, there are no other living things in this place. It is a barren waste, with bare trees and

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<sup>29</sup> Spenser and Chaucer both look back here to Ovid, who develops this motif of exile in his *Tristia* while he was in exile.

frozen ground. The landscape depicted in the woodcut is reminiscent of the winter in Tomis that Ovid describes in his *Tristia*:

at cum tristis heims squalentia protulit ora,  
terraque marmoreo est candida facta gelu,  
nec patitur Boreas et nix habitare sub Arcto,  
tum patet has gentes axe tremente premi.<sup>30</sup> (III. x. 9-12)

These Ovidian images are employed to emphasise Spenser's outsider status. Owens argues that distancing himself from the centre 'permits him to establish moral autonomy' (44). By instructing his book to 'Goe' and 'thy selfe present', Spenser is positioning himself on the periphery, and asserting that he is 'unkent' – or unknown – by those that occupy the centre. Spenser builds on this idea of being separated from the centre after his move to Ireland. As E. K. affirms in the gloss to 'Januarye' in *The Shepheardes Calender*, Colin Clout is the name '[under] which [...] this Poete secretly shadoweth himself, as sometime Virgil vnder the name of Tityrus' ([1]). Colin Clout is one of the personas used by Spenser within his poetry. It is useful to track the progress of Colin through *The Shepheardes Calender* and *Colin Clouts Come Home Again* to begin to grasp Spenser's portrayal of himself as an exile. In the words of Hadfield:

What the *Calender* does suggest is that leaving the Cambridge area at some point in the later 1570s was a significant wrench for Spenser, one he was eager to highlight in the January and June eclogues, casting himself as the exiled, dispossessed, and unhappy shepherd, rejected in

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<sup>30</sup> 'But when grim winter has thrust forth his squalid face, and the earth is marble-white with frost, and Boreas and the snow prohibit dwelling beneath the Bear, then 'tis clear that these tribes are hard pressed by the shivering pole' (Trans. A. L. Wheeler 137).

love and, like Virgil's Meliboeus, afraid that he will end up cut off from all the world. (86)

While there is an element of 'deliberate and self-parodic exaggeration in these inflated claims' (Hadfield 86), it is important to note that within *The Shepheardes Calender* it is Colin's movement from the North (possibly Cambridge) to the 'Southparts' around Kent that provokes him into casting himself as an exile ([21]). The movement here is simply a movement southward – and not very far at that – within England; this movement southward occurred at some stage prior to the publication of *The Shepheardes Calender* in 1579.

However, Spenser's idea of what it means to be an exile has evolved by the time *Colin Clouts Come Home Again* is published in 1595. Within *Colin Clouts Come Home Again*, Colin's exile is associated with him residing in Ireland. The second stanza of *Colin Clouts Come Home Again* opens with this exclamation from Hobbinol: 'Colin my lief, my life, how great a losse / Had all the shepheards nation by thy lacke?' (ll. 16-7). From this quotation, three things are clear: there is a 'shepherd nation' – possibly a society of poets/wits – of which Colin is a part, they are located in Ireland, and Colin has been away from them but has now returned. Hobbinol persuades Colin to rehearse to the 'shepherd nation' the tale of the voyage that he has undertaken which he then proceeds to do.

Within *The Shepheardes Calender*, E. K. identifies Hobbinol as Spenser's 'especiall good freend [...] Mayster Gabriel Haruey' ('September' [176]). 'There is no evidence that Harvey ever visited Ireland' (651), according to McCabe, yet he is a key member of the shepherd nation in this text. Colin begins by explaining how he came to make the voyage: while he sat at the 'foote of *Mole*' ('the range of

Ballyhoura and Galtee Mountains to the north of Kilcolman' (McCabe 651)) he happened to meet '[the] shepherd of the Ocean' (Raleigh), and they fell into singing and piping about the mythology of the place in which they then both found themselves. The shepherd of the Ocean believes that Colin had banished himself by moving to Ireland, '[into] that waste, where I was quite forgot' (ll. 182-3). To reside in the 'waste' of Ireland, away from the central power of the court was to be 'quite forgot' by those in positions of power. As such, the shepherd of the Ocean convinces Colin to undertake a voyage to England, to visit 'a great shepheardesse, that *Cynthia* hight' (l. 234). McCabe uses this journey to illustrate the difference between Colin and Spenser: '[Colin's] voyage abroad is Spenser's homecoming, his homecoming is Spenser's exile' (649). This being said, 'Colin's return "home" is [...] grimly ironic: the harsh and violent environment of Ireland is preferable to the "guileful" (l. 699), "ydle" (l. 704), "lewd" and "licentious" (l. 787) atmosphere of the court' (McCabe 649). When considering Colin's movements, the main difference between *The Shepheardes Calender* and *Colin Clouts Come Home Again* is the scale of his exile: in *The Shepheardes Calender* (in 1579) movement southwards within England is sufficient to be termed an exile, while in *Colin Clouts Come Home Again* (between 1591-5) it is Ireland that acts as the site of his self-banishment.

Hadfield takes the stance that '[we] will probably never know whether [Spenser's move to Ireland in 1580] was a great opportunity for a newly married poet in need of gainful employment or an effective banishment as a result of offending too many people in his early work, most significantly Leicester rather than the usual suspect, Burghley' (154-5). *The Teares of the Muses* and *Virgils Gnat* suggest that it is more likely the latter. Bearing the 'impe' metaphor in mind, *The Teares of the Muses* seems to support the idea that when Spenser moved to Ireland

he could be seen as one of those ‘impes’. Within the fiction of the poem, the relationships that he had with patrons had broken down because of the inability of these patrons to act as an advocate between him and some higher power. *Virgils Gnat* implicates Leicester as one of these patrons that failed as an advocate. Yet, the general argument that is shared by both poems in this part of *Complaints* is that it is Elizabeth that has failed in her duties as a patron. These failures have resulted in Spenser exploring alternatives to these traditional patronage structures, and found him in need of a suitable nursery in which he can be replanted.

### Invasion of Bowers

It is the breakdown of poet-patron relations that is responsible for the most prominent narrative event that occurs in *The Teares of the Muses*: the destruction of the Muses’ bower.<sup>31</sup> When *Complaints* was published, Spenser was in a precarious position as a colonial planter in war-torn Munster, and his castle at Kilcolman occupied a key strategic position. Andrew Hadfield identifies the boundaries of Spenser’s land as the rivers Awbeg and Castlepook and the Ballyhoura Hills, and further cites a letter from John Perrot to the Privy Council, dated 25 October 1584, in which Kilcolman is listed ‘as one of the castles that are to be fortified, [because of] its strategic importance above the rich, fertile Blackwater Valley [being] vital to guard the route between the Boggeragh and Nagle Mountains down to Cork’ (198). Spenser’s estate had been part of the lands forfeited by the Earl of Desmond; it was ‘part of the lands confiscated by the crown after the Munster Rebellion, but was always claimed by the Roches as their own’ (Hadfield 197). Spenser is aware of the strategic significance his lands play in the broader plantation of Munster; in 1597 he

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<sup>31</sup> For more on ‘bowers’ see Terry Comito’s ‘Bowers’ in *The Spenser Encyclopedia*. For more on ‘the ubiquity of the garden in Renaissance culture, whether as a metaphor, symbol or real space, as a site of contemplation, [or an] agricultural production or cultural inspiration’ (Samson 1), see *Locus Amoenus: Gardens and Horticulture in the Renaissance*, edited by Alexander Samson.

consolidates his power in the Blackwater valley through the purchase of a 395-acre property at Renny. The purchase of this land further encroached on the ancestral land of the Roaches. Given Spenser's sensitivity to land claims, and his desire to further solidify his own land claims, one way to read this section is as a warning about the destruction that could come if Spenser's patrons cease to protect his land grant. Euterpe is very strategic in the way in which she links the destruction of the Muses' bower to the 'Impe' metaphor that has already been employed by Clio:

For far more bitter storme than winters stowre  
The beautie of the world hath lately wasted,  
And those fresh buds, which wont so fair to flower,  
Hath marred quite, and all their blossoms blasted;  
And those yong plants, which want with fruit t'abound,  
Now without fruite or leaues are to be found. (ll. 247-52)

The 'fresh buds' and 'yong plants' that have been 'blasted' and stripped of their leaves in this passage are reminiscent of the way in which Ignorance and his brood have 'beat [the] buds' of the 'Impes' and made them 'perish through their harms' (ll. 75-8). Unlike Clio, Euterpe is not lamenting the dysfunctional nature of courtly patronage; rather, she is lamenting the destruction of the Muses' bower by Ignorance and his followers, which is said to include 'a ragged rout / Of *Faunes* and *Satyres*' (ll. 267-8), whom, it may be remembered have been placed there by Jove.

When relating the destruction of the Muses' bower, Euterpe focuses on three specific atrocities: the fouling of the 'sacred springs of horsefoot *Helicon*' and the 'streames of pure *Castalion*' (ll. 271, 273), the cutting down of their 'pleasant groues' (l. 277), and replacing the shepherds that frequented these groves with

‘Goblins and Shriekowles’ (l. 283). In relation to the first, McCabe points out that Spenser ‘[mistakes] Helicon for Hippocrene’ (596); he refers to Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* 5. 250-68 to show that the hoof of Pegasus ‘struck Mount Helicon thereby producing the spring Hippocrene frequented by the Muses (589). The editors of the Yale *Shorter Poems* gloss the reference to ‘the silver Springs of *Helicone*’ as ‘the well of Hippocrene on Mount Helicon’ (269). By so doing, they acknowledge that the poet is placing emphasis on the impact Pegasus made on the mountain itself. E. K.’s gloss for ‘Helicon’ in *The Shepheardes Calender* (‘Aprill’) shows that Spenser did have a greater understanding of both the watery Helicon and Mount Helicon:

Helicon) is both the name of a fountaine at the foote of Parnassus, and also of a mountain in Bæotia, out of which floweth the famous Spring Castalius, dedicated to the Muses (‘April’ [42])

It is clear from this gloss that Helicon can refer to both a ‘fountaine’ and a mountain, and that both the fountain and the mountain occupy very different locales. Yet, within this section of *Complaints* there seems to be a conflation of Mount Parnassus and Mount Helicon, as is shown in Clio’s complaint and in *Virgils Gnat*. Clio links ‘mount *Parnasse*’ and ‘*Castalie*’ when she mentions both as the abode of Apollo (ll. 57, 58). This link is continued in *Virgils Gnat*, when the narrator states:

Or whereas mount *Parnasse*, the Muses brood,  
Doth his broad forehead like two hornes diuide,  
And the sweete waues of sounding *Castaly*  
With liquid foote dothe slide downe easily. (ll. 21-4)

In this instance, ‘*Castaly*’, which is supposed to be linked with Mount Helicon, is in fact running down the face of Mount Parnassus. This association of Castaly with Parnassus is faithful to the *Culex*, as is the way in which Parnassus’s forehead is divided in two, ‘like two hornes’. The reference to the two horns of Mount Parnassus, added to the gendering of the mountain as male (‘*his* broad forehead’ – emphasis added), along with the Muses’ movement away from the mountain for the more feminine Castaly has links with the cuckolded husband; the idea that the Muses have made Parnasse a cuckold has further implications regarding their involvement in the destruction of their bower, which will be taken up again later on in this chapter. When Euterpe refers to the ‘horsefoot *Helicon*’ she is reminding the reader of the origins of this spring. As E. K. states in the gloss to ‘Aprill’: Pegasus ‘strooke the grownde with his hoofe, sodenly thereout sprange a wel of moste cleare and pleasaunte water’ ([42]). This is in contrast to the ‘ragged rout / Of *Faunes* and *Satyres*’ that ‘trampled haue with their fowle footings trade, / And like to troubled puddles haue them [the Helicon and the Castalion] made’ (ll. 275-6). Where Pegasus created something clean and pure, the followers of Ignorance have polluted. The Helicon is no longer a vibrant spring and the Castalion is no longer a moving stream, both are now stagnant puddles.

The second atrocity that is committed during the destruction of the Muses’ bower is related by Euterpe in the stanza that follows:

Our pleasant groues, which planted were with paines,  
 That with our musick wont so oft to ring,  
 And arbours sweet, in which the Shepheards swaines  
 Were wont so oft their Pastoralls to sing,  
 They haue cut downe and all their pleasaunce mard,

That now no pastorall is to bee hard. (ll. 277-82)

In Exodus 34:13 the Israelites are told to ‘cut downe their groues’. In this instance ‘their’ refers to the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Hittites, and the Jebusites (Ex. 34:11). These nations are seen as ‘going a whoring after [other] gods’ (Ex. 34:15). The gloss in the Geneva Bible for ‘groves’ reads: ‘Which pleasant places thei chosed for their idoles’ (Ex. 34:13d). The link between pleasant groves and idol worship is consistent throughout the Old Testament, and in the Geneva Bible references to groves are frequently glossed to highlight this association. As such, the ‘Shepherds swaines’ that frequent the Muses’ ‘arbours sweet’ have to be seen as participating in idol worship.

It could be that this perceived idol worship relates to the Cult of Elizabeth that has developed within post-reformation England.<sup>32</sup> In the gloss to ‘June’ in *The Shepheardes Calender*, there is a desire to decouple groves and idol worship. According to E. K., the term ‘[neighbour] groues’ used in ‘June’ is ‘a straunge phrase in English’ ([52]); it is an imperfect ‘word for word’ translation of the Latin ‘vicina nemora’ ([52]), which could also be translated as ‘near forests’. However, in the actual Aeglogue, it is while Colin’s ‘rymes and roundelayes’ echo in these ‘neyghnour groues’ that Calliope and the other muses ‘[theyr] yuory Luyts and Tamburins forgoe’ and ‘drew abacke, as halfe with shame counfound, / Shepheard to see, them in theyr art outgoe’ (‘June’ ll. 49-64). Within ‘June’ the groves are places where the shepherd can commune with the Muses – or, at the very least, the songs that the shepherds sing can rise from these groves to the dwelling place of the Muses. These sites of idol worship – sites where access to the Muses is possible – have been

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<sup>32</sup> See also Roy Strong’s *The Cult of Elizabeth: Elizabethan Portraiture and Pageantry* for more on the Cult of Elizabeth.

cut down and destroyed by the Fauns and Satyrs that follow Ignorance; the result of which is that there are no more Pastorals being sung. The ruined monasteries and friaries that bordered Spenser's land would have acted as active reminders of what happens when patronage ceases. They would have also acted as a warning of what could happen to Spenser's land if sufficient support is not given to him, by the crown, to maintain his grant while it is being disputed by Roche. *Virgils Gnat* likewise works to disassociate groves from idol worship. It is said of the shepherd:

Of him God is worshipt with his scythe,  
And not with skill of craftsman polished:  
He ioyes in groues, and makes himself full blithe,  
With sundrie flowers in wilde fieldes gathered (ll. 129-32)

In this passage, it is explicitly stated that he does not worship things that have been created 'with skill of craftsman'. Rather, his worship of God is accomplished through the use of his scythe and his arrangement of wild flowers. However, by so doing, this shepherd is letting his attention drift from the wellbeing of his flock, over which he has a charge.

The third and final atrocity is linked to – and comes as a result of – the previous atrocity. When the groves are cut down, the shepherds that once frequented them are displaced by 'fowle Goblins and Shriekowles' that '[with] fearful howling do all places fill' (ll. 283-4). By cutting down the 'pleasant groues' and 'arbors sweet' (ll. 277-9), Ignorance has not only defaced nature, he has divested these sites of their supernatural and religious worth. They are no longer places that are frequented by shepherds, or other of the Muses' sectaries, because they have been defiled and become profane. As pointed out in the First Chapter, the bower in *Virgils*

*Gnat* is still fully intact. Thus, the ‘woods, and groues’ are still places where the Muses, described as ‘fayre *Naiades*’, are ‘dauncing all in companie’ (ll. 25-32). Most notably in this context, the shepherd in *Virgils Gnat* still ‘ioyes in groues’ (l. 131). They still exist as sites of religious significance. The groves that would have been of immediate interest, and concern, to Spenser would have been those in the forested area found on the northern borders of his land at the foot of the Ballyhoura Mountains. The forest at the foot of the Ballyhoura Mountains was notorious for being a haunt of Irish rebels. As a result, ‘[densely] forested areas, in particular on the sides of the Ballyhouras and Galtees and in the Vale of Aherlow, would have been carefully avoided by English settlers, who tried to clear away as much forest land as they could’ (Hadfield 198). During Spenser’s stay in Ireland, deforestation was a pragmatic way of protecting one of his borders. At the same time, ‘Irish wood was used for coopering, shipbuilding, glassmaking, housebuilding, and ironmaking’ (Hadfield 217), so deforestation was also a good source of income.

Yet, there is far more to the invasion of the Muses’ bower than just the three atrocities identified by Euterpe. Mark David Rasmussen points out that the conflict that is described within the laments of Euterpe, Terpsichore and Erato is one that occurs between the ‘non-aristocratic/masculine [and the] aristocratic/feminine’ (‘Spenser’s Plaintive Muse’ 143). He goes on to show that ‘the Muses are represented as queens and are described, together with their followers, as “gentle” (ll. 334, 345, 361), “noble” (l. 331), and “loftie” (l. 394)’, while ‘their masculine antagonists are regularly characterised as “base-borne” (l. 392), “vulgar” (l. 319), and “rude” (l. 328)’ (143). In terms of class, there should be a gulf that separates the Muses from Ignorance and his brood. But as stated above, ‘Ioue by doome vniust’ has advanced them to positions of relative power and given them access to the

courts. The story that is then portrayed within the laments of these three Muses is one of masculine intrusion into feminine space, and ‘it reads most immediately as the narrative of a rape’ (Rasmussen – ‘Spenser’s Plaintive Muse’ 143). When the Muses’ bower is seen as a representation of the Elizabethan court, the lamentations of these three Muses can be seen to prophecy a violent fall, which would have played on the anxieties that already existed regarding succession. Within their complaints masculine invasion of feminine space has resulted in the loss of what Terpsichore nostalgically calls ‘the bosome of all blis’ (l. 308). In the Judeo-Christian fall narrative, it is a serpent that invades the pleasant bower, in this instance Eden. The gloss in the Geneva Bible explains: ‘As Satan can change himself into an Angel of light, so did he abuse the wisdom of the serpent to deceaue man’ (Gen. 3:1a). It goes on to say: ‘God suffered Satan to make the serpent his instrument and to speake in him’ (Gen. 3:1b). According to these glosses, the serpent is simply the mouthpiece of Satan within the garden. The serpent’s temptation of Eve can be read as the original masculine invasion of female space. As the serpent beguiles Eve, it is her ignorance – which could also be read innocence – that makes this fall possible. Knowledge only comes once she has eaten of the fruit of the ‘tre of knowledge of good and euil’ (Gen. 2:17). It is at this point that she realises that she is naked, but it is already too late to save Eden. Natale Conti puts forth the argument that ‘in man, ignorance and ill will (i.e., the Night of the mind) create and nurture almost every misfortune that descends on humankind’ (193). Within the narratives of Euterpe, Terpsichore and Erato, Ignorance, as a proactive and ‘obscenely prolific’ force (Rasmussen – ‘Spenser’s Plaintive Muse’ 144), has bereft the Muses of their Edenic bower.

According to the narrator at the start of *The Teares of the Muses*, the lament over the destruction of their bower is not the first time the Muses have offered up ‘piteous plaints and sorrowfull sad tine’ (l. 3). There have been at least two other occasions that have elicited the same response. The first instance that provided suitable material for their lament was when Phœbus’ ‘foolish sonne’, Phaeton, was killed by Jove ‘[for] trauersing the charret of the Sunne / Beyond the compasse of his pointed path’ (ll. 7-10). The other instance that is spoken of by the narrator is the death of the Palici. McCabe makes the observation that the mythology regarding the Palici is here confused: ‘Calliope mourned for her poet son Orpheus. The nymph Thalia (distinct from the Muse of the same name) was the mother of the Palici, two minor rural deities’ (594). Conflations and confusions aside, these two instances of loss inspire the Muses in the art of lament. On both of these previous occasions, the lamentations that are offered are of particular artistic merit. It is said of the first that ‘[such] mournfull tunes were neuer since inuented’ (l. 12). As such, the artistic inventions of the Muses seem to depend on either ‘the transgressive breaking of the limits’ – as shown by the story of Phaeton – or the ‘mimetic “spight” of others’ – as illustrated by their response to the killing of the Palici (Rasmussen – ‘Spenser’s Plaintive Muse’ 147). In relation to the defeat of the Muses by Ignorance and his brood, Rasmussen argues that the Muses ‘rely on this defeat to quicken their song’ (‘Spenser’s Plaintive Muse’ 145). Rasmussen recognises in this instance of loss, as well as the two previous, a ‘cycle of retreat, violation, and lament’, which he says ‘serves as the Muses’ life support system, prolonging their existence as vehicles of woe’ (‘Spenser’s Plaintive Muse’ 145). Violation and loss have made the Muses prolific in their art. In his discussion of *The Shepheardes Calender*, Harry Berger speaks of ‘an obsessively repeated alternation between paradisaal expectations and

bitterness, or [...] a “fall” from the first to the second followed by an effort to return’ (278). Unlike *The Shepheardes Calender*, *The Teares of the Muses* does not try to regain paradise. Rather the Muses participate in what Rasmussen terms ‘willed regression’ (‘Spenser’s Plaintive Muse’ 145). The implications of this willed regression are quite startling; according to this train of thought, the Muses are partially responsible for inviting Ignorance and his brood into their bower in the first place. While the violation of their bower by Ignorance has resulted in a quickening of their artistic abilities, ultimately they have lost Eden; while they have gained knowledge, it has come at a cost and paradise is beyond their ability to reclaim. Relating back to the politics of the Elizabethan court, this text is to be used as a mirror by Elizabeth, in that it will convey knowledge without the need for her to gain it through her own experience (being defeated by the forces of Ignorance so that she can gain access to knowledge).

In *Virgils Gnat*, the introduction of ‘[an] huge great Serpent’ into the pleasant bower conjures images of Eden on the verge of destruction (l. 250). As already stated above, when the serpent was introduced into Eden, it acted as the catalyst in bringing about the loss of that bower. Genesis offers an account of the interactions that occur between Eve and the serpent, wherein she is tempted to eat of the fruit of the ‘tre of knowledge of good and euil’ (Gen. 2:17). It begins:

Now the serpent was more subtil then anie beast of the field, which ye  
Lord God had made: and he said to the woman, Yea, hathe God in dede  
said, Ye shal not eat of euerie tre of the garden? (Gen. 3:1)

Eve offers a riposte to this opening salvo by explaining that God had said that she would die if she ate the fruit; the serpent then follows up with the following:

[...] Ye shal not dye at all, But God doth know, that when ye shal eat thereof, your eyes shalbe opened, *and* ye shalbe as gods knowing good and euil. (Gen. 3:4-5)

The gloss in the Geneva Bible offers that '[this] is Satans chieftest subltie, to cause vs not to feare Gods threatenins. As thogh he shulde say, God doth not forbid you to eat of the frute, saue that he knoweth that if you eat thereof, you shulde be like to him' (Gen. 3:4-5 d and e). In this instance, the serpent is able to lull Eve into a sense of false security, thus enabling her to partake of the fruit. It is this same sense of false security that enables the shepherd in *Virgils Gnat* to sleep while he is most in danger.

As with the shepherd, the serpent has come to the bower to find shelter from the 'boyling heate' of the day by '[drenching] himself in moorish slime' (ll. 252, 251). This is an important link to the complaint of Clio, where she claims that '[...] all that in this world is worthie hight / Shall die in darkness and lie hid in slime' (ll. 105-6). Within Spenser's poetics, slime is associated with a mutable, fallen world. Verlame refers to 'this sinfull earth and earthlie slime' as the main reasons for Philip Sidney's departure from it (l. 290). In *Daphnaïda* it is then proclaimed: 'I hate the earth, because it is the mold / Of fleshly slime and fraile mortalitie' (ll. 402-3). Given the links that slime has with mutability and death, it is not surprising that the serpent chooses to frequent such a site. By drenching 'himself in moorish slime', the serpent moves to a locale where he will have the opportunity to be the agent of death, enabling him to fulfil his role as the wrecker of bowers. Thus also claiming as his 'all that is [called] worthy'.

Within *Virgils Gnat*, the episode that describes the shepherd's drowsiness is of significance for the way in which it sets the stage for the invasion of this bower.

The shepherd is sitting by the fountain side when

[...] gentle slumbring sleep oppressed him,  
Displaid on ground, and seized euerie lim.  
Of trecherie or traines nought tooke he keep,  
But looslie on the grassie greene dispredd,  
His dearest life did trust to careles sleep (ll. 439-43).

Sleep in this instance is depicted as an oppressor, yet the shepherd is oblivious to any threat it poses. Sleep has literally invaded the body of the shepherd, leaving him vulnerable and helpless on the ground, yet he has trusted his life to this adversary.

While in this induced state of slumber, a snake makes its appearance within the bower.<sup>33</sup> This is reminiscent of the episode in *The Faerie Queene* III. i. 58-67, in which Britomart is led to a bower '[wher] through long watch, and late daies weary toil, / She soundly slept, and carefull thoughts did quite assoile' (III. i. 58. 8-9).

While Britomart is sleeping, Malecasta – from the Latin *malus* (wicked, lewd) and *castus* (chaste) (Hamilton 299) – 'by her side her selfe she softly layd' (III. i. 61. 4).

Britomart then wakes with a start, sending the bower into confusion. Finally, Gardante manages '[to] gore [Britomart's] side' with an arrow (III. i. 65), because in laying down to sleep Britomart had taken off her armour. Hamilton states that the 'gored side is a sexual wound, here relating to the womb' (300). Hence, in this episode with Britomart and Malecasta, falling asleep in a pleasant bower can be seen to have led to Britomart's rape. As Terry Comito observes, 'earthly gardens always suggest to Spenser the danger of another Fall if one yields to their seduction' (108).

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<sup>33</sup> The serpent is also related to Error in I. i of *The Faerie Queene*.

In the instance of *Virgils Gnat*, the shepherd has yielded to the seduction of the garden, in that he has gone to sleep. By so doing, he has left himself vulnerable to ‘another Fall’, as the serpent that is approaching him is bent on his destruction. This destruction is hindered by the providential sting of the gnat<sup>34</sup> that awakes the slumbering shepherd. However, it is replaced by the twofold destruction of the gnat and the snake. Hence, the invasion of the bower by the snake still results in death, just as the introduction of the snake into the Garden of Eden brought death into the world. The invasion of the shepherd’s ‘pleasant bowre’ by the serpent is comparable to the invasion of the Muses’ bower by Ignorance and his brood. According to Conti, ‘[sleep is] the child of Erebus and Night’ (1.195). In McCabe’s words, Erebus is the ‘god of darkness’; as such, he could correspond to ‘black Abyse’ (*The Teares of the Muses* l. 260), who is spoken of by Euterpe as being involved in the conception of Ignorance – who is ‘begot amisse / By yawning Sloth on his owne mother Night’ (ll. 263-4). It is no coincidence that both Sleep and Ignorance have the same mother, especially given that sleep can be seen as a type of temporary Ignorance. Within *The Teares of the Muses* and *Virgils Gnat*, Ignorance and Sleep are very real threats to the paradisiacal bower. The theme of sleep will be addressed again in Chapter Five.

This chapter began by discussing the three patrons that are addressed directly in this part of *Complaints*: Alice Spencer, Elizabeth, and Leicester. It has argued that the dedicatory note addressed to Alice Spencer sets out the ideal poet-patron relationship; Elizabeth is then evoked through references to Jove, Apollo, and Venus to interrogate the hierarchical structures that are associated with courtly patronage and what happens when those structures stop functioning; and Leicester is used to

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<sup>34</sup> The gnat is a representation of the poet, and the outcome of *Virgils Gnat* can be read as a foreshadowing of the outcome that is expected when the Monarch reads the more stinging satiric *Mother Hubberds Tale*.

show that patrons can act as mediators between the poet and a higher power. When poet-patron relations fall apart in both poems, alternative sources of patronages are explored. These alternatives generally fall outside of the court, and do not originate with the Queen; as such, Spenser, quite appropriately for his Irish setting, adopts the motif of exile, originally developed by Ovid in his *Tristia*. The ultimate result of a lack of patronage is the destruction of the pleasant bower. Ignorance and his brood have fouled the sacred springs and streams, cut down the groves, and replaced the shepherds with goblins and ‘Shriekowles’. This invasion of the Muses’ bower can be seen as the movement of a masculine force into a feminine space, and can be read as a narrative of rape. But this invasion of feminine space has quickened the creative powers of the Muses. It is as though their creative ability relies on wrongs being committed against them. The most obvious analogue being Eve’s fall and the loss of Eden, and the way this brought Eve from a state of innocence to a state of knowledge. This being the case, the Muses have to be seen as being partially responsible for the destruction that has occurred. That they are at least partially to blame for the destruction of their bower is reinforced by the sleeping shepherd in *Virgils Gnat*. The shepherd is responsible for the death that occurs in this poem because he has allowed himself to be lulled into a sense of false security and has fallen asleep. The sleeping shepherd links quite nicely to the slumbering monarch that will be discussed in the next chapter. It is sufficient, at this point, to emphasise that the gnat (poet) has died because of the negligence of the shepherd (his patron).

#### Chapter IV: Social Reform in *Prosopopoia: Or Mother Hubberds Tale* and *Ruines of Rome* by Bellay

*Prosopopoia. Or Mother Hubberds Tale* is by far Spenser's most politically contentious work, and was the major reason that the *Complaints* volume was called in shortly after its publication. The calling in was unsuccessful; if anything, it just drove up the price of the copies that remained.<sup>35</sup> Yet, the volatility of *Mother Hubberds Tale* did influence the way *Complaints* was both received and interpreted by later critics. In the Introduction, it was argued that the removal of *Mother Hubberds Tale* from *Complaints* in 1611 irrevocably altered the way the poem was to be approached by future critics. The primary aim of this chapter, then, is to resituate *Mother Hubberds Tale* in its original position within *Complaints*, within the third section of the volume, beside *Ruines of Rome*; thus, restoring the volume's unity. In so doing, it is argued that *Mother Hubberds Tale* and *Ruines of Rome* can both be divided into four parts that in turn satirize four specific parts of society: the military, the clergy, the court, and the monarch.

The links that occur between *Mother Hubberds Tale* and *Ruines of Rome* are mainly thematic, but the genres adopted in each also highlight a narrative progression. While it is true that *Mother Hubberds Tale* adopts aspects of pastoral and beast fable, the links that occur between the two poems relate more to satire, and echo the medieval mode of estates satire. The justification for giving precedence to the mode of estates satire is found in *Mother Hubberds Tale*. When Mother Hubbard first starts speaking, she explains that the driving force behind the action of this poem is that the fox and the ape dislike 'their euill / And hard estate' (ll. 46-7

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<sup>35</sup> For more on the publication and calling in of *Mother Hubberds Tale*, see Richard S. Peterson's 'Spurting Forth upon Courtiers: New Light on the Risks Spenser Took in Publishing *Mother Hubberds Tale*' in *TLS*, as well as his 'Laurel Crown and Ape's Tale: New Light on Spenser's Career from Sir Thomas Tresham' in *Spenser Studies*.

emphasis added). Thus, signalling to the reader that this is going to be an estates satire.<sup>36</sup> Jill Mann offers a definition of estates satire when she writes that it ‘comprises any literary treatments of social classes which allow or encourage a general application’ (3). Mann continues with the guidance that ‘[it] is, of course, generally recognised that satire practices both selection and distortion, and that its relationship with “historical reality” is therefore impossible to define with exactness’ (8). This is doubly true when, as with *Mother Hubberds Tale*, the text’s date of composition is not known with certainty. In general, the shortcomings of the various strata of society are presented as stereotypes that would be recognisable to the reader, while at the same time offering specific abuses that are applicable to contemporaries. McCabe identifies the estates through which the fox and ape blaze a ‘trail of corruption’ as ‘encompassing the citizenry, the church, the court and ultimately the monarchy itself’ (609).<sup>37</sup> In *Ruines of Rome*, Spenser translates Du Bellay’s Petrarchan sonnet sequence into ‘English sonnets of three quatrains and a couplet’ (McCabe 621), and, in so doing, adapts the sequence to his cultural context. Margaret W. Ferguson writes:

[...] although Du Bellay’s poems were about the ancient city rather than the Catholic church, his meditations on Rome’s pride and fall appear, at first glance, no less useful for Protestant polemical purposes than Augustine’s famous descriptions of Rome as the prototypical city of man, whose self-willed fate should warn us to turn our eyes to the city of God. (31)

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<sup>36</sup> See also l. 716 of ‘The General Prologue’ to *The Canterbury Tales*, where Chaucer refers to ‘Th’ estaat’ of the pilgrims to signal the mode of estate satire.

<sup>37</sup> Renwick also tracks the disguises worn by the fox and ape, and sees them as types for the shepherd, the priest, the courtier, and the king (233-42).

As the ‘prototypical city of man’, the fate of ancient Rome can be seen as foreshadowing the fate of any city that refuses to reform, but the shift from Petrarchan sonnet to English sonnet highlights the fact that these warnings apply specifically to England. As such, *Mother Hubberds Tale* is an estates satire, in which the flaws of society are exposed, with the intention that this exposure will bring about reform; *Ruines of Rome* can then be seen as a post-apocalyptic projection of what will happen if those estates refuse to reform.

Spenser was aware that this part of *Complaints* could be seen as seditious and, as with ‘The Printer to the *Gentle Reader*’, the title that is found on the third frontispiece works to distance him from the two works found therein. *Prosopopoia*, which is the first part of this title, is a standard rhetorical term that denotes personification. As the editors of the *Variorum* point out, the use of this rhetorical term ‘illustrates the close association of poetry and rhetoric in [Spenser’s] time’ (349), so it can be seen as a nod of acknowledgement in the direction of writers like Philip Sidney and George Puttenham; but the context in which it is employed does not imply any more than its conventional meaning. The editors of the *Variorum* edition quote Puttenham as follows:

But if ye will faine any person with such features, qualities and conditions, or if ye wil attribute any humane qualitie, as reason or speech to dombe creatures or other insensible things, and do study (as one may say) to give them a humane person, it is [...] *Prosopopoia*, because it is by way of fiction, and no prittier examples can be given to you thereof, than in the Romaunt of the rose translated out of French by Chaucer, describing the persons of avarice, envie, old age, and many others, whereby much moralitie is taught. (349)

So, *prosopopoia* is a rhetorical form that gives human attributes – such as speech and reason – to ‘dumb creatures or other insensible things’, with the overall intention that this serves as a vehicle through which ‘much moralitie is taught’. Puttnam emphasises that this is all accomplished ‘by way of fiction’ – which it has to be when talking animals are involved. Hence, by using the name of the rhetorical form as the title of the poem, there is an added emphasis on the fictional nature of the poem, as well as on the desire that it gives moral instruction. By adding the subtitle – *Mother Hubberds Tale* – Spenser is emphasising that this is not *his* tale. This pattern of attributing ownership to this fictional character is continued in the poem itself (ll. 33-42), and the narrator only claims to be the recorder of this tale, in the Chaucerian mode. The dedicatory note also sees Spenser attempting to downplay the poems in this section as ‘idle labours’ (l. 6), which he supposedly composed in the ‘raw concept of [his] youth’ (l. 7). The use of the word ‘concept’ is interesting in this context, especially with its connotations of understanding and judgement (Oram 334), not necessarily attributes associated with youth.

From the outset, there are attempts to excuse this highly volatile text. It seems as though Spenser is implying that this work is a rhetorical fiction with moral aspirations; if it still offends, then it was really Mother Hubbard that told the tale anyway; and if neither of the two previous explanations work, it was written when the author was immature in his understanding and judgement. The attempt that is made to attribute this tale to Mother Hubbard and the abdication of judgement on the part of the author – judgement that is handed over to the reader – are both Chaucerian gestures, and would have been quite transparent to a contemporary reader. Similarly, by placing the note about who this section is dedicated to on the frontispiece, a contemporary reader would have noticed that Spenser is emphasising

that this was not part of his juvenilia. At the time that this work was published, the dedicatee had already been widowed, and had remarried – she may even have been widowed a second time at this point. Thus, the note indicating the dedicatee also subtly emphasises the date. Although *Mother Hubberds Tale* contains allusions to the proposed marriage of Elizabeth and Anjou, as well as Essex falling into disfavour with the queen, this work has to be considered in the context in which it has been published. Just as with the poems in the preceding section, *Mother Hubberds Tale* must be seen as a work of 1591. A useful way into analysing this section of *Complaints* is to use the disguises adopted by the fox and the ape as a structural framework. They first dress themselves as soldier beggars, and after meeting a farmer they become shepherds.<sup>38</sup> Once they have failed as shepherds, they cast aside this disguise and become clerks, who upon meeting a priest adopt the vestments of the clergy. In the third episode of *Mother Hubberds Tale*, the fox and the ape dress themselves as courtiers. Once they have failed as courtiers, the ape takes up the sceptre, crown and hide of the sleeping monarch. In each of these episodes a specific stratum of society is satirised. The remainder of this chapter will highlight the links between *Mother Hubberds Tale* and *Ruines of Rome* by focussing on their handling of four estates, namely: the military, the clergy, the court, and the monarchy.

*Mother Hubberds Tale* and *Ruines of Rome* are both sceptical of the glory that can be won through military might. In *Mother Hubberds Tale* especially, soldiers are associated with fabulous accounts of conquest. This is emphasised when the ape dons his first disguise, and becomes representative of the soldier class. He is

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<sup>38</sup> During the early modern period, ex-soldiers were largely seen as rogues that existed on the fringes of society. Linda Bradley Salamon points out that '[except] for noble knights like Philip Sidney, heroic in death, who could be seen through the very different lens of a dying chivalry, former soldiers who returned from battles foreign or civil were construed as a transgressive presence on the margins of public life' (262). Thus, the fox and ape's donning of soldierly attire can be viewed with suspicion.

said to be wearing ‘a blew iacket with a crosse of red / And manie slits, as if that he had shedd / Much blood throgh many wounds therein receaued, / Which had the vse of his right arme bereaued’ (ll. 204-8). The first line quoted is a significant reminder of Redcross Knight, from Book I of *The Faerie Queene*, who ‘on his brest a bloudie Crosse [...] bore’ (I. i. 2). There are many slits in the ape’s jacket, illustrating the wounds he should have sustained in battle, thus adding to his prestige as knight. The shredded jacket, ‘plume feather all to peeces tore (l. 210), ‘hose broken high above the heeling’ (l. 213), and ‘shooes beaten out with traueling’ should signal the battle-hardened nature of the ape (l. 214); however, because the reader knows that the ape has just put on these clothes, they act more to illustrate his deceptive intent – highlighting his desire to counterfeit the behaviour of his betters. He is not the one who has suffered the wounds, or walked his shoes to pieces, it is someone else. Similarly, with Redcross, the damage done to the armour that he is wearing was inflicted on its previous wearer. The ‘old dints of deepe wounds’ that remain in his armour were obviously received before his time (I. i. 1), because ‘armes till that time did he neuer wield’ (I. i. 1). However, because the reader is not privy to the intentions of the Redcross Knight, his donning the old armour would have signalled him as being a ‘fair unknown’, whereas the ape must be a fraud. As the allegory of Book I progresses, it becomes clear that the armour donned by Redcross is really the armour of God, referred to in Ephesians 6:13-17; as such, when he is finally revealed as Saint George there is a sense that providence has brought him to this point. The ape’s clothing, by contrast, is simply an imitation – or even a parody – of this armour. The major difference in reader perception occurs because the reader is aware of the intent of the ape in *Mother Hubberds Tale*, because of the dialogue that has already occurred between him and the fox about their fraudulent intentions.

The seventh sonnet in *Ruines of Rome* ties into this interrogation of military power in its critique of heroism. The second stanza reads:

Triumphant Arcks, spyres neighbours to the skie,  
That you to see doth th'heaven it self appall,  
Alas, by little ye to nothing flie,  
The peoples fable, and the spoyles of all (ll. 89-92).

The triumphant arches that are spoken about here are, in a very real way, monuments of heroism and defeat. Yet, they have crumbled to the earth, little by little, until nothing remains of them but fable. Bearing this in mind, the fraud of the ape and the faith of Redcross will both be forgotten in time. Even if they are remembered, they will only survive as fables. Put another way, the heroism of Redcross in slaying the dragon and the infamy of the ape killing the sheep he has been set to guard are equal, in that both will be forgotten. For Richard Danson Brown, this forgetfulness is a key component of complaint poetry. He argues that 'complaint is crucial to Spenser's innovative poetics because of its central perception of the instability of the world and human accomplishments. Spenser suggests that if the world is unstable, then so is the means by which we make this perception intelligible' (Brown 23). There is in this pessimism an echo of Calliope's lament: 'What oddes [...twixt] best and worst, when both alike are dedd' (*The Teares of the Muses* ll. 447-8). The first disguise adopted within *Mother Hubberds Tale* is significant, as Spenser is offering here an example of how military strength is easily counterfeited; but this strength is ultimately meaningless as it has no lasting effect and will be distorted by flawed memory and in stories. When read alongside *Ruines of Rome*, the reader is reminded that the military might of Rome could not save it from the ravages of time. Hence, on a military level, time is the ultimate victor over Rome and will be over England. London's cognomen

as *Troy Novant* is an interesting reminder that as a city it is traditionally Troy's heir; thus, it is also heir to its destruction.

*Ruines of Rome* makes the destruction of Rome a foreshadowing of what will happen in England by engaging with the notion of *translatio imperii*. Margaret Ferguson remarks that '[the] Tudors found the Trojan Brutus at the root of their family tree, and French monarchs also traced their linkage back to Troy, specifically, to Hector's son Francus, who supposedly settled in Celtic Gaul after the city's fall' (24). The idea that there had been a constant western movement of empire is one that was quite popular in the Middle Ages. During this period, it was 'often uncomfortably merged with the pseudohistory tracing ancient migrations after the Flood and with legends asserting the Trojan origin of several royal dynasties, including those of France and England' (Prescott and Hadfield 601); these origin myths were starting to be treated with some scepticism in the Early Modern period. In the context of the English reformation, it had become problematic to adopt a 'theory of history that acknowledged Rome's temporal priority', yet 'far from relinquishing the theory itself, Protestants transformed it into a weapon for their own nationalist and theological arguments' (Ferguson 24-5). According to the tradition of *translatio imperii*, empire begins with the Babylonians, followed by the Persians, Greeks, and Romans. 'For Christians, and particularly for Protestants, [a] major source of thinking about the westward transfer of empire was the Bible's Book of Daniel' (Prescott and Hadfield 602). As has already been explained in some detail in Chapter One, the Book of Daniel contains an account of a dream of King Nebuchadnezzar, in which he sees a giant statue that is made up of different materials. Each of the materials that make up the statue represent one of the aforementioned empires. Within the second sonnet of *Ruines of Rome*, the seven

wonders of the ancient world are described; these wonders are connected to the empires that built them. Once the seven ancient wonders have been enumerated, the poet states: ‘But I will sing aboue all moniments / Seuen *Romane* Hills, the worlds seuen wonderments’ (ll. 27-8). Within *Ruines of Rome*, as empire moves westward, the newly established empires overshadow their predecessors in glory and wonder. In the case of the second sonnet, the seven Roman Hills are more magnificent than all of the seven ancient wonders combined. According to Christian exegetes, Daniel’s prophecy is that all preceding empires – the Babylonian, Persian, Greek, and Roman – would be superseded by God’s reign. Hence, there would be a fifth empire established that would be more glorious than the previous four. As Prescott and Hadfield assert, ‘rulers such as Elizabeth could claim that the Roman “imperium” had not vanished, and had certainly not moved to the huge Holy Roman Empire under the Habsburgs, but had dispersed so that the English could claim their part and the queen could indeed be an “empress” – with or without colonies’ (602). It is significant then in the fourth sonnet that Rome’s borders are defined by the barbarian races that inhabit their borders: ‘One hand on *Scythia*, th’other on the *More*’ (l. 45). As McCabe notes, this could read ‘one hand on the east, the other on the west, complementing line 44. *Scythia* lay north of the Black and Caspian Seas, and the “More” are the ancient inhabitants of Mauretania’ (623). Defining the borders of Rome by the uncivilized other that lurks on the periphery, threatening its empire, draws attention to the uncivilized other and forces the reader to assess them as a threat. Similarly, in the Elizabethan context, the reader has to consider those things that act as threats to Elizabeth’s imperial pursuits, as well as question whether her empire will suffer the same fate as Rome. In Elizabethan terms, Ireland fulfils this ‘Scythian’ liminal role.

In *A View of the Present State of Ireland*, Ireland is described as a potential threat to the future progress of this Elizabethan Empire. Irenius, in what is now his opening contribution, puts forward a few theories as to why the English had not yet succeeded in ‘reducing that savage nation [Ireland] to better government and civility’ (Renwick ed. 1):

Marry, so there have been diverse good plots devised and wise counsels cast already about reformation of that realm, but they say it is the fatal destiny of that land, that no purposes whatsoever are meant for her good will prosper or take good effect; which whether it proceed from the very genius of the soil, or the influence of the stars, or that Almighty God hath not yet appointed the time of her reformation, or that He reserveth her in this unquiet state still, for some secret scourge which shall by her come unto England, it is hard to be known but yet much to be feared. (Renwick ed. 1)

Such pessimistic phrases – of which ‘the fatal destiny of that land’ is an example – were current in relation to Ireland during Spenser’s lifetime (Renwick 190).

Ludovick Bryskett, in correspondence with Sir Francis Walsingham in 1582, laments: ‘What can be sayd but that the secrett Judgement of God hangeth over this soyle, that causeth all the best endeavours of those that labour the reformation thereof to comme to naught’ (*Calendar of State Papers* 366). Similarly, the editors of the *Variorum* note a further five instances where contemporaries of Spenser describe variously ‘the fatal Cursse of this Countrie’, ‘the cursed Destynye of that Ilande’, ‘a fatall destinie [...] in that land’, ‘a fatall and ineuitable destinie incident to that nation’, and ‘the curse of God [...] uppon that soyle’ (278, note to ll. 9-16).

Irenius puts forward four explanations as to why Ireland may have a fatal destiny:

first, the cause proceeds ‘from the very genius of the soil’; second, it could be the influence of the stars; third, God has not yet appointed the time for Ireland’s reformation; or fourth, Ireland is being saved as a future scourge for England. The first explanation has echoes of the genius of Verulamium in *The Ruines of Time*, as well as the ‘*Romaine Dæmon*’ of *Ruines of Rome*. In both instances, it could be argued, quite convincingly, that the genius of *The Ruines of Time* and the ‘*Romaine Dæmon*’ are references to the lingering influence of the dissolved monasteries around Saint Albans and Munster; as such, they are the ghosts of Catholicism that still haunt the soil, and the psyches of those who inhabit those locales. The second explanation harks back to the Ptolemaic conceptions of the universe. This explanation fits the ethos of *The Ruines of Time* and *The Teares of the Muses*, in which the Earth is the centre of the universe and subject to the planets that rotate around it. The third and fourth explanations move the fate of Ireland into the hands of God. Either He has not decided it is time for Ireland to be reformed, or He is saving it, just as He did the pagan nations that surrounded ancient Israel, to be the means through which England is destroyed when it is found to be irredeemable. All of the above explanations are either supernatural or providential. England has no power of itself over the fate of Ireland, and is powerless to reform it, according to Irenius. In the context of the threats to Elizabeth’s imperial project that *Mother Hubberds Tale* and *Ruines of Rome* work to enumerate, Ireland – standing to the west of England – is England’s greatest obstacle in terms of the western movement of power. Ireland is preventing Elizabeth from expanding westward, and fulfilling her true potential as empress over the failed Virginian enterprise. As such, the first reformation that needs to occur is that of the military enterprise in Ireland.

The second strata of society that is dealt with in *Mother Hubberds Tale* is the clergy. Both *Mother Hubberds Tale* and *Ruines of Rome* reminisce over a time when Christendom was still united. This is first evident in *Mother Hubberds Tale* when the fox and the ape ‘at length chaunst with a formall Priest to meete’ (l. 361). The priest is semiliterate; when he is presented with the ‘pasport’ that the fox and ape had forged – to show that they are ‘Clerkes booke-redd’ (l. 358) – he appears to scrutinise it ‘[as] if therein some text he studying were’ (l. 380), yet he cannot see that it is a forgery. His writing ability seems to be limited to mindlessly copying other texts, without the ability to understand what he is writing. Added to these inadequacies, he does not have any comprehension of Latin or Greek. ‘All his care was, his service well to saine, / And to read Homilies vpon holidayes’ (ll. 392-3). The priests literacy is limited to his vocalising of the words he sees on a page, but he lacks the ability to comprehend their meaning. Reactions to this passage have been varied. McCabe argues that Spenser satirises ‘the views of those who regard an ignorant clergy as politically advantageous’ (613). Similarly, Rix says that this passage is ‘[the] finest example of *ironia* to be found in Spenser’ (62). Yet, Long argues that ‘Spenser joins issue with the Queen herself, who averred “that it was good for all the Church to have few Preachers, and that three of four might suffice for a Country; and that the Reading of Homilies to the People was enough” (730). For McCabe and Rix the description of the priest falls into the categories of parody and irony, but for Long, Spenser is agreeing with the reformatory practices of Elizabeth. It is evident from the narrative that the priest lacks the ability to discern between good and evil, and as such is completely unable to protect his flock from the outside forces that present themselves in the form of the fox and the ape. While his lack of learning may protect him from delving into the ‘difference of texts, / From

whence arise diuersitie of sects, / And hatefull heresies, of God abhor'd' (ll. 387-9), it has also left him ill equipped to protect those over whom he has a stewardship. The ability of the fox and the ape to infiltrate the church in the way that they do shows that this newly reformed organisation is not fit for purpose, and those that should be acting as guardians within the organisation are not only failing to protect their parishioners, but actively enabling malignant forces to gain access to them.

We know that Du Bellay travelled to Rome in 1553 with Cardinal Jean Du Bellay, his father's cousin, but we have no record of Spenser ever visiting Rome. Even though Du Bellay is writing as a Catholic, 'Spenser may well have felt [...] that Du Bellay's poems were perfectly well suited to a Protestant world view' (Ferguson 31). As McCabe observes,

[under] Constantine and his successors the term *imperium* acquired an almost theocratic aura: 'in hoc signo vinces'. Henceforward 'barbarians' were also 'pagans' and to 'civilize' was to Christianize. The act of suppression was regarded as an act of 'charity'. (*Spenser's Monstrous Regiment* 19)

In this context, the geopolitical entity that is referred to as Rome is also made up of any space that adopts its religion. Rome is not simply an empire; it is also a religious idea. Hence, Rome's boundaries are not delineated only by those areas that have been conquered through military might, but also those that have been converted to its theocratic system. As such, the 'ruins of Rome' are not just to be found in Rome itself, and are not just the classical ruins that most people would think of – such as the Colosseum, the Roman Forum, and so forth – but also the remnants of the theocratic system that belonged to Rome – such as the monasteries and friaries that

were dissolved during the reign of Henry VIII. These monasteries and friaries would include those found in Buttevant and Ballybeg – which are both located just on the opposite side of the River Awbeg from Spenser’s allotment in Munster – and also those at Molana and Bridgetown – both located on the River Blackwater, which Spenser used to travel to Youghal.<sup>39</sup> Hadfield makes the observation that Jonson ‘thought that Spenser, like so many others, deeply regretted the division of Christendom and the destruction it wrought, and, like Rome and Verulam (St Albans) in his own *Complaints*, looked back nostalgically to a more unified, happier past’ (224). Yet, in *Ruines of Rome*, the ruins are those of the ‘Whore of Babylon’, and the sonnets found therein are meditations on her pride and fall (Ferguson 31).

Sonnet 18 of *Ruines of Rome* notes that Rome ‘[her] power to *Peters* successor betooke’ (l. 250), which McCabe notes is an allusion ‘to the “Donation of Constantine” whereby imperial power was allegedly transferred to the papacy’ (626). Thus, unlike Du Bellay who is lamenting the fall of ancient Rome, any discussion of the Roman Empire within *Ruines of Rome* is also a discussion of the Church of Rome. The warning that is given within *Ruines of Rome* that ‘onely *Rome* of *Rome* hath victorie’ is also a warning to the Reformed Church in England (l. 38). As McCabe observes, ‘in the context of the Reformation to “civilize” is to Protestantize and Catholics are new ‘pagans’ (*Spenser’s Monstrous Regiment* 25). By terming Elizabeth a ‘mightie and magnificent emperesse’ on the title pages of both the 1590 and 1596 editions of *The Faerie Queene*, Spenser is highlighting the imperial

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<sup>39</sup> Buttevant Friary is a Franciscan Friary that was founded by David de Barry in 1251. By the sixteenth century the conventional buildings were in ruins. As a result, there were some repairs done in 1604. Ballybeg Priory is an Augustinian Priory that was founded in 1229 by Philip de Barry and dedicated to St. Thomas. It was dissolved in 1541. Molana Abbey was founded in 501 by Mael An Faidh. It was dissolved in 1538, and made up part of Raleigh’s lands in 1587. Bridgetown Priory is an Augustinian Priory that was established by Alexander FitzHugh Roche between 1206-12. It was surrendered to Henry Sidney by the Roche’s at some point between 1576-7, but because of a lack of funding it was already in ruins by the time it came into Sidney’s possession.

aspirations of the monarch. By asserting that she is ‘empress’ over England, France, Ireland, and (later) Virginia, Spenser builds a theoretical empire that stands in stark contrast – as well as in opposition – to that of Rome. However, *Ruines of Rome* reminds the reader of the pitfalls of the Roman Empire, and *Mother Hubberds Tale*, by exposing the failings of the reformed clergy, points out how the New Rome is going about its own destruction. The juxtaposition of the two texts within the third part of *Complaints* forces the reader to think critically about the Queen’s claims of rule in this new empire, as well as the effectiveness of the methods that she adopts to Christianise the pagans – especially those found in Ireland.

In the second episode of *Mother Hubberds Tale*, the corruption that is present among the clergy is highlighted when the priest tells the fox and the ape how they can go about securing a benefice. He explains: ‘[...] thou must walk in sober grauitee, / And seeme as Saintlike as Saint *Radegund*’ (ll. 496-7). As has been noted by McCabe, Hamilton and Rupprecht, Saint Radegund was a sixth-century French queen/nun ‘who refused to consummate a forced marriage’ (Hamilton 536; also McCabe 614 and Rupprecht 580). Rupprecht points out that the priest’s reference to the saint in *Mother Hubberds Tale* is satirical (580). In the context of *Mother Hubberds Tale* the priest is explaining the extremes to which the fox and ape will have to go to gain a benefice by applying to ‘some Noble man’ (l. 489). However, this is obviously the more difficult way to attain the desired benefice, because the priest offers an easier alternative:

But if thou list vnto the Court to throng,  
 And there to hunt after the hoped pray [benefice],  
 Then must thou thee dispose another way [...] (ll. 502-4)

The alternative that the priest outlines includes learning ‘to laugh, to lie, / To face, to forge, to scoffe, to complaine, / to crouche, to please, to be a beetle stock / Of thy great Masters will, to scorne, [and] to mock’ (ll. 506-8). That this other, easier, way is associated with the court is a stinging criticism of the way in which the court administers the reformed church. Yet, it offers an alternative to the virginal, pious, virtuous model embodied in Saint Radegund, of whom Elizabeth is an imagined adherent. Of the two ways of obtaining a benefice that are outlined by the priest in *Mother Hubberds Tale*, the first (applying to a ‘Noble man’) seems far less hypocritical than the second (playing the game at court). Yet, the first option is still interested in the outward show of piety; it focuses on being well ‘attyred’ (l. 488), having a ‘zealous disposition’ (l. 491), ‘godly zeale’ (l. 493), walking in ‘sober grauitee’ (l. 496), seeming – rather than being – saintlike (l. 497), praying often (l. 498), and looking ‘lowly on the ground’ (l. 498). This sounds very much like Ben Jonson’s Zeal-of-the-Land Busy, a puritanical character found in *Bartholomew Fair* in 1614. The outward show of piety that the priest is encouraging in *Mother Hubberds Tale* – when he references Saint Radegund – can be linked to the prideful self-righteousness that is so heavily criticised in Matthew 6:1-2:

Take hede that ye giue not your almes before men, to be sene of them, or else ye shal haue no rewarde of your Father which is in heauen.  
Therefore when thou giuest thine almes, thou shalt not make a trumpet to be blowen before thee, as the hypocrites do in the stretes, to be praised of men. Verily I say unto you, they haue their reward.

The Geneva Bible gloss for hypocrite is one ‘[whose] workes procede not of right faith, but are done for vaine glorie’ (Matt. 6:2a). It is certainly correct to say of the fox and the ape that their ‘workes procede not of right faith, but are done for vaine

glorie', as they are at this stage solely interested in gaining a benefice. The reference to Radegund in *Mother Hubberds Tale* can also be linked to the Queen of the Amazons that bears the same name (spelt Radigund) in Book V of *The Faerie Queene*. As Rupprecht observes, 'Radigund's major characteristic in love and war is pride (V. v. 27-8, 32-3), which Britomart sets out specifically to attack (V. iv. 18)' (581). There is a duplicity in Elizabeth's adherence to the virginal values of Saint Radegund. She is holding on to these seemingly virtuous attributes out of pride. The second reformation that needs to occur is for the clergy, with Elizabeth at their head, to beware of pride or face the same punishments as those faced by Rome.

The third strata of society that is satirized is the court; this episode sees the ape 'cloathed like a Gentleman' and the fox 'like to be his groome' (ll. 660-1). The ape is said to surpass the entire court in 'newfangelnesse' (l. 675). This is an interesting intertextual link to *The Teares of the Muses*, as Terpsichore complains of how Ignorance and his brood have filled the schools 'with fond newfangelnesse' (l. 327). However, the illicit transactions of the fox lead to his banishment:

[...] this Foxe could not so closely hide  
 His craftie feates, but that they were descride  
 At length, by such as sate in iustice seate,  
 Who for the same fowlie did entreate;  
 And hauing worthily him punished.  
 Out of Court for euer banished. (919-24)

The banishment of the fox means that the ape no longer has an income, so he too leaves court. William Nelson adds an interesting insight into the allegorical meaning of the fox and the ape. He states: 'The pair constitutes a kind of unit, a counterfeit

man, the Ape mocking the man in body, the Fox in mind' (75). In this regard, they can be seen as a single entity. Thus, the actions of one are the actions of both, as illustrated by the ape's need to leave the court because of the banishment of the fox. In any event, the consequence of neglected duties at court is banishment. This idea of neglect at court is taken up in the twenty-third sonnet of *Ruines of Rome*, where it is stated that 'Romane Courage [...]

Through idlenes would turne to ciuill rage,  
And be her selfe the matter of her fires.  
For in a people giuen all to ease,  
Ambition is engendred easily;  
As in a vicious bodie, grose disease  
Soone growes through humours superfluitie. (ll. 313-320)

Here it is idleness at court that is the cause of discord. As has been illustrated by the fox and the ape, idleness and negligence at court in *Mother Hubberds Tale* leads to banishment. It is the ambition of the fox that leads to him being found out and punished, just as it was the ambition of the Roman people that led to their destruction.

The description of the court as being (over-) run by animals in the third part of *Mother Hubberds Tale* implies that – in this world of course – animals are 'really' the inhabitants of the court. When the mule is asked by the ape to tell him '[who] now in Court doth bear the greatest sway' (l. 616), the mule responds:

Marie [...] that highest now in grace,  
Be the wilde beasts, that swiftest are in chace;  
For in their speedie course and nimble flight

The Lyon now doth take the most delight [...] (ll. 619-22)

In the third and fourth parts of *Mother Hubberds Tale* the monarch is said to be a lion – the gendering of which will be returned to later on in this chapter. According to the mule, those that are ‘highest now in grace’ within the court find themselves in that position because they give the monarch ‘most delight’. Thus the sole aim of courtiers in this setting is to sycophantically delight the monarch. McCabe notes that ‘[the] lion figured prominently on the royal arms’ (616). Renwick states that ‘[the] “wilde beasts” are Elizabeth’s fighting captains and courtiers, the “Lyon”, of course, being the Queen’ (239). The editors of *The Yale Edition of the Shorter Poems of Edmund Spenser* observe that the ‘wilde beasts’ spoken of ‘have variously been identified as the earl of Leicester, the earl of Essex, and Sir Walter Raleigh’ (355). While somewhat useful in determining context, what is given less attention is the fact that the conversation that the fox and the ape have with the mule is the first that they have with another animal. Prior to this, the fox and the ape have spoken with a husbandman, while disguised as ex-soldier beggars, and a priest, while disguised as clerks. The description that is given of the husbandman is that he was clothed in ‘garments gray; / Yet though his vesture were but meane and bace, / A good yeoman he was of honest place’ (ll. 228-30). Given the fact that there is no mention of him being an animal, and that the ape ‘himselfe gan vp to reare’ (l. 237) – or stand upright on his hind legs in an attempt to be seen as normal – it should be safe to assume that the husbandman is a man. The priest is then explicitly said to be a ‘man’ (l. 364), and not an animal. Thus, the interactions that the fox and the ape have during the episodes that deal with more pastoral matters are with men, while those that occur in the episodes that deal with their exploits at court are with animals. The closer the fox and the ape move to the court, the more the poem is populated with

animals and, later, mythical creatures. Ironically, even when the fox and the ape are surrounded by animals at court, they still feel the need to imitate man. When the ape's courtly attire is described, he is said to again uprear 'hy / Vpon his tiptoes' (ll. 663-4), in an attempt to mimic man. Later, when the fox and the ape are debating who of them should don the kingly apparel, the ape puts forth the argument that he is 'in person, and in stature / Most like a man' (ll. 1029-30) – which is an argument that seems slightly out of place, given they should be trying to impersonate a lion. The ape's constant desire to imitate man, even when it is not completely necessary – or even appropriate – in the context of the narrative, shows that, even when animals rule at court, man is viewed as the ideal ruler. The fox and ape present a poor simulacrum of the ideal. This has implications for Elizabeth, as she is seen to be mimicking man in the same way that the ape does. Like the animals, Elizabeth can only be an imitation of the ideal.

The 'wilde beasts' that occupy the court in *Mother Hubberds Tale* can also be seen as an echo of the Irish and old English families that occupy positions of power. Irenius, while relaying his experiences in Ireland in Spenser's *A View of the Present State of Ireland*, states:

[...] for the chiefest abuses which are now in the realm are grown from the English, and the English that were are now much more lawless and licentious than the very *wild Irish*, so that as much care as was then by them had to reform the Irish, so much more must now be used to reform them so much time doth alter the manners of men. (emphasis added – Renwick ed. 63)

*A View of the Present State of Ireland* was first published by Sir James Ware in 1633. However, as Willy Maley and Andrew Hadfield point out, it ‘was completed sometime before 1598, when it was entered into the Stationers’ Register by one of Spenser’s publishers’ (xi). There is evidence to suggest that, although not printed in 1598, the text did circulate in manuscript form until it was finally printed in 1633 by Ware. Even though there is at the very least seven years between the writing of *A View of the Present State of Ireland* and *Mother Hubberds Tale*, the above reference to the ‘wild Irish’ who are responsible for the ‘chiefest abuses which are now in the realm’ harks back to the ‘wilde beasts’ who ‘now in Court doth beare the greatest sway’ in *Mother Hubberds Tale* (ll. 620, 616). Eudoxus sums up the above quoted words of Irenius when he says: ‘[that] seemeth very strange which you say, that men should so much degenerate from their first natures as to grow wild’ (Renwick ed. 63). What is put forward here is a general theory that those perceived to be of a superior racial pedigree are able to degenerate through exposure to lesser races. In this case, the English are able to degenerate to the point that they become wild Irish – and by implication the old English are being accused of already being in this degenerated state. According to this interaction between Eudoxus and Irenius, the old English were supposed to come to Ireland to abolish the ‘bad Irish customs’ (Renwick ed. 62), but the end result was the opposite. The old English have, according to Irenius, adopted these ‘bad Irish customs’ as their own. In both *Mother Hubberds Tale* and *A View of the Present State of Ireland*, the designation of ‘wilde’ signals that those to which it refers, regardless of whether it is a beast or the Irish, are deemed to be degenerate in character. In both texts, this degenerate other is seen as a threat to the realm if left unchecked. Whether Saracen, pagan, papist, beast or Irish, the degenerate other stands in opposition to the English imperial vision. What is

more worrying than this opposition is that, instead of expanding out into foreign lands and weeding out the evil customs of those whom the English hope to conquer, the degenerate other has managed to indoctrinate those that are supposed to be defending the faith, who have now returned to court and are destroying it from the inside. The idea that the degenerated old English hold sway at court and that they are destroying the empire from within echoes the sentiment of *Ruines of Rome* that ‘onely Rome of Rome hath victorie’.

One of the reasons that the old English are associated with the Irish during this period is that the majority of them have not converted to Protestantism. This is seen as a threat, because their Catholicism is thought to sway their allegiance from England towards Spain.<sup>40</sup> There is still huge anxiety over continental Catholicism and the threat it poses to England. Stemming from these anxieties, there is an inextricable link, during this period, between imperial conquest and spreading reformed Christianity. As already quoted above, ‘[in] the context of the Reformation to “civilize” is to Protestantize and Catholics are the new “pagans”’ (McCabe 24-5). Edward Said expands on ideas of imperialism thus:

What are striking in these [European imperialist] discourses are the rhetorical figures one keeps encountering in their descriptions of ‘the mysterious East’, as well as the stereotypes about ‘the African [or Indian or Irish or Jamaican or Chinese] mind’, the notions about bringing civilization to primitive or barbaric peoples, the disturbingly familiar ideas about flogging or death or extended punishment being required when ‘they’ misbehaved or became rebellious, because ‘they’ mainly

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<sup>40</sup> See Wallace T. MacCaffrey’s *Elizabeth I: War and Politic 1588-1603*, which argues: ‘To the modern observer with a knowledge of the Spanish situation denied to the Elizabethan Council, an early renewal of invasion seems unlikely, but to them, provided with sparse and uncertain intelligence, the probabilities appeared only too real’ (78).

understood force or violence best; ‘they’ were not like ‘us’, and for that reason deserved to be ruled. (xi-xii)

By designating the Irish as ‘wild’, *A View of the Present State of Ireland* harks back to the stereotypes that had existed since Gerald of Wales’ *Topographia Hiberniae*, which contains the descriptions of human mutations and acts of bestiality. The ‘wilde beasts’ that bear the greatest sway at court in *Mother Hubberds Tale* are similarly monstrous, and have failed in their imperial endeavour by becoming just as ‘wild’ as the Catholic pagans they are trying to Protestantize. The evidence of brute force and violence used against the ‘rebellious’ Irish would have been clear to all who attempted to enter Cork City, as the severed heads of ‘rebels’ were mounted on top of the gates into the city.

These criticisms of the court lead, naturally enough, to the fourth and final strata of society that is discussed: the monarchy. In both *Mother Hubberds Tale* and *Ruines of Rome*, the failings of the monarch are highlighted when they are depicted as being asleep. The lion is found by the fox and the ape in a pleasant bower, having presumably been lulled to sleep like the shepherd in *Virgils Gnat*. Having fallen asleep, the lion has laid his crown, sceptre and hide – all symbols of his kingly authority – by his side on the ground. The fox and the ape see this opportunity and steal these items, putting them on the person of the ape. It is only by divine intervention that the lion is woken and order is restored. The words which are spoken by Mercury, when he wakes the lion, are significant:

Arise (said *Mercurie*) thou sluggish beast,  
That here liest senseless, like the corpse deceast,  
The whilst thy kingdome from thy head is rent,

And thy throne royall with dishonour blent:  
Arise, and doo thy selfe redeeme from shame,  
And be aueng'd on those that breed thy blame. (ll. 1327-32)

Unlike the waking of the shepherd in *Virgils Gnat*, the messenger is not killed for waking the monarch and offering a warning. Rather, the warning is providential and thus from a higher power than the monarch. Mercury's warning gives divine legitimacy to the deposed monarch, while at the same time urging the punishment of those that have usurped his authority. In the twenty-fifth sonnet in *Ruines of Rome*, the poet wishes to 'awake out of th'infernal shade / Those antique *Cæsars* sleeping long in darke' (ll. 348-9). The poet implies that if he could wake them, Rome could be rebuilt. Hence, it is the fact that the ancient Caesars sleep that has led to this ruin. The warning that Spenser is offering here is that if Elizabeth does not soon awake from her slumber, England faces the same fate as ancient Rome.<sup>41</sup>

The gendering of the lion is purposefully ambiguous in *Mother Hubberds Tale*, in order to draw attention to – and at the same time problematize – the gender of the monarch. As McCabe observes: '[the] lion is gendered male at line 953, but female [...] at line 629 (and by implication at 901). This variation underscores the continuing relevance of *Mother Hubberds Tale* to the issue of female regiment' (*Spenser's Monstrous Regiment* 167). The passage in which the lion is gendered as male reads:

The Lyon sleeping lay in secret shade,  
*His* Crowne and Scepter lying *him* beside,

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<sup>41</sup> Helen Hackett argues that dream poetry during Elizabeth's reign, especially the latter part, 'could be used to compliment Elizabeth on her supposed agelessness while implicitly critiquing the sterility and stasis of her regime' (65). By imagining a sleeping monarch Spenser is emphasising the idea that time is standing still.

And hauing doft for heate *his* dreadfull hide [...] (ll. 952-4; emphasis added)

This quotation is taken from the start of the fourth episode in *Mother Hubberds Tale*, in which the ape dons the vestments of power that have been put aside by the lion while he sleeps. The fox and the ape are seen here to seize royal power while the lion sleeps. The lion is gendered as female during the third episode within *Mother Hubberds Tale*. After the mule has explained to the fox and the ape ‘[who] now in Court doth beare the greatest sway’ (l. 616), he states:

For so braue beasts *she* loueth best to see,  
In the wilde forrest raunging fresh and free. (ll. 629-30; emphasis added)

It is the narrator that later, while explaining the conditions of court, says:

Full little knowest thou that hast not tride,  
What hell it is, in suing long to bide: [...]  
[...] To haue thy Princes grace, yet want *her* Peeres [...] (ll. 895-6, 901; emphasis added)

McCabe notes that ‘the lion is female here [at line 629] and at line 901 but male at line 953 in the more politically sensitive context of the final episode’ (616). This observation by McCabe implies that there are times when it is appropriate – even necessary – to gender the monarch as male and others when it is permissible to gender the monarch as female. Elizabeth herself seems to be sensitive to these perceptions of gender in relation to the functions of the monarch. In her famous ‘Speech to the Troops at Tilbury’, delivered on 9<sup>th</sup> November 1588, Elizabeth proclaims: ‘I know I have the body but of a weak and feeble woman; but I have the heart and stomach of a king, and a king of England too’ (763). Elizabeth understood

the rhetoric that she had to use to justify her position as the monarch, and she attempts here to show that she really does have the ability to fill all the functions of the monarch. The rhetoric that is adopted by Elizabeth is very similar to that used by the fox and the ape when they are arguing over who will actually wear the vestments of the monarch. In the same way that neither the fox nor the ape are a complete man, Elizabeth is only ever masculine in her rhetoric. She can use all the political posturing she wants; she is still not King; she is as much an imposter as the fox and the ape. It is important at this point to highlight the significance of the fact that the lion is gendered as male when he is asleep. Just as the male lion puts the kingdom in jeopardy by lying dormant, so too do the male attributes of Elizabeth by being completely absent. The concerns that are raised about the fox, the ape and the gendering of the lion force the reader to consider what other attributes Elizabeth might be missing that would, if she had them, make her an effective monarch.

Although there are more links to be explored in the third section of *Complaints*, the ones that have been discussed are those that relate to the military, religion, court and monarchy. In relation to the military links, the ape's armour can be seen as a counterfeit of the true armour of God that is donned by Redcross Knight in Book I of *The Faerie Queene*. Yet, when *Ruines of Rome* is taken into account, there is no difference between the counterfeit and the hero, in that both of these sublunary characters will die and be forgotten. Both *Mother Hubberds Tale* and *Ruines of Rome* deal with the idea of *translatio imperii*; they both work to emphasise that Ireland is the major obstacle to the westward movement of empire. The religious links between these poems begin with a criticism of the new clergy of the Reformed Church, while lamenting the ruins of the old united Church – specifically those found in Ireland. The references to Saint Radegund show that there are many ways to

gain a benefice, while also working to criticise the virginal status of the queen. The links between the poems that relate to the court begin the exploration into the fox and ape as a composite man, and go on to show that it is idleness at court that breeds discontent. It is at this point also that those that the fox and the ape speak to begin to become more beastly, while they themselves work to be more like man. The final section dealing with the monarch questions the use of sleep in the final episode of *Mother Hubberds Tale*, contrasting the lion with sleeping Caesars spoken of in *Ruines of Rome*. The lion is shown to be referred to as both male and female. It is female when it is acting at court, but male when it is sleeping; thus showing that the greatest flaw in the monarch is her dormant – or even non-existent – masculinity. When *Mother Hubberds Tale* is juxtaposed with *Ruines of Rome*, it ceases to be simply a text that satirizes contemporary society; rather, it becomes a prophecy of what will befall England if these various segments of society fail to reform. The social ills that brought about the destruction of Rome, are shown to be current in England; thus the poet acts as foreseer of future destruction by looking back at the ruins of that old empire that are bearing down on the borders of his land.

## Chapter V: Contemplating the Supercelestial in *Muiopotmos*: Or *The Fate of the Butterflie and the Visions*

In the same way that the first section of *Complaints* – running from signatures A-D<sub>4</sub>, and containing *The Ruines of Time* – can be seen as an introduction to the volume, the final section – running from signatures T-Z<sub>4</sub>, which is made up of *Muiopotmos*, *Visions of the Worlds Vanitie*, *The Visions of Bellay*, and *The Visions of Petrarch* – can be seen as its conclusion. As has been argued in the First Chapter of this thesis, the structure of *The Ruines of Time* foreshadows what will happen in this final section. Lines 491-686 contain twelve ‘tragicke Pageants’ (l. 490), or visions, that materialise while the narrator has shifted his gaze from the mutable Earth to the immutable heavens. At first glance, it seems as though these twelve visions could even be sonnets, as they are each fourteen lines long (two stanzas per vision). They have also been numbered, further highlighting their separation from the rest of the poem and identifying them as self-contained within the broader work. However, aside from the numbering and the fact that they are fourteen lines each, they do not fit any traditional rhyme schemes associated with the sonnet. The turn also occurs far too early, favouring the natural break that occurs with the stanza rather than in the final couplet (or even sestet). It should be noted that in his *Rime Sparse* 323, Petrarch also has the volta occur ‘precisely at the midpoint’ of each sonnet (McCabe 641). So by favouring the break in the rhyme royal stanza, Spenser can be seen to be looking back to Petrarch. However, when Spenser translates *Rime Sparse* 323 as *The Visions of Petrarch*, which is also the last poem in *Complaints*, he does not ‘[achieve] consistency in the positioning of the “volta”’ (McCabe 641). For McCabe, ‘[the] insecurity of the new form – which may well be deliberate – is therefore at odds with the clear, dichotomous dynamics of the original structure’ (641). By evoking

Petrarch in the final section of *The Ruines of Time*, with the volta placed at the midpoint of each ‘sonnet’, Spenser is reinforcing that the instability of the volta in *The Visions of Petrarch* is deliberate, thus raising concerns about whether this final section will revert to chaos. The final section of *Complaints*, like the visions that occur at the end of *The Ruines of Time*, sees the narrator of the poems shift his gaze from earth to heaven. It is in this final section of the volume that the transcendent flight that is promised in *The Teares of the Muses* – wherein the soul travels from this sublunary plane, through the spheres, arriving finally within the immovable sphere – should finally be realised. As with *The Faerie Queene* – Books I and VII in particular – there is a movement towards apocalypse in *Complaints*, but questions are raised throughout this final section about whether the transcendence that is promised will actually be achieved. While addressing these ideas of transcendence, this chapter will also highlight techniques that Spenser uses to build momentum in the narrative that runs through all four poems. The narrative links that will be investigated relate to ideas of literary pictorialism, sleep and death, and the cosmic drama of creation, fall, and apocalypse.

Before I focus specifically on the unifying forces at play in this final section of *Complaints*, I will highlight some of the ways it looks back to the previous section, which contains *Mother Hubberds Tale* and *Ruines of Rome*. Spenser’s use of another Greek title for the opening poem in this final part of *Complaints* signals a link with the third section, which has just been discussed in Chapter Four. However, unlike ‘prosopopoia’, ‘Muipotmos’ is not a literary term. Rather, it translates as fly fate (Judith Dundas 186).<sup>42</sup> Thus, the subtitle – ‘Or The Fate of the Butterflie’ – is simply Spenser’s translation of the Greek title, rather than an attempt to attribute a

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<sup>42</sup> *Muia* = fly and *potmos* = fate.

controversial poem to another. The editors of *The Yale Edition of the Shorter Poems of Edmund Spenser* see in this subtitle ‘the first sign of mock-heroic deflation in the poem’ (413). This subtitle sets the tone for what is to follow, but significantly resonates with what has come before. Focussing on the typescript for a moment, the formatting of the titles and subtitles for the third and fourth sections of *Complaints* are almost identical. In both, the Greek title is set in capital letters, followed by some form of punctuation – a period in the case of *Mother Hubberds Tale* and a comma for *Muiopotmos*. The title is then followed on the next line by the word ‘Or’ in italics. The rest of the subtitle, in both, is then all in italics, followed by a period. The dedicatory note is all in regular type, with italics for the titles that the ladies bear. The word ‘Dedicated’ has not been reset between pressings. These visual similarities invite the perceptive reader to draw comparisons between the third and fourth sections of *Complaints*.

These comparisons are further encouraged by the types of poems that are found in the third and fourth sections of *Complaints*. The third section contains an original poem (*Mother Hubberds Tale*) followed by a translation (*Ruines of Rome*), while the fourth section contains two original poems (*Muiopotmos* and *Visions of the Worlds Vanitie*) followed by two translations (*The Visions of Bellay* and *The Visions of Petrarch*). It can be argued that the second section is also made up of an original poem (*The Teares of the Muses*) followed by a translation (*Virgils Gnat*); but the original poem in this section is not a beast fable, and the translation is from classical Latin literature, rather than more contemporary French. The forms do differ in the two original poems: *Mother Hubberds Tale* is written in rhyming couplets, reminiscent of a tale that might fit into *The Canterbury Tales*; while *Muiopotmos* is in the more complex *ottava rima* – harking back to *Virgils Gnat* which also adopts

this form. On the other hand, the translations that are in sections three and four are all sonnets in varied forms. *Ruines of Rome* is a collection of English sonnets, *Visions of the Worlds Vanitie* is the more complex Spenserian, *The Visions of Bellay* is English, and *The Visions of Petrarch* is mostly English, with the Envoy written as a Spenserian sonnet. As such, Spenser has not only translated the language of these poems (from French to English) but also the form (from Petrarchan to English and Spenserian). The order of the poems is also of significance. It would have been perfectly reasonable for a publisher, or printer, to place *The Visions of Bellay* directly after *Ruines of Rome*, as they are both translations of works by Du Bellay (*Ruines of Rome* is a translation of Du Bellay's *Les Antiquitez de Rome* and *The Visions of Bellay* is a translation of *Un Songe ou Vision*). In Du Bellay's works, *Les Antiquitez de Rome* and *Un Songe ou Vision* are bound and published together. There are at least three reasons that they might be separated within *Complaints*: first, there is symmetry in having one original poem followed by a translation and then two original works followed by two translations; second, by separating the two works by Du Bellay *Complaints* maintains its own internal unity; and third, '[the] reordering of the poems and inclusion of new material, in *Complaints* undoes [the] progression from complaint to consolation' that was previously found in Du Bellay (Mark David Rasmussen 230).

The final dedicatory note is addressed 'To the right worthy and vertuous Ladie; the La: *Carey*', Elizabeth Spencer – the daughter of Sir John Spencer of Althorp, sister of Alice and Anne, and wife of Sir George Carey.<sup>43</sup> Within Spenser's canon, the first mention of Elizabeth Carey occurs in the dedicatory sonnets that are

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<sup>43</sup> For more on Lady Carey, see Elaine V. Beilin's 'Carey, Elizabeth, Lady Hunsdon [*née* Elizabeth Spencer; *other married name* Elizabeth Eure, Lady Eure] (1552–1618)' in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

attached to the 1590 edition of *The Faerie Queene*. Within the sonnet that is addressed ‘To the most vertuous, and beautiful Lady, *the Lady Carew*’, Spenser promises to – at a later point – celebrate her ‘[in] ampler wise’ (l. 14). A. C. Hamilton sees the fulfilment of this promise in *Muiopotmos* (735). Fletcher takes this argument a little further, by claiming that the ‘faire Ladie’ spoken of in *The Visions of Petrarch* is referring to Carey, thus proving that the whole final section of *Complaints* is dedicated to her. As such, she has become Spenser’s ‘Laura’ in his translations of Petrarch. It is fair to say that Carey has become an ill-defined – and even contentious – figure in Spenser scholarship. A. H. Bullen, in an earlier version of the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* ‘supported the hypothesis that some or all of the versions of Spenser’s “Visions of Petrarch” included in *Complaints* (1590) [were] the works of the elder Elizabeth Carey’ (Duncan-Jones 305). He goes on to argue that Spenser had included these poems – translated by Carey – in *Complaints* ‘in order to gratify an aristocratic patroness who fancied herself as a poet’ (Duncan-Jones 305). Elaine V. Beilin, in the updated *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* entry for Elizabeth Carey, claims that Thomas Nashe’s dedication to her in *The Terrors of the Night* – wherein he says that Carey had ‘purchased divine Petrarch another monument in England’ – is ‘either a reference to her patronage or to her own writing’ (1). Katherine Duncan-Jones refutes Bullen’s claim that Elizabeth Carey authored Spenser’s *Visions of Petrarch* (305); contending that it is Carey’s daughter – also Elizabeth Carey (Bess) – who translated works by Petrarch. Duncan-Jones then goes on to publish transcriptions of Bess’s translations, from Berkley Manuscripts General Series Miscellaneous Papers 31/15. Thus, any connection of Elizabeth Carey (née Spencer) with Petrarch as translator – as interesting as these connections may be in relation to the sociality of texts and

intertextual communication – has to be seen as tenuous, and more than likely the result of mistaken identity (Bess being mistaken for her mother).

Elizabeth Carey (née Spencer) can, however, be seen as the dedicatee for all four of the poems that make up the final section. Further evidence for this can be found in the use of ‘flowers’ in the dedicatory note. In this note, Spenser says that he will ‘offer these fewe leaues’, which are to ‘be as to offer flowers to the Gods for their diuine benifites’ (ll. 2-4). The reference to ‘these fewe leaues’, if it was to have occurred on its own, would suggest a single poem on multiple sheets of paper. However, when it occurs with the plural ‘flowers’, there is a suggestion that Spenser is referring to more than one work. In *Virgils Gnat*, after the narrator catalogues the flowers that are to be found at the monument to the gnat, he states:

And whatsoeuer other *flowre* of worth,  
And whatso other herb of louely hew  
The ioyous Spring out of the ground brings forth,  
To cloath her selfe in colours fresh and new;  
He planted there, and reard a mount of earth,  
In whose high front was writ as doth ensue. (ll. 681-6; emphasis added)

It is the spring that brings the flowers forth out of the ground, having previously been planted there by the shepherd. This ties into the overall imagery used within *Complaints* in which springs – as with the ‘siluer Springs of *Helicone*’ (*The Teares of the Muses* l. 5) – and rivers represent the eternal; at the same time, they contribute to creativity, being something against which an instrument can be tuned: ‘Which once he made, as by a spring to laye, / *And tuned it vnto the Waters fall*’ (‘April’ ll. 35-6; emphasis added). The shepherd, then, is representative of the poet, who sits by

the waters side tuning his voice, or another instrument, to the sound of the water. This being the case, the flowers can be seen as the resultant creation that occurs when the spring and the poet work together. It is interesting to note that the flowers that have been offered in *Virgils Gnat* have not been offered to the Gods, but rather to a gnat. The flower simile is not the only link that *Muiopotmos* has with *Virgils Gnat*; the link between these poems is further strengthened by comparing the dedicatory sonnet of *Virgils Gnat* and the dedicatory note of *Muiopotmos*. The dedicatory note ends with the plea to Elizabeth Carey to ‘of all things therein according to your wonted graciousness to make a milde construction’ (ll. 19-20). McCabe notes that in asking her to ‘make a milde construction’, or an ‘innocent interpretation’, ‘Spenser disavows and simultaneously encourages political interpretation’ (631). This harks back to the dedicatory sonnet addressed to Leicester, in which Spenser invites the reader to discover the riddle of *Virgils Gnat*. In any event, the poems that make up this final section are metaphorically referred to as flowers in the dedicatory note, and they are all dedicated to Elizabeth Carey. As such, these poems can be read as one work, sharing narrative strands. The remainder of this chapter will work to identify these strands, and illustrate how they work to bring unity to this final part of *Complaints*.

The first strand that will be addressed is the ecphrasis that binds *Muiopotmos* and the *Visions* together. The visual links shared between *Muiopotmos* and the *Visions* that follow give this final section of *Complaints* an economy that is not found earlier in the volume. John B. Bender, commenting on the literary pictorialism of Spenser’s shorter poems, states: ‘The *Muiopotmos*, one of Spenser’s most extended pieces of ecphrastic writing, is laden with visual references’ (162). At first, these visual references may seem as divergent asides that break up the continuity of

the poem as a whole. However, the perceptive reader will realise that these visual references work to both help the narrative gain momentum, building towards the climactic fate of Clarion, and as important links between *Muiopotmos* and the other three poems. Using the description of Clarion's beauty as an example of how the visual elements help the narrative to gain momentum, Bender argues that

the victory [of Minerva over Arachne] is convincing because Spenser has already shown the butterfly with considerable pictorial force earlier in *Muiopotmos*. The carefully balanced economy of such a short narrative poem makes repetition of the original unnecessary and undesirable, so lines that sketch and recall the first image make it function again. (167)

Hence, Spenser uses the visual references, such as the extended description of Clarion's beauty and the shorter sketch of the butterfly in Minerva's tapestry, in such a way that the reader is forced to place the images side by side in their mind and see the combined whole. Kenneth Gross argues that, in *The Faerie Queene*, Spenser creates a 'repetition of scenes in which icons, statues, phantasms, illusions, and so on are first elaborately described and then summarily transgressed, broken, dissolved' (16). This can be seen to apply to *Complaints* in some respects, but Spenser is also inviting the reader to juxtapose the visual elements of *Muiopotmos* with the visual elements of the other three visionary poems that follow. An example of this is the Bull that appears in Arachne's tapestry as well as the second sonnet of *Visions of the Worlds Vanitie*. In *Muiopotmos*

*Arachne* figur'd how *Iove* did abuse  
*Europa* like a Bull, and on his backe  
Her through the sea did beare; so liuely seene,

That it true Sea, and true Bull ye would weene. (277-80)

The episode that Spenser chooses to use is one of the twenty-one amorous scenes that Arachne depicts in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (McCabe 635). Renwick states of Arachne's tapestry in *Muiopotmos* that it is 'so clearly visualised as to suggest that Spenser knew a good picture of the Rape of Europa' (254). When the Bull of *Muiopotmos* is compared to the 'Bull as white as driven snowe' found in *Visions of the Worlds Vanitie* (l. 16), it works in the same way as the descriptions of Clarion's beauty. Although Europa was violated by a god, in the shape of a Bull, that Bull is 'vext so sore' by a Brize (l. 26), or gadfly. The descriptions of the Bull and of Clarion are but two examples of how the reader is encouraged by Spenser to use these visual references to gain access to the deeper meaning he is trying to convey.

Spenser does not limit the use of this momentum building narrative technique to his ecphrastic passages; he also adopts this technique for the themes of sleep and death, which continue from earlier in *Complaints* and run through these last four poems. Chapter Four briefly discussed the perils of sleep, in relation to the shepherd in *Virgils Gnat*. It was observed that, in that instance, sleep has been depicted as an oppressor. Sleep is able to overpower the shepherd in *Virgils Gnat* because he has been lulled into a false sense of security within the pleasant bower, leaving him vulnerable to attack. Sleep gives the serpent power over the shepherd, and threatens to bring about another fall. There is a thin line between sleep and death within *Virgils Gnat*. In Conti's *Mythologiae*, 'Orpheus added Death as the sister of Sleep' (195). Thus, they can be seen as being related; which makes sense, because sleep is also seen as a temporary death. Death and sleep are key themes that link the last four poems within *Complaints* to each other.

The final lines of *Muiopotmos* read:

[...] his [the butterfly's] deepe groning spright

In bloodie streames foorth fled into the aire,

His bodie left the spectacle of care. (ll. 438-40)

Having been stabbed through the heart by Aragnoll, Clarion's spirit leaves his body and begins its journey towards the empyrean – the dwelling place of the gods.

Within the world of *Muiopotmos*, death is defined as the separation of 'bodie' and 'spright'. Bearing this definition in mind, the narrator of *Visions of the Worlds*

*Vanitie* could be seen as being dead at the start of the poem:

One day, whiles my daylie cares did sleepe,

My spirit, shaking off her earthly prison,

Began to enter into meditation deepe

Of things exceeding reach of common reason [...] (ll. 1-4)

The intermingling of sleep and death that occurs in *Visions of the Worlds Vanitie* is echoed in Peter Brown's assertion that dreaming 'may be associated with death and rebirth, with entering darkness and emerging into light, with anonymity, with a sense of freedom, with deliberate privation, which may include poverty, nakedness, ordeal, submissiveness, and humility' (49). Given that these lines occur directly following the ones quoted above that relate to Clarion, who is dead, it is possible that *Visions of the Worlds Vanitie* can be read as a continuation of Clarion's narrative; indeed, his own dream vision. The idea that Clarion could be the one uttering these words adds poignancy to the descriptions of the small overcoming the great that are to follow. In the final sonnet of *Visions of the Worlds Vanitie*, the narrator explains that his 'spright was greatly moued in her rest', because of the visions that have been

witnessed, but there is no reuniting of this spirit and body. The narrator of *Visions of the Worlds Vanitie* does not awake from his sleep, suggesting that it is something a little more permanent.

The opening lines of *The Visions of Bellay* offer a certain level of ambiguity that makes it unclear as to whether the narrator is just going to sleep or is still asleep. They read:

It was the time, when rest soft sliding downe  
From heauens hight into mens heauy eyes,  
In the forgetfulness of sleepe doth drowne  
The carefull thoughts of mortall miseries [...] (ll. 1-4)

The narrator does not refer to himself in these opening lines at all. Yet in the lines that follow we read that a ‘Ghost before *mine* eyes’ appears (l. 5 – emphasis added). The lack of first person pronouns in the opening four lines would suggest that the narrator is describing the general time of day that these visions occurred, rather than asserting that he himself was falling asleep. Thus, the narrator may already be asleep (or dead), seamlessly picking up where *Visions of the Worlds Vanitie* left off. However, unlike the narrator of *Visions of the Worlds Vanitie*, the narrator of *The Visions of Bellay* ‘wakte in sudden wonder’ (l. 210). Again, the narrator of *The Visions of Petrarch* follows on seamlessly from *The Visions of Bellay*:

Being one day at my window all alone,  
So manie strange things happened me to see,  
As much grieueth me to think thereon. (ll. 1-3)

The visions that the narrator of *The Visions of Petrarch* sees are while in a state of wakefulness, rather than sleep. As can be seen from the above instances, the state of death/sleep/wakefulness that the narrators experience within this final section of *Complaints* offers a seamless narrative link that gains momentum through all four poems.

Whether the narrator is asleep or dead, *Visions of the Worlds Vanitie* and *Visions of Bellay* can be seen as continuations of the dream visions introduced in *The Ruines of Time* and *Virgils Gnat*. These dream visions evoke memories of Spenser's earlier use of Langland's *The Vision of Piers Plowman* and the pseudo-Chaucerian *Plowman's Tale* as sources for *The Shepheardes Calender* and *The Faerie Queene*. *The Vision of Piers Plowman* significantly influences the way in which Spenser approaches dream poetry. While Langland was Catholic, in *The Vision of Piers Plowman* he is seen by English Protestants to have 'amalgamated simple colloquial speech and subjective inward piety in a manner that was thought compatible with Protestant belief in justification by faith alone and the priesthood of all believers' (John N. King 23). Indications that Spenser has been influenced by Langland can first be found in *The Shepheardes Calender*, especially in 'Maye' and the epilogue found at the end of the gloss for 'December'. The argument to 'Maye' introduces Piers and Palinodie as representing 'two forms of pastoures or Ministers, or the protestant and the Catholique'. The order in which the names and the churches are presented in the argument suggest that Piers should be associated with the Protestant church and Palinodie with the Catholic. A. C. Hamilton cites Robert Crowley, who was responsible for the 1550 edition of *Piers Plowman* (a print copy of the B-Text), when he writes:

For his age, Langland's poem was a covert allegory: 'the sence [is] somewhat darcke,' Crowley writes, 'but not so harde, but that it may be [understood] of suche as will not sticke to break the shelle of the nutte for the kernelles sake.' It was interpreted as a bitter satire against the Church of Rome, and its author honoured as a Protestant and prophet. ('Spenser and Langland' 535)

Thus, Hamilton uses Crowley to show that Spenser's contemporaries had cast Langland as a Protestant, and not just a Catholic arguing for reform. He is read, by the Elizabethans, as being able to anticipate, and hold a mirror up to, the grossest sins committed by the Church through his allegorical satire. The association, then, of Piers with the Protestant church in 'Maye' is not all that surprising, given that the name had by now become synonymous with Protestantism.

The other reference, found in the epilogue to *The Shepheardes Calender*, which is found after the gloss for 'December', is more complex:

Goe lyttle Calendar, thou hast a free passeporte,  
Goe but in lowly gate emongste the meaner sort.  
Dare not to match thy pype with Tityrus hys style,  
Nor with the Pilgrim that the Ploughman playde a whyle [...] (ll. 7-10)

The plea to '[goe] lyttle Calendar' repeats Immerito's command to '[goe] little booke' at the start of *The Shepheardes Calender*. This repetition brings *The Shepheardes Calender* full circle, ending it where it began; while at the same time inviting the reader to think again of Ovid's *Tristia* and Chaucer's *Troilus*. Spenser concludes, as he began, as an Ovidian outcast, whose 'booke'/'Calendar' needs to go and plead his case before a disgruntled monarch. Despite the Ovidian tone, the

‘Roman Tityrus’ and the ‘Romish Tityrus’ (‘Epistle’ ll. 6-7; ‘October’ [55]), as E. K. points out, are ‘wel knowen to be Virgile’ (‘October’ [55]). However, when the Roman designation is dropped, then E. K. explains ‘[that] by Tityrus is meant Chaucer’ (‘June’ [81]). So all that is left now is to identify the Pilgrim. During Spenser’s lifetime, there were editions of *The Canterbury Tales* that included the pseudo-Chaucerian *Plowman’s Tale*. It is, therefore, possible that Spenser is referring to the fictional pilgrim, the Ploughman that is telling the tale within the continuation of *The Canterbury Tales*. A more likely reading, given the influence that Langland has already had on *The Shepheardes Calender*, is that Spenser’s ‘Pilgrim that the Ploughman played a while’ – with its wonderful alliterative allusion – is a reference ‘to those climactic stages of Langland’s poem where the pilgrim Piers plays the role of the plowman’ (Hamilton 533). Spenser’s earlier work is clearly in dialogue with the perceived Protestantism of *Piers Plowman*.

The influence of Langland’s work also extends into *The Faerie Queene*. As A. C. Hamilton explains, in his essay ‘Spenser and Langland’ that is found in *Studies in Philology*, ‘[his] specific purpose [...] is to show how *The Faerie Queene* Book I is significantly related to *Piers Plowman*’ (536). He goes on to state that this ‘relation is not that of poem to source: instead they are parallel as analogues’ (536). Hamilton then shows how they are analogous by matching specific Cantos in *The Faerie Queene* to the corresponding Passus (or Step) in *Piers Plowman*. He argues that the poems only really diverge at the end, where he points out that ‘Langland’s satire ends with a vision of chaos: Peace, the porter of Unitas, is overborne by the hypocrisy of Friars and Antichrist reigns. Spenser’s heroic poem – or Book I at least – ends with a vision of divine order: the hypocrisy of Archimago and Duessa is unmasked, and Una enjoys “sure peace for euermore”’ (547). The divergence that

occurs at the end of each work can be seen as a result of the differing genres adopted: the satire ends in chaos so that the work can act as a warning to those that read it of what will happen if there is no reform; while the epic romance ends with the knight defeating the embodiments of evil. In both instances, the works live up to their generic expectations. The use of dream visions in the final section of *Complaints* could be seen as signalling to the reader that this volume is going to resist what it has previously promised to do, in *The Ruines of Time* and *Teares of the Muses*, and will in fact, as a satiric text in the tradition of *Piers Plowman*, revert to a vision of chaos.

However, these messages become muddled when the Chaucerian influences on these poems are acknowledged. By adopting aspects of Chaucer's dream poetry, especially the theme of contemplation, Spenser offers a means of gaining transcendence. Throughout his career, Spenser reworks, completes, and is inspired by the works of Chaucer: *Daphnaïda* is a reworking of *The Book of the Duchess*; 'The Squires Tale' from *The Canterbury Tales* finally finds a conclusion in *The Faerie Queene*; and *Mother Hubberds Tale* is very Chaucerian in its form and language. All of the above instances are fairly obvious links that occur between the two writers, and have been largely commented on already.<sup>44</sup> What has not found mention is the way in which Chaucer has influenced the dream poetry that occurs at the end of *Complaints*.

The works that are generally accepted as being Chaucer's dream poems are: *The Book of the Duchess*, *House of Fame*, and *Parliament of Fowls*. All three of

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<sup>44</sup> For example, see D. Harris and N. L. Steffen's 'The Other Side of the Garden: An Interpretive Comparison of Chaucer's *Boof of the Duchess* and Spenser's *Daphnaïda*' in *JMRS*; Patrick Cheney's 'Spenser's Completion of *The Squire's Tale*: Love, Magic, and Heroic Action in the Legend of Cambell and Triamond' in *JMRS*; and Kathryn Walls' 'Spenser and the "Medieval" Past: A Question of Definition' in *Spenser in the Moment*.

these works are considered to be early works within the corpus of Chaucer's writings. F. H. Whitman argues that there is structural unity to be found in these three poems; Chaucer

[...] was primarily interested in adopting a meditative framework.

Accordingly he gave an important place in each poem to the literature of the past. In these sections the main themes are generated, the same themes which afterwards in the dream visions are further explored. [...] The start of learning, thus, lies in reading, but its consummation lies in meditation (236)

Within each of these three poems, the narrator, finding that he cannot sleep, decides to read a classical text of some sort or another. While doing so, he comes across a truth – or theme, as Whitman puts it. Having stumbled upon this truth while in the act of reading, the narrator, finding that he is finally able to sleep, drifts off and begins to dream. The dream vision that he then has, although not always completely apparent, reiterates the truth that was learnt while reading. This process mimics, within the poetic text, the art of contemplation. It is through contemplation that the narrator – and the reader – is then able to comprehend how he can go about implementing the truth that he has learnt while reading. As such, as Whitman states above, the journey only begins with the discovery of truth; the next step is to comprehend the application of truth, and this only comes through contemplation. Whitman states: 'Macrobius [the medieval authority on dreams] is very explicit about the function of the dream vision. For him it is moral. It is the best means of instilling in the reader the desire to lead a virtuous life, by revealing to him rewards beyond death' (231). All three of these poems illustrate the pattern that needs to be

followed – finding truth through reading, and then contemplating that truth until its practical application becomes apparent – in order to lead a virtuous, moral life.

Towards the end of Book I of *The Faerie Queene* (I. x. 46-68), Spenser allegorises the process of contemplation. During this episode, Redcross comes across an ‘aged holy man’ (I. x. 46), who is named Contemplation – ‘goodnes was his meditation’ (I. x. 46). Redcross is initially received into Contemplation’s hermitage. After some time, Contemplation leads him – and Una – ‘to the highest Mount’ (I. x. 53). This mount is an amalgam of Sinai, which Moses ‘[dwelt] forty daies vpon’ (I. x. 53); Olivet, which was frequented by ‘that deare Lord’ (I. x. 54); and Parnassus, ‘[on] which the thrise three learned Ladies play / Their heuenly notes’ (I. x. 54). Hamilton notes that ‘[the] three mountains (Parnassus, Sinai, and Olivet) are linked to the three traditional dispensations – nature, law, and grace’ (134). By merging these three sites of contemplation – sites which the Muses, Moses, and Christ retreat to, to engage in contemplation – Spenser creates ‘the highest Mount’, the archetypal site for contemplation. While on this mount, Contemplation reveals to Redcross his future role as Saint George (I. x. 60-1), as well as ‘the new Hierusalem’ (I. x. 53-9), and what he needs to do before he can be admitted there (I. x. 63-4). It is Contemplation that shows Redcross what he needs to do to gain salvation; or, in other words, it is Contemplation that shows Redcross how the truth that he has received applies specifically to him. This allegorised lapse into contemplation lacks the initial reading of a classical text that is so crucial in Chaucer’s works. One of the results of this is that the truth that is conveyed comes directly from Contemplation. Thus, in this episode of *The Faerie Queene*, contemplation is more of a revelatory experience than one in which truth is meditated upon.

The Chaucerian pattern of contemplation can be seen a little more clearly in the final section of *Complaints*, particularly in the transition between *Muiopotmos* and *Visions of the Worlds Vanitie*. In the opening lines of *Muiopotmos*, the editors of the *Variorum* observe: ‘Spenser certainly meant his readers to think of the epic statement of the theme in the opening lines of the *Iliad*: “Sing. Goddess, the wrath of Achilles, Peleus’ son, the ruinous wrath brought on the Achaians woes innumerable”’ (394). By so doing, he is establishing the mock-heroic tone of the poem. Yet, it is the Pallas (Minerva)-Arachne myth, from Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, that impacts most on the narrative of *Muiopotmos*. Thus, following the structure of Chaucer’s works, the classical text that the reader has engaged with in a literal sense has been Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*. It is in the retelling of this Ovidian myth that the reader is to come to a knowledge of truth. The contemplation of this truth occurs when the reader moves on to *Visions of the Worlds Vanitie*, which opens:

One day, whiles that my daylie cares did sleep,  
My spirit, shaking off her earthly prison,  
Began to enter into *meditation* deepe  
Of things exceeding reach of common reason [...]  
[...] On which when *as my thought was thoroughly placed*,  
Vnto my eyes strange shewes presented were [...] (ll. 1-4, 9-10  
emphases added)

This opening sonnet emphasises the fact that the visions are only given to the narrator after he has meditated on ‘things exceeding reach of common reason’. Thus, Spenser recreates this Chaucerian pattern of presenting a truth to the reader by referencing a classical text, and then giving to them the visions that occur while in

the act of contemplation. These visions should then be seen as being a restating of the truth previously presented in *Muiopotmos*.

The final example of the seamless narrative links that gain momentum over the course of *Muiopotmos* and the *Visions* is the cosmic drama of the creation, the Edenic garden, the fall from – or loss of – Eden, and the apocalyptic visions of Earth's end. The first of these events is the creation, which is linked to metamorphosis as a key theme that runs throughout *Muiopotmos*. The tapestry-weaving contest that occurs between Pallas and Arachne explores these themes and the relationship between them. This episode is borrowed from Ovid's *Metamorphosis* 6. 1-145, but Spenser does make some significant alterations. As McCabe points out:

In Ovid the tapestries are described in the reverse order and the goddess, incensed to find her work equalled by Arachne, destroys her rival's tapestry and transforms her into a spider when she attempts to hang herself. In Spenser the transformation is the self-induced effects of envy.  
(635)

In Spenser's version, Arachne admits defeat when she sees how skilfully Pallas has wrought the butterfly within her tapestry. Arachne's metamorphosis does not occur immediately. According to the narrative, 'she did inly fret, and felly burne, / And all her blood to poysonous rancor turn. / That shortly from the shape of womanhed [...] She grew to hideous shape of dryrihed' (ll. 343-7). Thus, Arachne undergoes a metamorphosis from woman to spider. This transformation is, in and of itself, a creation, insofar as a dynasty of spiders – of which Aragnoll is a part – comes into being. However, the main creation that occurs is in the tapestries themselves. These

tapestries are not inanimate creations; the narrator imbues them with poetic life and movement. He describes '[the] *dashing* of the waues' (l. 283), 'how she in euerie member *shooke*' (l. 285), the 'light *fluttering*' of Sport upon the waves (l. 290), and 'a Butterflie [...] *Fluttering* among the Oliues wontonly, that seem'd to liue' (ll. 329-32, emphases added). The narrator turns these otherwise static and dead works of art into living and moving creations. Within the poem, the butterfly that is depicted in the tapestry is just as alive as Clarion himself. Arachne's envy is the result of a more perfect creation. This is reminiscent of Milton's *Paradise Lost*, which would later argue that 'Th'infernal Serpent' had been '[stirred] up with envy' and, in an act of revenge, 'decieued the mother of mankind' (l. 34-6). For Milton, envy is the underlying motivation for the serpent to beguile Eve. Arachne, because of her envy, becomes a satanic figure within *Muiopotmos*. Aragnoll, still carrying the family grudge, becomes the agent through which Clarion's paradise will be lost.

Palgrave also finds links between the garden described in *Muiopotmos* and Milton's Eden in *Paradise Lost*:

The stanza in which Clarion flies into the garden wherein the scene is laid has obviously been studied closely by Milton for his pictures of Eden: and Spenser's landscape here, like that in *Paradise Lost*, is nature beautifully felt, yet felt rather through literature, – through poetry if you will, – than through and for itself. (4. lxx-lxxii)

The idea that Spenser's description of Clarion's garden in *Muiopotmos* influenced Milton's description of Eden suggests that Milton may have seen in this episode certain elements that could act as analogues for the Adam and Eve narrative. Milton may have seen, in Clarion, Adam and Eve in their prelapsarian state. While in the

garden, Clarion is in a state of carefree innocence. He is said to be a ‘ioyous Butterflie’ (l. 249), that is ‘[fearles] of foes’, even though he is in ‘hidden ieopardie’ (l. 251). The ‘hidden ieopardie’ that is spoken of in *Muiopotmos* reminds the reader of the snake in *Virgils Gnat*, who did ‘drench himselfe in moorish slime [...] / there from the boyling heate himselfe to hide’ (ll. 251-2); as well as the shepherd, who is – like Clarion – ‘[deuoid] of care, and feare of all falshedd’ (l. 246). Hence, the occupants of both gardens, the shepherd in *Virgils Gnat* and Clarion in *Muiopotmos*, are lulled into a sense of false security. This sense of false security comes as a result of the beauty of the place and the malevolent force being hidden from the occupant’s frame of reference.

Where Clarion is used to represent the Edenic character in *Muiopotmos*, Aragnoll is the embodiment of the unforeseen malevolent force that is lying in wait to destroy his unsuspecting victim. As D. C. Allen states: ‘Thanks to Job 8.14 (His trust shall be like the spider’s web) and Isaiah 59.5 (They have eaten the eggs of asps and woven the webs of spiders), Aragnoll and his house embodied the Christian symbolism that associated them with impiety, heresy, hypocrisy, worldliness, and the very Devil himself’ (844). Thus within the garden symbolism, Aragnoll fills the satanic role of the serpent – whose web is itself a symbol of his deceit and impiety. Allen continues by quoting a commentary on the eleventh century work by Theobaldus, called *Physiologus*, thus:

The Devil catches us as if we were flies; he is always putting traps, nets, and loops in our way so that he can take us through sin. When he takes someone in mortal sin, then he eviscerates and deprives them of grace unless the sinner is rescued by confession and penitence. So the chief snare of the devil is man’s own will and it is only by repentance that he

can avoid it. The spider fears the sun just as the devil fears the Holy Church and the just man, who can also be compared to the sun. Usually the spider weaves his web at night; so the devil weaves his when the just man is less watchful. (844)

Ronald B. Bond problematizes Allen's analysis by arguing that to see Aragnoll only as an analogue for Satan would be to oversimplify what Spenser is doing and make him (Spenser) 'oblivious to aspects of his culture [that] lesser writers did not ignore' (*Edmund Spenser's Poetry* 845). Bond then goes on to show that Clarion is a representation of 'the famous man', and Aragnoll an analogue for envy. Thus, 'decked in all his finery, he [Clarion] is a pregnant reminder of the fame-thirsty courtier who is brought low by his own carelessness and his rivals' envy' (*Edmund Spenser's Poetry* 846). Whether Clarion is seen as a prelapsarian Adam and Eve, or as a 'famous man', it is clear from *Muiopotmos* that he is at least partially responsible for his own fall. Or rather, as William Nelson puts it, 'Clarion falls because like Astery he arouses envy and like Arachne he presumes upon his excellence' (74). Nelson sums up by stating that '*Muiopotmos* is a delightful teaching of the tragic lesson that on earth happiness is its own destruction, that only in heaven or by heavenly intervention is the fruitful olive victorious over chaos and death' (74).

Spenser's later account of Envy, in Book V of *The Faerie Queene* (1596), helps to build some sort of context, while at the same time offering a geographic locale in which Envy is most likely to be encountered. At the end of Book V, Artegall has just freed Irena, and is about to begin his campaign to 'reforme that ragged common-weale' (V. xii. 26. 4). It is at this point that he is called away '[to] Faerie Court, that of necessity / His course of Iustice he was forst to stay' (V. xii. 27.

3-4). It is on his journey back to [Faerie] Court that Artegall is assailed by Envy and Detraction: ‘Tho as he backe returned from that land, / And there arriu’d againe, whence forth he set [...] two old ill fauour’d Hags he met’ (V. xii. 28). Hamilton’s gloss to V. xii. 26-7 reads:

The topical matter that informs these stanzas, the conduct of Lord Grey, the Lord Deputy Governor of Ireland, from 1580 until his recall in 1582, is given in [*A View of the Present State of Ireland*] 106: “ I remember that in the late government of that good Lord Gray, when after long travail and many perilous assays, he had brought things almost to this pass that ye speak of [Irenius has been describing to Eudoxus the wasting of Ireland], that it was even made ready for reformation, and might have been brought to what Her Majesty would, like complaint was made against him, that he was a bloody man, and regarded not the life of her subjects, no more than dogs but had wasted and consumed all, so as now she almost had nothing left but to reign in their ashes”. (597)

According to Hamilton, Artegall is a representation of Grey. Irena is then a thinly veiled reference to Ireland, whom he has freed by killing Grantorto. Grantorto represents ‘*inter alia*, Spanish aggression supported by the Pope in Ireland’ (Hamilton 510 [note to V. i. 3]). Thus, within the allegory, Grey succeeds in removing the influence of international Catholicism in Ireland, and is just about to take on the far greater task of reforming the population of Ireland at large, when he is called back to England because of the unpopular nature of his tactics. It is only when he returns to England, having ‘returned from that land [Ireland]’ and is on his way to court that he is confronted by Envy and Detraction. Even though Book V was

published five years after *Muipotmos*, it can be seen as a possible resource in assisting the reader to locate analogues for Aragnoll and Clarion in Elizabeth's court.

The cosmic drama that is played out across the final four poems concludes with apocalyptic visions of the end of the world. The Revelation [or Apocalypse] of John the Divine is the key source text for these apocalyptic musings. This is first made evident in 1569 with the anonymous *A Theatre for Worldlings*. Within this early work, which is a translation of verses by Du Bellay and Petrarch, the final sonnets from Du Bellay's *Un Songe ou Vision* are replaced by apocalyptic visions. The first of these four new sonnets (sonnet 12) relates the visions seen by John in Revelation 13, of the arrival of a seven headed beast, out of the sea, that has the body of a Leopard, the feet of a bear, and the throat of a lion. This beast is said to have been given power by the 'mightie Dragon' (l. 6). The gloss to the Geneva Bible, as has been stated above, explains that this seven headed beast is a representation of 'the Romaine empire which standeth in crueltie and tyrannie' (gloss a, Rev. 13:1). The next sonnet (sonnet 13), with its accompanying woodcut, matches up to Revelation 17-18, in which a woman riding on that seven headed beast is described. She is said to be a representation of Babylon within the sonnet. The Geneva Bible associates this woman with 'the Antichrist, that is, the Pope' within its gloss (gloss f, Rev. 17:4). Sonnet 14, and its woodcut, tell of a 'faithfull man with flaming countenance' that is riding on a white horse (ll. 1-2). This man does battle with the seven headed beast and Kings of the earth, and defeats them. This sonnet is linked to Rev. 19, where the man on the white horse is glossed as being a representation of Christ. The final sonnet in *A Theatre for Worldlings* (sonnet 15) and its woodcut deal with the vision that John receives of the New Jerusalem, while he is caught up to a high mountain. This vision is taken from Revelation 20-21. The vision of the New

Jerusalem is also given to Redcross in Book I of *The Faerie Queene*, when he has been taken to the top of a high mountain by the hermit Contemplation. Both *A Theatre for Worldlings* and Book I of *The Faerie Queene* end with this moment of vision that comes as a result of contemplation. And while these visions are removed in favour of the original four sonnets from Du Bellay's *Un Songe ou Vision* when Spenser reworks his translation in *The Visions of Bellay*, there are still remnants of these apocalyptic visions that remain.

Even within Du Bellay's *Un Songe ou Visions* there are references to a beast '[dont] se formoit un corps à sept cheffz merueilleux'<sup>45</sup> (l. 5, sonnet 8); and 'une Cité quasi semblable à celle / Que vit le messanger de la bonne nouvelle'<sup>46</sup> (ll. 2-3, sonnet 14), which is reminiscent both of the New Jerusalem seen by John and Babylon which will fall. Within *The Visions of Bellay* Spenser makes subtle alterations to both of the above mentioned sonnets, and in so doing gives them a slightly different emphasis. In Du Bellay's eighth sonnet, the cities and castles ('villes et chasteaux' – l. 6) are said to 'couvoir sous sa poitrine' (l. 6) – translated by Helgerson: 'which hatched [...] under its breast' (287). While in Spenser's *The Visions of Bellay* these 'townes and castles vnder her brest did coure' (l. 104). In Du Bellay's work, the beast seems to hatch these cities and castles, or in other words, these cities and castle have their origins with the beast. However, in Spenser's translation, the towns and castles are already present and 'coure' at the coming of the beast. In Spenser they are besieged by, rather than originate from, the beast. Given the association of this beast with Rome, it is not surprising that Spenser might portray his English towns and castles as being besieged by this beast. Within the fourteenth sonnet in *The Visions of Bellay*, Spenser changes the gender of the city from neuter to feminine. This

<sup>45</sup> 'From which a body with seven wondrous heads was formed' (trans. Helgerson 287).

<sup>46</sup> 'I saw a city much like the one the herald of good news saw' (trans. Helgerson 292).

change is in keeping with John's designation of both Jerusalem and Babylon as feminine. Hence, it can be seen that Spenser has emphasised Du Bellay's allusions to The Revelation of John the Divine within *The Visions of Bellay*, and adapted these allusions to his English context.<sup>47</sup>

The transcendence that is hoped for in *The Visions of Petrarch* can be read as a type of neoplatonic flight. In the words of the fifteenth century Florentine philosopher, Marsilio Ficino, in his commentary on Plato's *Philibus*:

[...] the minds of those practicing philosophy, having recovered their wings through wisdom and justice, as soon as they have left the body, fly back to the heavenly kingdom. In heaven they perform the same duties as on earth. United with God in truth, they rejoice. United with each other in freedom, they give thanks. They watch over men dutifully, and as interpreters of God and as prophets, what they have set in motion here they complete there. They turn the minds of men towards God. They interpret the secret mysteries of God to human minds. (*Letters* 3:18 (31)).

As Valery Rees observes, '[the] location of this heaven is the supercelestial world' (83). The supercelestial world is one that is immutable, and corresponds to the Ptolemaic *empyrean* spoken of in Chapter Two. For Ficino, the separation of the body and the mind does not only occur at death, but can be accomplished while still alive, through philosophical enquiry and meditation. Within Ficino's philosophical framework, there are at least five levels of being. They are, from lowest to highest: the body, active power, the soul, the angelic mind, and God (Rees 78).<sup>48</sup> To ascend

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<sup>47</sup> See Anne Lake Prescott's article, 'Hills of Contemplation and Signifying Circles: Spenser and Guy Le Fèvre de la Boderie' in *Spenser Studies* 24, to see how St John's apocalyptic vision of 'a new heaven, and a new earth' are adapted to the English context of St George (Rev. 21:1-2).

<sup>48</sup> An ascent that the fox and the ape parody as they climb the social ladder in *Mother Hubberds Tale*.

to the supercelestial, one must cast off the body and move through these states of being, until they are united with God. Rees argues that, '[while] the invocations of *Fowre Hymnes* appear to envisage some contemplative union of the poet with the divine in this life, achieved by means of inspiration, the narrative of *The Faerie Queene* would often seem to deny that' (85). For Rees, this is one way in which Ficino and Spenser differ; in Ficino, the ascent can happen while still alive, but in Spenser it only occurs after death. As has been mentioned in Chapter Two, *Complaints* as a volume deals with an ascent to the *empyrean* or supercelestial. The culmination of this ascent is one of the key links within this final section, and is summed up in the concluding sonnet of *The Visions of Petrarch*. It is clear from the second quatrain that the world weary narrator can only 'turn vnto [his] happie rest' (l. 90), when his spirit has been freed from his mortal, mutable, corruptible, body (l. 91) – the same separation that has been addressed in *Muiopotmos* and *Visions of the Worlds Vanitie*. Thus, it is vain to place trust in 'this base world' (l. 96), which is only temporary; one should instead 'think on heauens blis' (l. 96), which, being eternal, is the only true existence. However, the concluding lines of the sonnet problematize the ascent that the volume is trying to achieve. They are addressed to the 'faire Ladie' (l. 93), and read:

And though ye be the fairest of Gods creatures,  
Yet think, that death shall spoyle your goodly features. (ll. 97-8)

These lines contemplate the instability, and mutability, of earthly beauty. Rather than offering beauty as the means by which love can be achieved, whereby an ascent to the supercelestial can be accomplished, it is shown to be mutable and death is the ultimate outcome. In this instance, meditation over other texts and contemplation have led the poet to offer a warning to the 'faire Ladie' rather than offer her solace

and hope. The volume ends with the poet, having ascended to the supercelestial himself, offering, as a prophet, moral guidance that is ultimately hopeless because the lady has already set her heart on the vanities of the world.

Richard Danson Brown sees Spenser's 'avoidance of closure' as being 'characteristic of his developing resistance to the moralism of traditional poetry' (263); noting that '[he] accepts that lived experience is more complex than the learned experience promoted by traditional moralism' (263). When Brown draws these conclusions, he is speaking specifically of *The Ruines of Time*, *The Teares of the Muses*, and *Muiopotmos*, which he terms '[the] major *Complaints*' (263); he is not referring to the *Complaints* volume as a whole. Mark David Rasmussen, on the other hand, is referring to all of *Complaints* when he argues that 'the collection closes with a relapse into plaintiveness' ('*Complaints* and *Daphnaïda* (1591)' 230). While agreeing with Brown and Rasmussen to an extent, this chapter set out to add nuance to these arguments by identifying narrative progressions that ran through the final four poems that point towards transcendence. This chapter began by showing that Spenser conscientiously used Greek titles for the third and fourth parts of *Complaints*. It was subsequently argued that this was done to force the reader to draw comparisons between these two sections; which in turn led to a discussion about how the poems have been divided into these sections – with a particular emphasis on the Du Bellay translations. There are three possible explanations for the way the poems are organised in sections three and four: first, they have been divided in this way to emphasise symmetry; second, the grouping of the poems in this way highlights the thematic unity that was argued in Chapter Two; and third, they have been grouped this way to undo the volume's overall movement from complaint to consolation. It could be argued quite convincingly that Spenser is attempting to do

all of the above; and if *Complaints* really is attempting to withhold consolation, it would appear that it is also going to refuse to move towards the heavenly bliss of the supercelestial, returning instead to plaintiveness. So, the dedicatory note to Lady Carey, Elizabeth Spencer, is focused on to illustrate Spenser's use of the florilegium motif; thus showing that the four poems that make up the final part of *Complaints* can be read as one poem, that share common narrative threads. The three narrative threads that are focused on pertain to literary pictorialism; sleep and death; and the creation, fall, and apocalypse. Spenser uses literary pictorialism to describe objects in minute detail when they are first introduced in the text, so that they can be simply mentioned later on, giving the poems in this section a wonderful economy. It was then shown that Spenser does something similar with the themes of sleep and death, which are described in detail in *Virgils Gnat*, and then briefly in the final four poems. While discussing sleep and death, it was shown that Langland was evoked through the use of dream visions, thus anticipating a return to chaos at the end of the volume; Chaucer is also brought to remembrance, as Spenser adopts his methods of mimicking contemplation; thus, there are mixed messages, because of the seeming generic obligations imposed by Langland to revert to chaos, set beside Chaucerian contemplation, with the promise of transcendence. These mixed messages persist in the final sonnet in *Complaints* when – following the culmination of the creation, fall, and apocalypse – the narrator seems to gain transcendence through death, while the fair lady is overcome by the vanities of the world. In any event, it is clear throughout this final section that transcendence can only be achieved when the spirit leaves this mortal body.

## Conclusions

The aim of this thesis has been to, first, show that Edmund Spenser's *Complaints* is a unified volume of poetry and, then, evaluate the literary implications of this unity. In so doing, it has been argued that the nine poems that make up the volume are both purposefully ordered and deliberately separated into four distinct sections. The poems are thematically linked with one another in their current order and there are also thematic links between the poems when the volume is divided into the four discrete parts. Prior perspectives of unity have included *The Yale Edition of the Shorter Poems of Edmund Spenser* and Richard Danson Brown's '*The New Poet*': *Novelty and Tradition in Spenser's Complaints*. But, in both cases, either the formatting of the work or the way the material is discussed detracts from their arguments for unity. The editors of *The Yale Edition of the Shorter Poems of Edmund Spenser*, most especially Ronald Bond and William Oram, see *Complaints* as an 'integrated whole' in which *The Ruines of Time* can be seen as 'an introduction to the larger collection' (Bond 222; Oram 263). Yet, they opt to preface each poem with a scholarly essay, which has the effect of visually isolating individual poems from the rest of the work. Similarly, Brown changes the order of the poems, opting to separate the translations from 'the major complaints', while also largely neglecting the final three poems. Having noted the impact that formatting can have on the overall argument, and having a desire to show that the ordering of the poems in *Complaints* and the division of the volume into four parts is of significance when considering unity, I decided that I would order my chapters in this thesis to reflect the order of *Complaints*. Thus, the first two chapters focused on overall unity in the volume, while the final three chapters focused on unity within each section of *Complaints*.

Bond's introductory essay to *Complaints*, in the Yale edition, does in large part provide the impetus for reimagining *Complaints* as a unified volume, but it is Brown that is first to respond to Bond's challenge with his monograph. Brown's approach is broadly formalist, wherein he opts for close reading over historical context. This leaves him open to the criticism that he has not really engaged with the main body of Spenser scholarship. For Brown, the main unifying factors in *Complaints* are the thematic 'concerns with poetry and the role of the poet' (7). This thesis has offered a response to Mark David Rasmussen's challenge, to 'combine the insights of historicist and formalist practices so as to bring [*Complaints*] into focus "as an integrated whole"' (223), by being grounded in 'the intricate contextualizing of Spenser's life and work' (222), while still adopting the practice of close reading throughout. The thematic links of poetry and the role of the poet are not the only unifying themes in *Complaints* either; so, while acknowledging these links, this thesis has built on the work of Brown by highlighting the multitude of thematic links that unify the poems in *Complaints*.

In the Introduction, I focused on the unity of *Complaints* as an historical artefact. I agree with Harold Stein that the signatures argue for the work being printed as one book (6), and with Adrian Weiss that the watermarks prove that *Complaints* was printed as one job-lot. One of the innovations of this thesis is the way in which it amplified Weiss's research. Where Weiss tabulates the distribution of watermarks in three copies of the 1591 *Complaints* (two from the Folger Library and one from the Huntington), Appendix 2 (found on pp. 203-4 below) tabulates the distribution of watermarks in another four copies of *Complaints*. It was also noted that of the nine copies of 1591 *Complaints* consulted for this thesis, none retained

their original binding; so, it is impossible to say from the binding when the fragmentary copies of *Complaints* broke away from the main body of the work.

Once the physical attributes of the book had been addressed, focus shifted to the frontispiece. It was argued that, because this frontispiece had been recycled – by Thomas Orwin – for *Complaints*, it was presented to contemporary readers as a religious text. Building up the reader's expectations in this way may have been a marketing ploy, but it may also have been to highlight a more religious reading of this humanist text. In any event, the repetition of the frontispiece works to endow it with more humanist meaning; as this happens, the emblems, that were once religious, become more humanist. It was argued that the frontispiece itself argues for unity by referring to the poems that will be listed on the following page. The placement of the author's name, or an abbreviation thereof, on the frontispiece was noted as being of significance. There was also an examination of the print order of the four frontispieces, with this thesis tending to favour Weiss over Stein because of his tireless, and ultimately more accurate, methodology. Nevertheless, the frontispiece is seen to argue for unity in *Complaints*.

The single most important event in determining how the unity – or lack thereof – of *Complaints* is perceived is what happened after the volume was called in, specifically in relation to *Mother Hubberds Tale*. Once there had been an attempt at censoring the volume, the offending passages from *The Ruines of Time* were amended and all of *Mother Hubberds Tale* was removed. Even when Spenser's works were published in 1679, and *Mother Hubberds Tale* is again printed, it was printed outside of *Complaints*, as a standalone poem. From this moment onwards, there has been a tendency to approach the volume one poem at a time.

There was an effort in the Introduction to problematize the assumed designation of William Ponsonby as the author of ‘The Printer to the *Gentle Reader*’. Given that the actual printing of the volume was subcontracted out to Thomas Orwin, it could be argued that he too can be seen as the printer. However, when ‘the printer’ is seen in more generic terms, the identification of Ponsonby as printer would have been politically advantageous, because of his links to the Pembroke circle. Thus, by associating this text with Ponsonby, and dedicating it to Mary Sidney, *Complaints* can be seen to be in dialogue with other texts associated with a subversive political movement. The individual dedicatory notes, written to ladies, can also be seen as responding to this movement, while at the same time proving that Spenser, at the very least, collaborated with Ponsonby when compiling *Complaints*.

The First Chapter began by engaging with the criticism of W. L. Renwick, Harold Stein, and Richard McCabe, who all articulate, to varying degrees, the argument that Verlame’s voice is polyphonous and fragmented. Renwick and Stein, especially, see Verlame’s fragmented voice as problematic and undesirable. This thesis built on the work of Richard Schell, who acknowledged the problems that Verlame’s voice raises, but then also offers a solution by suggesting that *The Ruines of Time* acts as an introduction to *Complaints*. This thesis also agrees with Schell that Verlame’s lament can be divided up into three sections, thus dividing *Complaints* into four parts. What is original to this thesis is the argument that there are thematic and linguistic links that bind the four parts of *The Ruines of Time* to the four parts of *Complaints*. The formal justification for this unity is found in Verlame’s adoption of the *ubi sunt* topos, wherein she evokes the apocalyptic imagery of Nebuchadnezzar’s statue and the composite beast in the Revelation 13. As with both of these iconic images, *The Ruines of Time* can be seen as a composite, wherein each part carries

specific symbolic meaning. The first part of *The Ruines of Time* then introduces the themes of memory and mutability; the second part, the appropriation of space and the sinfulness of the world; and the third and fourth, *consolatio* and the movement towards transcendence.

The First Chapter also engaged with Philip Schwyzer and Ruth Helfer, who assert that in *The Ruines of Time*, the ruins themselves are immaterial, and Verlame is a metaphor for poetry. While this thesis largely agrees with them that Verlame can be seen as a metaphor for poetry, it has also argued that there is more to be taken from the poem by considering the cultural history that is associated with the actual material ruins found at Saint Albans and the poetics of decay. When Verlame's materiality is emphasised, she comes to occupy a fixed geographic locale; which then highlights the discrepancies in the account she gives of her history, exposing her as unreliable, and even devious. Verlame's unreliability is further exposed when her story is compared to accounts given by Holinshed and Camden.

The Second Chapter continued this handling of unity within the entirety of *Complaints*, but it offered a different way of approaching the volume to that offered by *The Ruines of Time*. In so doing, this chapter engaged with Mark David Rasmussen's article, 'Spenser's Plaintive Muses', which asserts that *The Teares of the Muses* 'touches on some of the main concerns of the *Complaints* volume as a whole' (140). However, where Rasmussen sees the narrative of *The Teares of the Muses* forming concentric patterns, I have taken a more linear approach. The approach in the Second Chapter was not as interested in splitting *Complaints* up into four sections, as was done in Chapter One, or in reordering the poems, as with Rasmussen; rather, it dealt with the established order of the poems in the volume as a whole. The original assertion of this thesis is that there are clearly links between the

laments uttered by the nine muses, in *The Teares of the Muses*, and each of the nine poems in *Complaints*. The way this works is that Clio, as the muse of history, is linked to Verlame, in *The Ruines of Time*, through the concern they have with mutability and genealogies. Melpomene is linked to *The Teares of the Muses* by her use of ‘wretched’ and the way she deals with tragedy; there is an attempt made by Melpomene to move tragedy from literature and the stage into real life. Thalia is the muse that is invoked within the pseudo-virgilian *Culex*, of which *Virgils Gnat* is an expanded translation; and both deal with the invasion of a bower. While *Mother Hubberds Tale* specifically states that it will not be calling on a muse, it is linked to Euterpe because of its pastoral setting, and the way both Euterpe and the narrator of *Mother Hubberds Tale* describe episodes of destruction. *The Ruines of Rome* is linked to Terpsichore, and hints that the muses are responsible for their own downfall. *Muiopotmos* begins with a reference to Melpomene, and could also be linked to Calliope; but it is the handling of the Venus and Cupid myth that also links this, the sixth poem in *Complaints*, to the sixth muse: Erato. *Visions of the Worlds Vanitie* is linked to the lament of Calliope in the way it deals with the small overcoming the great. *The Visions of Bellay* and Urania’s complaints examine the ability of the poet to grant transcendence, as they both discuss the mutability of the sublunary world. In the final link, *The Visions of Petrarch* and the utterance of Polyhymnia work together to shift criticism towards the queen. As with *The Ruines of Time*, there is a movement from Earth to Heaven that occurs throughout *The Teares of the Muses*. This figurative movement can also be seen over the course of *Complaints*, as the poems themselves move from the ruins of an ancient Roman city to the visions of Spenser, Du Bellay and Petrarch. This being said, the final lines of

*Complaints* would raise issues of doubt as to whether transcendence ever is, or ever can be, achieved.

In the Third Chapter, the focus shifted from looking at *Complaints* in its entirety, to focusing on the second section in the volume containing *The Teares of the Muses* and *Virgils Gnat*. Having already discussed Spenser's justification for the structure of *Complaints* and the order of the poems within the volume, this chapter used the links that are found between *The Teares of the Muses* and *Virgils Gnat* to argue that Spenser purposefully placed them side by side. It argued that the overarching theme that links these two poems is patronage, which has been a fruitful topic in Spenser studies. As such, Chapter Three began by interacting with some of this scholarship. Wayne Erickson argues for a hierarchical, top-down approach to patronage structures during the reign of Elizabeth I; while Andrew Hadfield and Richard Helgerson argue that Spenser's success as a writer garnered him some degree of independence from these strictures. Thomas Herron, then, works on a broader definition of patronage by including, with monetary assistance, the granting of land. The novelty of this chapter comes from the way it applied these previous readings to *The Teares of the Muses* and *Virgils Gnat*. While it is true that Spenser tutors Alice Spencer in the implicit rules that govern ideal poet-patron relation, works to cultivate a gentle readership, and generally appeals to female patrons, these poems are obsessed with the breakdown of these relationships. It is argued that the relationships between Jove, Apollo, and the Muses are a metaphor for the relationships that exist between the monarch, the patron, and the poet. The dedicatory sonnet that precedes *Virgils Gnat* is used to give further clarity about who is involved in this trio: Elizabeth, Leicester, and Spenser. In both instances, the patron has been negligent by not acting in their role as mediator. It is because of this

breakdown in poet-patron relations that Spenser explores alternatives to traditional patronage structures. In so doing, he casts himself as an Ovidian outcast. Chapter Three concluded with an investigation into the destruction that occurs when poet-patron relations collapse. The destruction of the muses' bower and the threat that is posed to the shepherd's bower also gives voice to the anxiety that Spenser is experiencing over his own land in Munster. Thus, *The Teares of the Muses* and *Virgils Gnat* are used to show that Spenser's handling of patronage is personal to his then current circumstance, as poet and planter.

The Fourth Chapter continued the exploration into links within sections in its examination of the third section of *Complaints*, which contains *Mother Hubberds Tale* and *Ruines of Rome*. This chapter mostly built on the work of McCabe and Renwick, who both see the disguises donned by the fox and the ape as satiric representations of specific segments of society. The argument that is original to this thesis is that both *Mother Hubberds Tale* and *Ruines of Rome* can be seen as a type of estates satire: society's flaws are exposed in the estates satire of *Mother Hubberds Tale*; while society's doom is prophesied in the post-apocalyptic estates satire of *Ruines of Rome*. The specific estates, or classes within society, that were discussed in both poems are the military, the clergy, the court, and the monarch. The soldier class is viewed with suspicion in *Mother Hubberds Tale*, because the reader understands, from the start, that the intentions of the fox and the ape are not noble. But this suspicion is shown to be unwarranted in *Ruines of Rome*, because all military exploits, whether good or bad, will be forgotten in time. *Ruines of Rome* warns that the seemingly providential progress of Empire would come to a halt if reformation did not occur, and that Ireland, a contemporary 'Scythia', was seen to be the greatest inhibiting force in that progress west. The second stratum of society that is addressed

in both poems is the clergy. The clergy is shown to be illiterate and uneducated in *Mother Hubberds Tale*; while *Ruines of Rome* shows what will happen if this defect is not rectified. For Spenser, Rome is not simply a geopolitical entity; it is also a religious idea. The ruins of Rome could be found on the borders of Spenser's Munster plantation. The third segment of society is the court. In both poems, it is idleness at court that breeds civil discontent. Where other critics – such as Renwick, the editors of the Yale *Shorter Poems*, and McCabe – have focused on identifying the 'wilde beasts' that the mule says hold sway at court, this thesis focused more on the implications of this conversation with the mule being the first that the fox and ape have with another animal. It was argued that, the closer the fox and the ape get to court, the more they try to look like men, while the other characters look more like, and indeed are, animals. This led to a discussion about how Elizabeth can also be seen to be mimicking man. The final layer of society that is addressed is the monarchy. At this point, Elizabeth's gender is further brought into question through the fluidity of the lion's gender. The lion is found to be sleeping when it is gendered as male, suggesting that Elizabeth's femininity negates her claims to the throne. Likewise, in *Ruines of Rome*, it is sleeping Caesars that are to blame for Rome's demise. When *Mother Hubberds Tale* is juxtaposed with *Ruines of Rome*, they work together to highlight society's ills and then prophesy what will happen if these ills are not rectified.

The final chapter argued that, in the same way that *The Ruines of Time* can be seen as an introduction to *Complaints*, *Muiopotmos* and the *Visions* are intended to be the volume's conclusion. It was argued that the florilegium motif that Spenser adopts in the dedicatory note, addressed to Lady Carey, provides the justification necessary to read the final four poems as one work, sharing narrative strands. This

chapter built on John B. Bender's argument that when Spenser introduces an object in the text he describes it in minute detail so that he does not have to when we encounter that same object later in the narrative. It was subsequently argued in this chapter that this momentum building narrative technique is neither limited to *Muiopotmos* or ecphrasis. Rather, it is argued that Spenser uses this technique across all four of the final poems, in his discussion of sleep, death, and dream poetry; and the cosmic drama of creation, fall, and apocalypse. Where Richard Danson Brown and Mark David Rasmussen argue that *Complaints* avoids closure and relapses into plaintiveness, this chapter had muddied the water a little, and argued that the volume's conclusion is far more complex.

There is still more work that can be done on Spenser and his female patrons, as well as the Irish contexts of *Complaints*, and the watermarks in the remaining 1591 copies of *Complaints* can still be tabulated. Added to these, there is scope to adopt more ecocritical approaches to Spenser's work in general. But what this thesis has done is argue that Edmund Spenser's *Complaints* is a unified volume of poetry. While this has largely been the consensus in Spenser studies since the 1980s, this thesis has contemplated the poetic and structural implications of the volume's unity. The poems that make up *Complaints* are placed purposefully in a specific order. They are also intentionally separated into four distinct sections. The poems are thematically linked with each other overall and within the four discrete sections. Given the complexity of the links that exist within this fascinating volume, it may be more accurate to speak of the *unities* of Edmund Spenser's *Complaints*, rather than any singular unity; nonetheless, the volume is very much a cohesive whole.

## Appendix 1: Current Locations for *Complaints*

In 1933, Francis R. Johnson listed the whereabouts of forty-four copies of *Complaints* and then went on to explain that ‘there are probably at least 25 more sound copies in existence’ (26). Johnson also claims that ‘[there] are [...] a great many fragments in existence, containing one or more sections of the whole volume’ (26). The International Spenser Society’s online resource, ‘The Spenser Archive’, lists the whereabouts of forty-three copies of *Complaints*. The following list gives the current whereabouts of sixty copies of *Complaints* (1591).

### United Kingdom

#### Cambridge

1. King’s College, Cambridge – 2 copies – Keynes C. 2. 20; M. 29. 8
2. Trinity College, Cambridge – 1 copy – Capell S. 29
3. University Library, Cambridge – 1 copy – Syn. 7. 59. 77

#### London

4. British Library – 3 copies – G. 11539; C.39.e.5.; 239.i.1.
5. University of London Library – 1 copy – [S.L.] [Spenser-1591]
6. Victoria and Albert Museum National Art Library – 1 copy – Dyce 25.C.102

#### Manchester

7. John Rylands University Library – 2 copies – /2108; /12444

#### Oxford

8. Bodleian Library – 2 copies – Mal. 617; Tanner 217
9. Queen’s College, Oxford – 1 copy – Sel.b.15

10. St. John's College, Oxford – 1 copy – HB4/6.a.2.10(1)

#### Edinburgh

11. National Library of Scotland – 1 copy – H.32.c.29

12. University of Edinburgh – 3 copies? – De.5.108; De.5.130 (incomplete);  
De.5.108 (incomplete)

#### Glasgow

13. University of Glasgow – 2 copies – Sp Coll Hunterian Co.3.19; Sp Coll  
Hunterian Co.3.20

#### United States

##### California

14. Bancroft Library – 1 copy – PR2357 1591

15. Henry E. Huntington Library – 1 copy – 69576

16. UCLA William Andrews Clark Memorial Library – 1 copy – PR2357.A1

##### Connecticut

17. Yale University Library – 3 copies – Eliz 221; Ig Sp35 591; 1977 2523

##### District of Columbia

18. Folger Shakespeare Library – 5 copies – STC 23078 copies 1-5

##### Florida

19. University of Florida Libraries – 1 copy – Smathers PR2357.A1

## Illinois

- 20. Newberry Library – 1 copy – VAULT Case Y 185. S773
- 21. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Library – 1 copy – IUA11682

## Indiana

- 22. Fort Wayne Helmke Library – 1 copy – PR2357 .A1 1591a

## Kentucky

- 23. University of Kentucky Library – 1 copy – PR 2357.A3 1591

## Maryland

- 24. John Hopkins University Libraries – 1 copy – PO2357 1591 c. 1

## Massachusetts

- 25. Boston College University Library – 1 copy – [Unknown]
- 26. Boston Public Library – 1 copy – G.177.6
- 27. Chapin Library of Rare Books (Williams College) – 1 copy – Non-circ; vault
- 28. Harvard University Library – 2 Copies – STC 23078; HEW 6.9.31
- 29. Massachusetts Historical Society – 1 copy – Dowse Library
- 30. Smith College – 1 copy – 825 Sp31c 1591
- 31. Wellesley College – 1 copy – Spec. Coll. English Poets x

## Missouri

- 32. Washington University Library – 1 copy – PR2357.A1 1591

## New Hampshire

- 33. Dartmouth College – 1 copy – RAUNER RARE PR2357. A1 1591

## New Jersey

34. Princeton University Library – 2 copies – 16th-90; 3940.326.1591

35. Rutgers University Library – 1 copy – PR2357.A1 1591a

## New York

36. Cornell University Library – 1 copy – Petrarch PR2357.A1 1591

37. Pierpont Morgan Library – 1 copy – W 08 D

## Pennsylvania

38. Bryn Mawr College Library – 1 copy – 821.2 Sp3c Ed.1591

39. Haverford College Library – 1 copy – 821.2 Sp3c Ed.1591

## Texas

40. Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas-Austin – 2 copies – PFORZ 968  
PFZ; Wg Sp35 591c WRE

41. Texas Christian University – 1 copy – Lewis PR2357.A1 1591

## Washington

42. University of Washington Library – 1 copy – PR2357.A1 1591a

## New Zealand

## Wellington

43. Alexander Turnbull Library – 1 copy – Reng.SPENSER.Tear.1591

There are several privately-owned copies of *Complaints* which are not included on this list as they are understandably not quite as well catalogued as those currently in the possession of libraries. Given that the above list shows the whereabouts of sixty

copies of the 1591 edition of *Complaints*, Johnson's estimate of seventy-six 'sound copies' and 'a great many fragments' gives a fair estimate of how many copies are privately owned.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> On 19 March 2016, one of these private copies of *Complaints* (1591) went on auction on [www.liveauctioneers.com](http://www.liveauctioneers.com).

## Appendix 2: Watermark Distribution

### *Complaints*

| Sheet                    | A  | B  | C  | D  |
|--------------------------|----|----|----|----|
| Huntington               | IB | 5  | 6  | 7  |
| Folger copy 1            | IB | 6  | 6  | 5  |
| Folger copy 2            | IB | IB | IB | IB |
| Bodleian Mal. 617        | H  | 6  | IB | IB |
| Bodleian T. 217          | IB | H  | 6  | 7  |
| Cambridge Syn. 7. 59. 77 | -  | -  | -  | -  |
| NLS Edinburgh            | -  | -  | -  | -  |

### *Teares of the Muses*

| Sheet                    | E  | F  | G  | H  | I   | K  |
|--------------------------|----|----|----|----|-----|----|
| Huntington               | 5  | 6  | 6  | 6  | 1   | 6  |
| Folger copy 1            | 6  | 6  | 5  | 6  | 1   | 6  |
| Folger copy 2            | P2 | 5  | RB | RB | 10? | P5 |
| Bodleian Mal. 617        | IB | IB | IB | IB | RB  | P  |
| Bodleian T. 217          | 6  | H  | 7  | 6  | 6   | H  |
| Cambridge Syn. 7. 59. 77 | -  | -  | -  | -  | -   | -  |
| NLS Edinburgh            | -  | -  | -  | -  | -   | -  |

### *Prosopopoia*

| Sheet                    | L     | M  | N  | O  | P  | Q    | R  | S  |
|--------------------------|-------|----|----|----|----|------|----|----|
| Huntington               | 6     | 1  | 6  | 5  | 8  | 3    | 6  | 9  |
| Folger copy 1            | 5     | 1  | 6  | 5  | 8  | 5    | 4  | 7  |
| Folger copy 2            | RB,P2 | RB | IB | RB | RB | 4,GG | RB | RB |
| Bodleian Mal. 617        | GG    | RB | RB | RB | P  | P    | P  | RB |
| Bodleian T. 217          | -     | -  | -  | -  | -  | -    | -  | -  |
| Cambridge Syn. 7. 59. 77 | -     | -  | -  | -  | -  | -    | -  | -  |
| NLS Edinburgh            | 4     | 6  | H  | 7  | H  | H    | -  | -  |

### *Muiopotmos*

| Sheet                    | T  | V  | X  | Y  | Z  |
|--------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|
| Huntington               | 1  | 2  | 3  | 2  | 4  |
| Folger copy 1            | 6  | 5  | 3  | 6  | 6  |
| Folger copy 2            | RB | 7  | RB | P3 | GG |
| Bodleian Mal. 617        | P  | RB | RB | GG | RB |
| Bodleian T. 217          | -  | -  | -  | -  | -  |
| Cambridge Syn. 7. 59. 77 | 7  | H  | H  | 7  | 4  |
| NLS Edinburgh            | H  | H  | H  | -  | -  |

### *Daphnaïda*

| Sheet           | A | B | C |
|-----------------|---|---|---|
| Huntington      | 1 | 6 | 5 |
| British Library | H | H | H |

| Key                 |                                       |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------|
| IB, GG, RB          | Initials that are found on Pot        |
| P and P with number | Pot with unidentified initials        |
| H or number         | Cuffed hand or glove pointing to star |
| -                   | Part missing from edition             |

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