GHOST COMPLAINT: HISTORIOGRAPHY, GENDER,

AND THE RETURN OF THE DEAD IN ELIZABETHAN LITERATURE

By

Donald Jellerson

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Approved:

Professor Kathryn Schwarz

Professor Lynn Enterline

Professor Leah Marcus

Professor Peter Lake

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PREFACE

> Nobody heard him, the dead man,
> But still he lay moaning:
> I was much further out than you thought
> And not waving but drowning.
>
> Poor chap, he always loved larking
> And now he's dead
> It must have been too cold for him his heart gave way,
> They said.
>
> Oh, no no no, it was too cold always
> (Still the dead one lay moaning)
> I was much too far out all my life
> And not waving but drowning.
>
> —Stevie Smith, "Not Waving but Drowning"

Stevie Smith's poem features three intertwined voices in atemporal and disembodied relation. The dead man speaks without quotation marks and outside of time. He speaks retrospectively, summarizing his life for us and for an unspecified "they." Whoever "they" are—in whatever unspecified past they occupy—they presume to know about the meaning of the poor chap's life and death: "he always loved larking…it must have been too cold...." They think they know what the cold did and what the man loved. The untimely speaking of the dead man interrupts their presumption. The voice of the poet mediates this misunderstanding: as the disembodied "they" and "him" miss each other, the poetic voice, in the third person omniscient, erases itself in its own discourse. That "Nobody heard him" even though he "lay moaning," makes the poet the nobody who heard him and who now tells us. The poem produces its effects by framing three voices that attempt to capture each other across time and death.

We might recognize in the faintly condescending "Poor chap, he always loved larking" our own elegiac relation to the dead. Faced with the trauma of absence that a dead body inevitably recalls, we struggle to make meaning out of the past events seemingly attached to that body. We console ourselves with this new meaning, this epitaph. As in the elegiac tradition, we may also console ourselves by suggesting that something belonging to the body survives in memory or in an afterlife. But Stevie Smith's poem interrupts the impulse toward consolation when it speaks in the voice of the dead man. "Oh, no no no," the dead man says. The triple "no" scuttles the elegiac project, putting the meaning of the poor chap's life and death back in question. The meaning "they" have made of the dead man's life is spurious. He was never waving. The friendly gesture of meeting or departure, the motion that signals our connection to and knowledge of each other, never meant that at all. Instead it has only ever meant *I'm dying*. The signs of connection, love and "larking," have always only anticipated death. "It was too cold always."

The speaking of the dead threatens disruption and erasure. When the dead speak, they question the meanings we make of death itself; they remind us that we value the dead by revaluing them. They remind us that we construct the border between the dead past and the living present as a defensive bulwark, erecting a consolatory wall that allows us to fix past meaning into a form that authorizes our progress into the future. At Gettysburg, Abraham Lincoln famously speaks over the bodies of the dead. The words are incised on the walls of the Lincoln Memorial: "we highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain—that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom." "We," the living, make our resolutions—"we highly resolve"—in the graveyard. We

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construct our future perfect—"these dead *shall not have died* in vain"—in order to construct our perfect future, "a new birth of freedom." One wonders what the dead bodies at Lincoln's feet, the mingled Confederate and Union soldiers, might have said. In response to the triumphant meaning Lincoln makes of their mangled corpses, would they also have said "Oh, no no no…"? The perennial post-mortem fiction of western culture's wars, that "dulce et decorum est pro patria mori" (it is sweet and proper to die for one's country), is a consolation prize that authorizes an ethic of sacrifice. It is a way of speaking for the dead that attempts to turn the pathos of loss into enough patriotic zeal to beat back the fear of death. If the already dead were to speak for themselves, they might well compromise that project. What if they find death less than sweet? Can death ever be decorous for the dead?

Lincoln's rhetoric has a venerable history: funeral orations from antiquity have made the same kind of case. One of the main uses of poetry in the western tradition, in fact, has been to provide such rhetorical consolation and calls to action. In *The Metamorphoses*, Ovid uses the God of poetry himself to show how this works. Ovid's story of Apollo and Daphne begins with a contest between Cupid and Apollo over whose arrows work to greater effect. They both claim superiority, but Cupid gets the last word. He pierces Apollo with a golden arrow designed to incite love and Daphne with a leaden arrow to induce the opposite. As a result, Daphne reviles "the wedding torch as if it were a thing of evil" and begs her father, the river god Peneus, to grant her "perpetual virginity" (1.484–7). Apollo, struck by love, pursues Daphne, who runs away. In chase, Apollo tries to convince her to stop by reciting his credentials. Among other things, he tells her that he is the god of prophecy and music: "By me what shall be, has been, and

what is are all revealed; by me the lyre responds in harmony to song" (1.517–18). Ovid

thus loads these two figures with heavy symbolic weight. In her embrace of virginity and

rejection of marriage, Daphne rejects futurity itself. This is clear by contrast to Apollo,

who describes himself as the realization of time—"what shall be, has been, and what

is"—as well as the force which creates music (i.e. poetry). Inflamed by desire, Apollo

chases her until she calls on her father to save her by destroying her beauty (1.547).

Peneus grants Daphne's wish, transforming her into a laurel tree. The distraught Apollo

memorializes her:

> Since thou canst not be my bride, thou shalt at least be my tree. My hair,
> my lyre, my quiver shall always be entwined with thee, O laurel. With thee
> shall Roman generals wreathe their heads, when shouts of joy shall
> acclaim their triumph, and long processions climb the Capitol. Thou at
> Augustus' portals shalt stand a trusty guardian, and keep watch over the
> civic crown of oak which hangs between. And as my head is ever young
> and my locks unshorn, so do thou keep the beauty of thy leaves perpetual.
> (1.557–65)

Here Apollo memorializes Daphne in the language of futurity. The irony is thick, since

Daphne's denial of futurity is the motivation for her transformation. Nevertheless, since

she is now a non-speaking object in place of a person, her own will becomes irrelevant.

She can be resignified as an eternal marker for both civic and poetic glory. Seemingly in

response to Apollo's "paean," the laurel tree that was Daphne waves its branches. By this

waving she "seemed to move her head-like top in full consent" (1.567). The tease here

lies in the suggestion that such leaf shaking only "seemed" (*visa est*) to be "full consent"

(*adnuit utque*). Although in Ovid's world it is not unthinkable that a plant may have an

opinion about something, we should take this particular capitulation with some

skepticism because the reason Daphne is a tree in the first place is that she refused to

"consent" to Apollo's advances.

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In addition to displaying Ovid's characteristic irony when it comes to the power of poetry, the Apollo and Daphne story betrays the violence inherent in the elegiac impulse. Funeral elegy retrospectively affixes meaning to life in an attempt to justify death. It is a way of both closing the book on the dead and mitigating mourning in the impulse toward memorialized preservation. To torture the famous phrase from *Julius Caesar*, it comes to bury as much as to praise. In the words of the god of poetry, it sutures "what shall be, has been, and what is," guaranteeing the future by revealing the past as dead and defining the present against it. Daphne's ambiguous waving, however, like the waving of the poor chap who is either larking or dying, threatens that guarantee by putting it in question.

In the middle of *Hamlet*, the eponymous Prince famously describes death as "The undiscovered country from whose bourn / No traveller returns" (3.1.81–82).[1] But his current crisis is attributable to the fact that something *has* returned from the dead, and it claims to be his father. As if that were not enough, it demands to be remembered, and it has eyes-only revenge instructions for the Prince.[2] The half-life phenomenon of the ghost betrays the play's own language of death as leveling cessation, as "bestial oblivion" or the "silence" to which Hamlet consigns himself with his last word.[3] Death should be a relief, a return to the insignificance of dust. That signification will fall into in-significance is "a consummation / Devoutly to be wished" (3.1.65–66). At last desire will end! The ghost, however, denies Hamlet that consolation, torments him with memory and

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[1] Unless otherwise noted, all citations of Shakespeare in this dissertation follow *William Shakespeare*: *The Complete Works*, The Oxford Shakespeare, second edition, general editors Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor.
[2] Michael Neill begins his excellent book, *Issues of Death*, with this citation, and he returns to it later in his chapter on *Hamlet*.
[3] The phrase "bestial oblivion" appears in an extended, Q2 version of 4.4. See "additional passages" p. 717, 4.4.31. Hamlet's dying words are "the rest is silence" followed in some editions by "O, O, O, O!" (5.5.310–11).

desires that outstrip death itself. "Heaven and earth," Hamlet cries, "must I remember?"

(1.2.142–43). Describing the apparition in *Hamlet* , Marjorie Garber asks, "what is a

ghost?":

> It is a memory trace. It is the sign of something missing, something omitted, something undone. It is itself at once a question, and the sign of putting things in question.[4]

For Hamlet, the ghost remains a question—in question—throughout this hyperbolically

interrogative play, encumbering the Prince with the terrible burden of memory.

Ghosts such as Hamlet's father represent the past as materially present and

speaking, somewhere between dead and alive, or perhaps neither dead nor alive.

Partaking of both presence and absence, revenants and remainders, they are signs of the

in-between.[5] Not quite dead enough themselves, ghosts put death in question. By doing

so, they return in defiance of the elegiac impulse. It is no accident that in perhaps the

most famous elegy in literature, Milton's *Lycidas*, the poet declares his object dead so

emphatically. "Lycidas is dead, dead…," Milton insists. And as if commanding Lycidas

to stay dead, the poet tells him "now thou art gon / Now thou art gon, and never must

return!" To imagine the hoped for "tomorrow" with its "fresh woods, and pastures new,"

the poet must ensure that the body is securely buried without possibility of return.[6] When

the dead refuse to stay dead—when the past materially enters the present as a speaking

ghost—elegiac consolation fails.

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[4] Marjorie Garber, *Shakespeare's Ghost Writers*, 129.
[5] See Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, for a discussion of the figure of the ghost in terms of presence and absence.
[6] John Milton, "Lycidas," lines 8, 37–38, and 193. Though Lycidas does seem to possess a post-mortem agency as the "Genius" of the Irish sea, this deifies the dead man rather than imagining a bodily return capable of answering the poet (183).

In *Hamlet*, the ghost "waves" the Prince "to a more removed ground" with what Marcellus interprets as a "courteous action."[7] As courteous as it may be, Marcellus advises the Prince, "do not go with it." Hamlet, not setting his life at a pin's fee, follows the ghost as it raises its hand again: "It waves me forth again: I'll follow it." After some dire warnings from Horatio about cliff ledges and madness, Hamlet insists, "It waves me still," and he follows it, do what it will. This is more uncanny waving: what we might otherwise read as a friendly gesture, a father waving his son over for a talk, becomes strange, baffling, and dangerous. Shakespeare's ghost, Ovid's laurel tree, and Stevie Smith's poor chap wave in ghostly unison. These three ambiguous waves haunt one another as they haunt us. Unintentional citations, both proleptic and analeptic, these waves beckon us toward confrontations with ghosts that unsettle the very meaning we make of their conditions of possibility, their deaths. Does following this beckoning imply, as Carla Freccero provocatively writes, "a willingness both to be haunted and to become ghostly"?[8] This question is worth keeping in mind throughout the analyses that follow. Recent queer theory questions historicist methodologies that rely on marking the difference between past and present. Theorists such as Freccero hold out the promise of a disintegration of that difference in a "reciprocal penetrability" that yields a "commingling of times as affective and erotic experience" (488–9). The poems I study here enact that haunting reciprocity. Yet the ghosts in these poems also help us elaborate on its implications. What if the encounter with a ghost, as in *Hamlet*, inspires not eros but a thoroughgoing disgust with sexuality? What if, as is so often the case in revenge tragedy,

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[7] William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, ed. Susanne L. Wofford, 1.4.60–61. The next sentences follow Wofford's edition, 1.4.60–78. In the Oxford Shakespeare, the ghost "wafts" Hamlet "to a more removèd ground" (1.4.42) then, Hamlet says, "it waves me forth again" (49), then "it wafts me still" (56).
[8] Carla Freccero, "Queer Times," 488. See also Carolyn Dinshaw, who embarks on a "project of constructing queer histories that are constituted by…affective relations across time…," 2.

the ghost that haunts us is murderous? What if, as with Daphne, erotic attachment is precisely the problem and not the desired result, precisely that which kills and seeks an epitaphic alibi? What if the poor chap was never larking, his waving never waving, and our desire for friendly contact, for exchange of sympathies or even "mutual penetrability," yet another elegiac rewrite?

As a figure of "queer" temporality, the ghost holds out to us the promise of securing "affective and erotic" identifications across time, yet it calls into question the identitarian systems of reference between past and present that it promises to guarantee. As a figure of present absence, a ghost, like Lee Edelman's "queerness," "can never define an identity; it can only ever disturb one."[9] Ghosts call into question the very desires that prompt their appearance. Where, then, is pleasure, affective and erotic, if not in identification across the difference of time? This question prompts another. If erotic and affective pleasures are embodied phenomena, and if the figure of the ghost is a disembodied body, how is it that we somebodies take pleasure in its appearance? The pleasures of the encounter with the ghost belong neither to the sameness of identification nor the difference of disidentification—though they may well belong to the *play* of sameness and difference. Nor do ghostly pleasures reliably belong to stable bodies touching across the divide of time—a scenario, were we to imagine it, just as likely to yield fearful revulsion as pleasure—though a ghost only appears by reference to a body. Rather, the pleasures of the ghostly are textual pleasures, which, as Roland Barthes reminds us, are those of "intermittence."[10] "Is not," Barthes asks, "the most erotic portion of a body *where the garment gapes*?" The absence of the body and our expectation of it

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[9] Lee Edelman, *No Future*, 17.
[10] Roland Barthes, *The Pleasure of the Text*, 9.

in the folds of the text, not the body itself, pleasures. Insofar as spectral pleasure can be erotic and affective, it manifests, in Barthes' words, through "the staging of an appearance-as-disappearance" (10). Identification with a ghost can only ever be interrupted, foiled, glimpsed, guessed at, furtive. And yet, even as the pleasure of identification (or indeed, the pleasure of disidentification) teases and tempts us, again the ghost will ask with its plaintive waving: *whose pleasure*? Pleasure for whom, and at whose expense?

Uncannily revivifying the very terms of desire and death so strongly featured in the texts he studies, Stephen Greenblatt famously opens *Shakespearean Negotiations* with the sentence, "I began with a desire to speak with the dead."[11] This is what scholars such as Freccero might call a queer desire. But understanding this expression from a queer perspective means we must ask ourselves if Greenblatt ends by speaking "with" the dead, or *for* them? My work here examines the ghostly effects such desires can produce. It details the ways in which sixteenth-century poets have already put into operation Greenblatt's desire and theorized its implications. It traces the slippages among what it means to speak *with* the dead, to speak *for* them, and to speak *as* them. Such speaking (perhaps even the desire for it) courts a failure of differentiation between past and present. The appearance of a ghost is a sign of that failure. In what follows, I pursue the implications of the collapse of differential time in our reading of past texts from the vantage of the present as well as through the ghostly figures inscribed in those texts as they read their own pasts.

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[11] In another book, *Hamlet in Purgatory*, Greeenblatt attributes the literary trend for representations of ghosts such as Hamlet's father to a collective desire to speak with the dead in the wake of the Reformation.

INTRODUCTION

If the ghostly conversation to which this analysis belongs stretches across

Western literature, that conversation finds a specific, local idiom in the sixteenth century.

My dissertation focuses on early modern ghost complaint poetry, a form through which

writers lend their voices to lamenting spirits. In this period, "complaint" refers broadly to

texts of lament or protest. Scholars of the medieval and early modern eras will be familiar

with different strains of complaint—amorous, political, allegorical, or religious, for

instance. If the word "complaint" marks various kinds of texts in differing genres,

however, the phrase "ghost complaint poetry" narrows that field to a group of closely

related texts. Ghost complaints emerged as a distinct literary form and rose to popularity

in England during the latter half of the sixteenth century. In the following pages I bring

into view the contours of this trend. I examine the cultural conditions and literary

precedents that inform the emergence of these poems. I describe their shared language

and the similar effects they aim to produce. Since the poems have been categorized

variously (with such labels as *de casibus* tragedy, *ubi sunt* lament, Ovidian verse, female

complaint, and so on), part of the work of this dissertation will consist in showing how

they cohere as a group and why the phrase "ghost complaint" best captures that

coherence.

Ghost complaint poetry became popular with the publication of *A Mirror for*

Magistrates in 1559 and its sequel in 1563. Edited by William Baldwin, these two texts

collect complaints by various hands. Baldwin's *Mirror* prompted a flurry of expansions,

copies, and spin-offs over the course of several decades. Of the over one hundred poems

collected in the various editions of the *Mirror,* however, a few clearly stood out,

capturing the attention of writers who took them as models. Thomas Churchyard's poem

featuring the ghost of Jane Shore was one of them. *Shore's Wife* inspired a vogue for

what John Kerrigan has called "female complaint" poems: a succession of poems

published in the 1590s featuring the ghosts of lamenting women.[1] "Readers," as Heather

Dubrow remarks, would have "sensed themselves in the presence of a subgenre."[2] The

group includes such works as Samuel Daniel's *The Complaint of Rosamond* (1592),

Thomas Lodge's *The Complaint of Elstred* (1593), Thomas Churchyard's rewrite of the

Jane Shore poem as *The Tragedie of Shore's Wife* (1593), Michael Drayton's *Matilda*

(1594), John Trussell's *The First Rape of Fair Helen* (1595), and Thomas Middleton's

The Ghost of Lucrece (1600). Difficult to pin down, these poems drift restlessly into and

out of our modern taxonomies. They evolve quickly in relation to one another, work self-

reflexively, and push at their own boundaries, generic and otherwise. As Jonathan

Goldberg notes, "pure forms are a Renaissance anomaly; hybrids are the rule."[3] The

Mirror poems and the 1590s complaints that spring from them amply demonstrate this

dictum. While I argue that 1590s ghost complaint poetry coheres as a distinct subgenre in

the period's literary imagination, it does so only briefly, emerging under the influence of

a number of forms and merging into others. Notably, the spectral poetics of ghost

complaint informs Elizabethan and Jacobean dramatic works. Indeed, the poems have

roots in classical and medieval literature as well as branches extending well beyond the

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[1] This dissertation—indeed, any investigation of complaint poems such as those of the 1590s—owes a debt
to John Kerrigan's book, *Motives of Woe: Shakespeare and 'Female Complaint'*, which remains an
indispensable overview and analysis of the tradition of female voiced complaint poetry. I gratefully
acknowledge both an intellectual and a personal debt to John Kerrigan for his generous and insightful
guidance.
[2] Heather Dubrow, "A Mirror for Complaints," 410.
[3] Jonathan Goldberg, "Shakespearean inscriptions," 116.

sixteenth century. Nevertheless, the fad for poetic ghost complaints in the early modern period has recognizable temporal borders, beginning with the 1559 *Mirror for Magistrates* and ending with its last edition in 1610. The 1590s group represents the height of the vogue for *Mirror* style poetry. After the turn of the century, the ghost complaints fade along with the *Mirror* tradition. The 1610 *Mirror* was the last collection of its kind.[4]

My work here is animated by the sense that our scholarship has paid too little attention to these poems. We have dismissed them too readily. From our modern vantage looking back across the *longue durée* of literary history, ghost complaints seem much like the specters they feature: they appear suddenly to haunt the literature of the late sixteenth century and disappear soon after. Yet they were clearly admired by early modern writers and readers; they enjoyed great success in the literary market. That the fad for ghost complaints dwindled in the early seventeenth century should not mean we take them less seriously; rather, since such poems are bound so closely to Elizabethan tastes, they represent a unique register of preoccupations specific to the era.[5] The lamenting figures in these poems have much to tell us about how Elizabethan literature constructs history, gender, and death—concerns central to the period's poetics.

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[4] As Elizabeth Human notes, the 1610 edition was reprinted in 1619 and 1620, but the 1610 edition was the last in a series of expansions and alterations to the text ("House of Mirrors," 11–12). Lily B. Campbell also discusses the textual history in her introduction to *The Mirror for Magistrates*.

[5] Even if ghost complaint poetry tapers off in the early seventeenth century, writers remain fascinated by speaking ghosts in other contexts. Seventeenth-century prose and poetry offers a multitude of figures rising from the dead to weigh in on matters from international politics to advice for the lovelorn. In Thomas Scott's *Sir Walter Rawleighs Ghost* (1626), for example, the specter of Raleigh appears to Count Gondomar of Spain to berate him for threatening England. On the less serious end of the spectrum, Ovid's ghost is invoked to provide a "remedy for love-sick gallants" in *Ovid's Ghost* (1657). Other ghosts who return in seventeenth-century texts include Elizabeth I, Richard III, King James, Oliver Cromwell, Thomas Nash, and more.

The bulk of my dissertation examines poems featuring women protagonists. The *Mirror* volumes provide the backdrop from which the 1590s female ghost complaints emerge and against which they react. The complaints of the last decade of the sixteenth century supply the revivified figures of famous women from legend and chronicle history with new venues and new modes of speaking. The poems feature an identification of the male poetic persona with a lamenting woman who has risen from the grave to bemoan her loss of chastity in life as well as the reputation that has followed her in death. I ask what it means to be haunted in this way by historical and legendary figures such as Lucrece, Elstred, Jane Shore, and Rosamond, and why this haunting should produce such an excess of pathos—a keening that sometimes exceeds even that of the lovelorn, fractured Petrarchan sonneteers.

Many of the complaining women—Jane Shore, Elstred, and Rosamond, for instance—serve as examples of unchaste behavior. But whether the poems feature unchaste women or those whose chastity comes under threat through no fault of their own, like Lucrece and Matilda, they all also chastise tyrants. Jane Shore is tormented by Richard III, Lucrece by Tarquin, Rosamond by Henry II, and so on. The chaste Lucrece and Matilda bemoan the gendered conditions—the lure of feminine beauty, the inevitability of masculine lust—that lead to their deaths. And even as ghosts such as Jane Shore and Rosamond purport to serve as negative moral exempla for living women, they implicitly or explicitly undermine their own aims by resisting the very morality that condemns them. They too, according to their poems, suffer in a world in which the ideal of chastity succumbs to the corruption of courtly life and the tyranny of princes. The poems therefore represent a gendered site of contest. To be sure, we can read the terms of

this contest as a summary of renaissance misogynistic discourses, including the rhetoric

of chastity, that of the silence proper to (or garrulity improper to) women, the

commoditization and exchange of female bodies, and so on. Whether or not the female

characters in complaint poems recapitulate or resist these misogynistic discourses has

been called into questioned by critics.[6] My dissertation argues that, in fact, a sustained

examination of 1590s complaint poems and their historiographic and literary

backgrounds reveals the way in which the female ghosts complicate and resist the

moralizing, didactic discourses that would inscribe them into history. Not only do these

female ghosts contest the patriarchal histories that condemn them to an afterlife of

infamy, but the ostensibly masculine voice of the poetic persona is often fractured or

subsumed by the voice of the female ghost.[7] I suggest that part of what makes the 1590s

ghost complaint poems unique and interesting is the way they challenge such normativity

by calling attention to the constructedness and fungibility of the gendered voice, whether

coded as masculine or feminine.

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[6] Still, we might take this statement by Jennifer Laws as a common estimation of 1590s ghost complaints:
"the poems are unremittingly moralistic and didactic, with ruin and death for the woman as the inevitable
outcome of failing to guard her chastity or at least preferable to losing that virtue" (84). We can read the
critical tension between whether complaining women capitulate to or revise patriarchal systems most
clearly in the criticism surrounding Shakespeare's *The Rape of Lucrece*. Catherine Belsey, for example,
suggests that Lucrece acts to secure her own "symbolic future." In committing suicide, "the ultimate act of
self-determination," Lucrece is the "agent of her own judicial execution" (331). Debates surrounding
Shakespeare's depiction of Lucrece often revolve around whether or not Lucrece's agency can be imagined
in terms of her relation to authorship. Recently, for example, Amy Greenstadt has argued that Lucrece is an
"extremely powerful authorial figure" (46). See also Mary Jo Kietzman. Foundational to this debate are
considerations of the degree to which Lucrece is caught in a homosocial or patriarchal rhetorical system
(see Joel Fineman, Nancy Vickers, and Lynn Enterline). Similar debates are detectable in the critical
estimation of other complaint poems. In fact, Shakespeare's *Lucrece* (1594) is often grouped with the
1590s complaints.
[7] Critics, however, have also seen this as a one-sided contest in which male literary voices appropriate the
"feminine voice" only to secure the border between genders. Speaking of *The Ghost of Lucrece*, for
example, Wendy Wall suggests that "the vivid narration of the loss of chastity…constructs a pattern
whereby the writer establishes an identification with and a renunciation of femininity" (*The Imprint of
Gender*, 272). In Wall's view, Middleton uses Lucrece's shame to represent his own as a writer in the
public eye, which "ironically marks more clearly the distinction between genders." See my chapter on
Middleton for an alternative reading.

The methods, effects, and popular appeal of 1590s complaint, however, will remain largely opaque to interpretation without reference to the *Mirror for Magistrates*. Ghost complaint poetry in the Elizabethan period owes its peculiar properties to the first editions of the *Mirror* published in 1559 and 1563. Here I work to show that it is no overstatement to say that Elizabethan ghost complaint poetry was invented by the *Mirror*. By this I do not mean to deny the *Mirror*'s precursors. I do not mean that complaint poetry did not exist before 1559, that poems featuring speaking ghosts were unheard of, or even that any of the individual themes of the *Mirror* poems are new ones. Yet the *Mirror* takes up the various modalities of its predecessors in a new way. It creates a new genre by cobbling together elements of others and adding topical concerns. Baldwin and his fellow writers put a new formal twist on works by Lydgate, Boccaccio, and many others. In the process, they create what deserves to be called a new genre. Complaint poetry may have a venerable tradition, as does ghost poetry, but Elizabethan *ghost complaint poetry* was invented in the 1550s by William Baldwin and the other authors of the *Mirror*. 1590s ghost complaints follow that patent.

While I argue that the 1590s ghost complaint poems must be read in the context of the *Mirror*, they also elaborate on that tradition by drawing on Ovidian rhetoric. Ghost complaint takes a distinctly Ovidian turn in the late sixteenth century. Like their cousin forms, the epyllia, and like the sonnet sequences with which they were often published, 1590s complaints owe a debt to Ovid's works, the *Metamorphoses* and *Heroides* in particular. Throughout this dissertation I remain attentive to the ways in which ghost complaint poems take up problems of gendered voice for which Ovid's corpus remains

an indispensible referent.[8] Nevertheless, I also propose to correct a common assumption in our criticism: namely, that we can draw an unbroken line of influence between Ovid's texts, particularly his *Heroides*, and 1590s female complaint. The journal *Renaissance Studies* recently devoted a special issue to precisely this connection. The essays gathered under the issue's title, "The Rhetoric of Complaint: Ovid's *Heroides* in the Renaissance and Reformation," offer excellent examinations of Ovid's deep influence on the literature of the early modern period.[9] Yet such privileging of Ovidian rhetoric should not obscure the clear debt that 1590s ghost complaint poetry owes to the *Mirror* tradition. In every chapter, this dissertation works to show the ways in which ghosts such as Rosamond, Elstred, and Jane Shore emerge from, elaborate on, and contest the *Mirror* tradition even as they adopt Ovidian rhetoric. Ovid's influence is important, even crucial at points, but it is not uniquely responsible for Elizabethan ghost complaints.

　　We can draw a distinction between poetic projects directly inspired by the *Heroides* and those in the *Mirror* tradition by using Michael Drayton's work as an illustration. Drayton writes not one but two poems featuring Matilda: one is an epistle in the style of Ovid's *Heroides* and one a ghost complaint in the *Mirror* tradition. In his *England's Heroical Epistles* (1597), Drayton tells us in his introduction that he uses the word "heroical" in the "sence Ouid (whose imitator I partly professe to be) dooth also vse heroicall."[10] The Matilda of *England's Heroical Epistles* begins her letter to King John in response to his letter to her:

> No sooner I receiu'd thy letters heere,
> Before I knew from whom, or whence they were,
> But suddaine feare my bloodlesse vaines doth fill,

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[8] See Lynn Enterline, *The Rhetoric of the Body from Ovid to Shakespeare.*
[9] *Renaissance Studies* 22.3 (2008).
[10] Michael Drayton, *Englands Heroicall Epistles,* sig. A2r.

> As though diuining of some future ill;
> And in a shyuering extasie I stood,
> A chyllie coldnes runnes through all my blood:
> Opening thy letters, I shut vp my rest,
> And let strange cares into my quiet brest,[11]

By contrast, Drayton's complaint poem featuring Matilda begins with these words from

its protagonist:

> If to this time some sacred Muse retaine,
> Those choise regards by perfect vertue taught,
> And in her chast and virgine-humble vaine,
> Doth kindly cherrish one pure Mayden thought,
> In whom my death hath but true pitty wrought,
>> By her I craue my life may be reueald,
>> VVhich blacke obliuion hath too long conceald.[12]

The two poems differ radically in form and address. In his *Heroides*-inspired epistle,

Drayton uses heroic couplets. In his ghost complaint poem (published in quarto three

years before the first edition of *England's Heroical Epistles*) he uses rhyme royal, a

stanza pattern George Gascoigne called "best for grave discourses."[13] Formal differences

aside, Drayton's two poems offer radically different perspectives. In the epistle, the living

Matilda writes in anticipation of the tragedy to come, "diuining…some future ill"; in the

ghost complaint, the dead Matilda speaks retrospectively of that tragedy (her suicide) and

wishes to be rescued from "blacke obliuion" by having her story retold. The hallmark of

ghost complaint poetry is precisely this kind of metaleptic perspective: the ghosts speak

as figures simultaneously of the past and present. Drayton's *Matilda* carries on in the

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[11] Drayton, "Matilda to King Iohn," in *Englands Heroicall Epistles*, fol. 12v–13.
[12] Drayton, *Matilda*, sig. B1r.
[13] Sometimes called the *Troilus* meter, the seven line rhyme royal stanza was popularized by Chaucer in his *Troilus and Criseyde*. "Rhyme royal" is said to have been so named for its use by James I (OED), but George Gascoigne has this to say about it in his "Certayne Notes": "Rythme royall is a verse of tenne sillables, and seven such verses make a staffe, whereof the first and thirde lines do aunswer (acrosse) in like terminations and rime, the second, the fourth, and fifth, do likewise answere eche other in terminations, and the two last do combine and shut up the Sentence: this hath bene called Rithme royall, & surely it is a royall kinde of verse, serving best for grave discourses" (471).

ghost complaint tradition by asking the poet to take up her story with his "mortall pen."

She even invokes other complaints, including "Faire Rosamond, of all so highly graced, /

Recorded in the lasting Booke of Fame, / And in our Sainted Legendarie placed" (B1v) as

well as Lucrece, Jane Shore, and Elstred.[14] The epistle and the complaint differ in form,

structure, perspective, and effect. They may share aspects of narrative content, but that is

hardly enough for us to interpret them as interchangeable. Drayton's two Matilda poems

point out that when we invoke Ovid's *Heroides* (or Ovidian verse more generally) as an

interpretive reference point for ghost complaints, we must take care not to obscure crucial

differences between those poems that follow directly in the footsteps of the *Heroides* and

those that, although they adopt aspects of Ovidian rhetoric, work by reference to the

Mirror tradition.

Matilda's metaleptic perspective from both the past and the present offers an

example of one of the ways in which ghost complaints cohere as a genre. The speaking

dead combine a privileged perspective from within the past—a subjective view of past

events that take place well before the living memory of the poem's writer or reader—with

a view informed by the present. Drayton's Matilda can tell her story from a first person

perspective as it happened hundreds of years in the past, and at the same time she can

address Queen Elizabeth in the present as "my dread Soueraigne, rare and princely

Mayd" (B2v). It is no surprise that perspectives separated by centuries that are made to

coincide can conflict. Perhaps the best example of this is Thomas Middleton's *The Ghost

of Lucrece*, in which Lucrece mourns both the way she has been stained by Tarquin's lust

in the Roman era and the way her soul is damned in the Christian present. The poem

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[14] According to Edward Phillips' 1658 lexicon, *The New World of English Words*, a "legendary" is "the Title of a book, containing the lives of the Saints." The OED concurs, defining the noun form of the word as "a collection of legends, esp. of lives of saints."

articulates this doubled pagan and Christian view as a paradox that threatens to erase

Lucrece's identity: "Lucrece, I say, how canst thou Lucrece be, / Wanting a god to give a

life to thee?"[15] In reliving her pagan past, Lucrece takes an anachronistically Christian

view of her possibilities for redemption. To greater or lesser degrees, ghost complaints all

invoke and explore similarly jarring clashes of contemporary and historical

perspectives.[16] This is yet another way in which the speech of the dead can always

compromise the meanings we make of the past—even if the dead are represented as

making those meanings themselves.

My use of metalepsis in what I describe as ghost complaint's "metaleptic

perspective" requires elaboration to draw out its implications for the complaining ghost's

vexed temporality. For early modern rhetoricians, metalepsis is a figure of excess. In his

Art of English Poesy (1589), George Puttenham feminizes the term, calling it the figure

of the "Far-fetched." It is used, he suggests,

> when we had rather fetch a word a great way off than to use one nearer
> hand to express the matter as well and plainer. And it seemeth the deviser
> of this figure had a desire to please women rather than men, for we use to
> say by manner of proverb, things far fetched and dear bought are good for
> ladies. So, in this manner of speech we use it: leaping over the heads of a
> great many words, we take one that is furthest off to utter our matter by, as
> Medea, cursing her first acquaintance with Prince Jason, who had very
> unkindly forsaken her, said:
> > *Woe worth the mountain that the mast bare*
> > *Which was the first causer of all my care.*
> Where she might as well have said, "Woe worth our first meeting," or
> "Woe worth the time that Jason arrived with his ship at my father's city in
> Colchis, when he took me away with him"; and not so far off as to curse
> the mountain that bore the pine tree, that made the mast, that bore the sails,
> that the ship sailed with, which carried her away. (267–8)

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[15] Thomas Middleton, *The Ghost of Lucrece*, ll. 561–2.

[16] This is a poetic rendering of what Linda Charnes describes as the "notorious identity" of characters in Shakespeare's plays: "Always constituted retroactively, famous figures and historical events exist as representations, as well as effects, of their own *belatedness*" (1).

For Puttenham, metalepsis is an extravagance of metonymy leading to a hyperextended metaphor—a chain of associations that uses its two most distant links as tenor and vehicle, eliding its middle links.[17] Puttenham focuses on the expense of this metaphorical relation. Rather than making a straightforward, masculine sense, the metalepsis expresses a relation in an opaque, expensive, and therefore feminine manner. That Puttenham links the extravagance of metalepsis to the cursing and lamenting of a woman aptly demonstrates the use that will be made of the trope in Elizabethan ghost complaint.

      The speaking dead in ghost complaint poetry are metaleptic in their extravagantly doubled perspective. They enact such a perspective precisely because they are figures of figures, metaphors of metaphors. That is, the ghost that sees and speaks from the perspective of the present in ghost complaint does so as a metaphor for its referent in the history text, and that figure in the history text is already a figuration of the person who lived in the past. The figure of Matilda in Drayton's poem, for instance, is already a self-conscious adaptation of the Matilda from written English legend, which, in turn, is already a figure for the Matilda who lived in the time of King John. The poets who voice these ghosts take advantage of this extensive chain of signification. It allows the ghost the ability to comment on present circumstances through the lens of the past as well as past circumstances through the lens of the present. When ghosts such as Rosamond rise up to demand of present poets that their stories be rewritten, they show an awareness of their already figured relation to once-living bodies. Ghosts change their destinies in the afterlife by understanding that their bodies have accrued signification—fame or infamy—

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[17] Brian Cummings summarizes the early modern use of the term: "metalepsis was a term that was used to describe a process of transition, doubling or ellipsis in figuration, of replacing a figure with another figure, and of missing out the figure in between in order to create a figure that stretches the sense or which fetches things from far off" (219).

through various iterations of their lives in history and literature. Since they understand how they have been written into history, how their lives have been given significance through historically contingent lenses, they presume that rewriting their stories will resignify those contingent significations. The metaleptic perspective of the ghost, in short, allows it to rewrite its history. Prosopopeia, meanwhile, allows the ghost to speak of its own accord, giving the spectral voice an immediacy that elides the complicated metonymic chain of referentiality upon which its metaleptic perspective relies.[18]

From "prosopon," signifying *face*, *countenance*, *mask*, or *person*, and "poeia," *make*, prosopopeia is a rhetorical device whereby the poet impersonates an inanimate object, an animal, an abstraction, a fictional figure, or the dead. Quintilian's influential *Institutio oratoria* describes prosopopeia at work when the orator places "words of advice, reproach, complaint, praise, or pity into the mouths of appropriate persons." "Nay, we are even allowed in this form of speech," he continues, "to bring down the gods from heaven and raise the dead, while cities also and peoples may find a voice."[19] Henry Peacham's *Garden of Eloquence* (1577) follows Quintilian in describing prosopopeia as a voicing of abstractions or absent people. Prosopopeia "raiseth againe as it were the dead to life, and bringeth them forth complaining or witnessing what they knew" (136). It is worth noticing that Quintilian, Peacham, and other authors of rhetorical texts link

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[18] For modern theorists, metalepsis is a frame breaking figure. In his *Narrative Discourse*, Gérard Genette characterizes the figure as "any intrusion by the extradiegetic narrator into a metadiegetic universe (or by the diegetic characters into a metadiegetic universe, etc.)" (234–35). Also qtd. in Gerald Prince, "Disturbing Frames," 625. Genette describes this "intrusion" or "transgression" of one "narrative level" upon another as a "double temporality of the story and the narrating" times, "as if the narrating were contemporaneous with the story and had to fill up the latter's dead spaces." That Genette describes such frame breaking in terms of "transgresssion" and "dead spaces" hauntingly echoes the stakes involved early modern prosopopeia.

[19] "…*et suadendo, obiurgando, querendo, laudando, miserando personas idoneas damus. Quin deducere deos in hoc genere dicendi et inferos excitare concessum est; urbes etiam populique vocem accipiunt*" (9.2.30–31).

prosopopeia both to raising the dead and to lamentation. Ghost complaint poetry takes full advantage of prosopopiea's potential for such animation and keening.

Prosopopeia also carries ghostly consequences for the poet's persona. As with the poem that begins my introduction, "Not Waving but Drowning," speaking for the dead, giving voice to an absence, threatens the presence of the poetic voice. Although the poet attempts, on one level, to authorize himself by demonstrating his skill in voicing that which has no voice, that very act challenges the authenticity of the voice per se. Put another way, when the poet takes on the prosopon, the "face" of an absence, and gives it a voice, he calls attention to the already self-consciously constructed nature of the poetic persona. In ghost complaints, as we will see, taking on the face of the dead threatens to deface the poet.[20] Throughout this dissertation I work to describe the ghostly effects generated by this conundrum. It is important to note here that writers of the ghost complaints I study in this dissertation are fully aware of the potential effects generated by the use of prosopopeia. For some, exploring these complications of voice and the effects they produce seems to have been a very good reason for writing ghost complaint poetry in the first place. Looking back over the trajectory of sixteenth-century complaints, we can detect a growing emphasis on complex vocal effects. We need only recall Shakespeare's *A Lover's Complaint*, published after the height of the trend for ghost complaints, with its dizzying play of voices—its "re-worded…double voice"—to remind ourselves how intimately acquainted early modern writers were with the challenges,

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[20] Here I am influenced by Paul de Man's essay, "Autobiography as De-facement." De Man writes that "language, as a trope, is always privative." Prosopopeia ostentatiously writes voice as representation, "language as a figure," and thus calls attention to the fact that our only recourse to the world is through tropes. "As soon as we understand the rhetorical function of prosopopeia as positing voice or face by means of language, we also understand that what we are deprived of is not life but the shape and the sense of a world accessible only in the privative way of understanding. Death is a displaced name for a linguistic predicament, and the restoration of mortality by autobiography (the prosopopeia of the voice and the name) deprives and disfigures to the precise extent that it restores" (930).

rewards, and pitfalls of speaking for and as an abject other (1–3). This is a highly

concentrated version of a phenomenon so pervasive we sometimes forget to mention it:

early modern literature obsesses endlessly about what it means to put on a mask.

If ghost complaint poems are recognizable through their shared use of the

rhetorical devices, metalepsis and prosopopeia, they also share what I will call

"historiopoetic" rhetoric. In order to fully appreciate the paradoxical power that ghost

complaint writers assign to these voices from outside of time, it is necessary to

understand the poems within the context of the era's penchants for memorializing and

moralizing—tendencies poetry and historiography share. Memorialization seeks to both

preserve and bury the dead; it erects monuments that assign meaning to past lives,

dealing with loss through attempts to entomb and idealize. Moralization attempts a

mastery of the past through received understandings of history, whether religious or

secular, by which to evaluate past lives. Rather than authorizing the memorializing and

moralizing discourses which inform their appearance, the 1590s ghost poems I examine

complicate, contest, and revise their traditions. Samuel Daniel's Rosamond, for instance,

unhappy with her place in history as an example of vice, asks the poet to retell her story

so that her reputation might be redeemed. Rosamond cites Jane Shore, another royal

mistress and pattern of unchaste behavior. Rosamond suggests that Shore "did such

compassion finde" by having her story retold that she now "passes for a Saint." "Her

Legend," claims Rosamond, "iustifies her foule attaint."[21] In this way, the female ghosts

of the 1590s, voiced by their male poets, attempt to revise history. An understanding of

1590s complaint within the context of the *Mirror* tradition is crucial here as well. The

Mirror represents itself as both history and poetry—drawing on the shared concerns of

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[21] Samuel Daniel, *Delia with The Complaint of Rosamond 1592*, sig. H3v.

historiography and poetics. My chapter on the *Mirror* examines the close relationship between history and poetry in the sixteenth century. As they are imagined in this period, both foreground memorializing and moralizing.

The *Mirror* and the complaints to follow complicate the gendered memorializing and moralizing rhetoric common to history writing in the period. Edward Hall's history, *The vnion of the two noble and illustre famelies of Lancastre & Yorke*, opens with a diatribe against "Oblivion," described as "the cancard enemie to fame and renoune" and "the dedly darte to the glory of princes" ("The Preface"). Hall opposes Oblivion, a "sucking serpent" and "dedly beast," to "memory by litterature…the verie dilator and setter furth of Fame." It is no accident of rhetoric that Fame is a woman who will be "dilated" and set forth before us. I treat Hall's text and others in my first chapter to show how such gendered, memorializing, and moralizing rhetoric haunts early modern historiography and poetry. In the shadow of figures such as Ovid and Petrarch, what counts as poetry in the early modern period is rarely very far from a no-holds-barred obsession with the tortuous permutations of gender. Nor is the renaissance obsession with memorializing difficult to conjure up, as visible as it is particularly in amorous and elegiac poetry. And we need only think of the most ambitious poem of the sixteenth century, Edmund Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, to recall (as if we needed such a reminder) how closely the aims of early modern poetry can resemble those of moral philosophy. I am interested here in what happens to these common discourses when they collude to complicate the seemingly absolute border between the dead and the living—or when the crossing of that border complicates those discourses. In ghost complaint poetry from the first editions of the *Mirror* to the 1590s complaints, concerns with gender,

memorializing, and moralizing come together in that interruption of temporality and historicity, the figure of the ghost.

Marking out the literary territory of ghost complaint poetry in this introductory way raises one of the main questions this dissertation addresses. What is it about complaint poetry from *A Mirror for Magistrates* to *A Lover's Complaint* that appeals so strongly to early modern tastes? And why do we no longer seem to share those tastes? Modern scholars tend to find the *Mirror* didactic, confused, and awkward. As C. S. Lewis writes, "no one lays down the *Mirror* without a sense of relief."[22] Exceptions to this opinion are sparse in the criticism from the time of Lewis's writing to the present. Scholarship on 1590s ghost complaint has also been, for the most part, less than laudatory. That dubious reception extends to early modern complaints more generally. Edmund Spenser's volume of complaints might be the least examined of his works. And as Catherine Bates has noted, *A Lover's Complaint* has been routinely "slighted, sidelined, passed over, ignored…" with "not so much polite indifference as an embarrassed aversion of the gaze."[23] This embarrassment, Bates argues, results in periodic attempts to push the poem out of the Shakespearean canon, as if to distance the genius of Shakespeare from such a weirdly excessive piece of vulgarity. Yet ghost complaint poems, including those of the *Mirror*, were highly valued in their era. The *Mirror* secured the reputations of William Baldwin and Thomas Sackville, among others, as great poets worthy of emulation. And poems such as Daniel's *The Complaint of Rosamond* and Churchyard's *Shore's Wife* were widely admired and imitated by contemporaneous writers. A sustained examination of this radical difference between

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[22] C. S. Lewis, *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century*, 246.
[23] Catherine Bates, *Masculinity, Gender and Identity*, 174–6.

early modern and modern tastes with respect to complaint literature is overdue. In the pages that follow I use the phrase "spectral aesthetics" both to summarize the shared preoccupations of the complaint poems I study and to capture their appeal to Elizabethans. Spectral aesthetics, I argue, is an effect of the interaction between sixteenth century social preoccupations and what I will describe as the "ghostly" rhetoric of literary genres such as (but not limited to) ghost complaint poetry. If we see ghost complaints as a group and note their rise to popularity, we can begin to appreciate the growing taste for this particular set of effects as well as a growing awareness among authors of what working in this new genre might entail. That growing awareness of the pleasures ghost complaint poems provide and how they do it constitutes an important current in early modern literature and its reception.

The spectral aesthetic cannot be separated from the wider cultural and literary concerns of the era, since it has to do with historically situated notions of beauty, experiences of pleasure in reading, and changing tastes. This inseparability raises questions. To what degree can we say that ghost complaints—particularly the *Mirror* poems—prompt the trend for ghosts in revenge tragedy? Is the new and growing predilection for literary ghosts in the latter half of the sixteenth century a symptom of a cultural trauma in the wake of the Henrician disavowal of purgatory? These kinds of questions are well worth asking. Indeed, they will come up again throughout this dissertation. But my argument overall hesitates to decide these questions about the relation between the social and the literary (or generic influence) in terms of cause and effect. The poems I study here become popular, I argue, precisely because they repudiate historicisms that rely on causal relations promising to authorize progressive narratives.

When a ghost appears—when the past manifests itself inside the present—time goes awry. The temporal coordinates of cause (past) and effect (present) become unmoored, resisting teleologies. To read through a historicism that would understand ghost complaints as effects (or symptoms) and link them with social causes (or cultural trauma) would therefore perversely privilege the kind of analysis that the poems themselves question.

Theodore Adorno's *Aesthetic Theory* allows us to think through the historiopoetics of ghost complaint and, more broadly, spectral aesthetics in the sixteenth century. "Art," Adorno writes, "can be understood only by its laws of movement, not according to any set of invariants. It is defined by its relation to what it is not. […] Art acquires its specificity by separating itself from what it developed out of; its law of movement is its law of form" (3). As Adorno makes clear, this does not mean that "art" (or in the *Mirror*'s word, "Poesie") ever succeeds in fully separating itself from the social. In fact, it means precisely that such a separation never succeeds: "the unsolved antagonisms of reality return in artworks as immanent problems of form" (6). "This," Adorno claims, "not the insertion of objective elements, defines the relation of art to society." That is, the aesthetic in art is contingent upon the process of separation from that part of the social to which the art refers, and that very process of separation means that the social referent returns to haunt the artwork not only in its content but also in its form. "Art's double character as both autonomous and *fait social* is incessantly reproduced at the level of its autonomy" (5). Adorno's aesthetic theory informs my work throughout this dissertation as an *a priori* assumption.

Yet in order to extend Adorno's thinking to ghost complaint poetry, we must add another moment to the relation between "art" and the "social." We must add history. Ghost complaint poetry is not only concerned with how it figures the social in poetic terms; it also takes up the way in which history has already figured social events and bodies. The ghosts in these poems are poetic refigurations of historical figures—historical figures that, in turn, represent bodies once in the world. The metaleptic perspective of the ghosts in these poems work by virtue of the ghost's (and the poet's) awareness of how they have been inscribed into history. Spectral aesthetics, therefore, operates at a double remove from the social. The aestheticizing process that Adorno describes nonetheless holds true. In ghost complaint poetry, "the unsolved antagonisms of reality return…as immanent problems of form," yet insofar as the "social" returns to haunt the form of these poems, it does so as a palimpsest. This is what allows Middleton to ask, through the ghost of Lucrece, "how canst thou Lucrece be, wanting a god to give a life to thee?" The social constraints that shape history's pagan Lucrece are legible under (before) those that shape the present's Christian Lucrece. Doubly circumscribed by past and present social codes, Lucrece's spectral address must be formulated as a paradox, as she herself is a "paradoxical incorporation," a "becoming-body," an embodiment of absence.[24] As Adorno's formulation helps clarify, ghost complaint poetry separates itself from the history writing upon which it draws even as that history haunts its form. As we will see throughout this dissertation, the poems continually insist on the autonomy of poetry over and against history—relying on what the *Mirror* will call the "auncient liberties" of the poet—even as the poems animate their ghosts precisely as historical figures that vex

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[24] Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, 5. In Derrida's words, "…le spectre est une incorporation paradoxale, le devenir-corps, une certaine forme phénoménale et charnelle de l'esprit" (*Spectres de Marx*, 25).

historical interpretation. The emergence of a ghost from the pages of history to speak in poetry's present means that the ghost itself becomes a temporal problem immanent to the form of its own address. Ghost complaint is structured by the way its ghosts emerge from the social in the encoded form of history even as the poems declare their independence from the constraints of the social real.

Sixteenth-century spectral aesthetics bears comparison to our modern theorizations of the ghostly in historiography. Recent queer theory, for instance, seeks to complicate historicist methodologies by suggesting ways of reimagining our relation to the past. In *Queer / Early / Modern*, Carla Freccero draws on theorists such as Michel de Certeau (*The Writing of History*, *Heterologies*) and Jacques Derrida (*Specters of Marx*) to suggest that understanding the relation of the past to the present as "haunting" provides an alternative to progressive, teleological (and thus heteronormative) histories that rely on differentiation. Haunting (or "hauntology") promises an affective, erotically charged, spectral relation to the past activated by sameness rather than difference. As I note in my preface, queer theorists such as Freccero have written provocatively about the ways in which a queer historiography implies "a willingness both to be haunted and to become ghostly."[25] Questioning historicist methodologies that rely on marking the difference between past and present, queer historiography holds out the promise of a disintegration of that difference in a "reciprocal penetrability" that yields a "commingling of times as affective and erotic experience" (488–9). The poems I study, as I have said, enact that haunting reciprocity; yet the ghosts in these poems also help us elaborate on its implications. I argue that sixteenth-century ghost complaint poetry does, in fact, critique heteronormative, progressive historicisms. The poems also perform a palimpsestic

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[25] Carla Freccero, "Queer Times," 488.

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commingling of past and present that resonates with strong affect, registers the intensity of desire, and charges its language with the erotic. Yet ghost complaint incessantly raises questions about affect, desire, and eros that its spectral address complicates rather than simplifies: whose affect, whose erotic investment, whose desire is at stake? When a ghost rises from the past to possess the poet and speak in the present, the desires of the poet, the ghost, and the reader contest and inform each other.

In *Specters of Marx*, Jacques Derrida discusses "haunting" as that which is "neither living nor dead, present nor absent," that which "spectralizes" (202).[26] Such a phenomenon, according to Derrida, "does not belong to ontology." Derrida's word for a "haunting" that is prior to (and enables) "ontology" is "hauntology." This concept as well as the use Freccero and others make of it will illuminate the ghostly phenomena that I examine. Derrida's terms "hauntology" and "spectrality" describe the way in which, in ghost complaint poetry, haunting becomes the mode through which an ontology of the speaking subject is both generated and questioned. In turn, hauntology helps us question, in the words of Danielle Clarke, "the ontological stability of the female speaking subject" in ghost complaints.[27] Indeed, any stable gendering of the speaking subject in ghost complaint poetry as either feminine or masculine is complicated in the extreme by the simultaneously present and absent body of the ghost, the disembodied voice of the poetic

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[26] In *Of Grammatology*, Jacques Derrida uses concepts such as "the supplement" to describe the play of presence and absence in speech and writing. Indeed, such play turns out to be at the root of metaphysics, which "consists of excluding non-presence by determining the supplement as *simple exteriority*, pure addition or pure absence" (167). Derrida's encounter with the figure of the ghost in *Specters of Marx*, by contrast, aims at something more radical than supplementary relation. By now this language should sound familiar: "…the specter is a paradoxical incorporation, the becoming-body, a certain phenomenal and carnal form of the spirit. It becomes, rather, some "thing" that remains difficult to name: neither soul nor body, and both one and the other. For it is flesh and phenomenality that give to the spirit its spectral apparition, but which disappear right away in the apparition, in the very coming of the *revenant* or the return of the specter. […] …one does not know what it is, what it is presently. […] One does not know if it is living or if it is dead" (5).
[27] Danielle Clarke, "'Form'd into words by your divided lips': Women, Rhetoric and the Ovidian Tradition," 62.

persona, and their possession of each other. But it is not only the way in which Elizabethan poets compose their haunting poems that is at stake here, but also how we as readers and scholars are, in turn, haunted by those literary artifacts.

Complaint poetry occupied a prominent place in sixteenth-century literary production and consumption. The poems were widely read and admired. Yet they have since faded from view. Through demonstrating the complexity, force, and appeal of these literary artifacts in the following pages, this dissertation attempts to increase the visibility of ghost complaint in accounts of sixteenth-century literary history. The female ghosts in these poems, supposed outsiders (in both a temporal and a social sense), make their voices heard in the most sacred spaces of sixteenth-century literature and history. They claim the center ground of those privileged places that threaten to abject them. With the help of their poets, they rewrite their own histories, in relation to which they are both center and margin.

CHAPTER I

THE HISTORIOPOETICS OF *THE MIRROR FOR MAGISTRATES*

The *Mirror for Magistrates* was first published in 1559, soon after Queen

Elizabeth I ascended to the throne. Written by a group of poets under the direction of

William Baldwin, the volume was conceived as a historical "poesy" that would instruct

the current English nobility by conjuring the ghosts of past political figures to give

accounts of their lives and deaths. The *Mirror*'s ghosts rise from the grave in historical

order to tell of their falls from power, beginning with figures from the reign of Richard II

and ending with those in the time of Edward IV.[1] The authors interpose prose links

between the poems, often in order to comment on the moral lesson of the previous poem

and sometimes to introduce the next. From these linked exercises in prosopopeia in which

poets voice historical figures, current magistrates are supposed to learn virtue. As

Baldwin explains in his dedication, the ghosts are meant to provide examples of how

providence works in English history, detailing "[h]ow [God] hath delt with sum of our

countrymen your auncestors, for sundrye vices…" These historical examples of vice,

Baldwin suggests, "will be a good occasion to move you to the soner amendment."[2] The

ghosts of the *Mirror*, however they may strain against the didactic historiography that

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[1] The sequel in 1563 extend that chronology into the reign of Henry VI.

[2] William Baldwin et al., *The Mirror for Magistrates*, edited by Lily B. Campbell (65–66). All citations of the *Mirror* are from Campbell's edition. Several versions of the project were produced from 1559 to 1610. Some of them (1574, 1578, 1587) reach back in time to depict ghosts from Roman history and early English legend. But the individual ghost poems, be they representations of Caligula or Richard III, retain a recognizable pattern, and the didactic intent of the volumes remains clear through changes in historical location. Each aimed to expand on the exemplary history of Boccaccio's *De casibus virorum illustrium*, which was adapted into English by John Lydgate as *The Fall of Princes* in the 1430s (through the intermediary of a French translation of Boccaccio by Laurent de Premierfait).

invokes them, are called upon as examples of vice and recipients of a divine retribution achieved through the inexorable turning of fortune's perilous wheel. The title page reads:

> *A Myrrovre for Magistrates. Wherein may be seen by example of other, with howe greuous plages vices are punished: and howe frayle and unstable worldly prosperitie is founde, euen of those, whom fortune seemeth most highly to fauour. Foelix quem faciunt aliena pericula cautum.*

The Latin sentence reads, "happy are they who are made cautious by the dangers of others." The emphasis on punishment and divine intervention leads readers to assume that in these ghost stories, Fortune will serve as the handmaiden to God. Baldwin and his fellow writers promise ghost poems that will comprise a history of providential justice. Many of the ghosts, however, fail to deliver on that promise.

Midway through the first edition of the *Mirror for Magistrates* the ghost of Salisbury rises in a poem entitled "How Thomas Montague the earle of Salysbury in the middes of his glory, was chaunceably slayne with a piece of ordinaunce." The ninth in a series of nineteen ghosts, Salisbury tells the story of his accidental death at the siege of Orleans. In so doing, he calls into question the didactic purpose of the *Mirror*. The poem demonstrates not divine providence but fickle fortune, simple chance that neither the authors nor the ghost can interpret as a providential account. "Now Baldwin," Montague says, "note mine ende":

> I stoode in vewing where the towne was weake,
> And as I busily talked with my frend,
> Shot fro the towne, which al the grate did breake,
> A pellet came, and drove a mightly fleake,
> Agaynst my face, and tare away my cheeke,
> For payne wherof I dyed within a weeke. (152)

Salisbury dies as the result of standing too close to a window struck by a cannonball. Neither the writers of the *Mirror* nor the Earl himself know how to interpret this ill

fortune because Salisbury does not seem to deserve his end. A valiant soldier and loyal servant to the King, he is loved by nobles and commoners alike. After the poem ends, the authors are nonplussed. As they say in the prose link following the poem, "This straunge aduenture of the good erle drave vs al into a dumpne, inwardly lamenting his wofull destynye…." (154) Soon they snap out of their reverie: "To what end (quote one) muse we so much on this matter. This Earle is neyther the first nor the last whom Fortune hath foundered in the heyth of their prosperitye." The poets resolve to henceforth skip over stories of "many whych haue bene likewise serued, whose chaunces sith they be marcial, and therefore honorable, may the better be omitted." This ghost, they admit, has done nothing to further the didactic purpose of the collection. In fact, Salisbury's ghost scandalously speaks against the entire project of reading providential lessons into history:

> …how many shall we find
> For vertues sake with infamy opprest?
> How many agayn through helpe of fortune blind,
> For yll attemptes atchiued, with honour blest?
> Succes is wurst ofttimes whan cause is best,
> Therefore say I: god send them sory happes,
> That iudge the causes by their after clappes. (144)

For this ghost, we can read the pattern of human destiny only as chance. Fortune "gideth al the game" (143). Interpreting after the fact, judging by "after clappes," does not provide reliable moral lessons, much less an understanding of God's divine plan. "God doth suffer that it should be so, / But why, my wit is feble to decise" (145). Historical interpretation produces only "uncertaynty"; our best intentions and most praiseworthy desires may fall when "sodayne mischief dasheth all to dust" (153).

Stories such as Salisbury's have contributed to the difficulties modern scholars have encountered in attempting to categorize and evaluate the *Mirror*. If viewed as a

form of history writing, the *Mirror* may appear as an odd and "lackluster" step between the medieval chronicle and modern "objective" history.[3] If examined as poetry, the volume's putative didacticism seems difficult to embrace. And if understood as moral or religious philosophy, the text seems inconsistent. As Paul Budra claims of the *Mirror*'s critical reception,

> either the individual tragedies are shown to be predictable stories of the schematic retribution inflicted upon the morally or politically corrupt, and are therefore consistent and tedious, or they are shown to be a haphazard assortment of tales mixing divine Providence with irrational Fortune, and are therefore inconsistent and tedious. (303)

The accusations that the *Mirror* poems are either tediously consistent or tediously inconsistent betrays the degree to which scholars have been unable to reach a consensus about what exactly these poems are supposed to be and do. Yet by all accounts the *Mirror* was widely read and much appreciated in its time. It was reissued and expanded often over the course of more than fifty years. Sir Philip Sidney ranks its poetry with Chaucer and Surrey, calling it "meetly furnished of beautiful parts." Sir John Harrington's translation of Ariosto's *Orlando* includes a reference to the volume, "in which the life and fall of many great persons is very well set downe, and in a good verse." And Jasper Heywood doubts that his poetic abilities measure up to those of William Baldwin, the editor and principle writer, "whose Myrrour doth of Magistrates, proclayme eternall fame."[4] Elizabethans clearly enjoyed the *Mirror*'s blend of poetry, history, and moral philosophy. Given the difference between the modern and early

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[3] In his classic study, F. J. Levy suggests that the *Mirror*'s "lackluster poetry and carelessness with sources should not be allowed to overshadow an honest and quite successful attempt to solve the problems facing a historian who whished to preserve man's free will and God's providence together" (217). Levy's overall project is to show how "the rather formless narrative of the medieval chroniclers was hammered into a new, more organized, form" (ix). For history writing's supposed "objectivity" (the positivist assumption before the postmodern turn) see Michel de Certeau, *The Writing of History*.

[4] The responses of Sidney, Harrington, Heywood, and many more are recorded by Wilbraham Fitzjohn Trench in *A Mirror for Magistrates: Its origin and influence* (71–88).

modern reception of the *Mirror*, Jim Ellis asks the right question: "what did the Elizabethans find so fascinating about the poem that the rest of us have been missing?" (1033).

Scholars have dealt with the most flagrant of the *Mirror*'s inconsistencies, the fluctuation between fortune and providence, in a number of ways. Some attempt to understand the *Mirror* as consistent in its belief structure, others admit and explain its inconsistency.[5] The former critics understand the volume as didactically consistent: following classical and renaissance dialectic, the *Mirror* authors intend opposing voices and points of view to be synthesized into truth—the moral lesson that the dedication promises. The exceptions, in other words, prove the rule.[6] By contrast, I suggest that Baldwin's editions of the *Mirror* are better described as dialogic—conversational, multivocal, happy to present contradictions and question their own premises, reflecting what Baldwin in the prologue to his *Treatise of Moral Philosophy* (1547) calls the "mutuall conuersation of lyfe," and what one scholar, Jessica Winston, calls a "collaborative conversation" (395). I suggest that the "inconsistencies" and contradictions that have so troubled critics of the *Mirror* are, in fact, part of its purpose and appeal. If we reevaluate the *Mirror*'s spectral effects in order to appreciate its dialogic sensibility we may better understand why the collection was so well-loved in Elizabethan England as well as the influence it exerted on the era's literature. The *Mirror*'s poetic effects, I

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[5] Frederick Kiefer attempts to understand the relation between the two in "Fortune and Providence in the *Mirror for Magistrates*." See also Budra, "*The Mirror for Magistrates* and the Shape of *De Casibus* Tragedy." As Jessica Winston notes, "critics have attempted to resolve some of the contradictions in the depiction of fortune and providence in the *Mirror*, arguing for the compatability of the two ideas, or suggesting that the contradition reveals that the *Mirror* was written in a period of transition from the dominance of one idea to the other" (393). I agree with Winston that the relation between fortune and providence in the *Mirror* is neither clear nor consistent. This essay is an attempt to explain the effects of such inconsistency and how those effects are achieved.

[6] See, e.g., Peter Mack, *Elizabethan Rhetoric*, 141ff.

argue, arise from its historiopoetic engagement. Baldwin and his fellow writers use ghostly effects to fashion a politically engaged, dialogic text that prompts a conversation about the interpretation of history even as it pretends to be a didactic lesson in history's meanings. In so doing, they provide models for ghost complaint poetry as it is practiced in the Elizabethan period.

The 1559 and 1563 versions of the *Mirror* edited by Baldwin prompted many editions, expansions, and spinoffs over the course of several decades. Among the most intriguing trends generated by the *Mirror* was a vogue for ghost complaint poetry in the 1590s. These late Elizabethan works took the *Mirror* poems as their pattern. Works such as Samuel Daniel's *The Complaint of Rosamond* (1592), Thomas Lodge's *The Complaint of Elstred* (1593), Thomas Churchyard's rewrite of the 1563 *Mirror*'s Jane Shore poem as *The Tragedie of Shore's Wife* (1593), Michael Drayton's *Matilda* (1594), John Trussell's *The First Rape of Fair Helen* (1595), and Thomas Middleton's *The Ghost of Lucrece* (1600) proliferated in the era.[7] In these poems, as in the *Mirror*, historical and legendary figures rise from the dead in order to contest the chronicle accounts in which their stories have previously been encoded. The Elizabethan demand for these poems, which John Kerrigan identifies as "female complaint," markedly influenced literary history in the early modern period. Shakespeare's *The Rape of Lucrece* and *A Lover's Complaint*, for instance, owe a debt to the complaint tradition. And as Richard Helgerson notes, among the most famous of the women from complaint poetry, Jane Shore, "went on to be made the subject of plays that redrew the generic map of European drama even

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[7] See John Kerrigan's book, *Motives of Woe: Shakespeare and 'Female Complaint'*, which remains an indispensable overview and analysis of the tradition of female voiced complaint poetry. Poems such as William Shakespeare's *The Rape of Lucrece* (1594) and *A Lover's Complaint* (1609) are indebted to this trend. See Heather Dubrow, "A Mirror for Complaints."

more remarkably than her story had redrawn the generic map of Elizabethan poetry"

(461). Helgerson and Wendy Wall point out the ways in which early seventeenth century

domestic tragedy was measurably influenced by complaint poems such as Jane Shore's.

Wall suggests that the "Shore's Wife" story demonstrates a growing interest in "the

household as an alternative historical space to chronicle" (124). Scholarly work

proceeding in this direction convincingly demonstrates the need for further investigation

into the influence of the *Mirror* on later literary trends.[8]

Why did Baldwin's *Mirror* volumes prove intriguing enough to later Elizabethan

poets to serve as objects of imitation? I suggest that part of what intrigues poets such as

Daniel, Drayton, and even Shakespeare about the *Mirror* poems is the way in which the

figure of the ghost revives, in the *Mirror* authors' words, the "auncient liberties" of the

poet (359). The poems continually insist on the autonomy of poetry over and against

history even as the they animate their ghosts precisely as historical figures that vex

historical interpretation. This dynamic becomes highly influential for later articulations of

the power of literary representation such as that of Sir Philip Sidney's *Defence of Poesy*

as well as for later literature.[9] The *Mirror*'s ghost stories, as critics have noted, influence

literary complaint, domestic tragedy, autobiographical writing, and even index a trend for

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[8] Recent criticism has focused productively on the *Mirror*'s aftereffects and its place in Elizabethan culture. Meredith Skura, for instance, sees the volume as precursor to autobiography or "life writing" (27), Jim Ellis suggests that the *Mirror* registers the change from "a residual feudalism" to "an emergent capitalism" (1052), and Scott Lucas writes about "the role of the *Mirror* as a text of political critique and commentary" (52). Such recent readings are excellent and highly influential for my work here. These critics are attempting to combat decades of relative neglect in order to show that the *Mirror* is both culturally relevant and influential for later trends.
[9] Sidney famously makes the case that poetry preceeds and enables history: "historiographers, although their lips sound of things done and verity be written in their foreheads, have been glad to borrow both fashion and perhance weight of the poets" (5). Part of the argument of this essay is that the *Mirror* precedes and enables Sidney's argument for the priority of poetics over historiography.

a more inclusive "public political discourse."[10] I am interested here in describing the foundational move through which the *Mirror* exerts such influences. I suggest that the resistance to history, the assertion of independence from the perceived biases and determinations of the chronicle tradition, constitutes that move.

I began this chapter with the Earl of Salisbury not only because his poem disputes the *Mirror*'s avowed providentialism, but also because in doing so it perfectly captures the way in which the volume's speaking ghosts can challenge and critique the ways in which chronicle history produces meaning. These ghosts are not only fictionalized simulacra of past 'real' figures; at their most scandalous, they can break their enabling frame and question the historicity they represent. Moments of interpretive impasse such as the one in the Salisbury poem occur many times in Baldwin's editions of the *Mirror*. Uncertainty about the volume's didactic message and its reception by readers becomes a motif in the poems. The ghost of the poet Collingbourne, for instance, pleads with Baldwin to end the project, citing the uncontrollability of interpretation: "Ceas therefore Baldwyn… / Withdrawe thy pen, for nothing shalt thou gayne / Save hate, with losse of paper, ynke and payne" (349). In fact, the very first poem of the first edition, featuring Robert Tresilian, takes interpretation as its theme—specifically, Tresilian's penchant for "wrest[ing] the sence" from words and therefore misinterpreting the law (73). And two of the poems, featuring Owen Glendower and George, Duke of Clarence, are also about interpretation and misinterpretation—both cite Merlin and bemoan "false...prophecies / That go by letters, siphers, armes, or signes: / Which all be foolish, false and crafty lies..." (228). Such poems, depicting limit cases, problems of interpretation, and challenges to the volume's overarching message, occur alongside poems that more

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[10] Jessica Winston understands the *Mirror* to "facilitate public political discourse" (400),

straightforwardly demonstrate divine providence. The cumulative effect of this uncertainty is less to secure a comforting, providential view of history than to demonstrate the difficulty of doing so. The moralizing mode of the *Mirror for Magistrates*, at least in Baldwin's editions, prompts many questions. Conflicts abound between Fortune and Providence, Human and Divine law, and so forth. The *Mirror*'s moralizing is less dogmatic than dialogic. The volume complicates preconceived notions of how providence directs historical progress and reveals historical meaning, less concerned with unfolding history's absolute moral truths than with the lament produced by our inability to securely know either what history teaches or what God's lesson plan might be. Despite its insitently didactic introduction, the *Mirror* as a whole is more concerned with the questions that history raises than with providing answers to such questions.

Unlike in the modern world, as Blair Worden remarks, in the early modern period "Poets and historians were…the same individuals" (72).[11] Both a collection of poems and a history book, the *Mirror for Magistrates* exemplifies the way in which sixteenth century historian poets felt free to combine the *ars historica* and the *ars poetica*. We might add that these individuals often, and without contradiction, saw themselves as moral philosophers. Baldwin's other famous and often reprinted work, we might recall, was a work of moral philosophy. Later in his life he became a preacher.[12] Certainly the *Mirror* promises to be a moral guidebook in the tradition of princely conduct manuals. The *Mirror*, then, is an attempt to write in discourses that were not yet firmly separated in the sixteenth century: history, poetry, and philosophy. Though the borders between these

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[11] Paulina Kewes notes that "Renaissance poetry, drama, and prose historiography, which were often written by the same people, routinely shared aims and preoccuptations" (7–8).
[12] John N. King, "Baldwin, William," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

fields had been contested since antiquity, early modern humanists would once again

address the need to define them.[13] Such fields would grow into distinct disciplines in the

seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Sir Philip Sidney would famously insist on the

borders between disciplines in his *Defence*. In his *Novum Organum*, Francis Bacon would

distribute knowledge into the time-honored categories of memory (history), imagination

(poetry), and reason (philosophy). And seventeenth-century historians from Degory

Wheare to John Milton (*History of Britain*) would revive classical distinctions in order to

keep historical "truth" separate from poetic invention.[14] While we may argue about how

these borders were redrawn or who drew them, few would argue that by the eighteenth

century these kinds of writing had acquired distinct procedural and formal identities.

The mid-sixteenth-century *Mirror*, however, attempts to use the poet's pen in

order to write history as moral philosophy. Its well-educated writers could not have been

unaware of the long standing debates between the practitioners of such discourses since

Plato. Indeed, they would have considered the *ars historica* and the *ars poetica* related

but distinct,[15] and distinct in turn from moral philosophy or a religious doctrinal writing

they would have termed "divinity." Yet in writing the *Mirror*, Baldwin and his cohorts

were more interested in the shared aims of poetry, history, and philosophy (secular or

religious) than in respecting the borders between those discourses. For the purposes of

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[13] The seminal study of the development of early modern historiography is that of F. J. Levy, *Tudor Historical Thought* (1967). See also Herschel Baker, *The Race of Time* (1967). For recent approaches that expand on Levy's legacy, see the excellent essay collection, *The Uses of History in Early Modern England*, edited by Paulina Kewes (2006). Kewes' introduction to the volume is cited above. In *The Uses of History*, see particularly Daniel R. Woolf, "From Hystories to the Historical: Five Transitions in Thinking about the Past, 1500–1700"; Ian W. Archer, "Discourses of History in Elizabethan and Early Stuart London"; and Blair Worden, "Historians and Poets." The essays in this book are reprinted from *Huntington Library Quarterly* 68.1–2 (2005).

[14] In *The Method and Order of Reading Both Civil and Ecclesiastical Histories*, Degory Wheare registers this growing separation by suggesting that historians are those who write "explications," "relations," or "narratives" as distinct from "chronicles" or "lives" (17–18).

[15] See Donald R. Kelley and David Harris Sacks, "Introduction" to *The Historical Imagination in Early Modern Britain*.

this chapter, I am less interested in the early modern development of these disciplines—whether the growth of historiography, the territories defensively staked out by poetry, or the move from moral philosophy to more "scientific" approaches—than in what the *Mirror* envisions as their shared aims. The historiopoetic *Mirror* knowingly performs its work in the shared terrain of discourses that were in the slow process of becoming separate disciplines.

With this in mind, we can investigate the memorializing and moralizing aims that the *Mirror* shares with the historiography of the period and the way in which the *Mirror* puts those aims into operation differently. One productive way to do this is to look at Hall's chronicle, one of the history texts that Baldwin and his fellow writers claim to have open in front of them as they select their ghosts. As Lily B. Campbell notes, "The prose links state explicitly that the work was based upon the histories compiled by Fabyan, Halle, and Sir Thomas More. Wherever the chronicles disagreed, the authors accepted the authority of Halle" (10). Among the most influential of sixteenth-century chronicle histories, Edward Hall's *The Union of the two noble and illustre famelies of Lancastre & Yorke* opens by inveighing against "Oblivion," described as "the cancard enemie to fame and renoune" and "the dedly darte to the glory of princes." Hall opposes Oblivion, a "sucking serpent" and "dedly beast," to "memory by litterature…the verie dilator and setter furth of Fame." For Hall, as for early modern historians to follow, such memorializing has a moral purpose:

> If no man had written the goodnesse of noble Augustus, nor the pitie of mercifull Traian, how shoulde their successours haue folowed ther steppes in vertue and princely qualities: on the contrarie parte, if the crueltie of Nero, the vngracious life of Caligula had not beene put in remembrance, young Princes and fraile gouernors might likewise haue fallen in a like pit, but by redyng their vices and seyng their mischeueous ende, thei bee

compelled to leaue their euill waies, and embrace the good qualities of notable princes and prudent gouernours: Thus, writyng is the keye to enduce vertue, and represse vice.

In this vision, writing about the past becomes the means by which morality and proper governance are defined in the present. Indeed, this kind of exemplarity is the hallmark of early modern historiography. Whatever else it does and however it changes from the late medieval period to the enlightenment, early modern history writing retains this emphasis on memory and morality—above all else, early modern historiography preserves and moralizes. As Thomas Blundeville writes in 1574, "All those persons vvhose lyues haue beene such as are to bee follovved for their excellencie in vertue, or else to be fledde for their excellencie in vice, are meete to be chronicled."[16] And Degory Wheare explains that history writing is "undertaken to the end that the memory of [particular affairs] may be preserved, and so Universals may be the more evidently Confirm'd, by which we may be instructed how to live well and Happily" (15). In Hall's account, history writing bestows meaning on past lives by bringing those lives into the present. Princes, governors, and nobles may shuffle off their mortal coils, "yet thei by writyng and Fame liue and bee continually present: Thus fame triumpheth vpon death, and renoune vpon Obliuion, and all by reason of writyng and historie." Hall's introduction to *The Union of the two noble and illustre famelies of Lancastre & Yorke* thus previews a central preoccupation of the ghost complaint poems of the *Mirror*: the moral effect of memorializing the dead.

But a glance at the Salisbury story in the chronicle shows how very differently it employs the historiopoetic aims of memorializing and moralizing. When Hall's chronicle comes to the freak accident that kills Salisbury, it does everything it can to both

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[16] Thomas Blundeville, *The true order and Methode of writing and reading Hystories*, C2r.

memorialize the Earl and securely moralize his death.[17] Hall calls Salisbury a man of "wit, strength and pollicio":

> …in whose power (as it appeared after his deathe) a greate part of the conquest consisted and was estemed, because he was a man both painful and diligent, redy to withstand thynges perilous and imminent, and prompt in counsail, and with no labor be weried, nor yet his corage at any tyme abated or appalled, so that all men put no more trust in any one man, nor no synguler person gat more the hartes of all men.

This panegyric prepares the reader for the meanings that Hall will make of Salisbury's sudden death. The phrase "as it appeared after his deathe" reminds us that the florid praise to follow depends upon a retrospective view of events. Hall's post-mortem memorializing of Salisbury elegiacally speaks for the dead man: his death, "although it semed harde and straunge to all other, and to hym as it wer a thyng predestinate very easie." One mourner in Hall's account laments his loss: "dedde men cannot with sorowe be called again, nor lamentacion fordedde bodies cannot remedy the chaunces of men liuyng." We should note here the language of memorializing elegy. Even if Hall's introduction makes much of literature's ability to make the dead live again, those dead live a qualified existence in fame or infamy; they must be safely contained in moralizing writing. Unlike the *Mirror*'s ghostly historiopoetics, Hall's historiography cannot allow "fordedde bodies" to shamble out of the grave to interrupt its narrative, the meanings it makes of death. This is the double gesture of elegy: with one hand it buries and with the other it praises and eternizes. After Hall describes Salisbury's death, he tells us about its effect:

> what losse succeded to the Englishe publique wealthe, by the sodain death of this valiaunt capitain, not long after his departure, manifestly apered. For high prosperitie, and great glory of the Englishe nacion in the parties beyond the sea, began shortly to fall, and litle and litle to vanishe awaie:

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[17] The following account cites Hall, fol. ciiii–cvi.

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> which thing although the Englishe people like a valiant & strong body, at the firste tyme did not perceiue, yet after that they felt it grow like a pestilent humor, which succesciuely a litle and litle corrupteth all the membres, and destroyeth the body. For after the death of this noble man, fortune of warre began to change, and triumphant victory began to be darckened.

For Hall, Salisbury's death is the turning point in the Hundred Years' War. It marks the moment at which the English begin to lose by suggesting that the nation becomes demoralized by the death of such a highly valued leader. It begins to explain the loss of the battle at Orleans in the context of the larger historical narrative. There is, therefore, much at stake in moralizing Salisbury's death: no less than the trajectory of the wars with the French.

Hall's historical narrative may appear naively moralizing to us from our historical distance, but it is worth remembering that moralizing haunts history writing whether ancient, early modern, or modern. As Hayden White suggests in *The Content of the Form*:

> If every fully realized story, however we define that familiar but conceptually elusive entity, is a kind of allegory, points to a moral, or endows events, whether real or imaginary, with a significance that they do not possess as a mere sequence, then it seems possible to conclude that every historical narrative has as its latent or manifest purpose the desire to moralize the events of which it treats. (14)

White reminds us that narrativity itself is inseparable from "the impulse to moralize reality." No narrative history can therefore escape it. For modern historians this desire may be more or less "latent" under whatever disciplinary cover of objectivity is available. Hall's "desire to moralize" is certainly not latent. Yet as hyperbolic as his moralizing may appear, he uses it in service of an authoritative account. In reading Salisbury's death

as a signal moment in the larger historical narrative, Hall's authority arises from what

Michel de Certeau calls a "will to objectivity":

> Even though historiography postulates a continuity (a genealogy), a solidarity (an affiliation), and a complicity (a sympathy) between its agents and its objects, it nevertheless distinguishes a difference between them, a difference established in principle by a will to objectivity. (*Heterologies* 4)

This "will" works to make a "clean break between the past and the present" even as it

relies on strong sutures across that break. That is, Hall's account relies on two kinds of

appeal. The first establishes connections to the past, those Certeau names genealogy,

affiliation, and sympathy. Hall must see the Salisbury episode as part of a genealogical

story that will lead, as his title suggests, to the end of the wars (both civil and

international) in a marriage of the houses of Lancaster and York. What Certeau calls

"affiliation" we can read in Hall's account as nationalism: "the great glory of the

Englishe nacion." And "complicity" or "sympathy" in Hall's chronicle is evident in his

use of pathos—in the Salisbury story, the lament for the dead (and battles lost) that

includes the audience in shared affective response. If these appeals are to similarity, the

second kind of appeal is to difference. Certeau writes about the "will to objectivity":

> The space it organizes is divided and hierarchical. That space has an "own" [*un propre*] (the present of this historiography) and an "other" (the "past") under study. …the discourse of interpretive knowledge subjugates the known, cited, represented past.

Hall's knowledge relies on the historian's perspective from the present, subjugating the

past as other. The events he describes have a telos to which he has access—the union of

warring factions—and Salisbury's death must be interpreted in that frame. Salisbury's

death must *mean* something relative to the larger narrative, which can only be grasped

from the retrospective position of the historian. In order to signify in this way, it cannot

be chalked up to the vagaries of Fortune. What's past is prologue. Understanding the

Salisbury episode in this sense requires a privileging of the narrative end, the perspective

of the present, in order to create knowledge from past events.

That history creates a break with the past even as it draws connections to it will

not surprise scholars, least of all historians. And Hall's particular brand of historical

melodrama—distinguishing virtue and vice, identifying heroes and villains—is common

to sixteenth-century exemplary history. In this sense, the problems raised by Hall's

historiography are perfectly banal. For the purposes of this study, however, it is worth

giving a name to this kind of history writing in order to see clearly how the ghosts of

complaint poetry employ and contest it. Let us borrow a term from Friedrich Nietzsche,

then, and call Hall's history "monumental."[18] The word "monumental" modifies

"history" in much the same way as "elegiac" modifies "poetry." Monumental history

stands for the object that historians such as Hall have made of the past—the way they

have buried the dead, mourned them, and resignified their lives as calls to greatness. For

Nietzsche, monumental history works because we "are strengthened and made happy by

gazing on past greatness,"

> as though man's life were a lordly thing, and the fairest fruit of this bitter
> tree were the knowledge that there was once a man who walked sternly
> and proudly through this world, another who had pity and loving-kindness,
> another who lived in contemplation, but all leaving one truth behind
> them—that his life is the fairest who thinks least about life. The common
> man snatches greedily at this little span with tragic earnestness, but they,
> on their way to monumental history and immortality, knew how to greet it
> with Olympic laughter, or at least with a lofty scorn; and they went down
> to their graves in irony—for what had they to bury? Only what they had
> always treated as dross, refuse, and vanity, and which now falls into its
> true home of oblivion, after being so long the sport of their contempt. One
> thing will live, the sign manual of their inmost being, the rare flash of

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[18] Nietzsche, *The Use and Abuse of History*, 12–17.

light, the deed, the creation; because posterity cannot do without it. (13–14)

Memorialization seeks to both preserve and bury the dead; it erects monuments that assign meaning to past lives, dealing with loss through attempts to entomb and idealize; and moralization attempts a mastery of the past through received understandings of history, whether religious or secular, by which to evaluate past lives. Nietzsche's poetic rendering of this memorializing and moralizing direction as "monumental history" nicely captures this elegiac set of concerns and its use value for the living. Hall memorializes Salisbury as a monument to the battle of Orleans, the point at which the martial fortunes of the English take a turn for the worse. Hall moralizes Salisbury's life as one of the honored and heroic dead that line the road to the ultimate triumph of the "Englishe people." In Hall's story, the English, "like a valiant & strong body," suffered through sickness and war to get to marriage and prosperity. We may say, then, that Hall renders the Salisbury story as monumental history. In light of Nietzsche's reading of what this means, we can understand better Hall's rendering of Salisbury's death as, to the Earl himself, "a thyng predestinate very easie." Like Nietzsche's imagined hero stoically greeting his own death with "Olympic laughter," Hall's Salisbury faces death with ease. Hall reads back the ethic of his own discourse onto the dead. As we have seen, it is precisely this monumental quality of Hall's narrative that the Salisbury ghost in the *Mirror* contests.

Both Hall's chronicle and the *Mirror* memorialize the dead and moralize their lives. For Hall, memorializing promises to bring the dead back to life, but that turns out to be a mode of monumental historicism. Hall brings back the dead only insofar as he can freeze them in the amber of moralizing writing. History writing—what Hall calls

"litterature"—provides the dead with a moralized story, a "fame" that eternizes them as figures of either virtue or vice. From the perspective of the living, the dead survive in memory because historians have pronounced on the moral value of their stories, their ability to either "enduce vertue" or "represse vice." The memorializing of ghost complaint poetry, on the other hand, is more likely to destabilize the moralizations of the present than to secure them. Hall's monumental historicism, like any such elegiac discourse, must founder when the dead return to speak on their own behalf.

The conceit of Baldwin's 1559 *Mirror* is that the authors are in a room together one evening selecting their subjects from Fabyan's and Hall's chronicles. They pretend to be choosing from the histories which stories to represent in ghost poems, then reading the poems to each other. This mythical night of exchanging ghost stories is a framing fiction, a conceit giving the impression that the poems are composed on the spot as the ghosts possess their poets. The imagined gathering represents the voices of eight poets. More often than not the voices are detached from particular names with phrases such as "quoth one," "another said," "the company said," and so on, making a ghostly octet of which we are given only two names in the first *Mirror*: William Baldwin and George Ferrers.[19] In the narrative frame, the poets have agreed that each of the ghosts will speak to Baldwin. As Baldwin himself writes in the introduction, the poets "al agreed" that "the wretched princes" should "complayne unto me" (69). Baldwin's *Mirror*, in other words, employs a self-conscious prosopopeia that fictionalizes the voices of the poets as they voice their

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[19] Only these two names are given in the 1559 edition. Later editions name others (such as Chaloner, Sackville, and Phaer), though only sporadically; many of the poems still go without attribution. See Campbell's introduction (9–10). Throughout this chapter, I will refer to only the first edition of 1559 and its sequel in 1563, both edited by William Baldwin, with the phrase "the *Mirror*." Other editions, copies, and expansions also called *Mirror for Magistrates* followed the first two as other editors took over the project. None of the editions to follow, however, would have the impact of Baldwin's.

ghosts. Keeping this conceit in mind, we can profitably ask how it is that the poets are taken aback when the Salisbury ghost refutes their providential project.

In the prose link following the Salisbury poem, the *Mirror* writers (again, as imagined and penned by Baldwin) bemoan their inability to moralize Salisbury's accidental death: "this straunge aduenture of the good erle drave vs al into a dumpne, inwardly lamenting his wofull destynye." When, on the other hand, the Duke of Suffolk falls, the authors "reioyce[] to heare of a wicked man so righteously punished." The prose links model the reader's response in feigned lamenting and rejoicing after the ghost speeches. Such affective modeling invites readers to participate in a conversation about the meaning of history by assuring them that not even the authors know beforehand what the ghosts will say or how to moralize their speeches. If Baldwin and his cohorts had desired a simpler, perhaps less poetic kind of moralizing—a "looking glass" in which vice is punished, as the dedication promises—they could easily have chosen only those figures in whose righteous punishment they could rejoice—figures which would simply and consistently reinforce the providential model. But, as they say, the *Mirror* "is a Poesie and no diuinitye" (346).

We can also see prosopopeia at work to its full, ghostly potential when Salisbury's speech causes surprise in the chorus of poets. Speaking for dead works as temporal palimpsest, creating the possibility that the voices of the dead may contest those of the present. As in a ventriloquist's act, the object ventriloquized is most interesting and uncanny when it seems to take the ventriloquist by surprise—when it seems to speak without the ventriloquist's volition and against his or her design. Clearly the Salisbury poem aims for similar effects. The poem, however, complicates and accentuates this

effect by spectralizing the poet. Though Salisbury addresses Baldwin, the prose link that precedes his poem denies us knowledge of the author. Though the prose link cites him, it does so anonymously: "quoth one…I wyll take vppon me the person of Thomas Mountague earle of Salysburye…" (142). We never find out who this "one" is. What happens when anonymous voice takes on the voice of a ghost? At this level of complexity, prosopopeia creates harmonics and dissonances between absent (past) and present voices, threatening the seemingly secure borders between past and present, dead and living. It invites the kind of disturbance Jacques Derrida describes as "spectrality" in *Specters of Marx,* in which the past operates inside the present. The more effective the prosopopeia, the greater the sense that the poet's voice is possessed by the ghost's and dispossessed of his own intention.[20]

Salisbury's opening speech to Baldwin amply demonstrates the way in which the figure of the ghost embodies a doubled, metaleptic perspective. The ghost spends the bulk of the poem recounting the events of its life from a first person perspective, but it also looks back on those events from the distance of Baldwin's present. In the following stanza, the ghost speaks directly to the poet figure of the way in which events are resignified in hindsight:

> The ende in dede, is iudge of euery thing,
> Which is the cause, or latter poynt of time:
> The first true verdyct at the first may bryng,
> The last is slow, or slipper as the slime,
> Oft chaunging names of innocence and crime.
> Duke Thomas death was Iustice two yeres long,
> And euer sence sore tiranny and wrong. (144)

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[20] In fact, "voice" and "intention" are close to interchangeable here; Paul de Man reminds us that the former is a metaphor for the latter (*Allegories of Reading*, 18).

This passage and those like it slip between cause and effect in a way that is difficult to interpret. Salisbury speaks of two kinds of causes. The first is the reason for action. The opening of the poem is dedicated to clearing the name of the Earl's father, John, who took up what the ghost claims was a noble cause inspiring action that happened to contribute to events that turned out badly. The second kind of "cause" is historical, an inciting incident—regardless of motivational causes that may prompt individuals to action—that leads to the present. This second kind of cause represents the way providentialism tries to make sense of history. Salisbury suggests that "the cause" (the first kind) and not the "causal spede" (the second kind) "is to be wayed in euery kinde of dede." Moral lessons change with time and circumstance, and we revalue past actions given our ability to view them in hindsight. History, then, according to Salisbury (and he is not the only *Mirror* ghost who says so), is created after the fact, and events will be given the valence of "innocence" or "crime" by those in the present who seek to control interpretation of the past according to changeable current values and power structures.

Using the same emphasis on memorializing and moralizing reconfigured by ghostly poetics, the *Mirror* plays havoc with Hall's monumental historicizing. As Nietzsche says, the object of monumental history "is to depict effects at the expense of causes—'monumentally,'

> that is, as examples for imitation; it turns aside, as far as it may, from reasons, and might be called with far less exaggeration a collection of 'effects in themselves' than of events that will have an effect on all ages. The events of war or religion cherished in our popular celebrations are such 'effects in themselves'; it is these that will not let ambition sleep, and lie like amulets on the bolder hearts—not the real historical nexus of cause and effect, which, rightly understood, would only prove that nothing quite similar could ever be cast again from the dice-boxes of fate and the future. (15)

When Salisbury's ghost returns from the dead in the *Mirror*, he disavows the "causal spede" that Hall relies on to create historical narrative. By insisting on the rule of fate, which "gideth al the game" (143), Salisbury insists on what Nietzsche calls the "real historical nexus of cause and effect," a crapshoot that cannot authorize monumental history.

Salisbury's musings about causes and "causal spede" occur in a conversation with the poet that takes place in the present looking back on historical events. "Baldwin," the ghost demands, "waye the cause." The ghost pleads with those in the present to take intention into account when judging past figures, not the resulting events or the way in which history has made its heroes and villains after the fact. The authority for such a plea is based on the point of view of a ghost who was a participant in events and now also understands the use history has made of those events. Such a perspective—that of both the eyewitness and the historian—imaginatively trumps the singular perspective from the present. In this respect, the poet triumphs over the historian. At stake is the way in which moral lessons are drawn from the past. A later poem in the 1559 Mirror takes up the issue of "causes" again. This time, the speaker is not an innocent victim of Fortune but one who clearly deserves death, as we can tell from the title of the poem, "The infamous ende of Lord Iohn Tiptoft Earle of Wurcester, for cruelly executing his princes butcherly commanundementes" (197). For this ghost, stories about the past should be told truly, "Feare, nor favour, truth of things to spare," but the biases of those who tell them prevent it, so that "stories never can be true" (198). The ghost accuses chronicle writers in particular of writing useless or partial history:

> Vnfruytfull Fabyan folowed the face
> Of time and dedes, but let the causes slip:

> Whych Hall hath added, but with double grace,
> For feare I thinke least trouble might him trip:
> For this or that (sayeth he) he felt the whip.
> Thus story writers leave the causes out,
> Or so rehears them, as they wer in dout.

The two chronicle histories that the volume as a whole claims as source materials are here put in question. Fabyan presents no historical "causes" and Hall's are overly influenced by his desire to appease the powerful and elude punishment. The ghost continues:

> And therefore Baldwin eyther speake vpright
> Of our affayres, or touche them not at all:
> As for my selfe I waye al thinges so light,
> That nought I passe how men report my fall.
> The truth wherof yet playnly shew I shall,
> That thou mayst write, and other therby rede,
> What thinges I did, wherof they should take hede. (199)

Here we can see both the doubling of perspective (perspectival metalepsis) and voice (prosopopeia) at work. The ghost claims authority over historians by virtue of its first person narrative. It tells us it will speak the truth about its life. The poet persona, Baldwin, will take dictation. The audience will read and learn. The confusion between speech and writing, however, is no accident. Baldwin is asked to both "write" and "speake" here. And again we are not told in the prose links who of the eight poets writes (or speaks) the poem. The authority over the historian ostensibly results from the first person quality of the narrative. However, any authority (moral or otherwise) that such a narrator might provide for the reader is put in doubt not only because of the ghost's ostentatiously fictionalized doubled perspective as a figure of the past occupying the present but because the poetic voice (and writing) that gives it form and presence bears a forged signature, "Baldwin," that draws attention to its own forgery. In the *Mirror*, poetic

memorializing in the form of prosopopeia and perspectival metalepsis deconstructs the poem's ability to apply doctrine and demand judgment.

Critics have sometimes understood Baldwin's *Mirror* as oppressively moralistic in contrast to the seemingly more complicated, ambiguous, and irreverent poetic productions of the late sixteenth century superstars such as Spenser, Sidney, and Shakespeare. But by crafting the *Mirror* poems as a conversation—creating a dialogic exchange with both the prose links and the varied ghost speeches—its authors employ a kind of moralizing that challenges the audience to interpret. The *Mirror* authors understand something of what Spenser sees as the necessity of "darke conceit" in framing moral lessons. They "like it the better," as Baldwin writes after the Lord Hastings poem, because it is "very darke, and hard to be understood." It is "written for the learned." This quality promises to "cause it to be the oftener reade, and the better remembred."[21] In fact, the learned poets of the 1590s do read and remember the *Mirror*. Baldwin's volumes prompt the kind of conversation they model. In so doing, they exert a marked influence on sixteenth-century literary history. When Sidney's famous *Defence* valorizes poets, who "borrow nothing of what is, hath been, or shall be; but range, only reined with learned discretion, into the divine consideration of what may be and should be" (11), against historians, whose work is "captived to the truth of a foolish world" (21), it seems fair to say that the *Mirror* has already made the same argument.

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[21] "When I had read this, one sayd it was very darke, and hard to be vnderstoode: excepte it were diligently and very leasurely considered. I like it the better (quoth an other.) For that shal cause it to be the oftener reade, and the better remembred. Considering also that it is written for the learned (for such all Magistrates are or should be) it can not be to hard, so long as it is sound and learnedly wrytten" (297).

CHAPTER II

AETHETICIZING JANE SHORE

Anyone living in England between the early sixteenth and the eighteenth centuries
could scarcely have avoided encountering some version, even multiple versions, of the
story of Jane Shore.[1] Jane, the story goes, was the pretty, young wife of a London
goldsmith named Shore. She caught the eye of the lascivious King Edward IV, became
his mistress, and rose to a position of prominence at court. When Edward died, Jane was
vilified by his successor. The notorious tyrant Richard III, then Protector of the Realm,
imprisoned her and confiscated her possessions. She lived out the remainder of her life in
poverty. "Shore's wife," as she came to be known, would have her story written and
rewritten many times over in the early modern period into the eighteenth century. She
would figure prominently in histories, poems, plays, and ballads.[2] To read the Jane Shore
story, then, is to read a palimpsest. In fact, to call Shore's wife "Jane" already reads her
in this way, since that forename comes from two stage plays by Thomas Heywood
published in 1599. It was not "Jane," but "Elizabeth" Lambert, born circa 1450, who
would marry the goldsmith William Shore and become King Edward's concubine.[3]

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[1] D. F. Rowan suggests that "for over two centuries the tragic story of Jane Shore was familiar to every
Englishman" (447).
[2] For an enumeration of the many versions of the Jane Shore story, see James L. Harner, "Jane Shore in
Literature: A Checklist."
[3] See Nicholas Barker, "The Real Jane Shore," esp. 385. Heywood names Shore's wife "Jane" in his plays,
The First and Second Partes of King Edward the Fourth (1599).

Elizabeth is all but lost to history and literature, though her protean avatar, Jane, persists in both.[4]

Scholars such as Richard Helgerson and Wendy Wall have read Jane Shore as a figure for an emergent bourgeois class in its struggle with monarchical hierarchies, or, similarly, for the growing importance of a domestic sphere that increasingly registers as a crucial political and historical category.[5] In this narrative, Jane becomes a figure for assaulted domesticity. The changing iterations of her story index the rise of Jacobean domestic tragedy, prefiguring what Nicholas Rowe calls "she-tragedy" in the Restoration and "domestic" or "bourgeois" literature of the eighteenth century (Helgerson 456). This draws a developmental line between Jane Shore and Samuel Richardson's *Clarissa* or other sentimental novels featuring fallen women. If we pan out to view the Jane Shore palimpsest in the *longue durée*, such an evolutionary pattern begins to look undeniable. Indeed, it seems possible to read for the roots of that story even in Jane's first appearance in chronicle history. As with many such developmental narratives, however, a wide lens threatens to obscure local detail and force a particular reading of origins. Upon closer inspection, readings of Jane Shore as a domestic or bourgeois figure turn out to read backwards from Jane's appearance in dramatic literature. Jane's story first makes a

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[4] For descriptions of representations of Jane Shore from the sixteenth to the twentieth centuries, see Maria M. Scott, *Re-Presenting "Jane" Shore*.

[5] See Richard Helgerson, "Weeping for Jane Shore," for an indispensible analysis of the story as it develops in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. As Helgerson incisively observes, "That the story of an adulterous middle-class woman would dare aspire to the aristocratic and largely masculine realms of history and tragedy has always been felt (whatever the story's popular success) as profoundly transgressive" (453). I agree. In fact, one of the aims of 1590s ghost complaints will be to enact such transgression and consider its implications. Overall, Helgerson sees the evolution of the Jane Shore stories in a Marxist frame. In his words, "Shore's wife is a representative figure whose troubling encounter with history suggests the possibility that tragic emotion may not be the exclusive province of the great, that something like what would later be called "bourgeois" or "domestic" tragedy is not simply a ridiculous misnomer" (456). See Wendy Wall, "Forgetting and Keeping," in which Wall also relies on Thomas Heywood's *Edward IV* plays (1599) to make the case for Jane as a domestic paragon and for "the household as an alternative historical space to chronicle, one that allows citizens to write themselves into national history" (124).

sustained effort to depict the domestic realm in conflict with the court in Thomas

Heywood's *Edward IV* plays at the very end of the Elizabethan period. Before that, the

case for Jane as a domestic icon is more difficult to make. In this chapter I do not mean to

contest the reading of Jane Shore in relation to the emergent bourgeois sphere. Rather, I

want to leave it in place, but carefully bracketed. I am concerned here with how Jane

becomes widely known in the first place, before she becomes a figure for assaulted

domesticity in dramatic literature. Jane's rise to prominence through the sixteenth century

reveals the path through which she becomes appropriable for later literary movements.

Jane's emergence as a popular figure, as it turns out, is a ghost story.

In this chapter I show how Jane Shore haunts the Tudor period and what that

haunting means for the era's spectral aesthetics in general and the trajectory of ghost

complaint poetry in particular. I read the two accounts of Jane Shore that become by far

the most influential for the sixteenth century, Thomas More's and Thomas Churchyard's.

Jane is first written into chronicle history by More in his *History of King Richard the

Third* (c. 1520). More's becomes the accepted historical account, adopted by chronicles

throughout the sixteenth century such as those of Hall and Hollinshed.[6] Jane first appears

in poetry as a ghost in Thomas Churchyard's "Shore's wife," included in the 1563 *Mirror

for Magistrates*. Churchyard's poem then becomes the pattern for ghost complaints of the

1590s, a decade in which Jane reappears in many literary settings, ghostly and otherwise.

The competing figurations of Jane Shore in More's chronicle history and Churchyard's

ghost poem give rise to a number of interrelated concerns that occupy ghost complaint

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[6] See George M. Logan's "Introduction" to *The History of King Richard the Third*, esp. xliii–li. "Reprinted more often than any other historical work of the era, and highly admired, the *History* was in one sense enormously influential: presenting with surpassing eloquence the damning early view of Richard, More's work sealed the historical fate of an English king" (xliv). All citations of Thomas More in this chapter are from Logan's edition.

poetry and therefore this dissertation. These concerns include the related and sometimes conflicting work of pathos and moralizing; the fraught relation between the poet (or the historian) and the woman he voices (or narrates); and the slippery rhetorical relation between praise and blame and therefore, for ghosts such as Jane who rely on fame or infamy for their continued existence, redemption and damnation. I understand each of these concerns in relation to the way in which Jane's story participates in an agonistic interplay between historiography and poetics. I am interested here in the way in which sixteenth-century poets like Churchyard attempt to draw their subjects from the grasp of history and refigure them as a literary artifacts. This chapter will show how Churchyard, through such aestheticizing processes, substitutes the authority of a woman's word for that of the historian.

I draw on Theodor Adorno's *Aesthetic Theory* when I suggest that, in the sixteenth century, history exerts a structuring force on ghost complaint poems that constitute themselves precisely in the attempt to achieve autonomous distance from that history. Yet my use of Adorno's work here is faithful neither to the complexity of his theory as a whole nor the terms in which he articulates it. With apologies to Adorno purists, then, I will summarize what I find useful in *Aesthetic Theory* then promptly modify it. I adapt Adorno's general theory of aesthetics in order to outline a specific theory of the *spectral aesthetics* of ghost complaint poetry. Adorno suggests that "art acquires its specificity by separating itself from what it developed out of; its law of movement is its law of form" (3). But by no means do works of art ever fully escape that from which they "developed out of"—"it is precisely as artifacts, as products of social labor, that they also communicate with the empirical experience that they reject and from

which they draw their content" (5). "The unsolved antagonisms of reality return in artworks as immanent problems of form" (6). Adorno's principles are sound for the aesthetics of Elizabethan ghost complaint, but the terms must first be altered. The ground that ghost complaint poems push away is not "empirical experience" but already encoded history.[7] Such poems remain sensitive to the fact (indeed, they rely on it) that history is by no means "reality" or a transparent version of the "social." The spectral aesthetic arises in refiguring histories that writers know are already *suspect* rather than *inevitable* figurations of the "real" or the "social." The addition of the category of history to Adorno's formulation responds to ghost complaint's mode of operation, in which characters from chronical accounts return from the dead to contest the third-person narratives of their lives and deaths by offering their first-person retellings of those events. Yet Adorno's formulation usefully reminds us that even as poets distinguish their rewritings from the historical accounts, and, in many cases, contest the imagined biases of the historians, the "unsolved antagonisms" generated by the historical narratives structure the poetic ones. The ghosts return from the dead to address the problems generated by the way in which they have been encoded in historical narratives. Furthermore, like any aesthetic object ghost complaint poetry is necessarily a product of the time in which it is written; it is structured by both the concerns that emerge from the historical record from which it separtes itself and the "social" concerns of the moment of writing.

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[7] Throughout this essay, I use "history" to refer to a retrospective view of social events or 'real' people as that view is encoded in narrative form, "historiography" to refer to the methodologies and techniques used to create history, and "historicity" to refer to the quality through which something or someone comes to register as authentically historical.

Early modern writers call upon a rich array of statements on the beautiful and the sublime from Plato and Aristotle to Horace and Longinus. Renaissance authors from the Italian Neoclassicists to English writers such as Sir Philip Sidney also advance such statements. Even so, the word "aesthetic" carries modern theoretical weight. Thus loaded, Adorno's theory threatens wrenching anachronisms in an early modern context. By excerpting *Aesthetic Theory* rather than adopting it in its systemic fullness, however, we can contextualize Adorno's insights in early modern poetics. For the English Tudor period in particular, adding the category of history to Adorno's theory contextualizes aesthetics in the ever-deepening distinctions between historiography and poetics that become crucial to early modern understandings of the work of each of these sibling domains. The early modern arts of history and poetry find themselves locked in a tug of war that will result (albeit haltingly and over the course of many decades) in a much greater distance between the two. Historiography makes increasingly strident claims to "scientificity," to use Michel Foucault's word, in the age of Bacon and Descartes, while poetics emphasizes its relation to the supranatural and to the divine.[8] We can easily detect the struggle that will prompt such disciplinary separation in Sir Philip Sidney's "Defence of Poesy" (1595). In the following passage, for instance, Sidney claims that "poesy" precedes and enables historiography:

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[8] See F. J. Levy, *Tudor Historical Thought*. See also the references in my "historiopoetics" discussion (xx–xx). In thinking about the *ars historica* and *ars poetica* as "discourses" that struggle to separate, I draw on Michel Foucault's *Archaeology of Knowledge*. Foucault identifies a chronology of "thresholds" crossed by "discursive formations," involving ever greater determination and reification. In increasing order of determination, these are "positivity," "epistemologization," "scientifictiy," and "fomalization" (186–87). Following Foucault, we can point out the way in which the discourse of historiography separates from poetics by gaining more "scientificity" and formalizing itself. In a progressive model, this would lead to eighteenth-century narrative histories, which make claims to greater objectivity than their chronicle predecessors. Though, to do justice to Foucault, such formations are not necessarily predictably progressive: "their chronology, in fact, is neither regular nor homogenous" (187). On the break between sixteenth- and seventeenth-century systems of representation and the emergence of empiricism, see also Foucault's *The Order of Things,* esp. pp. 46–76.

> …historiographers (although their lips sound of things done, and verity be written in their foreheads) have been glad to borrow both fashion and, perchance, weight of poets. So Herodotus entitled his History by the name of the nine Muses; and both he and all the rest that followed him either stale [*sic*] or usurped of poetry their passionate describing of passions, the many particularities of battles, which *no man could affirm*; or, if that be denied me, long orations put in the mouths of great kings and captains, which it is certain *they never pronounced.* So that truly neither philosopher nor historiographer could at the first have entered into the gates of popular judgements, if they had not taken a great passport of poetry…[9]

This is one of the ways in which Sidney argues for the superiority of poetics over historiography. Throughout the "Defence," Sidney aims to show that the historian produces the "less fruitful doctrine" (221). If "truth" is at issue, history has no great claim to it. Poetry, on the other hand, provides "true doctrine" by virtue of its "weight"—its greater access to the timeless meaning of contingent events (240). And if what is at stake is the "passionate describing of passions" or the influencing of "popular judgements," poetry simply does these things better than history does. Sidney's insistence on continually returning to historiography against which to define poetry nevertheless highlights the close kinship between the two fields.

In his *Advancement of Learning* (1605), Sir Francis Bacon echoes Sidney's claims even as he attempts to reinstall the distinction between "feigned" poetry and "true" history:

> …because true history propoundeth the successes and issues of actions not so agreeable to the merits of virtue and vice, therefore poesy feigns them more just in retribution and more according to revealed providence; because true history representeth actions and events more ordinary and less interchanged, therefore poesy endueth them with more rareness and more unexpected and alternative variations: so as it appeareth that poesy serveth and confereth to magnanimity, morality, and to delectation.[10]

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[9] Sir Philip Sidney, "The Defence of Poesy" in *Sir Philip Sidney: The Major Works*, 214 (my emphasis).
[10] Sir Francis Bacon's *The Advancement of Learning* excerpted in *Critical Theory Since Plato*, 193.

Bacon cites a catalogue of poetic imitations of history, such as "feigned chronicles, feigned lives, and the appendices of history, as feigned epistles, feigned orations, and the rest." Such poetic endeavors, as the repetition of the word "feigned" insists, work as "mere imitation of history." For Bacon, poetry clearly has its uses. As he says, echoing Sidney, it can "raise and erect the mind" and offer itself more auspiciously to "man's nature and pleasure." Yet Bacon, famous for his "empirical method," cannot allow poetry the range and force that Sidney does. Sidney and Bacon typify an ongoing conversation about the relative merits and priority of history and poetry. Any notion of the aesthetics of sixteenth-century poetry must be informed not only by well-known classical and neoclassical theories of poetic power, but also by expressions of the grounds and limits of that power in an age in which poetics and historiography struggle to define themselves against one another. The sticking point in this struggle, as the conversation between Sidney and Bacon makes clear, is truth-value. Of course, conversations about the truth-value of art (as opposed to whatever seemingly more reliable epistemological system comes to hand) begin with Plato and never seem to go out of fashion. What is important to notice here is that in the sixteenth century, writers and readers habitually measure the kind of "truth" that poetry offers against historical "truth."

These sixteenth-century parameters lend an aesthetic charge to poetry's ghosts. Framed in relation to the historical world, aesthetic objects deliver what Sidney famously calls a "golden world" (216) that lifts up the mundane—in Bacon's words, "actions and events…ordinary"—into the "rareness" of what both authors call the "divine." Poetry escapes the tyranny of time to which history is more closely tied. As Sidney puts it, speaking of a painting of Lucrece, the "imitation" of painters "borrow nothing of what is,

hath been, or shall be; but range, only reined with learned discretion, into the divine

consideration of what may be and should be." The figure of the ghost, perhaps more

explicitly than any other aesthetic phenomenon in the period, escapes "what is, hath been,

or shall be"—the material inevitability of birth, development, decay, and death. In its

very appearance, the ghost exceeds such material contingencies. When the specters in

ghost complaint poetry speak from this extracorporeal position, they do so from not only

the first person perspective of their living years but also a perspective from the present

looking back on those years as well as the way in which history has encoded their lives

and deaths. The writer's prosopopeia of the ghost, in short, enables a metaleptic

perspective that exceeds the "ordinary" experience of the writer as well as the reader.

This too is an effect that Adorno ascribes to aesthetic objects. Wolfram Schmidgen

suggests that for Adorno, the aesthetic experience involves "the escape from

determination and reification" which takes "the form of a loss of subjective agency in the

encounter with a powerfully animated object."[11] Sixteenth-century literary ghosts

represent this kind of encounter. Fleeing the "determination and reification" of history,

the "powerfully animated" ghosts materialize through prosopopeia and speak

metaleptically. To the degree that these animations succeed in producing ghostly effects,

the writer of ghost complaint poetry necessarily gives over "subjective agency" to the

ghost. And to the degree that such ghostly effects succeed for audiences, they threaten a

similar loss of agency. In his encounter with the ghost that claims to be his dead father,

Hamlet famously models this kind of loss.

Yet if an aesthetic object like a ghost functions by robbing us of subjective

agency—and leads us, like so many Hamlets, not to prompt judgment but to

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[11] Wolfram Schmidgen, "Reembodying the Aesthetic," 64.

philosophical speculation and dehiscence—how does it direct us toward, in Sidney's words, "true doctrine"? Or put another way, once the ghost has taken over control of history precisely by breaking its rules, once she has dismantled the field of difference through which she appears by virtue of her escape from the past, on what basis can she speak the truth either of the past or the present? This is a question ghost complaint poetry ceaselessly asks of itself. It is a question that each writer of ghost complaint must encounter and to which each must find his own answer. Perhaps it is one version of a perennial question about the power and use value of the aesthetic; yet, more locally, it is the defining question—sometimes the paradox—of ghost complaint, as I hope to make clear in what follows by tracing sixteenth-century spectral aesthetics through one particular figure that would prompt the trend for 1590s female voiced ghost complaint.

Elizabeth "Jane" Shore, who would become such an influential specter, was still living in the early sixteenth century. The first writer to encode her in a historical narrative, Thomas More, knew her in her latter days as an "old, lean, withered, and dried up" remnant of the "fair face" she once was (65). Even as he knew her to persist in the realm of the living, More began the tradition of appropriating her body for use in chronicle history. Though the forename does not appear in More's text, the legendary figure who would become "Jane" Shore appears first in his *History*. More, as we will see, first provides the aestheticizing hints that poets will take up when they refigure Jane as a literary object. More is constrained, however, by a third-person narrative form that relies on the authoritative gaze of the historian. As much as he uses her "fair face" to generate pity, for instance, and therefore nurture the reader's disapproval of her tormentor, Richard III, More nevertheless must present the historical facts—or at least the

convincing appearance of facticity—required by his form of address. Poets who are not similarly constrained will provide Jane with a forum for her ghostly reappearances. By the 1590s, when Samuel Daniel's ghost complaint claims that Jane "passes for a Saint," she will have become a sign for much more than she or her first chronicler would have been likely to imagine.[12] How does a woman known originally for her adulterous relationship with a king become a saint, even if only in a self-consciously secular, literary sense? Such a transformation seems unlikely, especially in a culture that so highly values moralizing exemplarity and patriarchal standards of chastity for women. In order to understand this counterintuitive result, we need to first understand the contests that play out under cover of that false and proper name, Jane Shore.

Versions of the Jane Shore story from More's to the 1590s worry about what it means to give such a woman a place in a historical narrative. As King Richard himself has it when he rises from the grave in one 1590s ghost complaint poem, Giles Fletcher's *The Rising to the Crowne of Richard the Third* (1593),

> *Shores* wife, a subject, though a Princesse mate,
> Had little cause her fortune to lament.
> Her birth was meane, and yet she liv'd with State,
> The King was dead before her honour went.
>   *Shores* wife might fall, and none can justly wonder,
>   To see her fall, that useth to lye under.
> […]
> Nor weepe I nowe, as children that have lost,
> But smyle to see the Poets of this age:
> Like silly boates in shallow rivers tost,
> Loosing their paynes, and lacking still their wage.
>   To write of women, and of womens falles,
>   Who are too light, for to be fortunes balles.[13]

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[12] Samuel Daniel, *Delia with the Complaint of Rosamond 1592*, H3v.

[13] Giles Fletcher, *Licia, or Poemes of loue in honour of the admirable and singular vertues of his lady, to the imitation of the best Latin poets, and others. Whereunto is added the rising to the crowne of Richard the third*, sig. L2r–v.

The pun on "fortune's balls" implies that women unjustly usurp the traditional privileging of male subjects in historiopoetic endeavors. To be history's tennis balls, the pun suggests, subjects must possess the anatomical counterpart. Poets who write about "women's falles" take up low subjects unworthy of a place in history. Richard Helgerson writes that "Mistress Shore's" claim to fame rests, "paradoxically enough, on her very unfitness for the social, political, and literary domains to which adultery raised her" (453). I draw upon and reorient Helgerson's analysis by suggesting that, at least for the sixteenth century, it is precisely Jane's "unfitness" for *history* that makes her story a favored *literary* subject.

To make Jane a saint promises a literary apotheosis. Writers such as More and Churchyard rescue her from a tawdry existence as an adulterous merchant's wife and royal concubine to make her a significant part of the historical record and then the literary canon—to canonize her. Churchyard's Jane Shore then becomes a pattern for female figures in 1590s ghost complaints. The story of Jane Shore as it is reiterated in the sixteenth-century registers the fraught relation between historical and literary imperatives, between the interpretation of social relations (or 'real' events) and their aesthetic reinterpretation. That Jane Shore—like figures to follow such as Rosamond, Elstred, Helen, Matilda, and Lucrece—becomes a ghost haunting her own history as well as the present only intensifies the agonistic interplay between history and poetry that informs her appearance.

"Her great shame won her much praise"

Churchyard's contribution to the 1563 version of the *Mirror for Magistrates* bears the title, "Howe Shores wife, Edwarde the fowerthes concubine, was by king Richarde despoyled of all her goodes, and forced to do open penance."[14] The poem follows another featuring the ghost of Richard III. In fact, Churchyard's "Shore's Wife" is a sequel of sorts. The prose link introducing Jane Shore suggests that her poem will "supplye that whych is lackinge in him." Shore is "an eloquent wentch, whyche shall furnishe out both in meter and matter, that which could not comlily be sayd in [Richard's] person" (372). Jane Shore, the first female historical figure to appear in the *Mirror,* thus rises from the dead, in part, as a supplement to the ghost of Richard III. Indeed, it is easy to understand how Jane Shore, as a hapless victim of Richard's political scheming, would be able to voice a critique that the King himself would not utter. Jane Shore is a beautiful woman cast out of her social sphere and impoverished by a notoriously tyrannical hunchback. Her pathetic tale, told from her point of view as victim, underscores Richard's remorseless use of power. "Shore's Wife" supplements Richard's story not just in "matter," however, but also in "meter"—not only thematically, but also stylistically. Jane Shore will "furnishe out" Richard's poem in both content and aesthetic appeal. Richard's "howlinge" speech, the *Mirror* poets tell us, issues in "vncertayne Meter" from "so cruell and prophane a mouth as his" (359; 371). Jane, "whose words a world hath delighted in" (372), becomes at once a figure for physical beauty opposed to beastly tyranny and a figure for eloquence in the face of barbarous howling.

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[14] Churchyard's poem, known as "Shore's Wife," is printed in *The Mirror for Magistrates*, pp. 373–86.

The *Mirror* aestheticizes Jane Shore as a figure for both physical and poetic beauty.[15] But the *Mirror* is not the first text to elevate Jane Shore and vilify the deformed King through such rhetoric. Thomas More's *History of King Richard the Third* capitalizes on the Jane Shore story's potential for defaming Richard. More's history as a whole sets out to show "what manner of man" Richard was: morally and physically bent, "malicious, wrathful, envious, and, from afore his birth, ever froward" (8; 10). More's Richard is a petty tyrant who would be laughable if he were not so lethal. As the historian tells it, Richard sends Jane to jail for adultery, then forces her into the role of a penitent. Richard condemns her as "nought of her body," a harlot.[16] But More reminds us that "all the world" already knew Shore's wife was an adulteress. That Richard belatedly blusters over this well-known fact causes amusement:

> he laid heinously to her charge the thing that herself could not deny, that all the world wist was true, and that nevertheless every man laughed at to hear it then so suddenly so highly taken.

Richard's attempt to make Jane a signifier for Edward's sexual excess backfires. Instead of righteous indignation, the accusation inspires only sardonic laughter. More emphasizes the irony of Richard's insistence on punishing Jane: the hunchback's supercilious condemnation reveals his own hypocrisy.

> ...as a goodly continent prince, clean and faultless of himself, sent out of heaven into this vicious world for the amendment of men's manners...he caused the bishop of London to put her to open penance.... (64)

The irony here is thick. Richard's priggish accusation of Jane Shore points out that he is anything but "clean and faultless" himself. The people, More tells us, see through this

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[15] Following on this pattern, the rhetoric of beauty and tyranny in Elizabethan ghost complaints will rely on both physical and linguistic referents.

[16] As More's editor points out, the Latin version uses the word "*meretrix*" (64 n.4).

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charade, realizing that Richard's treatment of Jane owes more to political machinations than moral scruples.

> And many good folk, also, that hated her living and glad were to see sin corrected, yet pitied they more her penance than rejoiced therein, when they considered that the protector procured it more of a corrupt intent than any virtuous affection.

Richard's condemnation of Jane Shore's "sin," ironically, exposes his own Machiavellian scheming. As pious as they may be, "good folk" pity Jane's plight to the degree that they understand her as the victim of "corrupt intent." The relations among sin, empathic response, and tyrannical behavior will structure Jane Shore stories throughout the sixteenth century.

More's history insists that Jane's faults pale next to Richard's. The account everywhere implies a comparison of transgressions that works to exculpate the adulteress and vilify the cruel King. More relies on an affective calculus: the greater the reader's sympathy for Jane, the more Richard's debasement of her reads as excessive tyranny and the less Jane's adultery registers as "sin" worthy of punishment. That is, Richard's tyranny has a redemptive effect on Jane. To weight this formula in Jane's favor, More employs devices in addition to the overt irony of Richard's accusation. For instance, he gives her a sympathetic back-story.

> This woman was born in London, worshipfully friended, honestly brought up, and very well married (saving somewhat too soon), her husband an honest citizen, young and goodly and of good substance. But forasmuch as they were coupled ere she were well ripe, she not very fervently loved for whom she never longed. Which was haply the thing that the more easily made her incline unto the king's appetite when he required her. Howbeit, the respect of his royalty, the hope of gay apparel, ease, pleasure, and other wanton wealth was able soon to pierce a soft, tender heart. (64–5)

Here Jane is a well-raised young girl too quickly married. Her inexperience and the lure

of pleasure, along with the King's demand, lead her into the "wanton" world of the court.

The suggestion that she is trapped in an untimely and loveless marriage lends a note of

tragic inevitability to her story. What's a young girl to do? She becomes an easy mark for

the glitter of courtly life and the voracious King Edward. If her marriage finds her not

"well ripe," she soon becomes a "soft, tender" meal suitable for the King's "appetite."

The court, the gustatory metaphors lead us to believe, devours the young, hapless Jane.

More also makes much of Jane's allure for men. Perhaps the most remarkable

aspect of his gossipy rendition of the Jane Shore story is the sly way in which he narrates

her sex appeal. "Proper she was and fair," More tells us, "nothing in her body that you

would have changed, but if you would have wished her somewhat higher" (65). This

compliment is curiously oblique given his description of Jane as a penitent.

> [Richard] caused the bishop of London to put her to open penance, going
> before the cross in procession upon a Sunday, with a taper in her hand—in
> which she went in countenance and pace demure, so womanly, and albeit
> she were out of all array save her kirtle only, yet went she so fair and
> lovely, namely while the wondering of the people cast a comely rud in her
> cheeks (of which she before had most miss), that her great shame won her
> much praise among those that were more amorous of her body than
> curious of her soul. (64)

Jane's public penance, far from making her an object of derision, increases her appeal.

More's sidelong glance at her beauty—at the "nothing in her body that you would have

changed"—is displaced here onto the naked ogling of a Sunday crowd taking a prurient

interest in Jane's state of undress and her "womanly" promenade. The sin of sexual

transgression that Jane's penance ritual is presumably meant to expiate ironically exposes

her to the same sort of gaze that drew her into transgression in the first place. The

crowd's lascivious drooling recapitulates King Edward's. Jane's shame, as it gives her a "comely" blush, makes her up as an object of desire.

The scopic interest that More generates is instrumental: behind Jane's shaming lies Richard, the real target of More's venom. More tempts us to view Jane's abasement with pity and desire. She is all the more "demure," "comely," "lovely," and "womanly" for her shaming at the hands of such a malicious schemer. The phrase, "her great shame won her much praise," although it is qualified to refer to those spectators with baser motives, nevertheless encapsulates the counterintuitive work More asks his Jane to do in his account. Paradoxically, Jane's sin and punishment makes her praiseworthy; not necessarily because her penance itself purges her, but because that penance puts her in the position of a martyr tormented by an evil tyrant. Jane's body, her beauty, is here a lure designed to draw out our investment in seeing Richard punished. In this way, the chastening of Jane becomes a figure for the castigation of Richard. Martyred beauty enters into figural relation to unnatural tyranny.

In his discussion of eighteenth-century executions, Michel Foucault usefully demonstrates the way in which public punishment spectacles, in insisting on the absolute power of the monarch over the body of the subject, can produce such carnivalesque results as we see in More's account: "In these executions, which ought to show only the terrorizing power of the prince, there was a whole aspect of the carnival, in which rules were inverted, authority mocked and criminals transformed into heroes. The shame was turned round…."[17] Here Foucault could well be speaking of the punishment of Jane Shore. Richard punishes her, publicizing her unchastity in an attempt to consolidate his

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[17] Michel Foucault, *Discipline & Punish*, 32–69; 61. See also Rebecca W. Bushnell, *Tragedies of Tyrants*, on the "improper authority" of the tryant (3–5).

power and (ostensibly) purify the state. Yet More's account of this episode suggests that

Jane is all the more chaste—more "demure" and "womanly"—for her chastisement at the

hands of Richard, whom we are meant to see as unchaste insofar as he becomes a figure

of the sinful excesses of tyranny. Ghost complaint poems such as Thomas Churchard's

Jane Shore poem will make much of this carnivalesque reversal of chastity's terms and

the exculpatory effect it can have on the woman who suffers at the hands of the tyrant.

But More is not finished praising Jane. She may be a *meretrix*, as More calls her,

but she is a harlot with a heart of gold. Of three concubines, she was the favorite of King

Edward, "whose favor…she never abused to any man's hurt, but to many a man's

comfort and relief."

> Where the king took displeasure, she would mitigate and appease his mind; where men were out of favor, she would bring them in his grace. For many that had highly offended, she obtained pardon. Of great forfeitures she gat men remission. (66)

Jane's position gives her a power at court that she uses for the "comfort and relief" of

others. She becomes an intercessor figure for supplicants. She works to "mitigate"

imagined faults and to achieve "grace," "pardon," and "remission." The language of

sanctification on which Jane Shore poems will come to rely is thus already present in

More's account. More's word choice gestures at figuring Jane as a saint to whom sinners

appeal for pardon. Such a figuration may remain merely a rhetorical gesture here, yet that

gesture it is the hint upon which the ongoing sixteenth-century sanctification of Jane

Shore will build.[18]

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[18] Ironically, Thomas More becomes a canonized saint in the twentieth century while Jane Shore, still a wanton woman, becomes the subject of bodice-ripper novels. Jane is the heroine of novels such as *The Merry Mistress* (1952), *The King's White Rose* (1988), and *The Goldsmith's Wife* (1950), novels that by and large treat Jane as a sexually forward Scarlett O'Hara type trapped in an overly pious age. See Maria

Finally, More's Jane anticipates the "eloquent" and "talkative wench" she will become in complaints. Of Edward's concubines, More writes, "the merriest was this Shore's wife, in whom the king therefore took special pleasure."

> For a proper wit had she, and could both read well and write; merry in company, ready and quick of answer, neither mute nor full of babble, sometimes taunting without displeasure and not without disport. (65–66)

Calling upon this hint about her wit, learning, and conversational aptitude, Jane can say in her *Mirror* complaint, "since without blushing I haue so long beene a talkatiue wench, (whose words a world hath delighted in) I will now goe on boldly with my audacious manner" (372).

The spectacle of Jane's punishment in More's account is the culmination of a melodrama of desire. Jane's ripening desires as a young woman seeking love and pleasure give her over to the voracious King Edward. Richard's Machiavellian hunger for power is laid bare by his punishment of Jane after Edward's death. And that very punishment, which is supposed to chastise Jane for sexual excess, inspires the desiring gaze of the crowd. Over this covetous interplay presides perhaps the most important desire to consider: More's. The historian signals his own desirous investment even as he tempts us to look upon her youthful beauty.

> Proper she was, and fair…. Thus say they that knew her in her youth, albeit some that now see her (for yet she liveth) deem her never to have been well-visaged. Whose judgment seemeth me somewhat like as though men should guess the beauty of one long before departed by her scalp taken out of the charnel-house: for now she is old, lean, withered, and dried up, nothing left but riveled skin and hard bone. And yet, being even such, whoso well advise her visage might guess and devise which parts how filled would make it a fair face. (65)

M. Scott, "The More We Change" in *Representing "Jane" Shore*, for a discussion of these novels and other twentieth century representations of the Jane Shore Story (117–29).

Having told his readers that she was "proper" and "fair," and casting (by proxy) an appreciative gaze over her imagined body, More imagines "men" reading the past, gazing not at youthful beauty but at a charnel-house scalp. More attempts here to take his narrative out of the economy of desire circulating in the past—Jane's, Edward's, Richard's, the crowd's—and set it in retrospective relation to that historical moment. He and those naysayers in the present who "deem her never to have been well-visaged" can only consider her in withered age and guess at the beauty that so electrified those in the past. This narrative move distances More from the economies of desire he creates in two ways. First, his insistence on his own present point of view insulates him from the desiring gazes of those in the past. He may report Jane as others have described her, but he is not one of "those…amorous of her body" who drool over her as she passes by in her loose gown. Second, he distances himself even further by coolly commenting on those "men" in the present who guess at Jane's beauty by considering her "dried up" form in age. Yet even as he doubly removes himself from the lure of Jane's captivating beauty, he encodes another kind of desire—that of the historian. As Hayden White suggests,

> we can comprehend the appeal of historical discourse by recognizing the extent to which it makes the real desirable, makes the real into an object of desire, and does so by its imposition, upon events that are represented as real, of the formal coherency that stories possess.[19]

More tells us a coherent, appealing story—not just a desirable story, but one *about* desire: the poor, beautiful Jane is swept up by the glamour of the court and the lust of a King; she tries to make the best of her fall from chastity by helping those in need; and she suffers the injustices of a power-hungry tyrant.

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[19] Hayden White, *The Content and the Form*, 21.

If Jane's beauty engages More's desire (or that beauty glimpsed through a death mask) it manifests only under an alibi of objective distance. Narrating "those" captured by beauty as it walks as well as those "men" who try to call up beauty from its grave allows More to authorize himself as an objective observer even as he attempts to engage the reader's affective and erotic interest. He engages sympathies not only by way of the reader's imaginative view of the young Jane caught in the web of tyrannical royal desire, but also in the register of elegy. The loss of beauty—its inevitable destruction at the hands of time—adds piquancy to the hunchback's cruel oppression of Jane in the past. The desire for Jane that circulates on the surface level of the text covers More's desire—implicit and explicit—to create an 'official' version of past events that would define tyranny against a proper governance that inspires, in More's words, "a willing and loving obedience." More's narration of the Jane Shore story thus structures itself as elegy, which seeks to bury the past and encode it in service of a hopeful future. History and elegy both rely on a differential break between the dead and the living, the present and the past. As Michel de Certeau reminds us in *Heterologies*:

> Even though historiography postulates a continuity (a genealogy), a solidarity (an affiliation), and a complicity (a sympathy) between its agents and its objects, it nevertheless distinguishes a difference between them, a difference established out of principle by a will to objectivity. The space it organizes is divided and hierarchical. That space has an "own" [*un propre*] (the present of this historiography) and an "other" (the "past" under study). The dividing line between them affects both the practice (the research apparatus distinguishes itself from the material it treats), and the enactment in writing (the discourse of interpretive knowledge subjugates the known, cited, represented past). (4)

By layering the gazes that mediate his own, More's account demonstrates a "will to objectivity". The word "will" is important here. At stake is not an imagined (and anachronistic) empirical gaze—an *a priori* truth captured by an objectivity shomehow

insulated from human judgment. At stake is the convincing appearance of moral truths in framing the past and the authority granted by that appearance—not fact so much as facticity; not history so much as historicity; not objectivity so much as the will to it. More gazes directly upon those in the present who look upon the withered Jane. He gazes imaginatively upon those in the past who look upon Jane's martyred and sexy promenade. He implies that his eye is set on the truth even as his narration explicitly exposes Jane to the reader's scopic, erotic interest. To use Certeau's words, More invites a "continuity," a "solidarity," and a "complicity" between himself as historical agent and his object, Jane (who supplements Richard), and all by virtue of securing his distance, "difference," from that object.

At the end of the Jane Shore passage, More returns to the image of Jane's destitute old age.

> I doubt not some shall think this woman too slight a thing to be written of and set among the remembrances of great matters—which they shall specially think that haply shall esteem her only by that they now see her. But meseemeth the chance so much the more worthy to be remembered, in how much she is now in the more beggarly condition... (66)

Jane's story is as worthy to be remembered as those of "other men...which be now famous only by the infamy of their ill deeds." Lives such as Jane's, More argues, are "not so evil" and therefore not generally recorded in history: "For men use, if they have an evil turn, to write it in marble; and whoso doth us a good turn, we write it in dust, which is not worst proved by her, for at this day she beggeth of many at this day living, that at this day had begged if she had not been." The repetition of "at this day" once again emphasizes More's historical distance. And More once again writes in the language of moral comparison. Here and throughout the passage, Jane serves as a supplement to

Richard. Her beauty, its oppression by tyranny, and its tragic loss moves her from a "not so evil" adulterer to someone "worthy to be remembered" for the "good turn[s]" she has done. More's account here takes an elegiac turn insofar as employs a lament for a lost past and gives meaning to that loss for the present.

The need to elegiacally record good deeds that would otherwise go unheralded, however, is perhaps not the only consideration that leads More to defend the place he gives Jane Shore in history. Like other humanist historians of his era, More receives a twin historiographic mandate: on the one hand, history should tell the unvarnished truth; on the other, history should delight audiences with rhetorical artifice. Perhaps nowhere else in *The History of King Richard the Third* does More give in to the second of these directives more than in the Jane Shore interlude. George M. Logan describes the sixteenth-century historian's dilemma:

> Among the *studia humanitatis*, rhetoric—the art or craft of verbal persuasion—was the architectonic discipline; and the key fact about both classical and humanist historiography is that their practitioners regarded history as, for the most part, a *branch* of rhetoric. Moreover, as Cicero (106–43 B.C.)—the greatest of Roman rhetoricians and thus the god of humanism—explains, history belongs to *demonstrative* (or epideictic) rhetoric, the species most concerned with virtuoso stylistic display. Demonstrative is the rhetoric of praise or blame, comprising, as Cicero says, "eulogies, descriptions, histories, and exhortations," and, in general, works that are produced as "showpieces," primarily "for the pleasure they will give."[20]

Here Logan usefully reminds us of the centrality of rhetoric in humanism and the place of historiography within epideictic rhetoric. History should please audiences with its rhetorical display. Logan also reminds us, however, of Cicero's insistence that even as "historical writing must be highly eloquent," it must be truthful. "Who does not know"

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[20] Logan, xxxi–xxxii, citing Cicero, *Orator*, 11.37. For a more complete discussion of the early modern debate about "truth" versus rhetorical amplification, see Herschel Baker, *The Race of Time*, 15–41.

Cicero tells us, "history's first law to be that an author must not dare to tell anything but the truth? And its second that he must make bold to tell the whole truth?"[21] Perhaps sensing that he has gone too far in his use of rhetorical effects, More employs a distancing "will to objectivity"—a differential break with the past that would give his account the ring of truth—when he abstracts his investment in Jane's story from that of others in the present and past who look upon her. More's bid for the authority of retrospective distance is transparent: his account accentuates rather than obscures the way in which the rhetorical comparison between Jane and Richard functions by elegiacally aestheticizing Jane while his narration breaks with the past. Ghost complaint poetry functions by reading this transparency and ostentatiously reversing the terms that grant the historian authority. In ghost complaint, the authorizing voice belongs to the dead.

"My selfe for proofe, loe here I nowe appeare"

More's account of the Jane Shore story involves several concerns that Churchyard's complaint will take up and refigure for his poem in Jane's first-person, spectral address. Among these concerns are Jane's eloquence and beauty, her sexy shame, her agency in her downfall or lack thereof, her supposed unfitness for historical discourse, her candidacy for sainthood, and her relation to tyranny. To begin a comparison between More's account and Churchyard's, however, it is necessary to note the radical shift in context involved in taking Jane out of More's chronicle history and placing her in the *Mirror*. As its editor Lily B. Campbell reminds us, the *Mirror*'s "prose links state explicitly that the work was based upon the histories compiled by Fabyan, Halle, and Sir Thomas More" (10). But the authors carefully select the characters they

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[21] Quoted in Logan, xxxii, citing Cicero, *De orator*, 2.15.62.

import from history. As the principle writer of the volume, William Baldwin, admits, the authors comb chronicle histories for apt examples of how God "hath delt with sum of our countreymen your auncestors for sundrye vices" (64–65). True to its name, the *Mirror* aims to hold a mirror up to current magistrates, to coax them to moral "amendment." In this way the *Mirror* shares the general aim of More's *History*: both argue against bad government, the most legible form of which is tyranny. They take as their premise the idea that exposing and judging the evil behavior of past leaders will inspire a more judicious use of power in the present.

Yet everywhere the individual poems of the *Mirror* generate tensions between the pathos inspired by the plight of the ghosts, as morally bankrupt as they may be, and the moral certainty with which these historical figures are meant to be judged. This conflict between pathos and moralization remains in suspension throughout the *Mirror* volumes, a naturalized contradiction.[22] In his rhetorical manual, Henry Peacham notes the following examples of how "Pathopeia" (pathos) is supposed to work:

> …the Oratour by declaring some lamentable cause, moueth his hearers to pitie and compassion, to shew mercy, and to pardon offences. To moue compassion, lamentable histories are oftentimes vsed, and likewise the liuely descriptions of wofull sufferings, and pitiful miseries, and how they may be artificially expressed. Poets complaints may giue apt examples.[23]

Complaints and histories, Peacham suggests, use pathos in order to prompt pardoning. That Peacham puts history and complaint side by side indicates how closely related these discourses were in the sixteenth century. Yet it seems clear that "to pardon offences" is not exactly what the *Mirror* has in mind, as its first editor reminds us by suggesting that

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[22] See David Mikics, *The Limits of Moralizing*, for a literary history of the conflict between disabling pathos and moralizing judgment (the kind of conflict the Dido story embodies in Virgil's *Aeneid*, for example) along with an examination of how this conflict plays out in Spenser and Milton.
[23] Peacham, *The Garden of Eloquence*, fol. 144.

the ghosts are examples of vice. Baldwin prompts us to judge them, reject their ways as sinful, and do better. This would seem to require a break from the past. The juridical difference established between the present reader and the text of the past promises to guarantee a future without vice. Yet the pathos that the poems attempt to create demands an affective identification across time which threatens to collapse the difference required for judgment. While it seems entirely possible to entertain a cognitive dissonance that would allow the reader to empathize with past others and still reject their behaviors as inappropriate for emulation, the two activities nevertheless fit uncomfortably together in the same moment. How pardonable is an offense if one defines it as "vice"? And how effectively can one exercise moral judgment if one is moved to pardon by a pathetic appeal? It is precisely this tension between moralizing and pathos that the ghost complaints of the *Mirror* exploit.

Historiography and poetics share the aim of moralizing. As Thomas Blundeville writes of historiography in 1574, "all those persons whose lyues haue beene such as are to bee followed for their excellencie in vertue, or else to be fledde for their excellencie in vice, are meete to be chronicled."[24] Sidney and Bacon share a similar notion about poetry. In Sidney's words, "it is that feigning notable images of virtues, vices, or what else, with that delightful teaching, which must be the right describing note to know a poet by" (219). Both historiography and poetry, then, claim to teach by moral example. As Thomas More's version of the Jane Shore story points out, however, historiography's rhetorical display can force a kind of moral carnivalesque—it can, for instance, turn an adulteress into a saint and paint a king as a barbarous monster with the biting irony of comparison. That is, rhetorical artifice can threaten the stable, demonstrative moral truth

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[24] Blundeville, *The true order and Methode of wryting and reading Hystories*, sig. C2r.

for which the historian's account aims. Similarly, the moral certainty for which poetry

ostensibly aims, as Churchyard's poem and others in the *Mirror* demonstrate, can fracture

under the pressure of its "passionate describing of passions," its production of pathos.[25]

For sixteenth-century poetics and historiography, this is the slippery problem of

epideictic, rhetorical persuasion that aims to praise or blame and therefore produce

exemplary objects for readers: its deployment and context can threaten its aim. But

whereas More's historiography seeks to control the force of its rhetorical display by

insisting on the retrospective distance of the historian, poetry actively refuses such

distance. Poems such as Churchyard's pointedly confuse or collapse the differential

breaks upon which historiography relies—breaks between past and present, poet and

ghost, even, in the case of Jane Shore, beautiful victim and tyrannical oppressor. While

poems like those in the *Mirror* claim the didactic aim of providing moral exempla, that

claim is more often than not a cover for the creation of "powerfully animated objects"

that challenge the reader's moral orientation.[26]

The tension in ghost complaint between moralizing and pathos is perhaps

nowhere so evident as in the poem that features Jane Shore, the first woman to be

featured in the *Mirror*'s largely male catalogue of historical figures. Appearing in the

second, expanded edition of the *Mirror* (1563), Jane tells us that she "sought to hygh to

clyme":

> My selfe for proofe, loe here I nowe appeare,
> In womans weede with wepyng watered eyes,
> That bought her youth and her delyghtes ful deare.

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[25] Sidney, *The Defence of Poesy*, 6.
[26] In fairness to Sir Philip Sidney, it should be noted that he also makes the case that poetry functions by challenging the reader to think through moral ambiguities rather than presenting (as he claims history does) examples as uncomplicated models of behavior: "how will you discern what to follow but by your own discretion…?" (224).

> Whose lowde reproche doth sound vnto the skyes
> And byds my corse out of the grave to ryse,
> As one that may no longer hide her face,
> But nedes must come and shewe her piteous case. (374)

Jane asks us to pity her fate, yet she gives us reason to believe that the "lowde reproche" her reputation has garnered is not undeserved. In her last line she asks us to "[b]eware by me, that spent so yll her dayes" (386). Like Jane, the other *Mirror* ghosts gesture at offering themselves on the altar of the project's moralizing exemplary history; yet their spectral laments are filled with tears, cries for pity, and confession, all of which work to qualify and complicate moral judgment.

1590s complaint poems will take up this exculpatory aspect of ghostly lament and confession as a primary concern. As I have mentioned, when Samuel Daniel's Rosamond rises from the grave in the first of the 1590s ghost complaints, *The Complaint of Rosamond*, she will point to Jane Shore as an example: Shore "did such compassion finde" by having her story retold that she now "passes for a Saint." And Drayton's Matilda, in turn, will claim that "Faire Rosamond, of all so highly graced," is now "in our Sainted Legendarie placed."[27] Jane Shore's "wepyng watered eyes" thus haunt 1590s ghost complaints. Again and again, poets will follow the precedent of Churchyard's Jane Shore poem and take up the challenge of rewriting a fallen woman's history with such compassion that she is transformed from an example of vice into a saint. Thomas More only hints at the sanctification of Jane Shore, and that by virtue of her implicit martyrdom at the hands of Richard. Churchyard's contribution to the *Mirror* expands on the project of sanctifying Jane that More begins. 1590s ghost complaints like *The Complaint of*

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[27] Drayton, *Matilda*, sig. B1v.

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Rosamond follow Churchyard in making the sanctification of their speakers a structuring concern.

Churchyard's Jane closely follows More's account in storyline even if the form of her address in the *Mirror* reshapes the story's effects. The *Mirror*'s most radical change to the Jane Shore story is also the most obvious: the poet brings Jane back from the dead to speak for herself. The elegiac authority of the historian's third-person narration gives way to dramatic monologue in which the voice of the author is subsumed by that of the ghost he voices.[28] And yet, in a feat of formal adaptation, Churchyard's Jane manages to touch upon each and every one of the themes in More's account, even without the historian's coercive narration. Jane tells us she deserves a place in history, for instance. "Among the rest by Fortune overthrowen," she tells us, "I am not least, that most may wayle her fate" (373). As in More's account, her beauty adds to the tragedy of her fall: "For natures gyftes was cause of all my griefe" (376). She is lured into the wanton court in the same way. The "ease and wealth" (378) of Edward's court tempts her, and the "puissant kynges desyre" compels (376). More opines that Jane is "somewhat too soon" married to someone she could not love. Churchyard's Jane corroborates that speculation: "In maryage, a prentyse was I bound, / When that meere love I knewe not howe to vse" (377). The *Mirror* account also gives Jane the eloquence, good deeds, and opposition to Richard's tyranny upon which More's story relies.

Even as Jane closely follows the career mapped out for her by More's *History*, however, her plaintive, poetic address ratchets up the pathos of her situation. If More's account relies on an implicit affective calculus—the greater the sympathy for Jane, the

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[28] See my preface, in which I argue that the elegiac impulse authorizes itself by virtue of the absence of its object. The return of the ghost from the dead scuttles the elegiac project.

less for Richard—that equation is made hyperbolically explicit in Jane's account. This serves to erase the cool irony of the historian and replace it with an overt bid for the reader's sympathy from Jane herself. Richard, seen directly through Jane's eyes, becomes a foul beast, a "raging wolfe" who "would spare no gylteles bloud" (384). This would seem to elide the subtleties of More's story, the crafty way his account employs an adulteress to make the case for Richard's greater immorality. But in baldly laying out the terms of those subtleties, Churchyard's Jane reinstalls the problem of extracting moral sententiae from historical material. In More's account, Jane is a ruse, a figure for the chastisement of Richard. In the *Mirror*, Jane puts off that figuration. As much as she still curses the beastly hunchback, Richard is no longer the only villain with whom she contends. The affective appeal of beauty in relation to beastly tyranny remains, but the terms of that contested interplay change.

Jane's first target upon rising from the grave, in fact, is not Richard but her own historical account. The first stanza, like so many of those in the *Mirror*, prepares the reader for lamentation.

> Among the rest by Fortune overthrowen,
> I am not least, that most may wayle her fate:
> My fame and brute abrode the world is blowen,
> Who can forget a thing thus done so late?
> My great mischaunce, my fall, and heauye state,
> Is such a marke whereat eche tounge doth shoote,
> That my good name is pluckt vp by the roote. (373)

That Jane begins by lamenting what has become of her "good name" might surprise the reader, especially since the two previous poems and the interposed prose links have featured a direct attack on Richard's bad name, his tyranny. Though it is worth guarding against demanding too much narrative continuity from the *Mirror*'s eclectic compilation

of ghost poems, it is certainly notable that before Jane appears in the volume, the poet

Collingbourne has risen from the grave to warn us to "Beware, take heede, take heede,

beware, beware / You Poetes you, that purpose to rehearce / By any arte what Tyrantes

doings are" (347). Collingbourne, as the title of his poem reminds us, "was cruelly

executed" by Richard "for making a foolishe rime." And in the next poem, the one before

Jane's, the child-killer, Richard himself, volunteers for the reader's scorn:

> What hart so hard, but doth abhorre to heare
> The ruful raygne of me the thyrd Rychard?
> King vnkindely cald though I the crowne dyd weare,
> Who entred by rigour, but ryght did not regard,
> By tyranny proceding in kyllyng kyng Edward,
> Fyft of that name, ryght heyre vnto the crowne,
> With Rychard his brother, pryinces of renowne. (360)

The cruelties and excesses of tyranny—its persecution of princes and poets, among

others—are at the center of the conversation when Jane Shore takes the stage. Given

More's well-known version of her story and the way she is introduced (as an "eloquent

wentch" who will "furnishe out" Richard's speech "in meter and matter") we might

expect her to launch an all-out attack on the tyrant. Apparently, however, she is worried

less about blackening Richard's name than what has become of her own. Protesting that

she belongs "among the rest" of the complaining male ghosts, she laments that her story

has become "a mark whereat eche tounge doth shoote."

Even in death, Jane has heard how her "good name" has been abused. "Yea

though ful dead and lowe in earth I laye," she tells us, "I heard the voyce of me what

people sayd" (373). In fact, that very "lowde reproache" has prompted her "corse out of

the grave to ryse" (374). To defend herself against this slander, she universalizes her

plight. In the first several stanzas of her lament, Jane tells us that the "wandryng worlde

bewitched" her, as it must everyone.

> Oh darke deceyt with paynted face for showe,
> Oh poysoned baite that makes vs egre styll,
> Oh fayned frende deceyuing people so,
> Oh world of thée we can not speake to yll

The "whyrling whele" of the world—its inevitable deceits and lures—is to blame for her

fall. But what can be done—"who can stop the streame that runnes full Swyft"? Our falls

are inevitable:

> The thirstye drinkes, there is no other shyft,
> Perforce is such, that nede obeyes no lawe,
> Thus bound we are in worldly yokes to drawe,
> And can not staye, nor turne agayne in tyme,
> Nor learne of those that sought to hygh to clyme.

The tyranny that so concerns More's account is here displaced onto the lawless world and

pitiless, irreversable time. Of course, Jane's claim that one cannot "turne agayne in tyme"

is belied by her speaking. She has escaped the tyranny of time precisely in order to help

us "learne" from her.

> And nowe a time for me I see preparde,
> I heare the lives and falles of many wyghtes:
> My tale therfore the better may be heard, (375)

The work of the *Mirror* has prepared a time for Jane to speak; it has managed to open a

metaleptic time outside of historical time. In using this imaginative space, Jane claims to

tell "that truthe" that "shal witness" for her. Only through the poetic appropriation of her

story can she speak historical "truth." Given the poet Churchyard's creation of a new

"nowe" in which to speak, she addresses the *Mirror*'s editor: "Wherefore geve eare, good

Baldwyn do thy best, / My tragedy to place among the rest." Still, the new time that

Churchyard opens for Jane does not seem to make it easier for readers to "learne" from

her as one who "sought th hygh to clyme." Instead of clear historical truths that would

lead us to clear moral dictums, Jane presents us with contradictions.[29] She worries at

every turn about who or what should be blamed for her tragedy. With her last words, she

can finally tell us only to "defye this world, and all his wanton wayes," again

universalizing her fall as the inevitable result of acting in the world at all (386). In the

meantime, each separate conclusion or lesson she derives from her experience turns out

to be contingent and contested.

The source of this moral confusion and contingency lies in an irresolvable tension

in Jane's address—a tension between the prerogatives of beauty and forms of tyranny.

Jane tells us that she was born "of the meanest" social standing; she was not "of noble

bloud." She was, however, beautiful.

> Fortune ne gave to me the gyftes of golde:
> But I could bragge of nature if I would,
> Who fyld my face with favour freshe and fayer,
> Whose beautie shone like Phebus in the ayer. (375)

The enthusiastic alliteration, fyld-face-favour-fresh-fayer, returns fivefold More's

description of Jane as a "fair face." Jane follows this with a blazon of her own "chaste"

beauty: her "shape" was "seemely to eche sight," her "countenance" had a "sober grace,"

> Myne eyes in lookes were never proved lyght,
> My tongue in wordes were chaste in every case,
> Myne ears were deafe, and would no lovers place, (375)

In short, she paints herself as a paragon of the shamefast woman, beautiful and

uncommunicative—a stately fortress. Her chaste beauty is assaulted and ruined by King

Edward.

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[29] As I discuss in the previous chapter, this is the hallmark of the *Mirror* poems of the 1559 and 1563 editions. Rather than present us with clear moral conclusions, more often than not the ghosts raise questions about the moral sense that can be made of their stories.

> …(alas) a prynce dyd blot my browe,
> Loe, there the strong did make the weake to bowe.

Here proper beauty withers in the face of royal compulsion.[30] Jane's next stanzas lament

the power of kings. "Who can withstand a puissaunt kynges desyre?" (376). Her enticing

beauty, in Jane's *Mirror* account, dooms her from the start. If she had not been so

beautiful, her "name and good renowne" would not have been threatened. "For nature's

gyftes was cause of all my griefe." She admits that her beauty made her prideful; a

"peacocks pryde" leads her to forgo her "shamefast waies." But each time she approaches

the question of which is most responsible for her fall, royal power or her own decisions,

she equivocates.

> Who is in fault? The offendour yea or no,
> Or they that are the cause of all this wo?

This construction typifies Jane's irresolution when it comes to the moral lessons the

reader might expect to glean from her story. She admits that she offends, yet, like a

defendant pleading for a reduced sentence, she cites one "cause" after another to mitigate

her imagined offenses.[31] Tyranny, in the form of both Edward's lustful coercion and

Richard's "lewde and false entent" (383), is chief among these mitigating factors.

Jane cites other factors that also conspire to ruin her name. Again drawing on her

account in More's *History*, she accuses those around her of forcing her to marry too

young.

> But cleare from blame my frendes can not be found,
> Before my time my youth they did abuse:
> In maryage, a prentyse was I bound,
> When that meere love I knewe not howe to vse. (377)

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[30] We can draw an interesting comparison to More's account here. More's *History* lavishly praises Edward IV.

[31] This aspect of Jane's story is reminiscent of the long tradition of "complaint" in legal discourse. See Wendy Scase, *Literature and Complaint in England 1272–1553*.

"Note wel," Jane tells us, "what stryfe this forced maryage makes, / What lothed lyves do come where love doth lacke." Again, however, she equivocates: "But wealaway, that can not me excuse." In this way she vacillates between exculpatory lament and self-condemnation. "I was entyste by traynes, and trapt by trust," she tells us:

> Though in my power remayned yeas or nayes
> Vnto my frendes yet nedes consent I must,
> In every thing, yea lawfull or vniust… (378)

Jane's contradictory lament here devolves into an oxymoronic doubling of "consent." Her claim that she had no choice flatly contradicts her claim to the right to "yeas or nayes." It is again worth noticing the language of law and justice here. The "forced maryage" that overrides the consent of the woman parallels, in this account, royal force that overrides the will of the people. Jane's capitulation to Edward's desire presents us with a paradox of consent and will. When she gives in, it is not only because of the lure of promised luxury, of "ease and wealth," but also out of "the hope of will (that women seeke for all)."

Jane's pleading does explicitly what her beauty does implicitly; it bids for the reader's pity and thus qualifies judgment. Taking a cue from Churchyard's Jane Shore poem, Samuel Daniel's 1592 *Complaint of Rosamond* voices another royal mistress who rises from the grave to plead for pity. Rosamond uses legal language as well. Her ghost "comes to sollicit" the poet, to beg him to "register [her] wrong" (H3v).[32] Rosamond suffers because she remains encoded in history as an example of "sin," because "time hath wrong'd" her good name; her "soule is nowe denied…sweet Elisean rest" where she

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[32] The word "solicit" has a range of early modern connotations, including to plead a case in court (OED). Edward Phillips defines "register" as "a Memorial or Record, more particularly our ancientest book of Law, containing the Original Writs of the Common Law." The verb "register" suggests formally recording in writing, such as in a book of history or law (OED).

might be "repurified" (H3r). If the poet's beloved, Delia, will "offer vp her sigh" of pity

for poor Rosamond's fate, that sigh will waft Rosamond over the river into Elysium.

Rosamond's fall, her appeal, and her deliverance in the afterlife have to do with "beauty":

> So I through beautie made the wofull'st wight,
> By beautie might haue comfort after death:
> That dying fayrest, by the fayrest might
> Finde life aboue on earth, and rest beneath… (H4r)

Beauty both causes Rosamond's downfall and, in the form of Delia and her sighs,

promises to redeem her. Rosamond's proposed contract between beauties both expands

on the implications of the 1563 Jane Shore poem and inspires Churchyard to offer a

rewrite. In 1593, the year following the publication of *The Complaint of Rosamond*,

Churchyard expands and reissues the Jane Shore poem (thirty years after its initial

publication). In his dedication to "Lady Mount Eagle and Compton," Churchyard writes,

> good Madame because Rosimond is so excellently sette forth (the actor
> whereof I honour) I haue somewhat *beautified* my Shores wife, not in any
> kind of emulation, but to make the world knowe, my deuice in age is as
> ripe & reddie, as my disposition and knowledge was in youth…[33]

Churchyard disingenuously disavows "emulation" here. His revision of the Jane Shore

poem clearly capitalizes on Daniel's recently released ghost complaint and its emphasis

on the work of beauty.

Churchyard's 1593 version of "Shores wife" expands rather than revises the

original. Leaving what he has already written all but unaltered, Churchyard inserts

additional stanzas at strategic points. The first of these insertions is telling. After Jane's

description of herself as "fresh and faire," her poet gives her four additional stanzas of

lavish encomium on her own beauty. "My beauty blasd," she tells us, "like torch or

twinckling starre" (129). Comparisons follow to the sun, summer days, pearl, gold,

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[33] Churchyard, *Churchyard's Challenge*, fol. 126. The italics are mine.

flowers, and so on. Apparently jealous of the beautiful Rosamond, in fact, Jane directly

compares herself to her rival ghost:

> The Damaske rose, or Rosamond the faire,
> That Henry held, as deere as Jewells be,
> Who was kept close, in cage from open ayre:
> For beauties boast, could scarse compare with me…

As Wendy Wall makes clear, the contest between the ghosts Jane and Rosamond stands

in for a contest between the poets Churchyard and Daniel. In Wall's words, "complaining

women generated a discursive site for literary competition and authorization."[34]

Churchyard's introductory claim to have "beautified" his Jane, especially as it is followed

by Jane's claim to greater beauty than Rosamond, certainly supports Wall's view. But we

need to examine what makes that allegorical reading possible in the first place. Jane and

Rosamond signify as avatars of their poets because they first become figures for poetic

achievement—eloquence, or the power and beauty of poetry—in its struggle against, in

Schmidgen's words, the "determination and reification" of history.

  In his first version of the Jane Shore poem, Churchyard picks up on More's hint

about Jane's "wit" and expands upon it to make Jane eloquent.

> The Nightingale, for all his merry voyce,
> Nor yet the Larke, that still delights to sing,
> Did neuer make the hearers so reioyce,
> As I with wordes haue made this worthy King.

These lines are in each edition of the poem, but it is worth noting that this is another

strand of thought that Churchyard chooses to emphasize in his expanded, 1590s edition of

the poem. He adds three stanzas on the power of music and love. "Sweet are the tunes,"

Jane tells us in the later edition, "that pleaseth kings." This praise of music leads to the

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[34] Wall, *The Imprint of Gender,* 252.

image of a musical duet sung by Jane and King Edward. Two in love "sing at will, the treble or the meane":

> The king and I, agreed in such concorde,
> I ruld by loue, though he did raigne a Lord.

But this "concorde," however, soon threatens to discordantly upend the relation between governer and governed. "I bare the sword," Jane brags, "though he did weare the Crowne." This phallic image of Jane bearing the sword, based on the oft-repeated dictum that words are more powerful than weapons, might well be something like what Fletcher has in mind when he objects that women should not be (or have) "fortune's balles."

Female ghosts become aestheticized figures of poetic 'beauty' or 'eloquence' (and to that extent, figures for the poet's will and achievement) precisely as a result of their struggle to authorize themselves as the privileged speakers of the historical record against, to some degree, the historian's will. In ghost complaint, first-person accounts of historical events signify as privileged and primary, as accounts that can be 'true' enough to reorient moral judgment. Such speech acts rely upon and contest the determinations of the historical record. What counts as poetic authorization does so precisely to the degree that it pushes away from historical authority. The object of More's account is to authorize an interpretation of the past, to write the book of history in which Jane will signify as a supplement to Richard. Ghost complaint poems like Churchyard's and Daniel's, on the other hand, aim to inscribe Jane and Rosamond in another book: a literary saints legendary. Tyranny, as Jane and Rosamond make clear, is also the tyranny of the historical record that threatens to fix them forever in elegiac amber. Both Jane and Rosamond worry at length about their reputations—the fate of their good names—as they negotiate with their poets to change those afterlives. Daniel and Churchyard, then, are not

the only competitors in this drama of beauty and tyranny. The historian, More, stands behind them as a third term against which their competition unfolds. Churchyard reanimates the "Jane" that More encodes, Daniel's Rosamond reads both, and Churchyard's Jane reads Rosamond. In this fraught interchange, the terms of beauty and tyranny are reoriented so that history—insofar as it represents the fixity of time— becomes the tyrant that the principle of beauty opposes and at whose hands beauty suffers.

<p style="text-align:center">"The unsolved antagonisms of reality"</p>

In transforming Jane into a spectral aesthetic object, Churchyard opens a conversation about the transformative power of poetry—coded in his poem as Jane Shore's beauty and eloquence—in its contest with the tyranny of time and the historical record through which time is revealed and given meaning. This is the conversation that 1590s ghost complaint writers are anxious to join. The form of ghost complaint poetry, its prosopopeia and metaleptic address, affords an opportunity to think through and challenge the exemplary historiography of the era. The stakes of this contest between sixteenth-century poetics and historiography are high. In the Tudor period historical precedent is one of, if not *the* primary means through which contemporary culture structures and defends its rapidly changing institutional hierarchies. Justifying these hierarchies is a particularly pressing project in a nation staggering through the effects of the Reformation, a movement for which the rewriting of religious and secular histories is commonplace. The future of the nation in the aftermath of the Henrician and Edwardian Reformation, in fact, is not entirely certain to improve upon the past, since Queen

Elizabeth I shows no signs of generating an heir to perpetuate the relative peace of the Tudor regime. Throughout the sixteenth century, then, thinking deeply about what it means to draw moral lessons from the past in order to influence the present and future would seem to resonate deeply with contemporary concerns.

Thomas More's *The History of Richard the Third* can be read as a celebration of the end of civil war in the defeat of tyranny. Chronicles such as Edward Hall's *The Union of the Two Noble and Illustrate Famelies of Lancastre and Yorke* similarly take up this celebration of the emergence of the Tudor regime as a national destiny narrative. The story of Richard III and his hapless victim, Jane, signaling as it does at the end of the bad old days, threatens to rather neatly consign tyranny to the past and rely on a hopeful future. Ghost complaint poetry reopens those old wounds. By bringing Jane into the present to suffer once again and even revise her narrative, it puts history back into question. In the process, it opens Jane's tragic story to contemporary concerns. As Adorno writes, "the unsolved antagonisms of reality return in artworks as imminent problems of form." Jane's first-person, spectral address not only reconsiders the meaning of her story as Thomas More encodes it but also encompasses worries about tyranny inflected by the present moment.

Churchyard's Jane expands, for instance, on More's comments regarding Jane's early and loveless marriage. In the Mirror, Jane accuses her supposed friends of jostling her into marriage. This opens onto a conversation about women's will—"the hope of will (that women seeke for all)" and consent, "what stryfe this forced maryage makes." This also leads to a consideration of the power of women in political matters. When Jane claims "she bare the sword" in her relationship with Edward, for instance, and Fletcher's

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Richard rebukes her for such grasping, Jane's story touches on the kind of controversy with which late sixteenth-century writers never seem to tire. Narrative poems by Shakespeare such as *The Rape of Lucrece*, *Venus and Adonis*, and *A Lover's Complaint*, for example, relentlessly reexamine questions of women's agency. And when Jane becomes the saint at whose shrine character's like Rosamond appeal for similar sanctification, the Jane Shore story veers dangerously close to the kind of sacrilege to which writers like Michael Drayton (*Matilda*) and Thomas Middleton (*The Ghost of Lucrece*) will strenuously object in their own complaint poems. In short Churchyard's Jane does not merely write herself as another version of history. She enters the present and brings with her present concerns. She brings with her "the unsolved antagonisms of reality."

The writer's ability to make his ghosts so effectively speak in and of the present as well as the past is the great challenge of writing ghost complaint poetry. In this dissertation as a whole, I claim that the close proximity of history and poetry in the sixteenth century helps produce a spectral aesthetic. That aesthetic registers the close relation between historiography and poetics as well as the ways in which the two modes define themselves against each other. History and poetry are both branches of rhetoric. Poets and historians are often the same people. Writing history involves employing what we might now more readily think of as literary techniques and vice versa. The strenuous effors of writers such as Sidney and Bacon to identify differences of degree and kind between the two rhetorical modes highlights the already uncomfortably close relation between those modes. The ghost poetry of the *Mirror*, including the Jane Shore poem, draws on chronicle histories such as More's in order to offer a competing fantasy of how

meaning ought to be derived from past events in an age of exemplarity. In hoping to restore what it calls the "ancient privilege" of the poet specifically by writing historical poesy, the *Mirror* precedes, and, I suggest, enables theories of poetic power like Sidney's famous *Defense*. The spectral aesthetic of ghost complaint poetry can also help us tell the story of how history and poetry begin to articulate their differences as emergent, distinct disciplines. But more specifically for my purposes, Jane's aestheticization in the 1563 *Mirror* and through the 1590s wrests her from More's *History* and makes her a more mobile figure. Newly aestheticized, Jane plays a key role in prompting and participating in the fad for ghost complaint poems in the late Elizabethan period. She becomes part of a discourse capacious enough to sponsor several conversations about the relations between historiography and poetry, beauty and tyranny, gender relations and politics, consent and will, unchastity and sanctification. And yes, as Heywood's rendition of her story in 1599 testifies, Jane can even prompt a conversation about the emergent bourgeois and domestic spheres in opposition to monarchical and patriarchal hierarchies.

CHAPTER III

SAMUEL DANIEL'S *THE COMPLAINT OF ROSAMOND*

In the 1587 edition of the *Mirror for Magistrates*, Thomas Churchyard adds a new

introduction to his Jane Shore poem: a prose link in the voice of Jane. Referring to her

initial appearance in the 1563 *Mirror* over twenty years earlier, Jane tells us that she

"appeared fyrst to one Baldwine a Minister and a Preacher: whose function and calling

disdaynes to looke so lowe, as to search the secrets of wanton women."[1] In the conceit

of the first volumes of the *Mirror*, all of the ghosts speak to William Baldwin, the editor

and lead writer, whether or not he penned the poems in which they appear. The Jane of

the later *Mirror* has decided that addressing Baldwin was a mistake, "wherefore," Jane

says, "I haue better bethought mee, and so doe sodaynly appeale and appeare to some

martiall man, who hath more experience both in defending of womens honour, and

knowes somwhat more of theyr conditions and qualityes." The new figure to whom Shore

appeals is Churchyard, who was, of course, her writer all along.

> I now appeare to him that fyrst set mee forth, a writer of good
> continuance, and one that dayly is exercised to set out both matter
> tragicall, and other prophane histories and verses, whose name is
> Churchyard: hee shall not only haue the fame of his owne worke (which
> no man can deny) but shall likewise haue all the glory I can gieue him, if
> hee lend mee the hearing of my woefull tale, a matter scarce fit for
> womans shamefastnes to bewray. But since without blushing I haue so
> long beene a talkatiue wench, (whose words a world hath delighted in) I
> will now goe on boldly with my audacious manner: and so step I on the
> stage in my shrowdeing sheete as I was buried.

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[1] *The Mirror for Magistrates*, 372. John N. King notes that William Baldwin became a "Minister and a
Preacher" late in life. Giving up the career of writer and printer, "Baldwin was appointed vicar of
Tortington, Sussex, in 1559–60 and rector of St. Michael-le-Querne, London, in 1561; he died some time
before 1 November 1563" (DNB).

The gendered positions cited by this speech are clearly delineated, despite the fact that Churchyard here writes in the voice of a woman. Jane secures Churchyard's masculine enterprise. He is a "martiall man" and a defender of "women's honour" who reserves for himself the "glory" of poetic achievement; she is a "talkative wench" with an "audacious manner." Gendered norms allow Churchyard to receive fame for his knowledge of women and ability to voice them. In turn, he provides for Jane's continuing fame as one "whose words a world hath delighted in."

This exchange of notoriety imagines the poet and the ghost sharing the goal of continuing and enhancing each other's reputations. Earlier in this same passage, Jane tells us that her "tragedy was in question among some that would not spare due commendation to the autor therof." Both Churchyard and Jane must receive proper credit. Both are threatened with slander. In fact, when Churchyard revises the Jane Shore poem for publication in his collection of 1593, *Churchyard's Challenge*, the poet protests in his introduction against those who "of meere mallice disdaineth" his efforts. According to Churchyard, some have denied him "the fathering of such a worke," necessitating a reiterated claim that "the penning of Shore's wife" was and is indeed his.[2] The slander against Churchyard, like that against the adulteress Jane Shore, is gendered. The poet claims the "fathering" of a work that would "search" and "bewray" the "secrets of women." The idea that a female ghost from chronicle history and the poet who voices her might articulate each other's problems, authorize each other's speech, and advance each other's goals appears to have interested Samuel Daniel. Yet Daniel, as we will see, achieves very different effects with the relation between poet and ghost.

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[2] Churchyard, *Churchyards Challenge*, sig. S4v.

What happens, Daniel asks, when a monument talks back? In addressing this question, *The Complaint of Rosamond* (1592) takes sixteenth-century ghost compliant's spectral aesthetic to a new level, exerting a clear influence on the trend for ghost complaints in the 1590s. In the first lines of Daniel's ghost complaint, Rosamond Clifford's specter leaves behind the confines of her tomb. Her "body found a graue where to containe it," but her "Fame finds neuer tombe t'inclose it in" (5–7).[3] Her "poore afflicted ghost" rises up from the "horror of infernall deepes" to "plaine it." She has much to complain about. Her experience in life as the mistress of King Henry II was unfortunate, to say the least, marking her with "shame" even in the afterlife. Her soul is denied access to "sweet Elisean rest": the boatman will not let her cross the river without paying a toll of "sighs" from living lovers, and only a skilled poet can tell her story well enough to prompt such sighs.[4] But poets have yet to "penne" her "iust complaint" (8–23). Rosamond convinces Daniel to write her story by suggesting that Delia, the poet's lover, might sigh for them both. Daniel's *Complaint of Rosamond* follows his sonnet sequence, *Delia*, in the same quarto volume. "Delia may happe to deygne to read our story," Rosamond suggests, "And offer vp her sigh among the rest" (43–44). Such a sigh would benefit both Daniel and Rosamond. Delia "can blesse vs with one happy breath," Rosamond claims, and

> Giue comfort to thy Muse to doe her best
> That thereby thou maist ioy, and I might rest. (54–56)

Rosamond stakes her claim by virtue of the link between the two works, *The Complaint of Rosamond* and *Delia*, which are bound in a conversation of voices as well as a physical

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[3] *The Complaint of Rosamond*, in *Samuel Daniel: Poems and A Defence of Ryme*, ed. Arthur Colby Sprague. All citations of Daniel's works in this chapter follow Sprague's edition.
[4] According to the last two lines of Richard Barnfield's complaint poem, *Cassandra* (1595), "Sweet Elysium" is "The place for wrongful Death and Martirdum."

volume. This chapter examines Daniel's intertwined use of complaint and sonnet sequence, two prominent poetic trends of the 1590s. Daniel's success in combining the two forms is evident: writers adopt the combination throughout the 1590s. Thomas Lodge appends *The Complaint of Elstred* to his sonnet sequence, *Phillis*. Giles Fletcher pairs a ghost complaint featuring Richard III to his *Licia* sonnets. Richard Barnfield offers a triptych: *Cynthia*, *Certaine Sonnets*, and *The Legend of Cassandra*. Michael Drayton publishes his Ovidian complaint collection, *England's Heroical Epistles*, with his sonnet sequence, *Idea* (along with a historical poem, *The Barrons Warres*). Later, in 1609, William Shakespeare's *Sonnets* are published with *A Lover's Complaint*. Daniel links ghost complaint and sonnet sequence as a way of exploring and further complicating the already complex relation between lover and beloved in the Petrarchan tradition. What happens, *The Complaint of Rosamond* seems to ask, when the vexed temporality of *Mirror*-style ghost complaint is combined with poetic language in the tradition of Petrarch? In synthesizing these two inheritances, Daniel produces a dense exploration of poetic voice and its protean possibilities. Daniel's *Delia* and *Rosamond* volume, as I will show in what follows, uses the problems of voice and temporal perspective generated by the combination of sonnet sequence and complaint to construct a self radically fractured in the temporality of his own verse.

This chapter can be understood, then, as a gloss on the last line of the volume, in which the poet claims, "who made me knowne, must make me liue vnseen."[5] Throughout the volume, the poet desires to be made known—known, that is, to be a poet—but at the last, the process that has made him known leaves an unseen remainder. The two "me"s

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[5] Clark Hulse suggests that "the dilemma posed by Daniel's paradoxical last line is that of the professional poet and the professional courtesan." Hulse, *Metamorphic Verse*, 64; qtd. in Stephen Guy-Bray, "Rosamond's complaint," 348.

here stand in temporal relation. The "me" that the poem has given over to knowledge is now encoded in poetic language and is therefore already past tense, but this giving over to knowledge "must" generate an "vnseen" "me" of the present as well as a "knowne" one of the past.[6] This stands in contrast to the *Delia* sequence, in which the temporal fantasy imagines a present plea for love that courts an ambivalent future: death for the poet and eternal life for the beloved monumentalized in verse. The sonneteering voice of *Delia* claims authenticity by virtue of the immediacy and urgency of its affective apostrophe. "Vnto the boundles Ocean of thy beautie," the poet exclaims in the first lines of the sequence, "Runs this poore riuer, charg'd with streames of zeale:"

> Returning thee the tribute of my dutie,
> Which heere my loue, my youth, my playnts reueale.
> Heer I vnclaspe the booke of my charg'd soule, (1.1–5)

This is a conventional rendering of the sonneteering address: the poet exercises his zealous and dutiful enthrallment to the beloved by unveiling his "charg'd soule." That enthrallment drives him toward death. On Delia's brow, the poet says, "I written finde the sentence of my death" (10.3). He imagines his death as a "sacrifice" (21.5) that will eternize Delia: "this my death shall christen her anew" (27.13). Though her body and his give in to "tyrant Times desire," his "verse…Phenix-like shall make her liue anew" (30.7–14). The final poem of the *Delia* sequence bemoans the poet's own passing. "My liues flourish is decayde," he tells us, in contrast to his "youth" in the first sonnet, and he prepares the ground for the complaint to follow.

> Eccho, daughter of the ayre,
> Babbling gheste of Rocks and Hills,
> Knowes the name of my fearce Fayre,
> And soundes the accents of my ills (An Ode, 13–16)

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[6] Samuel Daniel, *Delia with the Complaint of Rosamond 1592*, sonnet 9, line 13. Hereafter I cite Delia parenthetically in the text by sonnet number and line.

The sonnet sequence thus ends in imminent death for the poet by reference to Ovid's Narcissus and Echo story.[7] When Rosamond returns from the dead in the ghost complaint, she fulfills this allusion by echoing the poet's sonneteering lament. Rosamond knows Delia's name and "soundes the [poet's] accents." The poet empathizes with the ghost;

> ...forthwith mou'd with a tender care
> And pittie, which my selfe could neuer finde,
> What she desir'd, my Muse deygn'd to declare,
> And therefore will'd her boldly tell her minde:
> And I more willing tooke this charge assignd,
> Because her griefs were worthy to be knowne,
> And telling hers, might hap forget mine owne." (57–63)

The arrangement, however, does not work, as this stanza predicts, to distract the poet from his own death-inflected lament. Instead of helping him "forget" the "griefs…worthy to be knowne" generated by the preceding sonnet sequence, Rosamond ends by redoubling them. Like Ovid's Echo, she fails to draw the poet from his own death-directed, loving lament. *Rosamond*'s echo of the poet's plea for eternizing in a death-defying temporality allows the poet to encounter his own fantasy in the figure of Rosamond, who, like the monuments he promises to create in his sonnets, has exceeded death's limits.

The *Delia* sequence works by forever deferring in a repeated, present-tense, affective cry the nevertheless everywhere anticipated future—the sacrificial death of the speaker and the eternizing of the beloved. In the temporality of ghost complaint, that structure of deferral is no longer possible. A reader of *Delia* might expect that *Rosamond*

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[7] Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 3.339–510. In Ovid's story, the disembodied Echo can only repeat what Narcissus says—though she repeats with different emphasis—while Narcissus is captured by his own image in a pool. Unable to draw his loving gaze from his image, Narcissus dies, *amore liquitur*, "wasted with love" (489–90), and Echo *reddebat sonitum plangoris*, "gives back [his] sounds of woe" (498).

would fulfill the poet's eternizing promise; Rosamond is, after all, granted post-mortem life by the power of poetizing. In this sense, Rosamond occupies exactly the position that the poet promises to Delia. Yet the poet's encounter with a realization of his own monumentalizing fantasy undoes rather than completes him. The encounter leads him to view himself as spectral, "vnseene," even as he is "made knowne" by monumentalized verse. Far from vindicating the sonneteering temporal fantasy of *Delia*, *Rosamond* explodes that fantasy precisely by returning it *as promised*. Rosamond holds a mirror up to the poet as she echoes him, and that mirror further divides the poet already fractured in his sonneteering address. The burden of this chapter is to show the way in which Daniel's poems create a poetic self fractured in Petrarchan language and undone by the metaleptic temporality of ghost complaint. The *Delia* sonnets threaten to kill the poet even as he creates monuments that would defy death; *Rosamond* completes the project by putting him the spectral time of his own monumentalizing. In short, I show that the spectral aesthetic of the mirroring *Mirror*, in Daniel's hands, spectralizes the poet.

Even as it aims for more sophisticated effects, Daniel's *Complaint of Rosamond* draws on the problems generated by the *Mirror* tradition's poetic representation of the past. As I have discussed in the previous chapter, the speaking of the ghost of Jane Shore works to authorize the poet, Churchyard, by virtue of authorizing Jane as the privileged speaker of the historical record. Jane will give Churchyard the "glory" and "fame of his owne worke" even as she claims authority over her own story, offering her "selfe for proofe" against the chronicle account. The ghost of Rosamond promises to authorize Daniel in a similar way. "No Muse suggests the pittie of my case," Rosamond tells the poet.

> Each penne dooth ouerpasse my iust complaint,
> Whilst others are preferd, though farre more base:
> Shores wife is grac'd, and passes for a Saint;
> Her Legend iustifies her foule attaint;
>> Her well-told tale did such compassion finde,
>> That she is pass'd, and I am left behind. (22–28)

If the poet takes up the challenge of rewriting the ghost's story, as Churchyard did Jane Shore's, Rosamond will "pass vnto those happy banks" of the Elysian fields a sanctified spirit, and future ages will know that "Thames had Swannes as well as euer Po"—that is, the English poet will rival Italians such as Dante and Petrarch (734; 728). Like Churchyard's *Shore's wife*, The *Complaint of Rosamond* projects the desire to rewrite the historical record upon the ghost, who will benefit from such a retelling by having her story inscribed in a saint's legendary. This will secure her reputation, her afterlife. Unlike Churchyard's poet, however, who emerges normatively gendered and glorified from his engagement with the spectral past, Daniel's poet is unable to find a way of being in the time of his monumentalizing poetic language without also becoming caught and divided between masculinized and feminized voices, the multiple temporalities of his address, private and public, the living and the dead. Daniel's poet suffers self-division in his monumental labor; yet his suffering does not mean he eschews that labor. Rather, he views his endeavor as beginning in private feeling and gifted to the world as a loving sacrifice—to his patrons, to Delia, to the glory of his culture—even if he is not always sanguine about how his sacrifice will be received or how lasting its legacy will turn out to be.

Daniel's sonnet sequence represents the poet's effort to take on the voice of the fractured, lovelorn sonneteer. In *Rosamond*, apostrophe gives way to prosopopeia as Daniel takes on another persona—that of a seduced and abandoned woman. But the two

personae are part of the same conversation. Sagaser emphasizes the similarity in the two

projects: "If [Rosamond] wins Delia's pity, then it accomplishes what the sonnet

sequence also aims to do."[8] Wendy Wall notes that "the female speaker and the

Petrarchan lover…have the compatible goal of winning Delia's heart."[9] Rosamond

speaks to her poet of these shared aims in relation to Delia.

> *Delia* may happe to deygne to read our story,
> And offer vp her sigh among the rest,
> Whose merit would suffice for both our glorie
> Whereby thou might'st be grac'd, and I be blest,
> That indulgence would profit me the best;
>   Such powre she hath by whom thy youth is lead,
>   To ioy the liuing and to blesse the dead. (43–49)

In order to convince the poet to tell her story—here imagined as "our story," both the

poet's and the ghost's—Rosamond cites a shared project that links her with the poet. The

poet has just complained for fifty sonnets that Delia will not capitulate to his desires. As a

woeful, pleading man, Rosamond argues, he must empathize with "a wofull womans

case" (42). Indeed, the poet does empathize, as he is "forthwith mou'd with a tender care

/ And pittie, which my selfe could neuer finde" (57–8). His own failure to move Delia

prompts him to adopt Rosamond's cause.

As Roche notes, however, Rosamond's request for the poet to retell her story is

shot through with "logical contradiction" (345). "What Rosamond wants is fame but not

fame for her sin, that sin that keeps her from 'passing'."

> *Rosamond* hath little left but her name,
> And that disgrac'd, for time hath wrong'd the same. (20–21)

"Would it be too much to suggest," Roche asks, "that time can only report what it

knows?" (346). Furthermore, the more we strive to make sense of the intentions marked

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[8] Sagaser, "Sporting the While," 160.
[9] Wendy Wall, *The Imprint of Gender*, 255.

as Poet, Delia, and Rosamond in the complaint's terms, the less sense those intentions make. Roche suggests that "Delia, if she has any sense at all, will see that if she succumbs to Rosamond's story, she will commit herself to the same predicament that Rosamond is speaking so heatedly against" (347). Why, that is, should the chaste Delia sigh for the sinful Rosamond, especially since the seduced woman offers an example of what might happen should Delia give in to the poet's amorous advances? "The whole affair is so busy," Roche concludes, "so 'shady' that one wonders why we as readers are being asked to participate in this ill-assorted triangle." Even in its frustration with the seemingly inscrutable logic of the intentions on offer in *Rosamond*, Roche's analysis points out that we are, indeed, being asked to participate as readers in this triangle. This is an important point to which I return below. But when Roche asks, with a sarcastic edge, whether or not it would be "too much to suggest that time can only report what it knows," he inadvertently shows us the way to respond to the intentional tangle of the poem. In order to pose his question at all, Roche must personify "time" as a knowing entity. The poem demands from the critic a figurative response to its seeming illogic. Whether Roche himself intends it or not, the poem has called his language into a phantasmatic register in which the speaking of a ghost—or the personification of time—might be the only way to make sense of the Delia/Rosamond/Poet contract.

The figurative logic of *Rosamond* does, in fact, have to do with what time may know and do, or at least what it can be imagined to know and do. As the volume's monumental eternizing consistently imagines, the greatest triumph of poetry will be to escape the time that also conditions and destroys it. As Musophilus writes of the great Chaucer,

> Since *Chaucer* liu'd who yet liues and yet shall,
> Though (which I grieue to say) but in his last
> Yet what a time hath he wrested from time,
> And won vpon the mighty waste of daies,
> Vnto th'immortall honor of our clime,
> That by his meanes came first adorn'd with Baies,
> Vnto the sacred Relicks of whose rime
> We yet are bound in zeale to offer praise. (151–58)

Of course, Chaucer's time is not that of Musophilus. Chaucer "came planted in the spring," whereas the present is "th'Autumne, in the withering, / And sullen season of a cold defect" (165–68). Nevertheless, Chaucer's achievement wrests a "time…from time." There is little logic in this tautological formulation, yet it is the enabling fantasy of Rosamond's address as well as the rock upon which the poet will split himself yet again.

The Complaint of Rosamond offers a figurative logic of "passing."

> No Muse suggests the pittie of my case,
> Each penne dooth *ouerpasse* my iust complaint,
> Whilst others are preferd, though farre more base:
> Shores wife is grac'd, and *passes* for a Saint;
> Her Legend iustifies her foule attaint;
>   Her well-told tale did such compassion finde,
>   That she is *pass'd*, and I am left behinde. (22–28, my emphasis)

In this stanza, Jane Shore *passes* for a saint while poets *overpass* Rosamond. This means that Jane can *pass* over the river to Elysium while Rosamond remains behind. With the triple emphasis on *pass*, the complaint puts the sense of *passing over* (from one metaphysical state to another) in close proximity to the senses *overlook* ("ouerpasse") and *appear to be* ("passes for"). In the uses of *pass*, in fact, we can read the key motifs of the poem. In the register of *passing for*, the poem will make appearance an obsession, specifically the powers, limitations, and consequences of beauty. That she will be *passed over* is Rosamond's chief fear in life as well as death. And the desire to *pass* into eternity, whether figured as Elysium or monumentalized poetry, is the primary impulse toward the

transcendental in the poem. In this multilayered use of *pass* the poem also calls attention

to Rosamond's pastness. That poets' pens "ouerpasse" Rosamond's complaint means that

she is threatened with the oblivion that it is the poet's task to forestall. Unlike poetry's

preserved and sanctified "holy Reliques," she will be lost to the unredeemed past of

chronicle history. But Rosamond returns from past in order to make this case about

passing. She is an ineluctably lost thing, a ghost, crying out against loss and hoping to be

made present, which will mean that she will pass into eternity justified, sanctified, and

mourned.

Sagaser locates this pastness by reading the poem as a lament for the "loss of

beauty."

> *Rosamond*…unfolds a story that is not so much about the loss of
> innocence as it is about the loss of beauty—the *untimely* loss of beauty,
> which means, we discover, that the tale is very much about the loss of
> *beholders* of beauty, and the loss of being in a community of beholders.
> Even more explicitly than *Delia*, the poem is about being seen and being
> read. (160–61)

I agree with Sagaser that the poem figures the tragedy of Rosamond as the loss of

beauty.[10] The poet's anxiety about loss, in fact, refers both to Rosamond's beauty as well

as the poetic endeavor for which she becomes an echo. Sagaser highlights this by

suggesting the poem is about "being seen and being read." In the poem's words, beauty is

"Sweet silent rhetorique" (121). The poem, in fact, goes to great lengths to connect

beauty and rhetoric, threatening both with loss in equal measure. Like Delia, Rosamond

is a natural beauty, a "happy blooming flowre" from the countryside (131). "My beauty

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[10] This is, in fact, the main point I draw from Sagaser's essay. She writes of Daniel's "determination in
[*Delia* and *Rosamond*] and throughout his career, to reconcile momentary pleasure (poetic and erotic) with
lasting meaning or power, and to do so in a way that does not value pleasure and beauty merely for their
ability to inspire individuals to virtuous action, but in a way that values pleasure and beauty for their own
sake—that is, values their ability to enrich those who possess them" (146).

was mine owne, / No borrowed blush which banck-rot beauties seeke" (134–35). Her move to the big city and into the court threatens to make her natural beauty into mere seeming. The court women, such as the woman who convinces Rosamond to succumb to King Henry's desires, represent the mere appearance of beauty, the way in which "shewes deceive, outward appearance lyes" (173). Rosamond's seductress is even introduced as a "seeming Matrone" (216). If we read Rosamond's beauty and the loss it suffers as a figure for poetic power, her ruin as she enters courtly society represents the threat to the poet as his verse becomes public. But the relation between the poet and Rosamond that the complaint develops is not as hermetic as one of ground and figure or tenor and vehicle. Rosamond has her own desires and her own story to tell. She is also a reader of the poet's sonnets, which posits her as external as well as internal to his verse. Rather than merely a figure or metaphor for the poet, the poem imagines Rosamond as his "Eccho."

Not only does the poem set its context as one of empathic exchange between the ghost and the poet, as I have discussed, but when Rosamond begins to tell her story, her echoes of the poet's relationship to Delia in sonneteering becomes clear. Like the poet, Rosamond laments the "ruine" of her "youth" (64). At first she is like Delia, an innocent, beautiful recluse in the countryside. But when she goes "from Country…to Court," her story returns the poet's deepest fears about what it means for the private, chaste self to engage a degraded society in which power, lust, and iconoclasm rule. Rosamond learns the power of beauty to "rauish sence, and play a world in loue" (91, 126). She learns falsehood.

> Impiety of times, chastities abator,
> Falshod, wherein thy selfe, thy selfe deniest:

> Treason, to counterfeit the seal of nature,
> The stampe of heauen, impressed by the hiest.
> Disgrace vnto the world, to whom thou lyest,
>   Idol vnto thy selfe, shame to the wise,
>   And all that honors thee idolatrise. (141–47)

Beauty forged in seclusion is corrupted by the "impiety of times." Rosamond's echo of the sonnets is double-edged here. She mirrors the poet's sonneteering address in its concern with preserving inviolate a private self—his "chaste desiers" that he tells us "Each byrd sings t'herselfe, and so will I" (49.2, 14)—against the "Barbarisme" (dedication) of the world. She also mirrors the poet's betrayal of Delia in making the beloved public. The poet tells Delia not to worry "that these my papers should, / Bewray vnto the world howe faire thou art" (36.1–2). This is the sonnet in which he promises she will live on, not disgraced in the world but "grau'd in marble" by his "carefull accents" (8, 13). The poet of the sonnets has imagined a time in which beauty can have its scope and praise—whether the beauty of the poet's words or that of Delia—but in which both the poet and Delia can be imagined as chastely preserved from the vulgar exchanges of the world. In Rosamond's echo, the private "selfe"—the "me" the poet so wishes to preserve "consectrated to silence" is voiced and doubled: "thy selfe, thy selfe deniest." Rosamond's tale reads as a narrative of beauty's entry into the wanton world that bears out the fears of the sonnet sequence; it will not be subject to the poet's control through eternizing preservation fantasies of cloistering and entombment. Ironically, it is precisely the poet's ability to erect monuments to beauty that launches Rosamond's narrative—a narrative that, in turn, echoes the poet's fears about beauty's corruption.

Rosamond's beauty goes on to reverse and corrupt hierarchies.

> …I wrought on no meane obiect;
> A Crowne was at my feete, Scepters obaide mee:

> Whom Fortune made my King, Loue made my Subiect,
> Who did commaund the Land, most humbly praid mee:
> *Henry* the second, that so highly weigh'd mee,
>   Founde well by proofe the priuiledge of Beautie,
>   That it hath powre to counter-maund all duetie. (155–61)

As with Jane Shore, Rosamond's very fall from grace gathers worldly power to itself. The duty of subjects along with 'proper' patriarchal rule is foiled by beauty's "priuiledge." Uncontained by the sonneteering fantasy, feminine beauty spreads like an infection and ravages the field of the proper. "What cannot women doe that know theyr powre?" (128). "Th' adulterate beauty of a falsed cheeke" is "Vil[e] staine to honor and to women eeke" (137–38). A parade of evils follows Rosamond's release from the seclusion of the countryside (in the diegetic narrative) or from the silence of the tomb (in the frame narrative). Not only are hierarchies overturned, but the wisdom of age is subverted (172–73), "Vulture ambition" feeds on Henry's "lyuer" (178), youth and nature are undermined (203), and honor and reputation are forgotten. "Fame, whereof the world seemes to make such choyce," the Matron tells Rosamond, "Is but an Eccho, and an idle voyce" (258–59). The chaste preserves of natural beauty are lost to a world of seeming.

> The subtile Citty-women better learned,
> Esteeme them chast ynough that best seeme so;
> Who though they sport, it shall not be discerned,
> Their face bewraies not what their bodies doe; (274–77)

Rosamond gives in to the false world here represented. Indeed, she seems to have no other choice in the face of royal compulsion: "he is my King and may constraine me" (337).

When King Henry locks Rosamond in the labyrinth, she laments that her beauty will no longer be seen. The threat to beauty becomes not only that it will become mere appearance, but also that it will never be seen at all.

> What greater torment euer could haue beene,
> Then to inforce the fayre to liue retired?
> For what is Beautie if it be not seene,
> Or what is't to be seene vnlesse admired?
> And though admyred, vnlesse in loue desired?
> > Neuer were cheekes of Roses, locks of Amber,
> > Ordayn'd to liue imprisond in a Chamber. (505-11)

Rosamond's story echoes the poet's anxiety that his enterprise is an unwinnable scenario. Even as the complaint is a bid for literary recognition, it figures a Rosamond whose happiness (indeed, her eternal rest) depends upon social recognition.[11] Just so, the poet may write all he wants, but what do his words signify if no one reads them, if they are misinterpreted, or if, as our reading of *Delia* might lead us to suspect, they fall prey to a "gross-sighted" audience more interested in iconoclastic innovation than preserving virtue or reverential respect for culture's monuments? As her beauty encounters the false and wanton court, Rosamond echoes the poet's problematic relation to the social world. But King Henry's actions also mirror the poet's containment fantasy. Henry's decision to seclude Rosamond, first in a "solitarie Grange" (366) and thereafter in a "stately Pallace he foorthwith did buylde" (463), repeats the sonnets insofar as Delia remains safely and silently cloistered in them. Henry builds a labyrinth of "intricate innumerable wayes," within "the closed bosome of which frame" Rosamond becomes a "Minotaure of shame" (464–478). She describes herself as a "monster of fortune, and the worlds wonder" who "Liu'd cloystred in so desolate a case" (479–80). In a context in which the building of monuments is so consistently a figure for poetry's ambitions, it would be difficult to read Henry's monument building and imprisonment of Rosamond without recalling the poet's characterization of Delia, who will live "Vnburied" in the poet's "lines" where she will

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[11] An Elizabethan poet's training is dependent on imitation of classical poetic models, his income on successful competition for patronage, and the practice of his craft on how well he occupies and varies a limited range of discourses.

be "reseru'd in purenes" as those lines "shall intombe" her "eyes" (36.10–11). From the

point of view of Rosamond's plight, Delia's entombment in the sonnets begins to look

sinister.

As if to ward off this association of the poet's monument building with Henry's,

Rosamond suggests that what happened to her will not happen to Delia. "*Delia*,"

Rosamond says, is "left to adorne the West." Unlike Rosamond, who was preferred to the

voracious court, Delia remains safe and pure in the countryside. Rosamond laments the

difference between her situation and Delia's.

> Yet would to God my foote had neuer moued
> From Countrey safety, from the fields of rest:
> To know the danger to be highly loued,
> And lyue in pompe to braue among the best.
> Happy for me, better had I beene blest,
>   If I vnluckely had neuer strayde:
>   But liu'd at home a happy Country mayde.
> Whose vnaffected innocencie thinks
> No guilefull fraude, as doth the Courtly liuer:
> She's deckt with trueth, the Riuer where she drinks
> Doth serue her for her glasse, her counsell giuer:
> She loues sincerely, and is loued euer.
>   Her days are peace, and so she ends her breath,
>   True life that knowes not what's to die till death. (533–46)

Rosamond provides a pastoral fantasy that comes to the rescue of beauty. This also

echoes the sonnets, in which Delia resides not on gaudy Thames but on arcadian Avon.

Such rusticity redounds to the credit of both Delia and her poet.

> For God forbid I should my papers blot,
> With mercynary lines, with seruile pen:
> Praising vertues in them that haue them not,
> Basely attending on the hopes of men.
>   No no my verse respects nor Thames nor Theaters,
> Nor seekes it to be knowne vnto the Great:
> But *Avon* rich in fame, though poore in waters,
> Shall haue my song, where *Delia* hath her seate.
>   *Avon* shall be my Thames, and she my Song;

> Ile sound her name the Ryuer all along. (48.5–14)

Again, however this fantasy of rural seclusion, both in *Rosamond* and *Delia*, appears as something of a back formation, a defensive stance against the ineluctable social valence of monumentalizing. It reads, in the context of both poems, as an attempt to veil the poet and his objects from the inevitabilities of his own discourse. Rosamond suggests that Delia's spatial retirement shields her from temporality. Delia "knowes not what's to die till death." But the combination of death-inflected sonnets and the echoes of Rosamond's post-mortem complaint make that spatial and temporal fantasy difficult to sustain.

The Queen finds King Henry's labyrinth, the story goes, and wreaks her revenge on Rosamond with poison. The final elegy for Rosamond's beauty is King Henry's. Here he mourns Rosamond's death.

> And I will cause posterity shall know,
> How faire thou wert aboue all women kind.
> And after ages monuments shall find,
> > Shewing thy beauties title not thy name,
> > Rose of the world that sweetned so the same. (689–93)

Henry promises to make monuments to Rosamond's beauty. Such monuments were, in fact, created, the poem tells us, but they did not last. "Marble and Brasse so little lasting be" (707). At the end of the poem, Rosamond has the poet building them again in verse.

> And were it not thy fauourable lynes,
> Reedified the wracke of my decayes,
> And that thy accents willingly assignes,
> Some farther date, and giue me longer daies,
> Fewe in this age had knowne my beauties praise.
> > But thus renewd my fame redeemes some time,
> > Till other ages shall neglect thy rime. (715–21)

A cycle emerges from the above two passages. The eternizing claim fails to do its work; it is revealed as only a temporary stay against time and the world's indifference. Like

marble and brass that wear away, poetry will be "neglected" in future ages. Decay and

loss are inevitable; beauty is ephemeral. Compare the opening sonnet of *Delia* to the last

stanza of *Rosamond*. Here is the first sonnet of Delia.

> Vnto the boundles Ocean of thy beautie
> Runs this poore riuer, charg'd with streames of zeale:
> Returning thee the tribute of my dutie,
> Which heere my loue, my youth, my playnts reuele.
> Heere I vnclaspe the booke of my charg'd soule, (1–5)

And now the last stanza of *Rosamond*, in which the poet brings us back to the *Delia*

sonnets as Rosamond disappears.

> So vanisht shee, and left me to returne,
> To prosecute the tenor of my woes:
> Eternall matter for my Muse to mourne;
> But ah the worlde hath heard too much of those,
> My youth such errors must no more disclose.
>   Ile hide the rest, and greeue for what hath beene,
>   Who made me knowne, must make me liue vnseene. (736–42)

At the end of *Rosamond*, the poet contemplates a return to his sonnets but decides against

it. Instead he gives in to time completely. He closes the "booke" that he opens in the first

sonnet—the book in which the "eternall matter" of his sonnets, the error of his youth, is

written. In the first stanza of the complaint, Rosamond's errors are also those of youth.

Her first request to the poet is to "write…the ruine of my youth" (64). The poet, then,

having finished disclosing Rosamond's error and given her "longer daies," decides he has

disclosed enough. In the last line, he claims that Delia or Rosamond (does it make a

difference?) has made him "knowne," but now he will "liue vnseene." Seen in this light,

the end of *The Complaint of Rosamond* announces the expense of and the ambivalence

toward the volume's monumentalizing ambition.

Rosamond reverses the temporal polarity of *Delia*. As I note above, *Delia*'s fantasy of temporality is based on the private poet's doomed defense against becoming public. In the ghost complaint, the poet confronts the already written—the already public—which makes a claim on his private feeling, his "lamenting Muse." Rosamond is already inscribed in the chronicle history from which she desires a sanctifying escape. She wants to wrest a new time from time. For a poet such as Daniel, who, as we have seen, remains extraordinarily sensitive to the way in which textual monuments represent cultural stability, to "re-edify" the "wracke" of Rosamond's "decayes" would seem to be an act of curatorial preservation. Yet Rosamond presents the poet with a temporal conundrum. In her claim for simpatico between herself and the poet, she echoes him and presents him with a post-mortem mirror of his poetic attempt. In the *Delia* sonnets, the *future* of the poet's enterprise is presumed to consist in a monument that *will* (future) proclaim the beloved's eternal fame and *will have* (future perfect) meant the poet's death. That futurity analeptically preserves the poet's private passion in an authentic present address. Death for the poet, in other words, is the necessary consequence of poetry's chaste and suffering present address as it is imagined to emerge into the public eye. Sonnet twenty of *Delia* shows the way in which the sequence depends upon the death imagined to attend the poet's eternizing verse.

> Come death the Anchor-holde of all my thoughtes,
> My last Resort whereto my soule appealeth;
> For all too long on earth my fancy dotes,
> Whilst my best blood my younge desires sealeth.
>   That hart is now the prospectiue of horror,
> That honored hath the cruelst faire that lyueth:
> The cruelst faire, that sees I languish for her,
> Yet neuer mercy to my merit giueth.
>   This is her Lawrell and her triumphes prize,
> To tread me downe with foote of her disgrace:

> Whilst I did builde my fortune in her eyes,
> And laide my liues rest on so faire a face;
>> That rest I lost, my loue, my life and all,
>> So high attempts to lowe disgraces fall.

Death here is imagined as center and limit ("Anchor-holde" and "last Resort") of the poetic address. The present tense of feeling is emphasized again with "hart is now" and its looking forward, its "prospectiue of horror." When the poem comes to Delia's triumph, "her Lawrell," the terms of the poet's present shift to those of the past. Her "prize" is based on what the poet "did build," the life he laid to rest, and the same that he "lost." In the 1601 version of the sonnet, "death" becomes "Tyme":

> Come *Tyme* the anchor-hold of my desire,
> My last Resort whereto my hopes appeale…

The substitution of time for death is appropriate. The sequence throughout develops its obsessive anticipation of death as a temporal system within which poetry operates and eternizes. Rosamond's address in the poet's prosopopeia unhinges this temporal fantasy.

Rosamond has read the sonnets that appear in the same volume as her complaint. In her own text, she asks her author to write her story, which he is already doing in writing her request. This elaborate framing conceit stages a conversation of voices that forces the reader into a strange, non-linear temporality. Even if she were not imagined as a ghost and therefore already outside of time, Rosamond's recollection of the sonnets in the work that precedes hers would register as a transgression of borders in the sense that Gérard Genette develops. Here Genette defines "author's metalepsis" in both classical and modern formulations.

> Cortazar tells the story of a man assassinated by one of the characters in the novel he is reading; this is an inverse (and extreme) form of the narrative figure the classics called *author's metalepsis*, which consists of pretending that the poet "himself brings about the effects he celebrates," as

when we say that Virgil "has Dido die" in Book IV of the Aeneid... […] …any intrusion by the extradiegetic narrator or narratee into the diegetic universe (or by diegetic characters into the metadiegetic universe, etc.), or the inverse (as in Cortazar), produces an effect of strangeness that is either comical...or fantastic.[12]

Genette draws on a tradition in which the rhetorical term "metalepsis" signifies a condensation of the tropes of narration with those of the narrated.[13] For Genette, the term describes the way in which the figuring voice interacts with the figured. In this sense, both Rosamond's awareness of the author's sonnets preceding the complaint in which she appears as well as the way in which she uses that knowledge in pleading with the poet register as metaleptic. Genette describes "narrative metalepsis" as playing "on the double temporality of the story and the narrating...as if the narrating were contemporaneous with the story and had to fill up the latter's dead spaces." In ghost complaint, the "dead spaces" that the narrating poet must "fill up" are more literally "spaces" belonging to the "dead" than Genette's formulation might intend. Nevertheless, I take Genette's fortuitous wording as a useful point of reference for understanding the metaleptic play of voices in Daniel's staging of possession and dispossession. Genette continues after describing some instances of narrative metalepsis.

> All these games, by the intensity of their effects, demonstrate the importance of the boundary they tax their ingenuity to overstep, in defiance of verisimilitude—a boundary that is precisely the narrating (or the performance) itself; a shifting but sacred frontier between two worlds, the world in which one tells, the world of which one tells. Whence the uneasiness Borges so well put his finger on: "Such inversions suggest that if the characters in a story can be readers or spectators, then we, their readers or spectators, can be fictitious." The most troubling thing about

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[12] Gérard Genette, *Narrative Discourse*, 234–35. Genette quotes from Pierre Fontanier, *Commentaire raisonné sur "Les Tropes" de Dumarsais*, vol. 2 of Dumarsais' *Les Tropes* (1818; repr. Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, 1967), 116, and *The Art of Poetry: The Poetical Treatises of Horace, Vida, and Boileau*, trans. Soame, ed. Albert S. Cook [Boston: Ginn and Col, 1892], 160.
[13] See the OED definition of "metalepsis," which offers a series of statements using the term dating from 1550 forward.

metalepsis indeed lies in this unacceptable and insistent hypothesis, that the extradiegetic is perhaps always diegetic, and that the narrator and his narratees—you and I—perhaps belong to some narrative.[14]

For Genette, readers who suspend disbelief and accept the metaleptic "hypothesis" are therefore troubled with the sense that they are caught up in a narrative economy that has vitiated the boundaries separating the narrated, narrator, and reader.

As I have shown in discussing *Mirror* poems such as "Shore's wife," the ghost possesses a metaleptic point of view in which she offers both a privileged, first person account of her living years as well as retrospective commentary on those years from the point of view of the present. Daniel's Rosamond also occupies this doubled temporality. Yet Rosamond comments not only on the past encoding of her own life and afterlife, she comments on Jane Shore's when she suggests that Churchyard has "grac'd" Jane and turned her into a "Saint." Even more importantly, Rosamond reads within the volume in which she is written. She has privileged access to the poet's writing and his thoughts about Delia, and she expects that the beloved of the sonnets will be listening as the ghost complaint unfolds. This elaborate conceit relies on both a synchronic and diachronic metalepsis. Rosamond reads a palimpsest of past lives and texts as well as the present volume in which she appears. Churchyard's poem, in fact, foreshadows Daniel's use of this effect. When Jane addresses Baldwin, the editor of the *Mirror*, asking him to place her "tragedy…among the rest," she shows an awareness of the other poems that surround hers. "I heare," Jane tells us, "the lives and falles of many wyghtes." Daniel follows Churchyard in allowing Rosamond a view that combines the first person perspective of past events with a present view imagined as (at least) coextensive with the author's.

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[14] Genette, 236, cites Jorge Luis Borges, *Other Inquisitions, 1937–1952*, transl. R. Simms (1964), 46.

Metalepsis implicates the reader in its temporal loop by virtue of what Paul de Man calls the "scene of reading."[15] De Man suggests that "we do not 'possess' language in the same way that we can be said to possess natural properties. It would be just as proper or improper to say that 'we'are a property of language as the reverse" (160). This is emphasized by the shift from sonnet to ghost complaint. In the sonnet, the lyric utterance that the poet addresses to his beloved (and that we, the readers, overhear) is presumed to belong to the poet in a way that registers as affectively authentic. It produces the effect of a lamenting subject speaking to a beloved object. The address of the ghost to the poet challenges that relation among speaker, beloved, and reader by confusing the subject-object terms upon which it rests. "The diegetic possibility implies the hypothetical existence of a narrator, of a man talking about men," de Man writes.

> It also implies the necessity of an act by which the question of the referential verifiability is raised, and this epistemological moment, which cannot be short-circuited, is readily represented in the figure of an audience or a reader. We re-find the traditional space or stage for the scene of reading as the scene of telling, the mimesis of a diegesis. But the necessary presence of the moment of utterance and of the interpretative moment of understanding has nothing to do with the empirical situation naively represented in this scene…. (161–62)

What ghost complaint adds to the sonnet sequence is a complication of the lyric utterance, the *apostrophe*, of the sonnet form. Sonnets are paradigmatic for the lyric voice insofar as they create a scene in which the poet generates the effect of a lamenting self in the moment of address to a beloved other. We, the readers, eavesdrop, we overhear this lamenting appeal. The sonnet generates a subjectivity effect based upon the presumed authenticity the poet-speaker's affective cry. Of course, sonnets in the Petrarchan tradition fracture the very subjectivity effects they create, calling into question the

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[15] Paul de Man, *Allegories of Reading*.

authenticity of the voice as much as they rely upon it. Nevertheless, the sonnet

paradigmatically *begins* with the premise of the lyric utterance: that a 'self' utters its

lament to an 'other' and that we readers overhear this address, taking pleasure in the

speaker's eloquent pain. In giving over the plaintive address to a ghost who reads the

sonnet sequence and hopes to appropriate its appeal for her own lament, *The Complaint*

of Rosamond allegorizes our own reading of Daniel's *Delia*. This serves to point out the

way in which, in de Man's words,

> …the notions of audience and of narrator that are part of any narrative are
> only the misleading figuration of a linguistic structure. And just as the
> indeterminacy of reference generates the illusion of a subject, a narrator,
> and a reader, it also generates the metaphor of temporality. (162)

That the terms of lyric address—the situations of the speaker, addressee, and reader—can

change places and appropriate each other's positions, suggests that, as Borges says, "you

and I," as readers, also "belong to some narrative." And that this "narrative" or linguistic

structure to which we belong makes us a "property of language" as much as language is

our property (de Man 160). *The Complaint of Rosamond* reminds us that in reading we

participate in the "illusion of a subject, a narrator, and a reader" that "generates the

metaphor of temporality." In reading the ghost complaint, then, we are implicated in that

illusory, metaphorical structure.

Compare the effects that Genette and de Man describe here the theory of how

poetry works in *Musophilus*. Musophilus suggests that writing eternizes the writer.

> For these lines are the vaines, the Arteries,
> And vndecaying life-strings of those harts
> That still shall pant, and still shall exercise
> The motion spirit and nature both imparts,
> And shall, with those aliue so sympathize
> As nourisht with their powers inioy their parts. (183–88)

This suggests that, though the writer may be dead, writing becomes newly embodied in the reader. Like the formulation by Genette and Borges, the poetics of *Musophilus* insists that poetry draws the reader into its desiring circuit, and that in such a circuit the boundary between writer and reader will fade. Lines of poetry will become veins and arteries, possessing the living in order to "inioy their parts." This bears a strong resemblance to the way in which the ghost of Rosamond suggests that she and the poet share the emotions of pity and woe as well as an audience. The dead Rosamond—in Genette's terms, the "diegetic" character—participates in the poet's living emotions; and, in turn, the poet imagines that he will enjoy the living bodies of readers after his death. In this fantasy of materialized citationality, the dead and the living are bound through the medium of "lines" into a relation of desire, as "harts," "sympathize," and "inioy" make clear. In *Musophilus*, the relation is also sexually necrophilic—an implication made unavoidable with the use of "pant," "exercise," the "motion" of "spirit and nature," and the suggestion of enjoying "parts." Musophilus continues:

> O blessed letters that combine in one
> All ages past, and make one liue with all,
> By you we do confer with who are gone,
> And the dead liuing vnto councell call:
> By you th'vnborne shall haue communion
> Of what we feele, and what doth vs befall. (189–94)

In an extended alliterative scheme, "letters"—which we may understand simultaneously as learning in general, epistles, and the symbols that form words—combine, confer, call to counsel, and commune. The reference to "communion" alludes to the Catholic Eucharist, in which ingesting the communion wafer materializes a spiritual and physical union between bodies absent and present. Taking the above two stanzas together, the "letters" and "lines" dispossessed from the writer's own body (presumed to be one of the

"dead" of "ages past" in this formulation) possess the reader. Musophilus figures that possession predicated upon dispossession in terms of shared feeling, desire, sex, conversation, and spiritual union.

At this point in my analysis, that such a relation between past and present bodies should be gendered should not surprise. In the dedicatory sonnet of *Musophilus*, Daniel describes his relation to the poem.

> I Do not here vpon this hum'rous Stage,
> Bring my transformed verse apparailed
> With others passions, or with others rage,
> With loues, with wounds, with factions furnished:
>   But here present thee, onelie modelled
> In this poore frame, the forme of mine owne heart:
> Here to reuiue my selfe my Muse is lead
> With motions of her owne, t'act her owne part
>   Striuing to make, her now contemned arte
> As faire t'her selfe as possiblie she can;
> Least seeming of no force, of no desart
> She might repent the course that she began,
>   And, with these times of dissolution, fall
>   From goodnes, vertue, glorie, fame and all.

This is a gendered story of possession: multiple beings occupying the same physical body and negotiate mastery. In that the poem's "poore frame" encloses and shapes the poet's "owne heart," authenticity, it seems, is at stake. The poem will not present the passions of others but those that are of his own essence. Strangely, however, it is the female "Muse," through "motions of her owne" and "act[ing] her owne part" that allows for expression from the poet's own "heart." The Muse aims for authenticity to "her selfe," which allows the poet's heart to be framed, shaped, and formed. In this setting, the authenticity of the masculine depends upon the ability of the feminine to be herself. On one level, Daniel perhaps alludes to the Latin grammatical fact that the soul is feminine; the poet then refers to his own soul. Muses are also traditionally imagined as women. But the passage

takes those gendered tropes seriously as a story of how poetry operates. Daniel seems to imagine here a self struggling to emerge as itself through a gendered interplay of self and self-imagined-as-other, which is the feeling self ("heart") formalized ("modelled") in the "poore frame" of verse. Of interest here for *The Complaint of Rosamond* is that the emergence of the poet's imagined, feminine self-as-other threatens not to secure the poet's masculine revival—his rescue from death that "revive my self" implies—but to expose it to dissolution and fall.

> She might repent the course that she began,
>   And, with these times of dissolution, fall
>   From goodnes, vertue, glorie, fame and all.

This dedicatory sonnet thus foregrounds the concerns that *The Complaint of Rosamond* also takes up.

Rosamond, the woman fallen from "virtue, glorie, fame and all," hopes that the poet's craft—in Ovidian terms, his Orphic breath—will prompt Delia's sighs. "Sorrow," for Rosamond, "is dead for aye reuiuing." She needs the poet's "wofull Song" to take up her cause.

>   …my myserable ghost,
> (Whilome inuested in so faire a vaile,
> Which whilst it liu'd, was honoured of the most,
> And being dead, giues matter to bewaile)
> Comes to sollicit thee, since others faile,
>   To take this taske, and in thy wofull Song
>   To forme my *case*, and register my wrong.
>
> Although I knowe thy iust lamenting Muse,
> Toylde in th' affliction of thine owne distresse,
> In others cares hath little time to vse,
> And therefore maist esteeme of mine the lesse:
> Yet as thy hopes attend happie redresse,
>   Thy ioyes depending on a womans grace,
>   So moue thy minde a wofull womans *case*. (29–41, my emphasis)

Here Rosamond echoes Jane Shore's word, "case." Jane is "one that may no longer hide

her face, / But nedes must come and shewe her piteous case." Another ghost hoping to

mitigate the judgments pronounced upon her, Rosamond appeals to the poet to "form her

case." The word signifies in multiple directions. Given the legalistic terms, "sollicit,"

"register," and "redresse," "case" suggests a context in which the poet will speak on

behalf of the ghost before those who would judge her.[16] In this sense, a case is a matter

brought forth in court. An entry in Huloet's 1572 dictionary reads:

> **Case in lawe, or properly that ryseth in contention vpon the point of
> the matter, which must be replied vnto, and [ei]ther confessed, denied,
> or trauersed.** Caussae constitutio.

This entry notes the relation of legal word, "case," to the Latin *causa*. This use of the

term recalls the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* attributed to Cicero, an important manual for

rhetorical training in the sixteenth century. As the *ad Herennium* suggests,

> *Tria genera sunt causarum quae recipere debet orator: demonstrativum,
> deliberabiutur, iudiciale*. [There are three kinds of causes which the
> speaker must treat: Epideictic, Deliberative, and Judicial.][17]

The "epideictic" *causa* involves praise or blame, the "deliberative" discusses policy, and

the "judicial" takes up legal matters. These three together comprise the orator's art. A

trained orator, such as a poet, takes up *causae*, or in the early modern English term, cases.

Rosamond's use of Jane Shore's word, "case," however, signifies beyond the

legal context both poems develop. Huloet's dictionary prints the following entries in

addition to the one above:

> **Case**, Casus, us.…gen. *Cas*.
> **Case to put anything in**…. *Vn estuy de quelque chose que se soit*.

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[16] OED dates "case," as in a suit brought for consideration before a court, to the fourteenth century, offering
several sixteenth-century examples.
[17] *[Cicero] Rhetorica ad Herennium*, translated by Harry Caplan, I.ii.

The first of these definitions notes the etymology of "case" from the Latin *casus*, which suggests an unfortunate 'falling' out of events. Casus can mean a "fall" or "error," an "accident, event, misfortune," or even "death."[18] Thus a "case" is often an undesirable set of events, as in Jane Shore's "piteous case," which Rosamond echoes in her "wofull womans case." Yet "case" also recalls enclosure and embodiment, as the dictionary reminds us in its "case to put anything in" above. In this sense the word derives from the Latin *capsa*, meaning chest, box, or a case for books.[19] William Baldwin's *Treatice of Moral Philosophy* suggests that the "body" is "the case & sepulcher of the soule."[20] And William Shakespeare's Cleopatra, when Antony dies, suggests that the "case of that huge spirit now is cold."[21] Rosamond speaks of how her "myserable ghost" was once "invested in so faire a vaile." Rosamond's death, however it divested her, has produced "matter to bewail." Given the insistence on embodiment here, "matter" must play upon the physical 'matter' that Rosamond leaves behind, her body, and the death that produces new (subject) 'matter' for lament. This context inflects the last line of the stanza above in which Rosamond asks the poet to "forme" her "case." The poem itself will, in fact, form a case for—frame or embody—her lamenting voice.[22] The play on encasing extends the concerns of the first stanza of the poem.

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[18] *Oxford Latin Desk Dictionary*, ed. James Morwood (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1994).
[19] Ibid.
[20] William Baldwin, *A Treatice of Moral Philosophy* [expanded edition by Thomas Palfreyman, 1571] book two, chapter six. Cited in OED, "case" n. 2, 3.a., which also cites the next quotation from Shakespeare.
[21] Shakespeare, *Antony and Cleopatra*, 4.15.94.
[22] The 1572 dictionary gives us one more sense of "case" to which we can add those above. **"Case, suche as they put pictures in, a case for an image**. Aedicula. *L'estuy d'vne image*." This plays upon yet another etymological association. The Latin *aedicula* is a small building or temple, which is here perhaps brought into the definition in light of the Latin and Italian word *casa*, meaning small house, hut, or cabin. Huloet's dictionary entry thus seems to confuse the root words *capsa* and *casa*. I suggest that Rosamond's "forme my case" follows this etymological confusion in conflating *causa*, *casus*, *casa*, and *capsa* into "case." The suggestion that a case can be (by metaphor) a picture frame applies as well. Daniel frames the image of Rosamond. That Rosamond is an image or copy is an idea that the poem necessarily depends upon (since she is a ghost) but everywhere complicates with its insistence on embodying that image. If Rosamond is an

> My body found a graue where to containe it,
> A sheete could hide my face, but not my sin,
> For Fame finds neuer tombe t' inclose it in. (5–7)

This articulation of a contained body with uncontainable afterlife finds rearticulation in the play on "matter" and "case" in the later stanza.

    The poet's prosopopeia of Rosamond reembodies her "soule" in poetic language under the sign and authority of "case" in its rhetorical and physical senses, and that reembodiment is gendered. Rosamond, materialized by and echoing the sonneteering voice, disables that voice's temporal fantasy in a return from the dead as she speaks in the metaleptic perspective that such a return enables. Such an incursion into the poet's sonneteering discourse dispossesses that discourse of its authority because the temporal fantasy in *Delia* relies on the positions in time of the poet, addressee, and readers. Unhinged from his sonneteering temporal coordinates in metaleptic address, the poet has achieved his dearest wish—to wrest a "time from time"—which also turns out to be his darkest nightmare, his "prospectiue of horror." The result is not, as Rosamond optimistically imagines at the beginning of the ghost complaint, that the poet "maist ioy, and [she] might rest." Instead, the ghost complaint has reaffirmed the sonneteer's deepest

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image—as indeed she must be on at least the level of poetic representation—she is an image, an *imago*, in the sense that Pygmalion's statue is. She can be animated and given a voice. The permutations of "case," however, do not end there. "Case" also potentially signifies sexually. Consider the use of the word in Shakespeare's *Merry Wives of Windsor*. Sir Hugh Evans asks the schoolboy William to recite the Latin "genetive case," to which William dutifully replies, "*Genitivo—horum, harum, horum.*" Overhearing and misunderstanding the words for English near-homonyms, Mistress Quickly exclaims, "Vengeance of Jenny's case! Fie on her! Never name her, child, if she be a whore" (4.1.57–58). Quickly mistakes the grammatical use of the word "case"—the form of a word indicating its particular function in a sentence— with the use of the same word referring to the vagina. Given *The Complaint of Rosamond*'s insistence on embodying the ghost, and given the way in which, as I note above, *Musophilus* sexualizes the relation between the living and the dead, reading "case" in these lines as implicitly sexual seems worthy of consideration. One need not accept all of the many possible senses of "case" available in Rosamond's request for the poet to "forme" her case in one stanza and "move" his "mind" to her case in another. Yet, at the least, the three senses of case as unfortunate circumstance, judicial matter, and bodily housing, are clearly in play.

fears: that his Muse will "mourne" eternally; that the dissolute world will probably tear

his monuments down; that he has fallen, like Rosamond, into a pit of error that he cannot

escape; that his voice does not, nor has it ever, belonged to him; and that his masculinized

monumentalizing is as uncertain as the timorous feminine soul it pretends to guarantee.

Rosamond, ever hopeful, chirps at the end of her song, "And if I passe vnto those happy

banks, / Then she must haue her praise, thy pen her thanks" (734–5). Yet the poet,

dispossessed of the ability that Rosamond still thinks he might have, can only retire. At

last, like Narcissus, he splits in the mirror of his own poetizing.

> My youth such errors must no more disclose.
> Ile hide the rest, and greeue for what hath beene,
> Who made me knowne, must make me liue vnseene.

This retreat from "errors" into hiding, grief, and invisibility can be read as the response to

a dissolution of the poet's "self" into a spectral state. The poet's *exigi monumentum*, his

reedification or encasing of Rosamond, has constructed a memorializing monument, a

tomb, in which he finds, finally, himself as poet.

Richard Danson Brown attributes the beginning of the metapoetic trend in

complaints to Edmund Spenser, whose *Complaints* volume was published the year before

Daniel's *Delia*.

> Spenser's *Complaints* [1591] constitute a self-conscious renovation of
> traditional complaint. Within this apparently disparate collection of
> 'sundrie small Poemes', a subtle realignment takes place in which the
> literary energies of traditional complaint are directed away from the
> perception of the instability of the external world towards the recognition
> of the instability of poetry itself. (397)

Brown's comments are applicable to Daniel's poem as well. (In fact, Spenser and Daniel

were likely writing literary complaints at the same time, even if Spenser's volume

precedes Daniel's by one year in printed form.) Daniel, like Spenser, goes beyond what

we might call the *de casibus* sensibility of, for instance, Churchyard's *Shore's wife*, which would tell us in its last words to "Defye this world, and all his wanton wayes." Both Daniel and Spenser draw out and emphasize the metapoetic aspects of complaint as inherited from the *Mirror* (which Brown calls "traditional complaint"). Daniel and Spenser set a tone for 1590s complaint, a literary trend that will remain concerned with the illusive power of poetry itself. Whether one credits Spenser, Daniel, or both, the turn towards the metapoetic in 1590s complaint poetry is undeniable. And as the poetry turns (to paraphrase Brown) from the external world to the mazy world of poetry itself, it begins to pose more difficult interpretive dilemmas.

Essays on *Rosamond* can wreck themselves on the shoals of this metapoetics, especially when attempting to construct a moral center for the poem. Scholars notice, of course, that the poem both emerges from the moralizing *Mirror* tradition and comments on it. They notice that in the new generation of complaint, the stakes have been raised. Yet some insist that *Rosamond* must still have a moral. Ira Clark, for example, tries to account for both tradition and complexity by making the case that the poem is "moral allegory" (156). Ronald Primeau reinstates the poem's moral level by showing that the poem is a "satire" of the *Mirror* tradition (23). In Primeau's words, "A high point in this manipulation of 'Mirror' conventions occurred in Daniel's bending and stretching of form to accommodate it to the ethical ironies which were his chief concern" (21). Primeau concludes that "Rosamond is not a repentant heroine but a self-centered, fame-seeking hedonist" (23). Through different interpretive pathways, Clark and Primeau both end by suggesting that Daniel exposes Rosamond's moral corruption. In short, they end up reconstructing the moralizing aspiration of the *Mirror*'s framing apparatus inside a

poem that clearly sets out to make moral judgment a problem.[23] This is all the more

ironic since, as I have argued in earlier chapters, the *Mirror* ghosts themselves have

already contested that apparatus by despairing of their own and their readers' ability to

generate moral lessons from their stories. *Rosamond* specifically addresses the moralizing

of the *Mirror* tradition in its eleventh stanza. Here the poet has just agreed to tell

Rosamond's story.

> Then write quoth shee the ruine of my youth,
> Report the downe-fall of my slippry state:
> Of all my life reueale the simple truth,
> To teach to others, what I learnt too late:
> Exemplifie my frailtie, tell howe Fate
>   Keepes in eternall darke our fortunes hidden,
>   And ere they come, to know them tis forbidden. (64–70)

Rosamond suggests that her story, like those of the *Mirror*, might be appropriable as a

negative example, but her idea of "Fate" forecloses that use. She calls on the poet to

"report," "reveal," "teach"; but the example that must be taught will not influence a

future that the reader is "forbidden" to understand. She herself, as the episode of the

engraved casket shows, does not learn by example. When presented with the engraved

figures of Amymone and Io (both ravished), she might take the hint and avoid trouble,

but she recurs again to fate.

> These presidents presented to my view,
> Wherein the presage of my fall was showne,
> Might haue fore-warn'd me well what would ensue,
> And others harmes haue made me shunne mine owne;
> But fate is not preuented though fore-knowne.
>   For that must hap decreed by heauenly powers,
>   Who worke our fall, yet make the fault still ours. (407–13)

The fatalism of this stanza is clear. Rosamond is presented with a clear lesson in

preserving her virtue against men in power, yet she cannot learn it. Indeed, even if she

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[23] For a thoroughgoing rebuttal to Primeau, see Sagaser, "Sporting the While," esp. 165–66.

wanted to she couldn't. It is out of her hands. Even as it gestures toward the expected

moral judgment of Rosamond's sin, the poem suggests that such judgment is impossible:

"fate is not preuented though fore-knowne."

Rosamond's contemporaneous detractors were less convinced than Clark and

Primeau that Daniel's poem could be interpreted as a moral condemnation. In fact, some

thought that Daniel had rather too successfully exculpated the sinful Rosamond. The

more puritanically inclined Michael Drayton, for example, refers to Daniel's *Rosamond*

in his own complaint poem, *Matilda*.

> Faire *Rosamond*, of all so highly graced,
> Recorded in the lasting Booke of Fame,
> And in our Sainted Legendarie placed,
> By him who strives to stellifie her name,
> Yet will some Matrons say she was to blame.
> > Though all the world bewitched with his ryme,
> > Yet all his skill cannot excuse her cryme. (B1v)

Drayton feels comfortable reiterating the literary appropriation of religious discourse. He

places medieval and classical references ("Book of Fame" and "stellifie") next to the

"Sainted Legendarie," yet, in relation to that sanctification he casts the speech of Daniel's

poet as witchcraft (by definition unsanctioned), suggesting that we ought not too quickly

accept the implications of those witchy rhymes. Drayton admits the poet's "skill" while

remaining suspicious about its exculpatory power. But the point of *Rosamond*, as I have

shown in this chapter, revolves less around the question of whether or not the ruined maid

should be held accountable for her sins than the way in which the fallen woman's

dilemma echoes that of the poet. The point of poem is to reflect upon the power and

limits of poetry. When Drayton's Matilda, then, suggests that Daniel's poem has

achieved mixed results—stellifying Rosamond even as it exposes her "crime"—she

repeats in a more literal key what Daniel has already figured as the problem of the monumentalizing poet in the dissolute world, subject as he is to becoming "knowne" even as he is "vnseene."

Churchyard seems to imagine that his voicing of Jane Shore produces a "martiall man" deserving of fame for his defense of "womens honour" and knowledge of "theyr conditions and qualityes." That is, Churchyard strives to produce a poet normatively gendered and glorified precisely, albeit paradoxically, through its adoption of a feminine voice. Daniel does not. Instead, Daniel imagines a poet for whom the feminine voice is constitutive of his poetizing. The feminine, for Daniel's poet, can be the object of address, as is the case with the Mary, Delia, and Rosamond for whom he would provide a place in eternity; but the feminine is also the poet's (e)motive force insofar as 'he' consistently imagines a feminized—shamed, chaste, private—"selfe" that is subject to a fall into the wanton world and which, finally, resists monumentalizing discourse. To put this in the overarching terms of my argument, Daniel finds himself as much in the position of Jane Shore as in that of Churchyard insofar as the *Delia* and *Rosamond* poet internalizes the feminine voice that resists the determinations and reifications of monumental history. For Daniel, the "me" conceived as feminine that "must…liue vnseene" is the force behind as well as the result of his poetic attempt every bit as much as is the normatively masculine public poet, the "me" who longs so mightily to be "knowne" as such. Poetizing fractures the poet along gendered lines. Such an understanding of how the *Delia* volume operates requires an appreciation of the layered and unstable vocality and temporality of the volume's terms of address and scenes of reading. In other words, Daniel's poetry does not merely "ventriloquize"—if by that we

mean the poet *subject* appropriates the imagined voice of an animated female *object* as other, thus securing masculine subjectivity through an objectification of the feminine. Rather, Daniel's performance of masculinity in poetic language relies upon a *constitutive* femininity. In the next chapter, I turn toward another ghost complaint poem in which the poet is possessed and dispossessed by a voice marked as feminine, Thomas Middleton's *The Ghost of Lucrece*.

CHAPTER IV

HAUNTED HISTORY AND THE BIRTH OF THE REPUBLIC IN THOMAS
MIDDLETON'S *THE GHOST OF LUCRECE*

In the Latin invocation that introduces Thomas Middleton's *The Ghost of Lucrece*

(1600), the poet summons Lucrece from the dead.

> *Castissimo, purissimoque Lucretiae Spiritui; Thomas Medius*
> *et Gravis Tonus primum Surge vociferat*
> *Tu castitatis imago,*
> *Surgito!* (20–23)
> To the most chaste and pure Ghost of Lucrece: Thomas, in a moderate and
> weighty voice, cries out the first 'Arise'. O thou, the image of chastity,
> arise![1]

"*Thomas Medius*" plays on the "middle" of "Middleton," associating the name of the

author with the poet's "moderate [*medius*] and weighty voice [*et Gravis Tonus*]." The

poet's voice thus linked to the author's name hails Lucrece by the name of chaste, closing

his invocation with the compliment, "totally devoted to your most chaste ghost"

(*Castissimo Spiritui tuo addictissimus*). The poet calls Lucrece from the Roman past into

the Elizabethan present, the *postremo tempore mundi*, "the world's worst age" (25). At

the beginning of the poem proper, Lucrece responds. She rises from the dead, asking

> What wind, what storm
> Blew my dissevered limbs into this form,
> And from the virgin paradise of death
> Conjures my ghost with poetizing breath? (62–65)

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[1] The translation is G. B. Shand's. I am indebted to G. B. Shand for generously allowing me to preview his
excellent edition, now published in *Thomas Middleton: The Collected Works*, gen. eds. Gary Taylor and
John Lavagnino (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007). Quotations from the poem and translations from
Middleton's Latin to follow are from Shand's edition, cited by line number. *The Ghost of Lucrece* was first
edited by J. Q. Adams (New York: Scribners, 1937).

In this reverse blazon, Lucrece is pieced back together by the poet's Orphic breath. *The Ghost of Lucrece* stages a haunting that will be concerned, as these passages intimate, with the power of poetry to figure conjurations of two kinds: that of the Lucrece's speech into (and by virtue of) the poet's breath and voice and that of the past into the present.

Reconstructed by means of "poetizing breath" and speaking to the one who conjured her, Lucrece's attention turns quickly to Tarquin; we soon discover that Lucrece views herself as inextricably coupled with her rapist in the afterlife. In an early metaphor, the two are an eternal lamp, which Lucrece claims uses "my blood for oil, his lust for fire" (79). After much lamenting over this condition—which, for Lucrece, functions "to seal [her] soul with rape and murder's stamp"—she summons Tarquin's ghost: "Come, spirit of fire... I conjure thee" (86; 115–21). The poem gives us no indication that Tarquin's ghost hears this: neither the shade nor the voice of the rapist makes an appearance. Nevertheless, Lucrece spends a good deal of the poem apostrophizing him by means of hurled accusations while she relives the rape. Other targets for Lucrece's lamenting apostrophe include Collatine, Iniquity, Lust, and Chastity itself. Near the end of her diatribe, she takes over the position of the poem's author. Lucrece imagines that the poem itself is her letter written to Tarquin: "To thee I consecrate this little-most / *Writ by* the bloody fingers of my ghost" (568–69, my emphasis). Then she falls back into hell to spend eternity with Tarquin. The poem ends with an elegiac epilogue in which the poet laments Lucrece's death, the passing of her body and breath. "O her breath," the poet cries,

> That pension of her life, from life to death.
> How ill was this bestowed on death, that elf,
> Which robs all others, yet still poor itself. (637–40)

This cross-couple paradox on death's acquisitive impoverishment leads to a final couplet that underscores once again the fluid border between life and death with which the poem is everywhere concerned:

> First Tarquin-life clad her in death's array.
> Now Tarquin-death hath stol'n her life away. (653–54)

The couplet features a crossing and reversal of order, a chiasmus of "life" and "death," that is also a synœciosis, a coupling of opposites expressing the oxymoronic or paradoxical.[2] Tarquin is here, in terms of his effect on Lucrece, the principle of both life and death, suggesting that Lucrece's interaction with the tyrannical prince has shrouded her in death even while she lives, and even in death Tarquin robs her of life.

In order to describe how Lucrece's haunting operates in Middleton's poem—its cultural and literary referents, effects, and consequences—this essay attends to cross-coupling, or what early modern rhetoricians call "synœciosis," such as that in the final couplet. In *The Ghost of Lucrece*, synœciosis yokes opposites in order to call attention to the perverse or the unspeakable. Death perversely infects life, the past invades the present, as the incantatory magic of the invocation stages a mingling of breath in which the living poet lends the dead Lucrece a voice. Along with the most perverse coupling, that of Lucrece and her rapist in life and in the afterlife, the poem joins blood and fire,

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[2] Synœciosis (variously spelled syneciosis, synæciosis, and synœciosis) belongs to a larger group of rhetorical techniques used for comparison and contrast, similarity and difference, such as antithesis, oxymoron, contrarium, and so on. Catherine Belsey, "Tarquin Dispossessed: Expropriation and Consent in *The Rape of Lucrece*," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 52 (2001): 315–35, writes that "Synœciosis brings contraries together to form oxymoronic or paradoxical truths: to hope more is to have less; to gain is to lose; excess of pleasure brings grief" (319). The two seminal discussions of Shakespeare's use of the cross-couple in *The Rape of Lucrece* are Joel Fineman, "Shakespeare's Will: The Temporality of Rape" in *The Subjectivity Effect in Western Literary Tradition* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991), 165–221, and Heather Dubrow, *Captive Victors: Shakespeare's Narrative Poems and Sonnets* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987). Belsey builds on Fineman and Dubrow to argue for a "union of contraries," or cross-couple result, in Shakespeare's poem: Lucrece's "final victim-ization, rendered by her own hand, is at the same time the ultimate act of self-determination; the object of violence is simultaneously the subject as agent of her own judicial execution" (330–31).

milk and blood, chastity and tyranny, and so on, unions that testify to the confusions of

propriety engendered by rape. For the violated Lucrece, only oppositions pressing

paradox can articulate the horrifying effects of Tarquin's "Lust," which "sets a devil

where a god had stood" (429), or the fire of his "Iniquity," which sows ashes on the earth

"as thick as stones / Like wombs of lust in tombs of lechery" (381–84). With moments

such as these, Middleton takes up the figure of the cross-couple so prominent in an earlier

poem on the same subject, Shakespeare's *The Rape of Lucrece* (1594), expanding and

transforming the figure for use in his ghost story featuring a post-mortem version of the

Roman heroine. As Henry Peacham suggests, "Synæceosis [sic] is a figure which

teacheth to conioine diuerse things or contraries…"[3] George Puttenham's *The Art of*

English Poesy (1589) calls this figure "the Crosse-Couple, beacacuse it takes me two

contrary words and tieth them as it were in a pair of couples…."[4] Middleton's poem

relies on such cross-coupling from syntactical to structural levels: *The Ghost of Lucrece*

goes to great lengths to couple not just "contrary words," but contrary persons, voices,

and times. As a ghost—and therefore already a paradoxical embodiment, neither living

nor dead[5]—Lucrece returns from death to embody the violence of her own story: her

"ghost the idea of her soul resumes, / Which Phoenix-wise burns in her own perfumes"

(56–57).

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[3] Henry Peacham, *The Garden of Eloquence (1593)* (Gainesville, Florida: Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, 1954), fol. 170.

[4] *The Art of English Poesy by George Puttenham: A Critical Edition*, eds. Frank Whigham and Wayne A. Rebhorn (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007), 291.

[5] Jacques Derrida, *Spectres de Marx*: *L'État de la dette, le travail du deuil et la nouvelle Internationale* (Paris: Éditions Galilée, 1993), suggests that "le spectre est une incorporation paradoxale, le devenir-corps, une certaine forme phénoménale et charnelle de l'esprit…. On ne sait pas is c'est vivant ou si c'est mort" (25–26). That is, "the specter is a paradoxical incorporation, the becoming-body, a certain phenomenal and carnal form of the spirit…. One does not know if it is living or if it is dead" (Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, trans. Peggy Kamuf [New York: Routledge, 1994], 5). I return to Derrida below.

Those familiar with *The Rape of Lucrece* will note the way in which Thomas

Middleton's *The Ghost of Lucrece* and Shakespeare's earlier poem tell the same story in

very different ways.[6] Shakespeare's well-known poem narrates the sexual assault of a

beautiful and chaste noblewoman, Lucrece, by a tyrannical Roman Prince. After the rape,

Lucrece commits suicide in order to preserve the honor of her family. Her body is then

paraded through the streets of Rome as an example of the effects of royal tyranny, her

bloody corpse used to generate public outrage in support of a revolution against the

monarchy. The story ends when Romans respond, "with one consent," to banish the royal

family and change the government "from kings to consuls"—from monarchy to

republic.[7] Middleton's poem follows Shakespeare's in key ways: both are concerned with

Lucrece's attempt to articulate, largely through paradox, a traumatic event that seems to

exceed the power of language to capture; both Lucreces are threatened with misogynist

social and literary systems that militate against their becoming 'subjects' of their own

discourse; and both react to the disenfranchisement threatened by rape with an appeal to

the power of authorship.[8] Both versions of Lucrece attempt to counter the threat of

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[6] Heather Dubrow, "A Mirror for Complaints: Shakespeare's *Lucrece* and the Generic Tradition" in
Renaissance Genres: *Essays on Theory, History, and Interpretation*, ed. Barbara Keifer Lewalski
(Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1986), 399–417, draws out the way in which Shakespeare's *The Rape of Lucrece*
participates in and responds to complaint poetry in the tradition of *The Mirror for Magistrates* and Ovid's
Heroides. Even more than Shakespeare's, Middleton's poem self-consciously works within the female-
voiced ghost complaint tradition of the 1590s. Formally, that is, Middleton's *Lucrece* is more closely
related to Samuel Daniel's *The Complaint of Rosamond*, Thomas Churchyard's *Shore's Wife*, Thomas
Lodge's *The Complaint of Elstred*, and other 1590s complaints that feature famous women returning from
the grave to lament the conditions that led to their deaths, though Middleton follows Shakespeare with his
subject matter.
[7] See "The Argument" that precedes the poem (p. 238). Citations of Shakespeare's *The Rape of Lucrece*
follow *William Shakespeare: The Complete Works*, The Oxford Shakespeare, 2nd Edition, gen. eds. Stanley
Wells and Gary Taylor (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005); hereafter I cite the poem by line number.
[8] For influential arguments about these themes in Shakespeare's poem, see Lynn Enterline, "'Poor
Instruments' and unspeakable events in The Rape of Lucrece," in *The Rhetoric of the Body from Ovid to
Shakespeare* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 152–97; Joel Fineman, "Shakespeare's
Will"; Belsey, "Tarquin Dispossessed"; Coppélia Kahn, "The Rape in Shakespeare's Lucrece,"
Shakespeare Studies 9 (1976): 45–72, and "The Sexual Politics of Subjectivity in Shakespeare's Lucrece"
in *Roman Shakespeare: Warriors, Wounds, and Women* (London: Routledge, 1997), 27–45; and Nancy

becoming a textual object, that which is written, with a consideration of the ways in which Lucrece becomes, in Lynn Enterline's words, "author of her own 'plot of death'" through acts of ventriloquism.[9] And both poems feature an intertwining of the personal, the trauma of rape, with the political in the form of a national destiny narrative.

When viewed for how the Lucrece story intertwines the personal and the political, at least three critical narratives emerge from scholarly accounts of Shakespeare's *Lucrece*, its literary heritage, and its late Elizabethan cultural context. I will call these 1) the allegorical model, 2) the resistance model, and 3) the complicity model. First, an allegorical reading suggests that Lucrece, as a representation of the Elizabethan body politic, unveils the abuses of tyrannical monarchy and offers a fantasy of the sacrifice of a female body on behalf of a liberatory republicanism. "Lucrece stands as the body politic," Andrew Hadfield writes, "abused as a possession by the monarch…." Lucrece is a "male fantasy, a self-sacrificing figure, prepared to die for a political ideal."[10] For many scholars equally concerned with how gender operates in the Lucrece story, however, such political interpretations raise uncomfortable questions about the extent to which the Lucrece narrative asks us to endorse its teleological end point—the republican overthrow of monarchical tyranny—if that outcome means exploiting Lucrece's rape and death as a *cause célèbre*. Is violence against Lucrece the necessary expense of ensuring Rome's future? This line of questioning leads to concerns about agency. To what extent does

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Vickers, "'The blazon of sweet beauty's best': Shakespeare's *Lucrece*," in *Shakespeare and the Question of Theory*, eds. Patricia Parker and Geoffrey Hartman (New York: Routledge, 1990), 95–115. The intellectual debt this essay owes to work by Catherine Belsey and Lynn Enterline in particular will no doubt become clear in what follows, but it is worth stating at the outset. Belsey's essay on Shakespeare's poem suggests my approach to Middleton's, and my thinking throughout this essay is deeply engaged with and informed by Enterline's *The Rhetoric of the Body*.

[9] Enterline, "'Poor Instruments'," 153.

[10] Andrew Hadfield, *Shakespeare and Republicanism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), suggests that "given its foundational narrative, republicanism rarely managed to escape from the discourses of misogyny that enveloped it, especially the forms that emerged in England in the 1590s" (152–153).

Lucrece orchestrate her unhappy end and therefore knowingly underwrite the political

use made of her death? Should we instead understand her story in terms of a homosocial

agenda authorized by her abused body, an agenda that requires her suffering and death?[11]

Feminist readings of Lucrece as a viable 'subject' or efficacious 'agent' tend to suggest

that the poem holds out at least the possibility of gendered resistance (e.g. an early

modern, emergent emphasis on "consent") to oppressive fantasies of male activity in

which women are mere instruments, silent, passive, and ultimately excluded. This is the

second model, one that focuses on Lucrece's resistance. A feminist analysis of another

stripe, what I am calling the complicity model, suggests that Lucrece is indeed

ineluctably instrumental to, victimized by, or even complicit in patriarchal linguistic and

cultural systems. Such a reading understands Lucrece less as a subject with volition than

as a constitutive absence against which male activity emerges, or as a cog in the wheels

of male political narratives that turn by virtue of her abused body.[12] The lines between

these three kinds of critical approaches are, of course, considerably less sharp than I can

represent them in a brief, schematic way; but the distinctions serve to point out the scope

of the criticism surrounding Lucrece's early modern reception.

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[11] Drawing on René Girard and Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, Nancy Vickers writes, "In *Lucrece*, occasion, rhetoric, and result are all informed by, and thus inscribe, a battle between men that is first figuratively and then literally fought on the fields of a woman's 'celebrated' body. Here, metaphors commonly read as signs of a battle between the sexes emerge rather from a homosocial struggle, in this case a male rivalry, which positions a third (female) term in a median space from which it is initially used and finally eliminated" ("'The blazon of sweet beauty's best'," 96). Stephanie H. Jed, *Chaste Thinking*: *The Rape of Lucretia and the Birth of Humanism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989), shows the "lexical chain" whereby the story of the rape of Lucrece, originating with a contest between men and culminating with Brutus "preserving chastity by castigating the Romans for their tears," begins and ends by repressing its referent, Lucrece's bodily presence, in favor of a chaste cultural ideal (11). See also Arthur L. Little Jr., *Shakespeare Jungle Fever*: *National-Imperial Re-Visions of Race*, *Rape, and Sacrifice* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), esp. 29–35; and Coppélia Kahn, "The Rape in Shakespeare's *Lucrece*."

[12] I draw, in part, on Belsey, "Tarquin Dispossessed," who delineates two kinds of feminist models reading against an older, Augustinian model (315–16). Belsey does not discuss the model of political allegory, but recent work by Hadfield, Norbrook, and others, along with a growing interest in early modern republicanism and a general tendency to read early modern texts for political valence or emergent "publics" makes it important to consider.

My purpose here is not to endorse or reject any of these models *qua* readings of Shakespeare's poem but to point out how Middleton's Lucrece contests, supports, or informs the cultural narratives they generate. What does Middleton gain by bringing Lucrece back from the dead? Given that readings of how Lucrece signifies in the era so often privilege Shakespeare's *The Rape of Lucrece*, I take it as salutary to our critical conversation to consider also *The Ghost of Lucrece*, a contemporaneous poem that both responds to Shakespeare's and offers a very different reading of the same story. For better or worse, Middleton depicts Lucrece as distinctly trapped in the third of the critical narratives I have delineated, the complicity model. She is, as I have pointed out, bound in an eternal embrace of sin with her rapist. Yet the poem is dedicated from beginning to end to Lucrece's mighty, if doomed, struggle to emerge as a subject with volition who can be read in light of the second, resistance model. The cross-couple paradoxes of the poem serve to bridge the gap, I will argue, between resistance and complicity. Lucrece's haunting, her ghostly keening, is a lament for—and as such a form of resistance to—the cruel and tireless machinery of early modern exemplary history that consigns her to death and damnation. Middleton's Lucrece decidedly rejects the first, allegorical model, however. If she cannot launch a successful campaign of resistance from her half-life as a figure determined and judged by history, her speaking specifically precludes an interpretation that takes her as a sign for progressive politics

Middleton's *Ghost of Lucrece* conjures Shakespeare's heroine from the underworld to retell the story of her rape and its aftermath. As a ghost, Lucrece has acquired a spectral point of view—one that allows her to comment not only on her actions in the past but also on how her story signifies for the moment in which she rises

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from the grave. The Lucrece of Shakespeare's poem commits suicide, in part, because she worries about the example she might set for future generations. Middleton's Lucrece, back from the dead, knows precisely how her reputation has been read. She knows the exemplary history that has been crafted using her rape and suicide. Her "shame," like a beacon in the heavens, has become a warning to all who would remain chaste.

> The candle of my shame burns in the sky,
> Set on the cross-poles of the firmament
> To fear away divine virginity,
> And light this world below, that being bent
> To follow me, they go not as I went. (66–70)

Lucrece's doubled perspective from both Roman past and Elizabethan present grants her a metahistorical consciousness.[13] From the perspective of the present, she can now consider Rome and Tarquin in lamenting retrospect.

> Tarquin the prince: had Rome no better heirs?
> Thou mistress of the world, no better men? (164–65)

Shakespeare's *Rape of Lucrece* narrates and laments the tyrannical act of sexual violence prompting the birth of republican Rome; Middleton's *Ghost of Lucrece* employs its heroine's ghostly perspective to draw out the moral, political, and religious implications of that lament for its present moment. In Middleton's poem, various challenges to differential categories—past and present, masculine and feminine voice, speaking subject and spoken-for object, and so on—escalate into an apocalyptic vision, the threat of a radical collapse of difference as all names, all systems of order and identity, turn into the names of rape with its threat of illegitimate birth. As we will see, the poem turns, at the last, not to political *revolution*—the overthrow of tyranny in favor of republicanism—but

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[13] I owe the phrase "metahistorical consciousness" to Dahlia Porter, who suggested it after reading a draft of this essay. The phrase nicely captures the metaleptic perspective of the ghost looking back upon her own history, relating her first-person experience in the past as well as commenting from the perspective of the present on how she has been encoded in previous texts.

to biblical *revelation*, a vision of the corrupt world's destruction. Such a turn, I argue, presents us with a much darker view of how the Lucrece story signifies in the 1590s.

The Name and the Pen

Middleton's *The Ghost of Lucrece* follows Shakespeare's *The Rape of Lucrece* in its preoccupation with names and naming. Middleton's ghost bemoans what has become of her chaste name, her reputation. As if trying to do her predecessor in Shakespeare's poem one better, however, Middleton's Lucrece lashes back from the ruins of her own name by obsessively naming and renaming her rapist in a bid to claim the power of naming itself. This struggle over the power to nominate expands, turning a contest for the voice into a contest over writing. Lucrece ultimately takes over not just the poet's voice, but his "pen" as well, expanding upon the authorship motif in Shakespeare's poem. At stake here, for Lucrece, is nothing less than imagined control of the Symbolic order— control over who gets to do the nominating, who gets to decide which bodies matter and in what way.

Lucrece's troubles in *The Rape of Lucrece* begin with an act of naming that is out of her control. In the first lines of Shakespeare's poem, we find that the "name of 'chaste'" (8) unwisely "published" by Collatine drives Tarquin "from the besiegèd Ardea all in post" (1).[14] This sets in motion a trajectory that leads ultimately to Brutus' decision, in the final stanza of the poem, to parade Lucrece's body through the streets in order to "publish Tarquin's foul offense" (1852). Even Tarquin knows what it is to be named and thus have one's destiny determined. In order to carry out his desire, Tarquin must

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[14] See Joel Fineman, "Shakespeare's *Will*," on the trajectory of naming in *The Rape of Lucrece* in terms of the itinerary of a letter (an argument inflected by Lacan and Derrida on Poe's "The Purloined Letter"). Fineman was the first to draw critical attention to the problem of the "name" in the Lucrece story.

overcome fears of being written. He anticipates "Some loathsome dash the herald will contrive / To cipher me…" (206–7), but desire wins out: "Who fears a sentence or an old man's saw / Shall by a painted cloth be kept in awe" (244–45). Middleton's specific echoes are unmistakable here. His Lucrece utters the "sentence" that Tarquin fears. Back from the dead, she says that which she could not say in the prior poem, exercising a power from which she was previously barred. Just before she kills herself, Shakespeare's Lucrece tries to tell her husband the name of the man who has raped her. "He, he, fair lord, 'tis he…," she says, but she cannot speak Tarquin's name.[15] Middleton's Lucrece, back from the dead and in full accusatory voice, cannot seem to speak the name often enough. She has named him twice by the ninth stanza, in which she begins to summon him from hell. By the twelfth stanza she makes explicit that which her counterpart in Shakespeare leaves unsaid: "Tarquin, thou art he" (136). She then begins the process of naming and renaming to which much of the poem is dedicated.

> Tarquin the ravisher: O, at that *name*
> See how mine eyes dissolveth into tears!
> Tarquin the Roman: I describe my shame.
> From Rome it came, a Roman *name* it bears.
> Tarquin my guest: lo, here began my fears.
>   Tarquin from Ardea posts. Hence sprang the fire,
>   For Ardea's *name* sounds ardent hot desire. (143–49; my emphasis)

Lucrece names Tarquin four times in this stanza, and the word "name" appears three times. Middleton is clearly addressing Shakespeare's preoccupation with "the name of chaste," turning the crime in the earlier poem into an accusation, in which "Tarquin" rather than "Lucrece" becomes the name to repeat. Middleton is taking up both the stutter in *The Rape of Lucrece*—"He, he,…'tis he…"—and Shakespeare's meta-rhetorical focus

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[15] The text is admittedly ambiguous here. The narrator tells us that Lucrece "throws forth Tarquin's name," then belies the statement in the very next line: "But more than 'he' her poor tongue could not speak" (1717–18).

on the power of a name. Middleton's ghost not only obsessively names the unspoken referent of "he" in Shakespeare's poem, she also aggressively asserts her right to the act of naming itself. She seeks control of words, the power to name. The "name" registers the interpellation of Tarquin and Lucrece, both in life and in the afterlife. Insofar as Lucrece was the object in Shakespeare's poem, the one who is named, Middleton works to make her the subject, the one who names. The power to name, for the ghost of Lucrece, means, at the limit, the power to resignify the past—to rewrite history.[16]

Middleton's concern with the "name" responds to both Shakespeare's "name of chaste," and the status of the "name" or reputation in spectal and eternizing poetry more generally. As Horace tells us in his influential "exegi monumentum" poem, *dicar*, "I shall be spoken of."[17] And, as I discuss below, Ovid's *Metamorphoses* ends with the claim that the author's name, his *nomen*, will live on. Following on such classical precedents, early modern writers imagine the name as an essence that exceeds the body in life and survives it in death.[18] An act of publication-as-naming in Shakespeare's *Lucrece*—that Collatine "published" Lucrece's chaste name—prompts Tarquin's desire. An act of textual transmission, a story told and 'read,' *about* Lucrece's body, fires an appropriative act

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[16] Writing of women's roles in Shakespeare's history plays, Phyllis Rackin, "Anti-Historians: Women's Roles in Shakespeare's Histories," *Theatre Journal* 37 (1985): 329-44, has most eloquently described the way in which women figure as "opponents and subverters of the [male] historical and historiographic enterprise." Women as "anti-historians" represent "a voice that challenges the logocentric, masculine historical record" (329).

[17] *Horace: Odes and Epodes*, trans. Niall Rudd (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), 3.30.

[18] My understanding of the work of the "name" in classical poetry as received by Shakespeare and Middleton is indebted to Lynn Enterline's discussion of epitaphic and eternizing gestures in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (*The Rhetoric of the Body*, 49–61). Enterline prompts us to detect in Ovid's claim to self-preservation by name and voice—his "epic battle against the mortal body and time"—an ironic undertone. "The self-conscious interlacing of conventional topoi, the citations of Ennius and of Horace, the graphic figure of an unerasable name, the (funerary) idea of a reader's speaking lips lending life to written letters, the allusion to Echo's iterations in the mouth of the reader as Other: all these poetic and rhetorical concerns mean that deeply Ovidian questions remain. Whose 'voice' are we supposed to be hearing? Whose conquering 'poetic word' is this?" Ovid's eternizing gestures prompt "skepticism about whether anyone really owns these words" (61).

upon that body. Those acts register as an assault on Lucrece's (and Collatine's) name.

Vows are made and governments toppled in the name of the victims of that assault. Even

as embodiment grounds the story's traumatic events, that story begins and ends in

disembodied moments—a name spoken in the absence of a body that prompts events of

social significance, then a body's post-mortem survival as a name. A name acquires its

significance by reference to a body and what has happened to that body or what that body

is imagined to have caused to happen, but a name charged with such significance

paradoxically increases its power by virtue of its separability from the body. A spectral

and essentializing thing, a name in this poetic tradition both prompts and encodes social

causes and effects. A name is a zero degree fantasy of how history operates—or, more

precisely, how people enter historical time. The name, like the promise of singular and

enduring consciousness attached to a body, promises to unite present, past, and future

under one sign.[19] The name spurs action in the world, becomes the sign by which others

read and understand that action, and justifies further action. In this sense (with which we

are still intimately familiar today) social action is very often justified *in the name of*

others. Much can be justified in this way, particularly when those whose names are

invoked are victims of an assault perceived as unjust.[20] The name pretends to presence

predicated upon absence. To call up a ghost—to resusciate or reencode a name—is then a

social and historical act as well as a poetic one.

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[19] See Shoshana Felman, *The Scandal of the Speaking Body* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), esp. 34–35, for a discussion of the way in which such promises are always in bad faith.
[20] As a case in point, think of the name of "Hamlet" that the son shares with the father. The son bears the burden of the name that demands action by virtue of the father's having been assaulted and usurped. In our own time, the political change made 'in the name of' victims of 9/11 provides an apt example. Other examples could be brought forth that do not have to do with righting percieved wrongs, but the revenge pattern brings out the honoring of the name in its most obvious and aggressive forms.

Even as Middleton's ghost represents the return of Shakespeare's Lucrece from the dead, the terms of that return owe as much to Ovid's epic as to Shakespeare's poem. In his invocation, Middleton summons Lucrece from the "virgin paradise of death" (64), commanding her to rise (*Surgito!*) and behold (*Noscito!*) Tarquin (23–24).

> *…Tu coeptis—nam te mutavit et illum—*
> *Adspirato meis! Postremo tempore mundi,*
> *Ad sua perpetuum deducito crimina carmen.* (24–26)
> Favour these my beginnings (which have transformed both you and him)!
> In this the world's worst age, launch my tireless poetry against his crime.

Here Middleton explicitly echoes Ovid's invocation in the *Metamorphoses*. Ovid has it this way:

> *di, coeptis (nam vos mutastis et illas)*
> *adspirate meis primaque ab origine mundi*
> *ad mea perpetuum deducite tempora carmen!*
> Ye gods, for you yourselves have wrought the changes, breathe on these
> my undertakings, and bring down my song in unbroken strains from the
> world's very beginning even unto the present time.[21]

Middleton's version of Ovid's invocation puts Lucrece and the poet himself in place of the gods. He asks Lucrece (*Tu*) instead of the gods (*di*) to breathe on his undertakings (*coeptis…adspirato meis*), and he suggests that his own poetic labor, not the actions of the gods, has transformed Lucrece and Tarquin (*nam te mutauit & illum*). Ovid asks the gods to draw out his *perpetuum carmen* from the first age to his own. Middleton's poet asks Lucrece to bring "eternal verse" to bear against Tarquin's crime. Middleton's revision, then, makes poetic agency ambiguous: it divides the act of singing (to "bring down" [*deducito*] the song) between the poet and the one who "breathes" on his "beginnings" and "inspires" him. As a ghost story rather than one authorized by the gods or a muse, Middleton's scene adds to this traditional dynamic a sense of possession. The

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[21] As far as I can discover, I am the first to mark Middleton's quotation of Ovid's induction. Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 1.1–4.

poet is, at least in part, the medium for a ghost instead of the gods; and the poem refigures temporal coordinates with the implication that the spectral Lucrece will bring the "eternal" song from the past into "the world's worst age." This last revision of Ovid demands careful attention for its reworking of historical frames.

The narrative direction of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* as a whole takes us from the beginning of time to the moment of writing. Ovid begins by describing the creation of the world, and ends with his arrival at "the span of [his] uncertain years" (15.874). Then he famously recalls the *perpetuum carmen* of his invocation by suggesting that he has written a poem that will make his name henceforth indestructible: *nomenque erit indelebile nostrum* (876). Through "all ages" he will "have mention on men's lips"; he will "live in fame" (878–79). The fantasy of presence in Ovid—the basis of the eternizing claim—resides, in the last instance, not in the gods, but in the author's voice. The moment of speech draws the past into the present and guarantees the poet's future in an echo effect. While his body dies, his *nomen* will be imperishable. Middleton's reworking of this temporality, however, emphasizes Lucrece as the singer. The poet's metamorphic "labor" consists in providing a vehicle for her song. Middleton closes his invocation with the phrase "*Castissimo Spiritui tuo addictissimus*" ("Totally devoted to your most chaste ghost"). The poet devotes himself "totally" to Lucrece in an incantatory address. He is asking her singing spirit, in short, to "arise" and possess him. The fantasy of presence— the originary secured through writing—is still a voice, but it is not imagined to be solely the poet's.[22] The poem's voice is summoned from the past, from the long ago Rome of

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[22] See Derrida's well-known theory of the "supplement" in *Of Grammatology*, trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976). Derrida describes "writing as a dangerous means, a menacing aid, the critical response to a situation of distress. When Nature, as self-proximity, comes to be forbidden or interrupted, when speech fails to protect presence, writing becomes necessary. It

Ovid. In fact, we might hear this invocation as choral as well as antiphonal, an echo of

Ovid's voice in the poet's even as he calls for Lucrece's. In contrast to *Metamorphoses*,

the temporality of Middleton's revision lays emphasis on Lucrece as the spectral return of

an originary voice for which the poet will be a vessel.[23]

The Ghost of Lucrece, then, presents us with a spectrum of concerns arising not

only from the political uses of historical exemplarity but also from *historicity* itself. That

is, the poem is not only interested in how the Lucrece story provides historical

examples—a personal model for chaste behavior, for instance, or a public one for

progressive politics—but also the means by which the story comes to signify as history at

all. The concerns with poetic breath and naming that Middleton takes from Ovid and

Shakespeare register the deployment of voice in poetry (Orphic breath) in conversation

with the reifications and determinations (the "name of chaste" or the "Roman name") of

revealed history. In coupling past and present through the ventriloquized figure of a ghost

who occupies both, Middleton's poem also collapses the distance between present subject

and past object, the differential space required, in principle, for historiography's

'objective' judgment.[24] In order to make meaning from past events, that is, history is

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must be added to the word urgently" (144). Writing supplements speech in order to guarantee self-presence. But what happens, this poem asks us to consider, when the speech that one's writing is meant to guarantee is imagined not to be one's own?

[23] For further comparison and contrast, see Shakespeare's Lucrece, who imagines herself lending her "lamenting tongue" to Hecuba (1465) or singing in concert with the legendary Philomel, "that sing'st of ravishment" (1128).

[24] I draw here on Michel de Certeau's descriptions of the differential break with the past upon which historiography relies. See de Certeau, *The Writing of History*, trans. Tom Conley (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), esp 2–6; and *Heterologies: Discourse on the Other*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), esp. 3–16. In *The Writing of History*, Certeau describes historiography as a "discourse of separation," built upon a foundation of "differentiation between the *present* and the *past*" (2); and in *Heterologies*, Certeau suggests that the voices entombed in the past—the objects of historiography's differentiation—bite back (*re-mordent*) from the "text/tomb" (8). See also Carla Freccero, *Queer / Early / Modern* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), who brings together Derrida's hauntology and Certeau's historiography to develop "Queer Historiography," in which "the past is in the present in the form of a haunting" (80).

obliged to create a diffferential break between past and present, the subject of knowledge in the present (the historian) and that subject's object (a past event or agents of that event). Cross-coupling present subject and past object threatens history's mode of operation, necessarily questioning its interpretive result. The cross-couple, as Catherine Belsey notes, is "the trope of deconstruction and thus of the instability of meaning" (335). Applied to Middleton's haunting, this suggests that the figure of the ghost, through her very presence, joins past and present in a paradoxical incorporation that carries the potential to deconstruct her own history.

Lucrece begins her complaint by speaking and ends by writing. In her rage against Tarquin and her vociferous suffering in the afterlife, Lucrece possesses the poet, takes over a large part of the poem, and ultimately wrests a pen from the poet's grasp. This invasion of the moment of writing threatens the conventional difference between the masculine authorial subject (writer) and feminine object (text). But this long-standing convention proves resilient and difficult to breach. Lucrece struggles fiercely before she gains ground as author. The angel-feather pen, milky-way paper, and "poetizing breath" are still the poet's when Lucrece first rises from the underworld, but by the middle of the poem she competes with his voice and by the end of her final speech she replaces his writing implements.

> This knife, my pen,
> This blood, my ink, hath writ enough to lust.
> Tarquin, to thee, thou very devil of men,
> I send these lines. Thou art my fiend of trust.
> To thee I dedicate my tomb of dust.
>   To thee I consecrate this little-most
>   Writ by the bloody fingers of my ghost. (563–69)

This late in the poem, she fulfills the terms of the invocation, bringing eternal verse against Tarquin's crime. Lucrece, moreover, gives a title—"Intitulèd, *The Lines of Blood and Flame*"—to the letter she imagines writing, a title that threatens give the poem itself an entirely new name (574). Then, in a final gesture before she plunges back into hell, she imagines sending her letter. "And from poor Lucrece' mouth tell Tarquin thus, / That Philomel hath writ to Tereus" (589–90).

About half way through Lucrece's speaking she becomes dissatisfied with speech itself and tries her hand at writing.

> Lo, under that base type of Tarquin's name
> I cipher figures of iniquity. (395–96)

In the multivalency of "cipher" we can read the issues at stake for Lucrece in this poem. Lucrece ciphers figures, by which we might understand that she 'depicts' or 'expresses' such figures.[25] In other words, she turns iniquity into characters on a page. But in moving from speech to writing, Lucrece is once again threatened with absence, with losing power over her words. The use of "cipher" also hints at the noun form of the word, which, applied to Lucrece, renders her as nothing, a non-entity, or at best, a code.[26] Lucrece, as a ghost, is quite literally a cipher in the sense of "non-entity." She is a personified absence. We may also read the word in the sense of "decipher" or decode. Such a reading would suggest that Lucrece is deciphering her story of "iniquity."[27] In decoding her story, she is attempting to make herself present to understanding. In the least hopeful reading, Lucrece suggests that her fate, as in Shakespeare's poem, is to be spoken by Collatine, written by

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[25] The Adams edition glosses "cipher" as "express" and calls on Tarquin's fear of being ciphered in *The Rape of Lucrece* as an example: "Yea, though I die, the scandal will survive / And be an eyesore in my golden coat; / Some loathsome dash the herald will contrive / To cipher me how fondly I did dote" (204–7).
[26] OED, 2nd ed., s.vv. "cipher" (v), "cipher" (n), "cypher" (n).
[27] For this sense of "cypher" we can turn to *The Rape of Lucrece* once again, this time to Lucrece's words: "Yea, the illiterate, that know not how / To cipher what is writ in learnèd books, / Will quote my loathsome trespass in my looks" (810–12).

Tarquin's "pen," and published as a Roman revenge tract by Brutus.[28] Each act depends upon her silence, her absence. Yet to "cipher" also means to write. For Lucrece to write "figures of iniquity" under Tarquin's name would make that iniquity Tarquin's rather than hers. If she can become the writer rather than the written, her accusation of Tarquin will take on force and guilt will be placed where it belongs. If not, she will continue to embody the text created by Tarquin's pen (not to mention Ovid's, Livy's, Shakespeare's and Middleton's).

Lucrece needs to become a writer; she needs her own pen. Before she gets it, however, the passage continues along predictable gender lines:

> He writes himself the shamer, I the shame,
> The actor he, and I the tragedy.
> The stage am I, and he the history (397–99)

Here Lucrece gives us Tarquin as writer, actor, and history. In terms of these, Lucrece is either subject matter (that which is written or acted), or field (the stage upon which history is played). This threatens to reinstall the distinction between masculine activity and feminine passivity, consigning Lucrece, once again, to textual object. Lucrece attempts to counter this threatening vision by conjuring a pen, but the implement is inadequate.

> O lust, this pen of mine that writes thee 'lust'
> Lies blasted at the sulphur of thy fire.
> The quill and feathers, burnt to ashy dust. (402–4)

She needs a better pen—one that will stand up to the task at hand.

> Send me Prometheus' heart t'endite withal,
> And from his vulture's wings a pen of blood,

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[28] The multiple significations of "pen" are relevant in this context, which clearly range from "penis" to writing implement to author-ity. Lacan's well-known concept of the "phallus" seems both obvious and appropriate here. I return to the way in which Brutus uses Lucrece's dead body to publish his revolution below.

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<p style="text-align:center">Thrice steeped and dipped in Phelgethontic flood. (413–15)</p>

The vulture (or eagle) famously eats Prometheus' liver every morning while the god is chained to a rock. A feather-pen from such a vulture's wing would seem an appropriate tool for Lucrece to use in writing her own story of eternal suffering. With a pen thus drawn from the literary history of torment and tempered in hellfire, Lucrece writes her letter. By the time she is finished, the implements have changed once again: "This knife, my pen, / This blood, my ink…." Whatever the writing tools, however, Lucrece couples speaking and writing when she imagines sending this letter:

> And from poor Lucrece' *mouth* tell Tarquin thus,
> That Philomel hath *writ* to Tereus. (589–90; my emphasis)

We can read in these lines the fantasy of Lucrece's entry into the supplemental agon of speaking and writing. Lucrece sends the words from her mouth ahead of the letter, but the letter, which should guarantee speech, has apparently been written and posted. If Lucrece must relay by "mouth" what she has "writ," it is because her project in this poem is to enter language, to enter the symbolic economy from which she was previously barred.

<p style="text-align:center">Haunted History</p>

The Ghost of Lucrece deals explicitly with questions of gender, tyranny, and agency not only as those concerns emerge from Lucrece's Roman context, but also as they inform the poem's moment of writing. What if, Middleton's poem asks, Lucrece came back from the dead and spoke in the present? Middleton gives his Lucrece a metahistorical consciousness through a metaleptic perspective.[29] That is, Middleton

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[29] I use "metaleptic" here in the sense developed by Gérard Genette. In *Narrative Discourse*: *An Essay in Method*, trans. Jane E. Lewin (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980), Genette characterizes the figure as

<p style="text-align:center">154</p>

constructs such a consciousness through temporal and ontological confusions—the paradoxical cross-couples of presence and absence, past and present, masculine and feminine, author and text—with devastating consequences for the historiography surrounding the Lucrece story. Critics have read Shakespeare's poem as an endorsement, however qualified or implicit, of emergent republican thought or the importance of "consent" in sexual relations and political theory.[30] Middleton, however, refuses to read the Lucrece story either in terms of consent or as a sacrifice that enables greater political freedom and thus authorizes a progressive version of history. "And in an iron throne of death and dearth / Rules this young age" (336–37). The poem's "iron age," as Shand notes, is "the last and worst age of the world, a period of wickedness, debasement" (335n.). No progressive political model attends Middleton's poem.

Neither living nor dead, both present and past, ghosts such as Lucrece carry the potential to disturb, among other things, the differences upon which history relies.[31] Middleton's Lucrece revenant troubles history in several ways. In the invocation, the poet conjures Lucrece's ghost from the timeless underworld into the present, the "world's

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"any intrusion by the extradiegetic narrator into a metadiegetic universe (or by the diegetic characters into a metadiegetic universe, etc.)" (234–35).

[30] See Colin Burrow, "Rape and Consent" in *The Oxford Shakespeare: The Complete Sonnets and Poems* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002), 66–73, for an excellent overview of the issues surrounding consent as *The Rape of Lucrece* engages them. Belsey, "Tarquin Dispossessed," as I have noted, suggests that Shakespeare's Lucrece does the best she can within a system that militates against it to secure a measure of "self-determination," and that therefore "The installation of the Republic which is the consequence of her act affirms a model of state politics based on consent" (335). To be clear, I am in complete agreement with Belsey's analysis of Shakespeare's poem. Of interest to me here is that Middleton's version of the story does not seem to allow a similar conclusion.

[31] The poem represents what Jacques Derrida calls "hauntology," a haunting that calls ontology into question by virtue of its participation in both presence and absence. Speaking of the ontological status of the ghost in *Hamlet*, Jacques Derrida suggests in *Specters of Marx*, that one does not know if it belongs to the past or the present—"one does not know: not out of ignorance, but because this non-object, this non-present present, this being-there of an absent or departed one no longer belongs to knowledge" (5).

worst age."[32] Lucrece rises to bemoan at length her place in the pious, disciplinary

tradition of the sixteenth century in which loss of chastity becomes irrevocable

damnation. She appears to experience at one and the same time a past of rape and suicide,

a present of purgatorial suffering, and a future of apocalypse. She is thus caught between

the pagan past in which she lived and the Christian present in which her ghost speaks.

Though she desires Christian redemption, her pagan life condemns her to eternal torment.

As G. B. Shand notes, Lucrece "has descended into an underworld which is the inevitable

destination of her pagan spirit, but which is imaged as a fiery hell of eternal torment,

rendered unbearably tragic by her 'Christian' longing for redemption."[33] She pleads

mightily with Chastity, the principle that would provide her, in Augustinian terms, with

redemption, "Sanctity's saint, divinity's divine": "O touch my veins again," "all chaste

functions with my soul combine" (541–51).[34] Yet the plea is usesless. Her chastity taken,

she is condemned: "The want of thee," she says in her apostrophe to Chastity, "made my

ghost reel to hell" (508). Caught in an inescapable embrace of shame with her rapist, her

soul burns eternally in the fire of Tarquin's lust. This eternal and perverse coupling of

chastity and the lust it inspires threatens to infect not only the chaste name that Lucrece

meant to guarantee with her suicide, but also the political project that was authorized in

the name of revenging her rape. Her diatribe calls into question the triumphant,

progressive history—Rome's transition from tyranny to republic—that was supposed to

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[32] Line 25 reads *postremo tempore mundi*. Shand translates this as "the world's worst age." The word *postremo* could be "worst" or "latest." Adams translates the phrase as "the latest age of the world." "Latest" is perhaps the more common translation of *postremo*, but I agree with Shand's rendering: the context of the poem makes "worst" appropriate.
[33] Quoted from Shand's introduction to the poem in *Thomas Middleton: The Collected Works*, p. 1985.
[34] The problem of chastity in the context of rape and suicide was influentially articulated in Christian terms by Augustine in *City of God*. See Sasha Roberts, *Reading Shakespeare's Poems in Early Modern England* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), esp. 105–113, for an analysis of the Augustinian context of Lucrece's early modern reception. See also Ian Donaldson, *The Rapes of Lucretia: A Myth and Its Transformations* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), esp. 21–39.

have resulted from her death. As she warns while addressing Rome and Tarquin together, "I'll shame you both before my shame be done" (182).

I read Lucrece's concerns with fame, name, and genealogy as an engagement with political history. As Catherine Belsey notes, "the story of Lucretia was widely read as a myth of the founding of the [Roman] Republic."[35] In this myth, drawn from the account in Livy's *Early History of Rome*, Sextus Tarquinius (Tarquin) is the son of the Roman King, Tarquin the Proud. The Tarquins rule Rome with an iron fist, mercilessly killing political opponents and taking over their possessions. Legally speaking, Lucrece's chastity is the property of her husband, Collatine; so when Prince Tarquin rapes her, the act represents one more abuse of private property by an already tyrannical regime. In other words, Tarquin's appropriation of Lucrece's body stands in for a political appropriation, for his family's having usurped property that should belong to free male citizens. After the rape, Lucrece stabs herself in order to preserve the now stained honor of the family and in order to avoid the corruption of Collatine's lineage that a child born of the rape would represent. In the aftermath of her suicide, Lucius Junius Brutus (the nephew of the King) takes the knife from Lucrece's breast and swears to drive the tyrannical Tarquins from Rome. Avenging the rape of Lucrece becomes a revolutionary project. In place of tyrannical rule, Brutus brings a republicanism that restores the rights of the Roman people. The literary history of the rape of Lucrece, drawn primarily from accounts in Livy's history and Ovid's *Fasti*, thus links personal trauma with political change. This is the literary and historical afterlife Lucrece faces when she rises from the grave. Middleton's Lucrece acknowledges the way in which her suffering promises to turn "private means" (i.e. laments) into "public moans" (279). She does not, however,

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[35] Belsey, "Tarquin Dispossessed," 327.

write the story of the triumphant birth of republican Rome that we might expect. Instead of a story in which the ideal of chastity is preserved through sacrifice, guaranteeing the purity of patriarchal futurity, *The Ghost of Lucrece* gives us a story in which rape and suicide generate only perversion and corruption.[36]

Middleton's Lucrece, in a *tour de force* of lamenting negativity, tears apart the progressive, teleological fabric of what scholars have understood in broad terms as the *translatio imperii*, the translation of empire from Rome to England. Middleton's poem forecloses a reading of the Lucrece story as a narrative of the triumphant emergence of republican Rome and therefore as precedent for English republicanism. Insofar as English national narratives relied on a kinship with Rome that imagined a continuity with and rebirth of classical civilization, Rome could be understood in genealogical relation to England. As Coppélia Kahn notes, "for the English Renaissance, 'the Roman past was…not simply *a* past, but *the* past,' legendarily linked to the moment in which Britain itself emerged into history."[37] In historical terms, Rome was England's fatherland. Humanist education, for which Roman Latin was the father tongue and training in classical rhetoric was the goal, reinforced and institutionalized that paternal relation.

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[36] Laura G. Bromley, "The Lost Lucrece: Middleton's *The Ghost of Lucrece*," *Papers on Language and Literature* 21 (1985): 258–74, suggests that Middleton's poem satirizes a decadent society, a "fallen world" where "corruption is the status quo" (271) and Anna Swärdh, *Rape and Religion in English Renaissance Literature* (Upsala: Upsala University Press, 2003), offers religion as the target of its "satire," specifically the "baroque style" of counter-reformation religious poetry (206–19).

[37] Coppélia Kahn, *Roman Shakespeare*, cites George K. Hunter to reminds us that "in English chronicle histories, the founding of Britain was connected to the founding of Rome through Brutus, the grandson of Aeneas, founder of Rome" (3). See Hunter, "A Roman Thought: Renaissance Attitudes to History Exemplified in Shakespeare and Johnson" in *An English Miscellany Presented to W. S. Machie* (Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1977), 93–118. In the context of this essay, Hunter may be worth quoting at greater length. "The Roman past was to [Tudor and Stuart writers] not simply *a* past but *the* past, and therefore, a subject necessarily evaluative, since it led to the present. Roman culture was not simply one competitor for attention among several, but supplied, in fact, the only possible range of meanings that would have attached to the word *culture*, if it had existed. The adequacy of national or modern culture seemed to be measurable, then, only to the extent that it could reproduce or rival the qualities of Roman culture" (95–96). See also Heather James, *Shakespeare's Troy: Drama, Politics, and the Translation of Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

Middleton's *Lucrece* asks a devastating question of this cultural formation: if Romans are

fathers, who are the mothers? The answer reveals the gendered violence inherent in a

national narrative that relies on classical precedents. As Margaret Ferguson points out,

"many Renaissance educators saw themselves as the heirs of Rome, and as the revivers

and rescuers of its Latin language…":

> As soon as we think about Latin as a critical instrument for cultural
> transmission broadly understood—a political, economic, and linguistic
> phenomenon that medieval and Renaissance scholars called the *translatio*
> *studii et imperii*—we are invited…to think about asymmetries of
> gender…[38]

Middleton's poem forcibly reminds us that the women whose bodies enable the *translatio*

imperii—figures such as Helen, Dido, and Lucrece—are left behind, exchanged, or

abused. Tarquin and Rome are, according to Lucrece's ghost, "Nursed with my blood,

weaned with my tragedy" (96).

Recent scholarship on Shakespeare's *The Rape of Lucrece* has examined the place

of republican Rome as an exemplar for Elizabethan England.[39] Since the story of

Lucrece's personal suffering is also the story of Rome's political transition from

monarchy to republic, Shakespeare's *Lucrece* is a key text for critics involved in "a series

of ongoing debates about the place of classical republicanism within the political

mentality of late Elizabethan England."[40] There is no doubt that republican thought was

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[38] Margaret W. Ferguson, *Dido's Daughters*: *Literacy, Gender, and Empire in Early Modern England and France* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 15–16.

[39] See, for instance, Andrew Hadfield, *Shakespeare and Republicanism*, esp. 130–53. Barbara L. Parker, *Plato's Republic and Shakespeare's Rome*: *A Political Study of the Roman Works* (Newark: University of Delaward Press, 2004), esp. 31–53, also focuses on the poem's allegory to show a "correspondence between the poem's milieu and England's" (33). Belsey, "Tarquin Dispossessed," suggests that insofar as we read the poem as a critique, "what [the poem] criticizes is a model of both marriage and government that works to no one's advantage, not the husband's and not, in the end, the tyrant's" (327). Belsey outlines several concurrences between the uses of the Lucrece story for Livy, Ovid, and Augustine, and concerns of the early modern era such as slavery, consent, and tyranny.

[40] Curtis Perry, "The Uneasy Republicanism of *Cornelia*," *Criticism* 48 (2006): 535–55, 535.

emergent in a late sixteenth-century Elizabethan "monarchical republic" deeply

concerned with the power of the sovereign and how that power ought to be

circumscribed.[41] Following scholars such as David Norbrook and Andrew Hadfield,

Curtis Perry aptly summarizes:

> It is clearly true that late Elizabethan writers and readers were avidly
> interested in a number of questions that can at least loosely be described as
> republican, questions about the limits of monarchy and the liberties of
> subjects, the problem of tyranny and resistance, and the role of counsel in
> government. And it is clear, likewise, that writers in this period often
> turned to Roman writers and to stories about the rise and fall of the Roman
> republic as a kind of political science laboratory for thinking through
> problematic questions about liberty and governance, republic and
> empire.[42]

Lucrece's was one of the stories that Elizabethan writers turned to for this kind of

"laboratory." Hadfield, for instance, relies on this context to claim that Lucrece's body

represents the Elizabethan "body politic" in protest against the abuses of absolutist

monarchy (152). Hadfield invests in the genealogical fantasy of the 'birth' of republican

Rome out of tryannical monarchy and its generational relation to England by claiming

that in *The Rape of Lucrece*, "the republic, the child of rape, is born—paradoxically, a

welcome development resulting from a heinous act" (147). Middleton's Lucrece tells us a

starkly different story.

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[41] Patrick Collinson, "The Monarchical Republic of Queen Elizabeth I" in *Elizabethan Essays* (London: Hambledon Press, 1994), 31–57 (first printed in *BJRLM* 69 [1986–87]: 394–424). Also cited in Hadfield, 17. Collinson's influential essay puts forward the claim that "Elizabethan England was a republic which happened also to be a monarchy: or vice-versa" (43). Such a claim, however, continues to be controversial among historians. John F. McDiarmid has recently edited a collection of essays, *The Monarchical Republic of Early Modern England: Essays in Response to Patrick Collinson* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), which investigates Collinson's claim further. See McDiarmid's introduction for a summary of the controversy. See Peter Lake's contribution to the volume, "'The Monarchical Republic of Queen Elizabeth I' (and the Fall of Archbishop Grindal) Revisited," 129–147, for a usefully corrective warning that, in some respects, the case for Elizabethan republicanism has been "over-stated" (135).

[42] Perry, "The Uneasy Republicanism," 539. See also David Norbrook, *Poetry and Politics in the English Renaissance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), and *Writing the English Republic*: *Poetry, Rhetoric, and Politics, 1627–1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

Corrupt Generation

If Lucrece returns from the dead to become an author, we might fairly ask what kind of rewriting she gives us. What work is performed by her imagined authorship? Does Lucrece change anything by returning to speak and write? At the end of the poem, she plunges back into hell for the "sins" forced on her by the rape, no better off than she was at the beginning. And if revenge is at issue, we have no sense that Tarquin even hears her invective. But even if Lucrece cannot alter the fate of her soul in the afterlife, she does, in fact, change literary history. In exposing and critiquing the bloody logic of castigation that informs her story, she changes our understanding of the way in which her death signifies.

Early in her speech, Lucrece examines the terms upon which she has become a literary and historical subject. She compares her union with Tarquin to a candle, and then a lamp. The fuel (wax or oil) is her blood, and the fire is Tarquin's lust: "For lust and blood are mingled in one lamp / To seal my soul with rape and murder's stamp" (85–86). Here Lucrece extends the lamp / candle metaphor.

> Before my shame, yon candle had no fire,
> Vestals nil feared me, the world saw me not.
> Shame was the tinder, and the flint desire
> That struck in Tarquin's bosom and begot
> A child of fire, a firebrand, and so hot
>   That it consumed my chastity to dust (87–92)

Lucrece is unseen, securely outside of literary history, before her interpellation by rape. Her very absence, signified by chaste shame, fuels Tarquin's desire. But with the phrase "child of fire," Lucrece hints at a more radical critique to come. The poem begins to construct a genealogical fantasy. The next stanza relocates the "firebrand" of lust, the child imagined to be inside Tarquin's "bosom."

> Was I the cradle, O my chastity,
> To rock and lull this bastard firebrand,
> Nursed with my blood, weaned with my tragedy… (94–96)

At the end of this stanza the answer to this rhetorical question is yes: "I was the cradle"

(99). Lucrece becomes the nurse to Tarquin's lust-child. Still, this is only the first

movement in Lucrece's story of perverse generation: she soon transforms the metaphor.

> Thou art my nurse-child, Tarquin, thou art he.
> Instead of milk, suck blood and tears and all.
> In lieu of teats, Lucrece thy nurse, even she,
> By tragic art seen through a crystal wall,
> Hath carvèd with her knife thy festival.
>   Here's blood for milk; suck till thy veins run over,
>   And such a teat which scarce thy mouth can cover. (136–42)

Here Tarquin becomes not just the bearer of the lust-child, but the lust-child itself. In the

act of rape, he perverts himself and Lucrece in such a way that generation itself is

perverted. One more stanza gives us the political, temporal, and gendered scope of this

lineage fantasy.

> Tarquin the prince: sham'st thou to hear thy name?
> Rome, 'tis thy heir. Sham'st thou to call him son?
> Tarquin the prince: lo, I'll repeat thy shame.
> A Roman heir, from him to thee I run.
> I'll shame you both before my shame be done.
>   Tarquin the prince, Tarquin the Roman heir,
>   Thus will I haunt and hunt you to despair. (178–84)

Having made Tarquin her nurse-child, Lucrece now puts him in the position of both

father and child. He becomes both lust's principle of origin and its embodiment, its

procreative result. In this stanza she extends this characterization of Tarquin to include

Rome and expands her goal to haunting and shaming both. Using the same confusion

between father and child, Lucrece blurs the boundaries between Rome as Tarquin's father

and Rome as his child. "Rome, 'tis thy heir" can be read both ways. Either Lucrece

addresses Rome with "thy," in which case Tarquin is the heir of Rome, or she addresses

Tarquin, which makes Rome the heir of Tarquin. But her task here is to "run" at both

Tarquin and Rome, to shame them both. In the allegorical narrative, the rape, death, and

chastisement of Lucrece results in the birth of the republic—"the republic, the child of

rape, is born—paradoxically, a welcome development resulting from a heinous act."

Middleton's Lucrece offers us a spectral possibility, the dark side of that birth. Reading

Rome as Tarquin's "heir"—in the context of the story of perverse generation Lucrece is

telling with its goal of shaming—allows us to think of the Rome Brutus will found as the

bastard child of Tarquin, gotten on Lucrece's body, nursed with her blood, tears, and

milk. She allows us to think of the triumphant cultural narrative authorized by her rape

and suicide as essentially perverse, shockingly and thoroughly infected by the moment of

its rapacious inauguration.

Middleton's Lucrece characterizes the effect of Tarquin's crimes in terms of

corrupt generation. The names with which she accuses Tarquin also signify the

degradation of the conventionally protective forces of custom and law. Lucrece names

"Tarquin the Roman," Tarquin my guest," "Tarquin my kinsman," and "Tarquin the

prince" (145–64). These names should signify protective, ordered social relations, yet

here they are the names of a rapist. For Lucrece, the act of rape becomes an assault on all

systems of meaning and order—from chastity to national stability. Tarquin's sexual

crimes take the supports of her world apart, and Lucrece draws on imagery from

Revelations about the apocalypse to signify the extent of this collapse:

> Now is my tide of blood. Come, quench thy soul.
> The sluices of my spirit now runs again.
> Come, I have made my breast an ivory bowl
> To hold the blood that streameth from my vein. (122–25)

This passage bears comparison to Revelations 16, which has much to do with blood and bowls. Verse 3, for example, reads: "The second angel emptied his bowl over the sea, and it turned to blood, like the blood of a corpse, and every living creature in the sea died."[43] Revelations 13 also appears, coupled with Roman geographical references.

> […] seven hills that should o'erlook thy evils
> Like seven hells to nurse up Roman devils?
> To thee, that mak'st the moon thy looking-glass
> To view thy triple crown and seven-fold head… (169–72)

In Revelations, Chapter 13, a seven-headed beast rises from the sea and is "allowed to mouth its boasts and blasphemies" (13.5). It is "allowed to make war against the saints and conquer them, and given power over every race, people, language and nation" (13.7).[44] This beast, according to George Gifford's popular volume of sermons on Revelations (1596, 1599), is the Roman Empire.[45] "O it is the lot of the Saints," cries Gifford, "to be cruelly murdered by the beast, that is, by the Romane tyrānie" (252). As Gifford makes clear, this tyranny not only refers to ancient Rome and its rulers, but also to present day Rome and its Pope. Lucrece's repeated offering of her blood for Tarquin to drink echoes Revelations as well. Gifford explains that Romans (then and now) kill martyrs (329); the angel pouring out vials of blood suggests that Romans "shed the blood of the Saints and Prophets, and therefore [God] hast giuen them blood to drinke" (311). Lucrece's references to the seven hills of Rome, the seven-headed beast, blood, and the "triple crown" follow Gifford and other apocalyptic writers in conflating ancient and

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[43] Cited by chapter and verse from *The New Jerusalem Bible* (New York: Doubleday, 1990).
[44] See Spenser's use of the same set of images—the triple crown and seven-fold head—in conjunction with references to Rome, which famously occupies seven hills. Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, I.vii.16–18.
[45] According to George Gifford, *Sermons vpon the whole booke of the Reuelation* (1596), "the Roman Empire (which is figured by this monstrous beast) did spring and grow vp from the contentions and discords, and diuisions among the kingdoms, which are as a raging sea. […] Thus the beast ariseth out of the sea: this yee see is verie plaine" (fol. 246).

early modern Roman power.[46] A triple crown in this context—loaded as this moment in the poem is with eschatological and anti-papist symbology—refers not only to the historical domination of three continents by the Roman Empire, but also to the tiara, or papal crown.[47]

The references to Revelations cast an apocalyptic light on the poem, providing, once again, a vision of history in stark contrast to the triumphant narrative of the birth of republican Rome. Lucrece gives us an alternate history. Instead of a narrative in which her suicide ensures that tyranny is overturned, she suggests one in which rape and its perverse progeny utterly and irrecoverably infect the world with a "tide of blood." This view of how Lucrece's story signifies is made possible by what I have called her metaleptic perspective—a perspective that has the effect of collapsing the differences upon which gendered identification (and disidentification), authorship, and historiography precariously rely. The following lines near the end of the poem aptly encapsulate this challenge to difference:

> Lucrece, I say, how canst thou Lucrece be,
> Wanting a God to give a life to thee? (561–62)

The poem leaves unclear who asks this devastating question. At this point in the poem, the difference between the voice of the narrating poetic persona and that of the ghost of Lucrece is precarious at best. The effect of this uncertainty can be understood as a ghostly unison of living and dead voices. But from wherever we imagine this utterance to emerge, the question threatens the identity of the Lucrece revenant. How can Lucrece

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[46] Maurice Hunt, "'Forward Backward' Time and the Apocalypse in *Hamlet*," *Comparative Drama* 38 (2004): 379–99, reminds us of a common belief "that Doomsday would occur at some time just after the centennial year 1600" (386). The 1590s, Hunt writes, saw "a spate of books on the Apocalypse."
[47] See G. B. Shand's note to line 172. Shand only grudgingly admits ("perhaps") to a "glancing" allusion to the "papal crown." I suggest that the context makes such an allusion inescapable.

"be," however uncertain and ephemeral that ghostly being? How can she exist in the collapsed temporal realm that the poem offers—that is, an eschatological time that comprises the Rome of both the pagan and the Christian eras? The collapse of historiographic differences leaves no room for Rome to emerge as a narrative of identity, national or personal.

When Lucrece plunges into hell at the end of her revenge song, she joins Tarquin there in an eternal embrace of sin. She points out her connection with Tarquin: "Philomela's choir / Is hushed from pricksong" (593–94). The cruelty of "pricksong," recalling her rape as it does, links her tragic, Philomela-like song inextricably with its cause.[48]

> Acheron's bells begin
> To call our ghosts, clad in the spirits of sin.
> Now Tereus meets with ravished Philomel,
> Lucrece with Tarquin in the hall of hell. (594–97)

With Lucrece and her story of perverse generation and apocalypse back in hell, the poet resumes control of the poem in an epilogue. He takes great pains to assure us that Lucrece is back in the grave, repeatedly describing her as silent and dead. Her voice is no longer a threat. The "tongue, which Orpheus tuned before he died" is gone: "Now she of it, and it of her bereaven" (627–33). Her beauty is no longer a lure: "That hair which danced in beams before her breath / Serves now to stuff the gaping ribs of death" (618–19). Attesting to the growing sense that the poet has been possessed, the Epilogue locates Lucrece in the grave: "Death's power is come," the poet writes, "and beauty's triumph

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[48] A "prick-song" was a tune written using tablature rather than staff, or, more relevant in this context, "music sung from notes written or pricked as opposed to music sung from memory or by ear" (OED). The bawdy pun on "penis" is clearly available, as is the sense of a song intended to prick the emotions. Yet another common understanding is that the nightingale, as an avatar of Philomela, sings as she pricks her breast against thorns. For a history of this last image, see Carol Madison, "'Brave Prick Song': An Answer to Sir Thomas Browne," *Modern Language Notes* 75 (1960): 468–78.

past" (611). His lamenting encomium serves to tame the forces he has released and reinstall the temporality the poem's haunting has worked to dislodge. Just as his "poetizing breath" blows her "dissevered limbs" together in the poem's opening, his epilogue blazons her, taking her apart again piece by piece and putting her back into the grave. Her breasts, hair, eyes, tongue, and breath each gets its own stanza of lament and burial.

The urgency with which the poet takes Lucrece apart and laments her death in the epilogue can be read as a measure of just how disruptive this literary possession has been. "O her breath," the poet laments, "Through discord of her tongue did all consume" (635–36). In recalling the image of the unruly tongue, a conventional renaissance indictment of women, the poet seems to suggest that Lucrece consumes her own breath in vociferous lament. She chokes, as it were, on her own voice. Either that or her voice, in another apocalyptic image, consumes "all" the world. In any case, the poet's epilogue cannot seem to make her silent and dead enough. In the final couplet, he suggests that

> First Tarquin-life clad her in death's array.
> Now Tarquin-death hath stol'n her life away. (653–54)

Lucrece's relationship to Tarquin here, as I noted at the beginning of this essay, makes her dead even while living and doubly dead in the afterlife. Yet as a present absence, a past operating in the present, a ghost, the voice of Lucrece was and is both alive and dead. The life / death synœciosis in the final couplet acknowledges the strange temporality of such a haunting. The past, for the poet, operates inside the present. In Lucrece's struggle to speak, to name, and to write, she and the poet become one. Reading the poem that lies between the prologue and the epilogue, we can as easily read the poet as a figure for Lucrece as we can Lucrece as a figure for the poet. But Middleton's poet

goes to much trouble to introduce Lucrece's speaking with an Ovidian invocation, securing his bona fides as an authoritative voice even as he calls for her voice. In the epilogue, the poet stops the breath of his Lucrece in blazoning Petrarchan language, moving away from haunting possession to more conventional literary territory. The poet builds this framing apparatus to contain a voice that threatens to become indistinguishable from his own.[49]

Middleton's poem changes our understanding of how Lucrece's story signifies, or fails to signify, as exemplary republicanism for the late Elizabethan period's literature and history. The poem offers a useful point of comparison for events that early modern scholars often read primarily through Shakespeare's poem.[50] But Middleton aims for more than presenting an alternative version of Rome's place in history. The collapse of differential categories throughout *The Ghost of Lucrece*—its haunting vision of authorship along with its confusion of temporalities, gendered voices, and narrative coherence—questions not only Lucrece's history, but also her historicity. That is, Middleton inquires into the conditions of possibility for exemplary history. "Lucrece…how canst thou Lucrece be," the poem asks. Middleton raises questions about Lucrece's ontological status. Perhaps the poem's most frightening vision, from this point of view, is of Lucrece as a cipher, a nothing, infinitely appropriable, adaptable, for

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[49] "Death," writes Paul de Man, "is a displaced name for a linguistic predicament, and the restoration of mortality by autobiography (the prosopopeia of the voice and the name) deprives and disfigures to the precise extent that it restores" ("Autobiography as De-Facement" *MLN* 94 [1979]: 919–30, 930). If Lucrece cannot alter her fate in the afterlife, it is perhaps because she can only be restored to the precise extent that she is disfigured.

[50] In trumpeting his recently published edition of Middleton's works, Gary Taylor proclaims Middleton "our other Shakespeare." Taylor, suggests that "we can now see the English Renaissance, stereoscopically, from the perspectives of two very different geniuses" (58). An investigation of a work of Middleton's that directly engages one of Shakespeare's would seem to be usefully "stereoscopic." For an example of the consideration of "whether it is just (or even helpful) to claim for [Middleton] the title of 'our other Shakespeare'," see Michael Neill, "Old Dad dead?" in *London Review of Books* (4 December 2008): 23–28, 24.

whoever chooses to write her into whatever rhetorical frame comes to hand (and in this sense a figure for the authorial persona's helplessness in the face of an inevitably citational future). Yet it is only through a thoroughgoing exploration of Lucrece's historicity that Middleton can get at what I take to be the focus of the poem. The historical vision of *The Ghost of Lucrece* offers scathingly commentary on the exemplary republicanism of the Lucrece story. Middleton is interested, finally, in describing the human expense of such models. For the Lucrece of Middleton's poem, a political narrative, however liberatory, cannot justify the erasure of the personal costs on which it is founded. Constructing histories over abused bodies such as Lucrece's cannot generate authorizing narratives of national identity. It can only continue in a mode of ineluctable corruption.

CHAPTER V

'THE TYRANT TIRES ME AN AUNT':
COMPLAINT, TYRANNY, AND *THE WINTER'S TALE*

In the fifth act of *The Winter's Tale*, an advisor urges Leontes not to "fail of

issue." Dion pleads with the King, on behalf of the state's "future good," to take another

wife and generate an heir. Paulina counsels against it. "Care not for issue," she tells the

penitent King; to "wed again" would dishonor Hermione, "she you killed." Leontes

submits to Paulina's judgment, adding that if he were to choose another, his first Queen's

ghost would rise up; her "sainted spirit" would "again possess her corpse."[1] Paulina

imagines the reaction of the ghost of Hermione to the proposed second wife.

> Were I the ghost that walked, I'd bid you mark
> Her eye and tell me for what dull part in't
> You chose her; then I'd shriek, that even your ears
> Should rift to hear me, and the words that followed
> Should be, 'Remember mine.' (5.1.63–67)[2]

The Winter's Tale here recalls the vengeful command, "remember me," of the most

famous Shakespearean ghost, Hamlet's father. *Hamlet*, like *The Winter's Tale*, turns on

anxieties about what women's bodies may do as well as what ghosts demand. The

spectral voice in *The Winter's Tale*, however, is imagined not as a dead father's but as a

dead mother's, a "sainted spirit" mediated by Paulina, whose name suggests another

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[1] See act five, scene one, lines 15–58. All citations of *The Winter's Tale* follow the edition by Susan Snyder and Deborah T. Curren-Aquino for The New Cambridge Shakespeare (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2007).
[2] Here "mine" refers to Hermione's eyes. "Stars, stars," Leontes replies, "And all eyes else dead coals!" (67–68). To "shriek" is not only something that ghosts do, it is also an expression of overwhelming distress or fear. See OED, "shriek," which cites Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* ("Ghosts did shrieke and squeale about the streets" [2.2.24]) and Milton's *Paradise Regained* ("Infernal Ghosts, and Hellish Furies,..some howl'd, some yell'd, some shriek'd" [4.23]). In the early modern period, as now, shrieking indicates an ungovernable expression of extreme emotion by "a human being in pain or terror." OED cites Shakespeare's *A Lover's Complaint*, in which the abandoned woman is overheard "shrieking undistinguish'd woe."

saint.[3] In a play well known for representing anxieties surrounding what it means for women to provide for patriarchal futurity through the "issue" of maternal bodies, the ghostly "remember mine" resonates deeply, a vengeful demand not only for Leontes to keep Hermione's eyes in front of his own, but also for restitution of what the Queen describes in the trial scene as her "childbed privilege denied," a forced separation from the "fruits of [her] body" (3.2.95–101). Even though Paulina calls "monstrous" the idea that her own dead husband should "break his grave and come again," she enforces the King's long repentance by means of just such images of Hermione's spectral return (5.1.42–3). The fifth act begins by implying that for sixteen years, since the supposed death of Hermione, Paulina has been threatening Leontes with the traumatic shrieking of the "queen's ghost" and its memorial demand (80). In order to play the "physician" to Leontes, Paulina stages perhaps the most prolonged haunting in early modern theater (2.3.54).

In the final scene, Paulina orchestrates Hermione's return; the reanimated Queen then claims that she has "preserved" herself, yet the play does not reveal what form this preservation has taken (5.3.127). Though Leontes promises everyone will "answer" for what has been "Performed in this wide gap of time" (153–5), the time of Hermione's absence, the play ends without providing that answer. This gives rise to the most famous of the interpretive problems surrounding *The Winter's Tale*: how are we to understand Hermione's absence and reappearance in the play? Is this a 'restoration' to society of a woman sequestered for sixteen years or a 'resurrection' of the dead? Such ambiguity prompts various interpretive strategies. Some understand Hermione's awakening in the religious frame suggested by the final scene's chapel setting and its rhetoric of faith and

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[3] Paulina, as the play's critics often remark, is a feminized form of Paul, the most famous of biblical saints.

redemption. Others understand the Queen's absence and 'miraculous' return as an expression of the power of theatrical representation or a play on the conventions of literary romance. Still others unpack these events in terms of possibilities suggested by early modern understandings of death and revivification.[4] Whether scholars interpret Hermione's reappearance as exceeding the humanly possible or not, the play undeniably allows and even encourages both the 'restoration' and the 'resurrection' scenarios: "Shakespeare seems to want it both ways."[5] This essay builds upon the work of those critics concerned with how to describe the disappearance and return of Hermione, yet I am less interested in the mechanisms of her awakening at the end of the play or deciding on the truth of what happens to her after her trial than with the kind of work her absence performs during the "wide gap" that the play identifies and refuses to clarify: the interval between her apparent death and her reappearance. The ambiguity of Hermione's sixteen year absence structures the play and its critical reception in important ways. What work, then, does this absence and the play's refusal to explain it perform? In order to address

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[4] For each of these critical positions (which are by no means mutually exclusive) I point to recent essays, though the debates they represent are long-standing. Those arguing for the religious dimension to this scene (or at least an appropriation of religious rhetoric) draw on Paulina's name, which suggests a connection to Pauline Christianity. See, e.g., Huston Diehl, "'Does not the stone rebuke me?': The Pauline Rebuke and Paulina's Lawful Magic in *The Winter's Tale*," in *Shakespeare and the Cultures of Performance*, eds. Paul Yachnin and Patricia Badir (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2008), 69–82; and Scott F. Crider, "Through Nurture and Good Advisement: Paulina, Ideal Orator of Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale*," *Cithara* 47.2 (2008): 17–36. For a variation on this, see James A Knapp, "Visual and Ethical Truth in *The Winter's Tale*," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 55 (2004): 253–78, who argues for an understanding of the final scene in terms of ethical choice and redemption. For readings of the play in terms of romance genres, see, e.g., Marion Wells, "Mistress Taleporter and the Triumph of Time: Slander and Old Wives' Tales in *The Winter's Tale*," *Shakespeare Survey* 58 (2005): 247–59; and Stuart Gillespie, "Shakespeare and Greek Romance: 'Like an old tale still'," in *Shakespeare and the Classics*, eds. Charles Martindale and A. B. Taylor (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2004), 225–37. For readings interested in theatricality, see, e.g., Marina Warner, "Painted Devils and Aery Nothings: Metamorphoses and Magic Art," in *Shakespeare and the Mediterranean*, eds. Tom Clayton, Susan Brock, and Vicente Forés (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2004), 308–31; and Anthony B. Dawson, "Shakespeare and Secular Performance," in *Shakespeare and the Cultures of Performance*, 83–97. See Kaara L. Peterson, "Shakespearean Revivifications: Early Modern Undead," *Shakespeare Studies* 32 (2004): 240–66, for a culturally specific understanding of Hermione's awakening.
[5] Susan Snyder and Deborah T. Curren-Aquino, "Introduction" to *The Winter's Tale*, 48.

this question, I bring to bear a nearly contemporaneous discourse structured by concerns strikingly similar to those of *The Winter's Tale*. 1590s "female complaint" poetry, in which women return from the dead as lamenting ghosts, combines concerns with absence, spectral return, chastity, patriarchy, tyranny, and sanctification, just as *The Winter's Tale* does.[6] Complaint poetry as practiced in the late Elizabethan era develops a vocabulary—an interrelated set of tropes, figures, and discourses—that *The Winter's Tale* appropriates and stages. Careful attention to this shared vocabulary revises our understanding of the gendered terms within which Shakespeare's play puts patriarchal imperatives, the threat of tyranny, and the voices of the lost or dead into conversation. The 1590s complaints, in other words, evince and contextualize *The Winter's Tale*'s structuring concerns.

Viewing *The Winter's Tale* in light of the ghosts of female complaint poetry reveals the way in which such texts take up the interplay of patriarchy, tyranny, and chastity in the key of haunting loss. Each of these terms—patriarchy, tyranny, chastity—points toward a wide and highly unstable spectrum of discourses in the early modern period. My aim here is less to provide full, historicized parameters for these epistemes than to show the ways in which they struggle to define themselves against and in terms of each other within the textual objects I consider. Nevertheless, it will help to start with minimum definitions, insufficient as they may be. In referring to "patriarchy," I mean to indicate a system of male rule and masculine superiority understood by those within it as stable and natural. Under patriarchy, women become instruments of male will; they provide the bodies that guarantee the transmission of power between men through

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[6] John Kerrigan calls this group of poems "female complaints" in *Motives of Woe: Shakespeare and 'Female Complaint'* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991).

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generations. "Chastity" provides a disciplinary regime designed to ensure that women's bodies will indeed reliably perform as instruments enabling patriarchy's stability and progress. And "Tyranny" indicates the fall of the social order into disorder insofar as the monarch's will becomes absolute and his actions detrimental to, rather than protective of, other bodies participating in the system.[7] The discourses to which these terms refer rely upon sharp distinctions. Chastity calls upon the figure of the obedient, silent, irreproachable maiden opposed to the unruly, shrewish, or wanton woman, just as the rhetoric of tyranny attempts to separate the continence and good will of the legitimate ruler from the beastly tyranny of the monarch who indulges his own passions at the expense of his subjects. And yet, I will be interested throughout this essay not only in how complaint and *The Winter's Tale* rely upon such distinctions but also in how they complicate them. If women must be silent instruments in a successful patriarchy, for instance, such a system already registers as oppressive to the very bodies it imagines itself to venerate and protect. The rhetoric of chastity, that is, potentially reveals both the difference and the similarity between patriarchy and tyranny: patriarchs protect women whereas tyrants abuse them, yet both patriarchs and tyrants work to exclude women's participatory voices. The difference between patriarchy and tyranny, understood in terms of chastity, becomes one of degree rather than kind.

In both *The Winter's Tale* and female complaint poems, the radical silencing of women—by exile, imprisonment, or death—suggests that patriarchy has become tyranny. Yet that same exclusion paradoxically provides women with a new medium for speech from their positions outside the sphere of the proper. As Simon Shepherd incisively

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[7] I say "*his* actions" because the texts I consider here, for better or worse, feature male rulers. This is not to say that women cannot be tyrants or, indeed, that they cannot rule in systems otherwise patriarchal, as the case of Elizabeth I demonstrates.

observes, plays written around the time of *The Winter's Tale* (1610–11) commonly

suggest a "parallelism of women and ghost. The ghost is literally 'other'. And both

women and ghost make valid analyses of the male world."[8] The extrinsic speech of the

ghost possesses a peculiar power. Freed from the constraints of the social order, early

modern female ghosts echo and shriek—they chastise that order by haunting it. Late

Elizabethan complaint poems as well as the dramatic works that draw upon them ask us

to consider the possibility that women's falls from grace are a sign of a patriarchal system

derailed by its own conditions. Given the normative misogyny of the early modern

period, stories about the loss of chastity might be expected to suggest a cause and effect

relation: unchastity—as the failure of the disciplinary regime for women that enables the

stable transmission of male power—threatens a resulting collapse of the patriarchal

project. But the voices of abjected women offer competing scenarios. What if, they ask us

to consider, unchastity (real or imagined) is not the *cause* of patriarchy's collapse but its

effect? Or, perhaps more startling, what if we can't tell the difference?

1590s Ghost Complaint

During Shakespeare's working life, and in the 1590s in particular, complaint

poems take on a distinct character. The new "subgenre" of female-voiced ghost

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[8] Simon Shepherd, *Amazons and Warrior Women*: *Varieties of Feminism in Seventeenth-Century Drama* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981), 112. In his chapter on the "Plays of 1610" (107–118), Shepherd discusses, among others, *The Revenge of Bussy d'Ambois*, *The Second Maiden's Tragedy*, *Match Me in London*, *The Athiest's Tragedy*, and *The Duchess of Malfi*: "their plots all concern corrupt courts ruled over by men who usually interfere with the marriages of more or less innocent women" (107). In *Match Me*, Shepherd notes, "the queen who has been 'killed'…reappears saying: 'You call me from a grave of shame and sorrow,/In which I lay deepe buried' (V.v.66–7)." Shepherd also recalls the Echo scene in *The Duchess of Malfi* as another (ambiguous) return of the voice of a dead woman.

complaint rises to popularity.[9] Poems such as *The Complaint of Rosamond* (1592),

Shore's Wife (1593), *The Complaint of Elstred* (1593), *Matilda* (1594), *The First Rape of*

Fair Helen (1595), and *The Ghost of Lucrece* (1600), among others, feature chastity

threatened or subverted. Matilda and Lucrece commit suicide in order to preserve a

chaste ideal against a royal assault. Rosamond, Jane Shore, and Elstred compromise

chastity in pursuit of other goals, sometimes goals as simple as survival. While these

poems ask us to judge their female protagonists against a standard of chaste behavior,

they also ask us to pity them for their suffering at the hands of tyrannical princes.

Lucrece, for instance, kills herself in the name of chastity. But beyond proving her chaste,

Lucrece's death serves as a rallying cry for her family to seek revenge against the tyrant

who rules Rome. As Stephanie Jed has shown, Lucrece's body figures the body politic—

tyranny over Lucrece's body figures political tyranny.[10] Avenging her rape means

overthrowing a tyrant. Patriarchy is purged, rescued from tyranny and unchastity, both of

which are figured as lawlessness and unreasoning excess. This much is familiar from

Shakespeare's well-known *The Rape of Lucrece* (1594), which has been categorized as a

complaint poem.[11] In a sequel of sorts set more squarely within the ghost complaint

genre, Thomas Middleton's *The Ghost of Lucrece* summons the Roman matron from the

underworld to retell her tale. The Lucrece specter then proceeds to rebuke her tyrannical

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[9] Heather Dubrow, "A Mirror for Complaints: Shakespeare's *Lucrece* and the Generic Tradition," in *Renaissance Genres*: *Essays on Theory, History, and Interpretation*, ed. Barbara Keifer Lewalski (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1986), 399–417, claims that in encountering these poems, readers would have "sensed themselves in the presence of a subgenre" (410). I call this group of poems "ghost complaints" to mark the way in which their female protagonists launch critiques enabled by spectrality. Ghosts see things, these poems suppose, that they did not previously see as living beings. They possess a retrospective view of their living years as well as the ways in which their stories signify for those in the present. They can thus offer an analysis of their histories that they could not offer in life.
[10] Stephanie H. Jedd, *Chaste Thinking*: *The Rape of Lucretia and the Birth of Humanism* (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1989).
[11] E.g. Heather Dubrow, "A Mirror for Complaints."

rapist in stanza after stanza. "Tarquin the ravisher," she flatly accuses: "Tarquin the lecher," "Tarquin the traitor."[12] If, as Celia Daileader notes, the Middleton Lucrece's "ringing *vituperatio* against Tarquin bears little resemblance to the vacillating self-blame of Shakespeare's Lucrece,"[13] the difference must owe in part to the fact that Middleton's Lucrece is a ghost and therefore already excluded from the social realm that constrains her in life.

While not all of the 1590s complaining women are characterized as virtuous like Lucrece, even those who seem to be most culpable in their own downfalls are no less pitiable for that, and no less vocal in their post-mortem accusations: fallen women have their tyrannical tormentors to chastise as well. Rosamond laments her cruel imprisonment in a labyrinth at the hands of King Henry II, Jane Shore curses Richard III for vilifying and impoverishing her, Helen calls Egeus to account for rape, and so on. The complaining women of Shakespeare's era are assaulted, exiled, imprisoned, left behind, or otherwise excluded from a place in what is imagined as a failing patriarchy. This very process of exclusion marks the break between patriarchy and tyranny: a patriarch who abuses women becomes a tyrant. "So tyrantlike this traytor used me," Helen protests in John Trussell's ghost complaint.[14] In Samuel Daniel's *The Complaint of Rosamond*, a penitent King Henry mourns over the body of Rosamond, describing himself as tyrannical for contributing to her death: "Such life hath tyrants, and this life I led."[15] Drayton's Matilda responds to her oppressor by asking her executioner to "tell the Tyrant

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[12] Thomas Middleton, "The Ghost of Lucrece," ed. G. B. Shand, in *Thomas Middleton: The Collected Works* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007), lines 143–92.

[13] Celia R. Daileader, "'Writing Rape, Raping Rites': Shakespeare's and Middleton's Lucrece Poems" in *Violence, Politics, and Gender in Early Modern England*, ed. Jospeh P. Ward (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 67–86, 68.

[14] M. A. Shaaber (ed.), "The First Rape of Faire Hellen by John Trussell," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 8 (1957): 407–48, line 168.

[15] Samuel Daniel, "The Complaint of Rosamond," in Kerrigan, *Motives of Woe*, line 656.

this when I am dead, / I loath'd his beastly and adulterous bed."[16] And in Thomas

Middleton's ghost complaint, as I have noted, Lucrece comes back from the dead to

accuse Prince Tarquin:

> The tyrant, with his force of luxury
> Tires me an aunt, through imbecility. (239–40)

The pun expands "tyrant" to "tires me an aunt"—that is, dresses me as a whore. In the

one word Lucrece conflates tyranny and the accusation of unchastity. Just as in *The*

Winter's Tale, in which Hermione is imagined to "shriek" at Leontes and stare him down

from beyond the grave, the women of ghost complaint poetry return to accuse the tyrants

who tormented them in life.

Among the most visible and influential of the 1590s ghost complaints features

Jane Shore, the mistress of Edward IV.[17] When King Edward dies, the story goes, Jane is

vilified by his successor, the notorious tyrant Richard III. In part because of her treatment

at the hands of the cruel hunchback, Jane becomes among the most famous adulteresses

in early modern literature. Scholars such as Richard Helgerson and Wendy Wall have

noted Jane Shore's influence on Jacobean "domestic tragedy, complete with its critique

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[16] Michael Drayton, *Matilda. The faire and chaste daughter of the Lord Robert Fitzwater* (London, 1594), sig. G1r.

[17] Jane Shore famously appears in Thomas More's *The History of King Richard the Third* (c. 1520). Thomas Churchyard first figures her as a ghost in the 1563 edition of *The Mirror for Magistrates*. In response to the 1590s trend for ghost complaints (for which Churchyard and the *Mirror* are partly responsible), the poet expands and reissues his Jane Shore poem in his 1593 collection, *Churchyard's Challenge*. In decrying tyranny, complaint poetry as practiced by Shakespeare's contemporaries draws on a tradition that includes Ovid's *Heroides* as well as the ghost poems of the *Mirror for Magistrates*. First published in 1559, the *Mirror* anthologizes poems in which the specters of famous figures from English history rise up to lament the conditions leading to their deaths. In the words of the first editor of the *Mirror*, the ghost complaints show how God "hath plagued evil rulers" and punished "shameless presumption and hypocrisy" with "death, diseases, or infamy." See William Baldwin's introduction to *The Mirror for Magistrates*, ed. Lily B. Campbell (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1938), 65. Citations of "Shore's wife" follow this edition.

of royal abuse."[18] Less often noted is the way in which that critique relies upon a retrospective view of events enabled by Jane's return as a specter. In Thomas Churchyard's complaint poem, Jane's ghost is clearly dissatisfied with her ignominious reputation. She suffers a "lowde reproach" that she hears even in the afterlife, calumny that "doth sound unto the skyes."[19] Such talk forces her out of the grave:

> …byds my corse out of the grave to ryse,
> As one that may no longer hide her face,
> But nedes must come and shewe her piteous case. (41–43)

Jane does not entirely excuse her behavior in leaving her husband for a monarch, but she does suggest that, among other things, it was royal demand that made her sin inevitable. Before Edward coveted her, she "was never proved light"; she was "chaste in every case" (73–74). But alas, "who can withstand a puissaunt kynges desyre?" (89). Yet Jane's troubles begin in earnest when Edward dies and Richard takes over. Richard publically punishes Jane for adultery in an effort to slander his predecessor as a libertine. Jane's "piteous case," it turns out, includes an admonition for current rulers based on a scathing indictment of Richard's tyranny.

> Ye Princes all, and Rulers everychone,
> In punyshement beware of hatreds yre.
> Before ye skourge, take hede, looke well thereon:
> In wrathes yl will yf malice kyndle fyre,
> Your hartes wil bourne in such a hote desire,
> That in those flames the smoake shal dym your sight,
> Ye shal forget to ioyne your iustice ryght. (337–43)

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[18] Wendy Wall, "Forgetting and Keeping: Jane Shore and the English Domestication of History," *Renaissance Drama* 27 (1996): 123–56, 123. See also Richard Helgerson, "Weeping for Jane Shore," *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 98 (1999): 451–74, for an overview of the literary trajectory of the Jane Shore story and its impact. Helgerson sees Jane Shore as a figure indexing and even prompting the rise of Jacobean domestic tragedy. Thomas Heywood's *The First and Second Parts of King Edward IV* (1599) first transports Jane Shore from complaint poetry to the stage (Shakespeare having all but ignored her in his *Richard III*).

[19] Thomas Churchyard, "Shore's Wife," in *The Mirror for Magistrates*, line 40. Churchyard's poem first appeared in the 1563 version of the *Mirror*, but the author revised and republished it in the 1590s in response to the growing trend for works of its kind.

Jane goes on to suggest that rulers "should not iudge til thinges be wel diserned" (344).

She gives us Richard III as an example of the kind of malice and wrath that produces the

fire she describes. "To such mischiefe this Tyrantes heart was bent," Jane tells us, that "in

his wrath he made his wyll a lawe" (299–301). Jane goes on to curse the tyrant as a

"raging wolfe" who "would spare no gylteles bloud" (317).

> I aske of God a vengeance on thy bones,
> Thy stinking corps corrupts the ayre I knowe:
> Thy shameful death no earthly wyght bemones,
> For in thy lyfe thy workes were hated so,
> That every man dyd wyshe thy overthrowe" (323–27)

Following the pattern that Jane Shore sets, the women of 1590s complaint poetry rise

from the dead to chastise tyranny.[20] Revivified, complaining women struggle with the

patriarchal values that excluded them. Their ghostly voices—self-consciously mediated

by masculinized poetic voices—ask us to reconsider the reputations of these 'fallen'

women in a new light.

Jennifer Laws writes that complaint poems "are unremittingly moralistic and

didactic, with ruin and death for the woman as the inevitable outcome of failing to guard

her chastity or at least preferable to losing that virtue" (84). This is a common

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[20] Both the *Mirror* complaints and the tradition of complaint in the legal system speak against tyranny. Wendy Scase, *Literature and Complaint in England 1272–1553* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2007), has shown that legal complaints in the medieval period—peasant plaint, clamour writing, and libel—markedly influenced literary complaint. In her words, "judicial institutions of written complaint…came into dialogue with literary production, becoming part of, and centrally informing, a wider literature of complaint" (1). In the medieval tradition, a plaint often registers a grievance against those in power. One late medieval peasant plaint runs:
> 'To the king I shall go', said Adam the wretch;
> 'Before the king I shall fall, I'll deliver him a bill'.
> They went off singing, making much mirth,
> But they come back weeping, lamenting without end. (qtd. in Scase, 5)
The female complaints of the late Elizabethan period similarly feature characters "lamenting without end" in their confrontation with power from its margins. In fact, Samuel Daniel's Rosamond, Thomas Middleton's Lucrece, Thomas Lodge's Elstred, and others speak from *beyond* the margins, as voices from the dead. Their male poets imagine their return as ghosts outside of time.

understanding of 1590s complaint. But what we tend to forget is that if the poems are "moralistic" about the behavior of women, they are equally so about that of the men who torment them. Surely the spectral lament of the adulterous Jane Shore would not have gained such currency were it not also about castigating the notorious tyrant Richard III. And *The Complaint of Rosamond* is as much about the corruption of the court and the lascivious King Henry as it is about how Rosamond is swayed by them. Complaint poems depict a tragic world in which the beauty and desirability of women enters into lethal combination with the ungoverned fears and desires of men. In the degraded world of complaint, chaste women fall and powerful patriarchs become tyrants. Complaint poems realize patriarchy's sweaty nightmare—"that all women at heart are whores" to borrow a phrase from Stephen Orgel, and "all men at heart are rapists."[21] The contest between tyranny and chastity in complaint reveals the fragility of the patriarchal contract between men and women by breaking it and showing us the wreckage.

Patriarchy Lost

The Winter's Tale opens with expressions of love between the "twinned lambs" Polixenes and Leontes. As scholars have noted, images of male parthenogenesis abound in act one.[22] The two monarchs have courted each other with "gifts, letters, loving embassies" (1.1.24). Polixenes has visited Leontes for nine months, "nine changes of the wat'ry star" (1.2.1). His first exchange with Leontes reiterates images of pregnancy: empty places are filled up, ciphers multiply, images of "burden," "perpetuity," and

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[21] Qtd. in David Schalkwyk, "'A Lady's "Verily" Is Potent as a Lord's': Women, Word and Witchcraft in *The Winter's Tale*," *ELR* 22 (1992): 242–72, 246. Schalkwyk analyzes the play in terms of male word as transcendental signified that must authorize the female word.
[22] See, for example, Janet Adelman, *Suffocating Mothers*: *Fantasies of Maternal Origin in Shakespeare's Plays, Hamlet to the Tempest* (New York: Routledge, 1992), esp. 224–8.

"breeding" attach to that nine month stay. The male child, Mamillius, is spoken of as the hope of the nation. The "gallant child…physics the subject" (1.1.33). These opening speeches do more than simply privilege the homosocial relation between Polixenes and Leontes; by imagining a reproductive relationship between men, they contemplate the exclusion of women from the patriarchal realm, an idea that, when materialized, will lead to tyranny. Patriarchy relies on women even as it attempts to silence them. Women provide the reproductive bodies and guarantees of purity without which patriarchal power cannot replicate itself even as that replicated power hierarchically devalues women's bodies. Homosocial parthenogenesis, seen in this light, represents a fantasy of the successful exclusion of women from the very structure of power only they can guarantee.

The homosocial exchange between the two men in *The Winter's Tale*, an exchange of "innocence for innocence," soon threatens to vilify the heterosexual relation as sin and guilt (1.2.68). "We knew not / The doctrine of ill-doing," Polixenes claims, nostalgically describing his childhood bond with Leontes (69–70). Hermione sees where such language is going: "Of this make no conclusion, lest you say / Your queen and I are devils" (80–81). Yet she fails to derail the "conclusion" she predicts. The language of fall from edenic innocence, sexual knowledge, soon becomes the language of infection, in Leontes' words, "the infection of my brains" (144). Leontes relentlessly universalizes an awareness of Hermione's infectious sexuality as a corrosive on patriarchal lineage: "thy mother plays," he tells his son,

>   …and I
> Play too, but so disgraced a part, whose issue
> Will hiss me to my grave. Contempt and clamour
> Will be my knell (185–8).

Futurity itself is infected. "It is a bawdy planet," the King claims—there is "no barricado

for a belly," no way to ensure that his children are his own (199–202). Therefore, "the

world and all that's in't is nothing" (290). To look upon the paradox of patriarchy—that

its survival is guaranteed by the word of the very women it attempts to silence—is to see

the patriarchal contract and the futurity it authorizes "disgraced" and reduced to

"nothing."[23] Patriarchy needs the voices of women, their good will and powerful

guarantee: in his "diseased opinion" (298), as Camillo describes it, Leontes becomes

tyrannical to the degree that he refuses to accept the terms of this contract. *The Winter's

Tale* shows us patriarchy run aground on the shoals of its enabling paradox.

Given these thematic parameters, however, the question is still valid: what

prompts Leontes to turn so suddenly toward jealousy and tyranny, rejecting not only his

wife but also his beloved friend? After all, Hermione clearly and lovingly supports

Leontes' bond with Polixenes, facilitating a longer visit for the men and even offering to

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[23] Critics have long understood this as a paradox. Phyllis Rackin has done much to bring such structures to our attention in examining the relation between women and history in the plays. As the editors neatly summarize in the introduction to *The Winter's Tale*, "Rackin examines the paradox of women who ostensibly have no voice within the patriarchal historiography of the early modern era but who nonetheless manage, by their very presence as 'keepers of the unwritten and unknowable truth' of biological legitimacy, to subvert the patriarchal historical record" (20, note 47). Here Snyder and Curren-Aquino cite Phyllis Rackin, *Stages of History: Shakespeare's English Chronicles* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1990), 146. Kathryn Schwarz, "Chastity, Militant and Married: Cavendish's Romance, Milton's Masque," *PMLA* 118 (2003): 270–85, incisively describes the fraught relation between patriarchy and chastity: "chastity...is not a straightforward mechanism of hierarchical imposition by a complicated and always potentially contested interplay of constraint and will. We have come to recognize that dependence on well-governed female sexuality poses a threat to patriarchal structures, revealing need in the light of utility. As a social imperative, chastity mobilizes the response to that need, investing women with the power to provide guarantees" (270). See also Schalkwyk, who puts this problem in terms of the play: "patriarchy in *The Winter's Tale* is predicated upon a paradox: its greatest need is at the same time the source of its deepest fears and insecurity. Nothing but a woman's word can justify the legitimacy of its bloodline. The whole action of the play springs from that paradox" ("'A Lady's "Verily" Is Potent as a Lord's'," 269). In using the language of "contract" for patriarchy, I follow Patricia Parker, "Temporal Gestation, Legal Contracts, and the Promissory Economics of *The Winter's Tale*," in *Women, Property, and the Letters of the Law in Early Modern England*, eds. Nancy E. Wright, Margaret W. Ferguson, and A. R. Buck (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2004), 25–49, who has shown that *The Winter's Tale* attaches contractual language— "commercial and legal terms"—onto a "trajectory of forbearance and the gestational passage of 'Time'" that "invoke[s] the temporal gap between 'promise' and 'performance'." She calls this "the promissory economy of the play" (26–27).

give Leontes her "commission" when it is his turn to visit Polixenes "To let him there a month behind the gest / Prefixed for's parting" (40–42). If patriarchy entails bonds between men producing "gallant" male children that ensure the replication of male power in states made stable by such bonds and assurances, the play gives us a picture perfect example of that system. Leontes and Polixenes have exactly what a patriarch might desire: both have sons who promise stabilizing primogeniture, and the bond between the men represents "loving embassies" between states. If, moreover, patriarchy needs women to willingly participate, to make of themselves obedient vessels facilitating male exchanges of power, Hermione enthusiastically gives herself to such a project. Leontes tells her she "never spok'st / To better purpose" when she convinces Polixenes to stay longer, and she insists that such speaking springs from an original capitulation to the will of her husband:

> My last good deed was to entreat his stay.
> What was my first? It has an elder sister,
> Or I mistake you— (87–98)

Leontes admits that it was when she agreed to marry him, when "didst thou utter, / 'I am yours for ever'" (103–104). The claim here, that Hermione's speech act convincing Polixenes to stay is the "elder sister" of that with which she married Leontes, immediately precedes the King's precipitous turn into jealousy. Leontes famously completes the easy meter of Hermione's summary of her own speech acts, "The one for ever earned a royal husband, / Th'other, for some while a friend," with the hypermetric spondees, "Too hot, too hot!" (106–107).

Leontes does not object here to a situation that *disables* the homosocial fantasy of exchange between men, but to one that that *enables* it too seamlessly. Hermione does exactly what she is asked to do: prompted by a desire to obey her husband, she speaks on

behalf of the friendship between the two men. Yet as soon as she does this, echoing the marriage vow, she lays bare for Leontes the proximity between heterosexual union and homosocial bonding upon which the male parthenogenesis fantasy relies. "To mingle friendship far is mingling bloods," Leontes claims; there is "no bourn 'twixt his and mine" (108, 133). He cannot accept the exposure of his own fantasy, which has already mingled friendship with "bloods"—with the imagined procreative union between men, "his and mine." Hermione's speaking, in effect, subverts rather than reinforces patriarchy precisely by exposing and enacting its enabling terms. Leontes responds to this exposure by rejecting *both* Hermione and Polixenes. Hermione having made transparent for him the way in which the social system that ensures his own power and even state power (so far as the relations between Sicilia and Bohemia are concerned) depends on bodies in such intimate proximity to his, even "mingling" with his own, he begins to understand those bodies as cancerous, as an infectious threat to his autonomy and authenticity. Leontes now seems to understand this system as a materialization of the phantasmatic: "Affection," he claims, "communicat'st with dreams"; desire is "coactive" with "what's unreal" and "fellow'st nothing" (137–41). Whether he understands this "affection" as his own or that of others (the text is ambiguous), he makes clear that the phanasmatic has, however improbably, conjoined with the material world to produce an "infection" (144). Leontes' world protectively narrows. No will, no body but his own is now trustworthy. This very reliance on an errant will insisting on its own autonomous judgment at the expense of others earns Leontes the name of "tyrant" in the following act.

This early in the play, Leontes loses faith in patriarchy's conditions of possibility: he loses the ability to believe that a system in which female bodies and voices authorize

homosocial exchange can work. The version of patriarchy with which Leontes is presented, perhaps because suspiciously perfect, begins to appear perverse. For such a system to work, men in power must hear and *believe* the women they invest with the power to guarantee legitimacy. But for Leontes, if the system is not to be trusted, neither are the women who authorize it; women "will say anything" (1.2.130). The play will insist that "tyranny" is on offer when men in power cease to believe women. Leontes raises the threat of tyranny himself in responding to the perceived threat of his wife's speech: he reasserts the mastery he understands to be compromised, resorting to a royal "prerogative" that does not rely on counsel or law but solely his own opinion—a mistaken belief that he takes for knowledge (2.1.163). In fact, Leontes has an overabundance of good counsel. Camillo, Antigonus, Paulina, and Hermione all launch well-crafted arguments against him, all of which rely on belief. As Camillo frankly says, "I cannot / Believe this crack to be in my dread mistress" (1.2.318–19). He understands that Leontes bases his actions on "diseased opinion" (1.2.294). In another defense of Hermione, Antigonus puts the problem most clearly: to doubt Hermione is to refuse to believe women in general and thus annul the patriarchal contract. If Hermione is false, every "woman in the world…is false." To disbelieve women, for Antigonus, is tantamount to castration. "I had rather glib myself," he tells Leontes, "then they should not produce fair issue" (2.1.149–50). Yet at this point in the play Leontes has moved from belief to knowledge. His opinion has become certainty: "Alack for lesser knowledge!" he laments (2.1.38). Clinging to his absolutist position, he ignores counsel and assures himself that the divine word of Apollo will endorse what he knows already.

Tyrants Chastised

Paulina's words, however, anticipate those of the oracle, who will call Leontes a "jealous tyrant" in the next act (3.2.131). Approaching Leontes with Hermione's baby, Paulina asks the lords, "Fear you his tyrannous passion more, alas, / Than the Queen's life? A gracious, innocent soul / More free than he is jealous!" (2.3.27–30). Directly confronting Leontes, she calls him "unworthy and unnatural," but she's just warming up:

> …I'll not call you tyrant;
> But this most cruel usage of your queen,
> Not able to produce more accusation
> Than your own weak-hinged fancy, something savours
> Of tyranny, and will ignoble make you,
> Yea, scandalous to the world. (2.3.112–20)

Paulina predicts a future of scandal. She presents Leontes with the vision similar to the one Tarquin has as he makes his way toward his victim in *The Rape of Lucrece*. "Yea, though I die," Tarquin says, "the scandal will survive":

> …my posterity, shamed with the note,
> Shall curse my bones, and hold it for no sin
> To wish that I their father had not been.[24]

Tarquin imagines the consequences of his anticipated rape of Lucrece here in words similar to those of Leontes in the face of his wife's imagined adultery. "Contempt and clamour," Leontes predicts, "will be my knell." Insisting that Leontes' own "tyranny" and not his wife's adultery is that which will make him "scandalous to the world," Paulina makes the connection between the poem and the play explicit: tyranny, evidenced by the mistreatment of women, threatens patriarchal futurity just as certainly as unchastity does. Indeed, both the poem and the play intertwine tyranny and chastity. In *The Rape of Lucrece* and in complaint poetry more generally, it is not only the sexual

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[24] *The Rape of Lucrece* in *William Shakespeare*: *The Complete Works*, Second Edition, eds. Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005), lines 204–10.

waywardness of women—whether imagined, chosen, or forced—that promises to void the patriarchal contract, it is equally the tyranny of the men who torment them. Tyrannical behavior itself becomes a form of unchastity that promises to yield, in Leontes' words once he realizes his mistake, "shame perpetual" (3.2.235).[25]

The voice of the god Apollo pronounces its judgment upon Leontes: he is a "jealous tyrant." Taking a cue from David Schalkwyck's analysis, we might say that Apollo is the embodiment of the male Word *par excellence*, the transcendental signifier. But even this divine pronouncement does not convince Leontes of his error. The King claims that the oracle is false. Leontes must witness the collapse of the patriarchal project—Mamillius and Hermione must "die," and Perdita must be "lost," cutting off all possibility for patriarchal futurity—before he can give up his absolutist stance. Paulina now directly calls Leontes a "tyrant" (3.2.172), accusing him of a "tyranny" (176) marked by foolishness, weakness, and inconstancy. For Leontes to be reformed, the voices of women, having been repressed (lost, imprisoned, dead) must return. In mediating the accusation of the absent women, Paulina "canst not speak too much" (3.2.212). Patriarchy, having crossed the line into tyranny by practicing the exclusions toward which it has always tended, must be haunted by the very absences it has forced. It

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[25] The discourses of chastity and tyranny are inextricably interlaced in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In the preface of the era's most famous polemic against tyranny, the *Vindiciae, Contra Tyrannos: or, concerning the legitimate power of a prince over the people, and of the people over a prince*, ed. and trans. George Garnett (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1994), the author presents us with a vision of proper governance in gendered terms: "…we will bear in mind this old and, to be sure, perfect image of the governance of kingdoms, as a legitimate, chaste, and blameless matron without any excessive adornment; in its place these Machiavellians do not hesitate to present us with an illegitimate, painted, lewd, and wanton harlot" (8). The contraries here couple the question of legitimacy with disciplinary descriptions of women's behavior all too familiar in the early modern period: chaste/wanton, matron/harlot, blameless/lewd, unadorned/painted. In order for the kingdom to be "passed on from hand to hand," kings must possess a "royal virtue" that preserves chaste governance. The *Vindiciae* thus dedicates itself to providing a "perpetual remedy…for posterity" (9).

must listen to the ghostly voices it has created. The only way to hear such an absence is in a mediated form.

In presenting Leontes with the vision of Hermione as a "sainted spirit" who would "again possess her corpse" to "shriek" at him, Paulina takes upon herself the task of translating the voice and will of the dead—the same task assumed by the mediating poet in ghost complaint. Ghost complaints feature a poet-persona who self-consciously facilitates the return of the wronged woman. In Jane Shore's complaint, Thomas Middleton gives Jane an invocation to her own poem in which she claims to "sodaynly appeale and appeare" to her author, who has "experience…in defending of womens honour."[26] The poet hears her appeal agrees to pen her story. Samuel Daniel's *The Complaint of Rosamond* begins with Rosamond's lamentation, "Ovt from the horror of infernall deepes, / My poore afflicted ghost comes heere to plaine it" (1–2). She soon turns to the poet to plead with him to retell her tale.

> No Muse suggests the pittie of my case,
> Each penne dooth ouerpasse my iust complaint,
> Whilst others are preferd, though farre more base:
> Shores wife is grac'd, and passes for a Saint;
> Her Legend iustifies her foule attaint;
>   Her well-told tale did such compassion finde,
>   That she is pass'd, and I am left behinde. (22–28)

The the poet is "forthwith mou'd with a tender care" by the fate of the spectral Rosamond: "What she desir'd, my Muse deygn'd to declare." He deems "her griefes…worthy to be knowne," agrees to become a conduit for her speaking, and bids her "boldly tell her minde" (57–62). Expanding on this pattern in which the ghost and the poet negotiate the terms of the poem, Thomas Middleton's *Ghost of Lucrece* provides an

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[26] This invocation appears in the 1587 and subsequent editions of *Mirror for Magistrates*, 372.

elaborate Latin invocation in which the poet summons Lucrece from the underworld and

dedicates himself to her lamenting ghost:

> *Castissimo, purissimoque Lucretiae Spiritui; Thomas Medius*
> *et Gravis Tonus primum Surge vociferat*
> *Tu castitatis imago,*
> *Surgito!* (20–23)
> To the most chaste and pure Ghost of Lucrece: Thomas, in a moderate and
> weighty voice, cries out the first 'Arise'. O thou, the image of chastity,
> arise![27]

She rises, asking

> …what wind, what storm
> Blew my dissevered limbs into this form
> And from the Virgin-Paradise of death
> Conjures my ghost with poetizing breath? (62–65).

After a negotiation of the terms within which the poet reassembles her and gives her

voice, Lucrece proceeds to tell her story of rape and tyranny. In ghost complaints such as

these, the ghost must strike a bargain with the poet. By virtue of channelling a lamenting

woman, the poet is himself feminized. Something of a gendered contest is nevertheless

implicit in these poems between the poet's masculine endeavor and the female ghost's

complaint against patriarchal systems. As Wendy Wall notes in discussing Middleton's

Lucrece, the ventriloquism of a ghost featuring "the vivid narration of the loss of

chastity…constructs a pattern whereby the writer establishes an identification with and a

renunciation of femininity."[28] The writer triumphs because he gets credit for the poem.

As Jane Shore admits in her invocation and appeal to her poet:

> hee shall not only haue the fame of his owne worke (which no man can
> deny) but shall likewise haue all the glory I can gieue him, if hee lend mee
> the hearing of my woefull tale, a matter scarce fit for womans
> shamefastnes to bewray. (372)

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[27] The translation is G. B. Shand's from his edition in *Thomas Middleton: The Collected Works*.
[28] Wendy Wall, *The Imprint of Gender: Authorship and Publication in the English Renaissance* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), 272.

However challenged normative gender roles are in ghost complaint, Shakespeare's move in *The Winter's Tale* to give the role of ghost mediator to Paulina instead of a poet with his own masculinized agenda would seem a welcome improvement.

Unlike the ambiguously feminized poets who mediate ghosts in the complaint poems, Paulina is unambiguously feminine. Along with the role of spokesperson for the absent Hermione and lost Perdita, in fact, she takes up a key gendered commonplace of the rhetoric of tyranny. As Rebecca Bushnell has shown, in the early modern period tyranny is often accompanied by the figures of the shrewish woman and the effeminate man. Proper patriarchy is figured in terms of patriarchal gender roles, and tyranny reverses those roles in carnavalesque fashion.[29] In Bushnell's words, "in that the family was…seen as a symbol of the state and as its essential building block, the shrew's 'mannish' authority and her husband's submission to her served as a model of tyranny, the opposite of legitimate sovereignty" (69). *The Winter's Tale* adopts this inversion model after Leontes breaks his family through tyranny. A parody of the tyrannical family, even if they are not married to each other, Leontes becomes the male milquetoast to Paulina's shrew. Paulina scandalizes the royal advisors when she accuses the King of having "killed" Hermione (5.1.15). Leontes submits to her chastisement:

> Good Paulina,
> Who has the memory of Hermione,
> I know, in honour, O that ever I
> Had squared me to thy counsel! (49–52)

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[29] As the *Vindiciae* demonstrates, proper marital relations model royal virtue. Under the heading of "what the purpose of kings is," the *Vindiciae* cites Augustine, who links properly governed families and states: "those who are concerned for the welfare of others are said to command, as a man does his wife and parents do children…." (92, citing Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, xix, xv). When a king exercises proper authority (what Augustine in *Vindiciae*'s citation calls"compassion in providing") over the state, normative (i.e. patriarchal) gender roles are imagined to remain secure and a "legitimate" state can be "passed on," enabling patriarchal futurity.

Playing the scold to the sorrowfully obedient King, Paulina fulfills the role that tyrannous sovereignty provides for her, the "audacious lady" and "Dame Partlet" that Leontes has already accused her of becoming (2.3.48, 75).

Staging an elaborate haunting, Paulina "physics" patriarchy by sanctifying Hermione; she works to make Hermione a "sainted spirit" in Leontes' eyes (5.1.57). Much has been made of acts of sanctification in the awakening scene of *The Winter's Tale*, which takes place in a chapel under the direction of Paulina's white magic.[30] Sanctification is also a common motif in complaints. As I note above, Rosamond claims that Jane Shore was so well articulated by her poet that she now "passes for a saint." Matilda, in turn, says that "Faire Rosamond" is "highly graced…and in our Sainted Legendarie placed" (B1ᵛ). Paulina similarly works to resignify Hermione's death as martyrdom in the face of tyranny. If tyranny is to be rehabilitated—however it may be altered or compromised in the process—it must listen to its extrinsic voices, reincorporating them and expanding its self-enclosed, homosocial system to once again include them. This has little to do with truth or knowledge and much to do with "faith." Paulina (in at least one critical narrative) lies when she claims that Hermione is dead. Whether she tells the truth or lies, however, the fact that Leontes believes her is the first step in reinstalling belief into a system of knowledge that has attempted to exclude it. If tyranny relies on knowledge and judgment alone, untempered by mercy, patriarchy depends on the way compassion and belief inform knowledge. This gives fuller resonance to those famous words near the end of the play just before Paulina reawakens Hermione, "It is required / You do awake your faith" (5.3.94–95).

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[30] Paulina: "Either forbear / Quit presently the chapel, or resolve you / For more amazement" (5.3.85–7)

My approach here was initially suggested by the fact that the name "Hermione"

does not occur in William Shakespeare's source for *The Winter's Tale*, Robert Greene's

Pandosto. Scholars have most often explained the choice of the name in light of its

etymological association with "Hermes," pointing to the messenger god of that name and

to the derived word, "herm" or "herma," which can mean "statue."[31] This etymological

association seems entirely persuasive, which perhaps explains why an alternative

explanation has gone unexplored. More than forty years ago E. E. Duncan-Jones

suggested that the name "Hermione" would have been best known to Shakespeare and his

contemporaries as one of the complaining women from Ovid's *Heroides*. Shakespeare's

Hermione would have been associated with her namesake, the daughter of Helen and

Menelaus. Duncan-Jones notes a strong resemblance between Ovid's poem and

Shakespeare's play: each involves "a mother's adultery, a daughter's motherless

childhood and a reunion between mother and daughter after a separation of many

years."[32] The connection between Ovid's Hermione and Shakespeare's is, in fact, even

stronger than Duncan-Jones suggests. Ovid's lament begins with Hermione accusing

Pyrrus of tyranny: "*Pyrrus…inclusam contra iusque piumque tenet*" [holds me in durance

against every law of earth and heaven].[33] Hermione pleads with her husband Orestes to

come to her rescue: "Husband, I entreat, succour your wife" (29). The lament for unjust

imprisonment and plea for a husband's proper behavior towards his wife might well

suggest to us the plight of Shakespeare's Hermione.

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[31] E.g. Julia Gasper and Carolyn Williams, "The Meaning of the Name 'Hermione'," *Notes and Queries* 33 (1986): 367.

[32] E. E. Duncan-Jones, "Hermione in Ovid and Shakespeare," *Notes and Queries* 13 (1966): 138–39, 139.

[33] Ovid, "Hermione Orestae," in *Heroides*, transl. Grant Showerman and G. P. Goold (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1977), 8:3–4.

Shakespeare was, as we know, familiar with Ovid's *Heroides*. It was a favorite text in the grammar school curriculum, and it was readily available to early modern readers both in Latin and in a popular English translation by George Turberville. Complaint poetry inspired by the *Heroides* and the *Mirror for Magistrates*, though perhaps not as visible as it might be in current criticism, occupied a prominent place in Shakespeare's literary landscape. Some of the foremost poets of the era tried their hands at the form, including Edmund Spenser, Samuel Daniel, Michael Drayton, Thomas Middleton, and Shakespeare himself (depending on whether or not we believe he wrote *A Lover's Complaint* or on how we categorize *The Rape of Lucrece*). Given all this, the notion that the name "Hermione" might have signalled a connection between complaint poetry and *The Winter's Tale* seems probable.

We cannot know with certainty, of course, what Shakespeare had in mind in choosing the name "Hermione" or what that signifier may have recalled for audiences. At stake here, however, is less an absolute determination of what Shakespeare or his audiences knew than how we contextualize the play. The popularity of complaint poetry and its importance for Elizabethan and Jacobean literature has not traditionally drawn a great deal of scholarly comment, yet complaints have happily begun to enjoy renewed critical attention in the last few decades, owing in large part to John Kerrigan's work in *Motives of Woe* (1991).[34] Reevaluations of *A Lover's Complaint*, for instance, have increased our understanding of the popularity and centrality of complaint literature for

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[34] Yet Catherine Bates, *Masculinity, Gender and Identity in the English Renaissance Lyric* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), sounds a cautionary note. She argues that we have yet to fully examine and question the way in which female complaint poetry has been "ignored, overlooked, blanked out, one could almost say institutionally suppressed by the authorities and guardians of the canon, in spite of the fact that, endemic and universal, the literature of female abandonment has existed since poetry began and has crossed centuries, continents, and cultures" (181).

Shakespeare's era.[35] This promises to build new bridges across the generic divide between the era's poetry and dramatic works.[36] This essay adds to our critical conversation by unpacking a connection between the spectral dynamics of 1590s female complaint and *The Winter's Tale*. As I have argued, Shakespeare's play addresses precisely the same problems as late Elizabethan complaint does, and in closely related terms. Shakespeare's play, like female complaint poetry inspired by the *Heroides* and the *Mirror*, shows us the fragility of the patriarchal contract between men in power and the women whose bodies are supposed to guarantee pure patriarchal lineage. Both complaint poems and the play show us that contract broken; both imagine functional patriarchy degraded into dysfunctional tyranny. Most importantly, many of these poems—such as *The Complaint of Rosamond, Matilda, The Complaint of Elstred*, and *The Ghost of Lucrece*—imagine the haunting return of their female protagonists from the dead. Such hauntings, like the one Paulina facilitates in *The Winter's Tale*, serve to chastise tyrants, "sanctify" women, and thus to critique the treatment of women under patriarchal rule. Reading *The Winter's Tale* in light of literary complaints elaborates both the terms of patriarchy's crisis in the face of tyranny and that which becomes necessary to piece back together a more inclusive system of governance.

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[35] See, for instance, *Critical Essays on Shakespeare's A Lover's Complaint: Suffering Ecstasy*, ed. Shirley Sharon-Zisser (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2006). Another sign of complaint literature's critical revival, the journal *Renaissance Studies* recently devoted an issue (volume 22, issue 3, 2008, edited by Susan Wiseman) to the early modern reception of Ovid's *Heroides*.

[36] See Heather Dubrow's contribution to *Critical Essays on Shakespeare's A Lover's Complaint*, "'He had the dialect and different skill': Authorizers in *Henry V, A Lover's Complaint*, and *Othello*," 121–34. Dubrow's essay, in her words, "yet again demonstrates the interactive connections among [Shakespeare's] dramatic and non-dramatic texts" (133). I take it as equally salutary to draw "interactive connections" among Shakespeare's dramatic works and poems by others with which Shakespeare was nevertheless deeply engaged.

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