

Complaint in Scotland

c. 1424-c. 1500

A thesis submitted for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

by

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Oxford

September 2013

Abstract: Complaint in Scotland c. 1424-c. 1500

This thesis provides the first account of complaint in Older Scots literature. It argues for the coherent development of a distinctively Scottish complaining voice across the fifteenth century, characterised by an interest in the relationship between amatory and ethical concerns, between stasis and narrative movement, and between male and female voices.

Chapter 1 examines the literary contexts of Older Scots complaint, and identifies three paradigmatic texts for the Scottish complaint tradition: Ovid's *Heroides*; Boethius's *De Consolatione Philosophiae*; and Alan of Lille's *De Planctu Naturae*.

Chapter 2 concentrates on the complaints in Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Arch. Selden. B. 24 (c. 1489-c. 1513). It considers afresh the Scottish reception of Lydgate's *Complaint of the Black Knight* and Chaucer's *Anelida and Arcite*, and also offers original readings of three Scottish complaints preserved uniquely in this manuscript: the *Lay of Sorrow*, the *Lufaris Complaynt*, and the *Quare of Jelusy*.

Chapter 3 focuses on the relationship between complaint and narrative, arguing that the complaints included in the *Buik of Alexander* (c. 1438), *Lancelot of the Laik* (c. 1460), Hary's *Wallace* (c. 1476-8), and *The Buik of King Alexander the Conquerour* (c. 1460-99) act as catalysts for narrative movement and subvert the complaint's traditional identity as a static form.

Chapter 4 is a study of complaint in Robert Henryson's three major works: the *Morall Fabillis* (c. 1480s); the *Testament of Cresseid* (c. 1480-92); and *Orpheus and Eurydice* (c. 1490-2), and argues that Henryson consistently connects the complaint form with the concept of self-knowledge as part of wider discourses on effective governance.

Chapter 5 presents the evidence that a text's identity as a complaint influenced its presentation in both manuscript and print witnesses. The witnesses under discussion date predominantly from the sixteenth century; the chapter thus also uses them to explore the complaints' later reception history.

Word Count: 97, 068 words

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Acknowledgements

My first thanks are to my supervisor, Dr Sally Mapstone. Dr Mapstone first introduced me to the study of medieval literature as an undergraduate, and she has supervised this thesis with patience, kindness, and good humour. I have benefited enormously from her advice, her wisdom, and her example; without her support and encouragement I would have been unable to complete this thesis.

I would also like to acknowledge the support of St Hilda's College, where I undertook both my undergraduate and postgraduate studies. I would particularly like to thank my undergraduate tutors Dr Susan Jones, Dr Margaret Kean, and Dr Georgina Paul. I was also taught by Dr Kate McClune, and I would like to thank her for the friendship and support she has shown me ever since.

I am grateful to the University of Oxford, particularly to the community of medievalists within the English Faculty. I am also grateful to my colleagues at Wadham College, Dr Jane Griffiths and Dr Ankhi Mukherjee, who have been extremely supportive during the latter stages of my work on this thesis.

I would like to thank the Arts and Humanities Research Council, who funded this project. I have also received generous financial support from the Muriel Wise Research Fund for Graduates at St Hilda's College. I have had the privilege to work in some wonderful libraries over the course of my research, and I would particularly like to thank the staff of the Bodleian Library, Oxford, the National Library of Scotland, and the Centre for Research Collections at Edinburgh University Library.

On a personal note, I would like to thank my wonderful family, particularly my mother, Janis Henley, and my stepfather, Hugh Simon, for their continuing love and support. I would also like to thank my friends Suzanne White, Alex Martin, Lucia Baker, Sophie Dicocco, and Sinead MacCann.

My last and greatest debt is to Catherine. This thesis is dedicated to her, with love.

Introduction

‘All our defens,’ yai said, ‘allace
And he yat all our comford was
Our wit & all our gouernyng
Allace is brocht her till ending.
His worschip and his mekill mycht
Maid all yat war with him sa wycht
Yat yai mycht neuer abaysit be
Quhill forouth yaim yai mycht him se.
Allace quhat sall we do or say,
For on lyff quhill he lestylt ay
With all our nychtbowris dred war we,
And in-till mony ser countre
Off our worschip sprang ye renoun
And yat wes all for his persoune.’

(*The Bruce*, XX, 273-86).¹

So lament the knights of Scotland on the death of the eponymous hero of John Barbour’s *Bruce* (c. 1375).² *The Bruce* is the earliest surviving poetic work in Older Scots;³ this is thus the earliest extant written example of a vernacular Scottish complaint.⁴ The inclusion of this complaint within *The Bruce* suggests that fourteenth-century Scottish readers possessed a certain familiarity with the conventions of complaint as a genre. As a lament for a dead king, these lines participate in a well-established tradition, primarily associated with Latin.⁵ These lines are ostensibly conventional; not least because their context associates them with the etymological origins of the term ‘complaint’. In the preamble to this complaint, Barbour notes that ‘Yar mycht men se men ryve yar har... And as woud men yar clathis ryve’ (XX, 265; 268), and this physical description of sorrow recalls the Latin *plangere*, ‘to

¹ Quotations from *The Bruce* are from McDiarmid and Stevenson, eds (1980-5) and are identified by book and line number.

² On the authorship and date of *The Bruce*, see Skeat ed. (1894), vol. 1, pp. xiii-xxxvi and McDiarmid and Stevenson, eds (1980-5), vol. 1, pp. 1-13.

³ *The Bruce*’s position as the first Older Scots poem is widely acknowledged: most recently noted in Royan (2005b), pp. 354-69 (355); Jack (2007), 11-24 (11); E. Elliott (2010), pp. 574-93 (577); and Petrina (2012), pp. 27-40 (28). For a survey of the evidence for a vernacular literary tradition in Scotland before Barbour, see McDiarmid and Stevenson, eds (1980-5), vol. 1, pp. 14-16; for a more recent, and more detailed, assessment of Scottish literary culture prior to the fourteenth century, see Hudson (2001), pp. 156-65.

⁴ There is evidence of an earlier, oral lament for the dead in Andrew of Wyntoun’s *Orygynale Cronykil* (c. 1408-20), Book VII, chapter x. Wyntoun records a lament for the death of Alexander III (d. 1286), and suggests that it was a popular song of the period. See Amours ed. (1903-14), vol. 5, p. 145, ll. 3621-8.

⁵ The history of laments for the dead is discussed in detail in chapter 3, pp. 160-75.

beat the breast, lament'.⁶ Yet, however deep their roots in the earlier complaint tradition, these words are uttered 'comounly' (XX, 266), and do not reflect the highly individualised voice which characterises Scottish complaint at the end of the fifteenth century. This thesis is concerned with the importance of the complaint form within the wider context of fifteenth-century Scottish literature; it examines the process by which Scottish complaint moves from these conventional, and in many ways incidental, lines in *The Bruce*, to being a well-developed and sophisticated means by which individual subjectivity can be articulated.

I

Scholarship

In this thesis I argue that there is a distinctive Scottish tradition of complaint, with its own characteristics and conventions. Scottish complaints repeatedly associate the amatory with ethical, political, and philosophical concerns, and this association is both formal as well as thematic; as I argue throughout this thesis, Scottish authors persistently use metrical forms associated primarily with amatory poetry for the treatment of non-amatory subject matter. This reflects a particularly Scottish preoccupation with the idea that desire has a problematic relationship with the concepts of reason and governance.⁷ I argue that this oppositional feature of Scottish complaint, which sees the amatory paired with the ethical, is also reflected in the relationship between complaint and narrative. The corpus of fifteenth-century Scottish literature contains both independent lyric complaints and complaints which are set within a broader narrative context, and in this thesis I argue that the choice between the two was a very deliberate one. I argue that self-contained complaints depend upon a sense of circularity and stasis which is deliberately subverted

⁶ Kerrigan (1991), p. 7.

⁷ This problematic relationship is the main focus of Couper (2001); Martin (2002); and Martin (2008a).

when the complaint is inserted into a longer text. Fifteenth-century Scottish texts consciously play with the relationship between static complaint and linear narrative, often using an inset complaint to create a space for psychological reflection within the text: this psychological reflection then functions, paradoxically, as a catalyst for narrative movement.

The research presented in this thesis opens up a new facet to our understanding of the intertextual relationships between fifteenth-century Scottish texts: I argue that the authors of these texts were conscious of complaint as a wider tradition within Older Scots literature, with its own set of generic expectations, and that they actively engage with, and allude to, other Scottish complaints. I also argue for intertextual relationships between Scottish complaints and Latin, French, and English examples of the genre, and I identify Middle English complaint as particularly influential in Scotland. Previous studies of English complaint have emphasised Chaucer's central position within the genre, and this thesis does not seek to deny that centrality. I argue for the significant influence of Chaucer's work on Scottish complaint, but I do not apply labels such as 'Scottish Chaucerians',⁸ nor do I suggest that the Scottish authors and texts under discussion are meekly imitative. Rather, I seek to establish Chaucerian complaint as one particular strand of influence on the Scottish complaint tradition, and I argue for a variety of Scottish responses to Chaucer's complaints which are sophisticated, questioning, and critical. I also argue for the importance, and influence, of complaints by Lydgate and Hoccleve.

This thesis engages extensively with codicological issues and book history, seeking to integrate the material evidence provided by surviving books and documents with literary analysis in order to provide the fullest possible picture of the complaint tradition in Scotland. Textual scholarship is a growing area of Older Scots literary study, exemplified

⁸ This label was apparently coined by G.Gregory Smith (see G.G. Smith [1900], vol. I, pp. vii and 40). It is also the title of an influential study by Denton Fox (Fox [1966], pp. 164-200). This term has fallen out of favour because of its critical limitations and its reductive connotations. A concise summary of the term's critical history, and the associated debates, is given in Bawcutt and Hadley Williams (2006b), pp. 1-18 (11-14).

by the work of Boffey,⁹ MacDonald,¹⁰ and especially Mapstone.¹¹ There is also a strong trend towards textual scholarship in recent doctoral theses completed in the field.¹²

Complaint is a notoriously challenging generic category, and all previous studies have struggled from the outset to establish a satisfactory definition. The first major work to consider complaint as a distinctive and identifiable literary form is John Peter's 1956 book-length study, *Complaint and Satire in Early English Literature*, which seeks to define complaint and satire as distinct from one another and, in so doing, creates a somewhat pejorative definition of complaint which denies any wit to the form, and ultimately equates it with 'laziness'.¹³ The limitations of Peter's study have been widely acknowledged;¹⁴ subsequent commentators on the form have sought to provide a more nuanced view by treating 'complaint' as an umbrella term and subdividing it into more manageable categories. The first, and most common, form which this categorisation takes is thematic: scholars have typically considered either the socio-political aspects of the form, under the title 'complaints of the times'; or they have focused on the love plaint, primarily through the figure of the female complainer.¹⁵ The exception is Wodsak, who offers a consideration of various types of complaint within the same study.¹⁶ Wodsak's analysis, whilst admirably broad and inclusive, concentrates purely on French complaints; its depth is also limited by its extensive chronological scope, tracing complaint in French literature from the beginning of the thirteenth century up to 1914. The most recent study of

⁹ Boffey (1993), 23-40; Boffey (1995), 1-17; Boffey (2000), pp. 125-34; and Boffey and Edwards (2005), pp. 14-29.

¹⁰ MacDonald (1994a), pp. 101-10; MacDonald (2003a), pp. 57-86; and MacDonald (2003b), pp. 147-72.

¹¹ Mapstone (1986); Mapstone (1991), 410-26; Mapstone (1999a), pp. 31-55; Mapstone (2001b), pp. 1-23; Mapstone (2008b), pp. 1-10; Mapstone (2010), pp. 30-47.

¹² Most notably Verweij (2008); Sweet (2009); Wingfield (2010); and Murray (2012b).

¹³ Peter (1956), p. 39.

¹⁴ In Prasad (1965), p. 8; T.J. Elliott (1973), 22-34; Lyall (1983), pp. 44-64; and most recently in Scase (2007), p. 2.

¹⁵ Prasad (1965) is the first major study to follow Peter's, and he separates the 'Social Complaint' and the 'Love Complaint'. 'Social Complaint' or 'complaint of the times' is subsequently analysed by Keller (1969), 120-37; T.J. Elliott (1973), 22-34; and Lyall (1983), pp. 44-64. The major analyses of the female complainer are: Schmitz (1985), available in translation as Schmitz (1990); Lipking (1988); Kerrigan (1991); and McKim (1994), 32-46.

¹⁶ Wodsak (1985).

complaint as a form is by Scase, who negotiates the vexed identity of the genre by contending that ‘English law imposes structure on complaint’,¹⁷ and arguing that legal and judicial language exerts a material influence on English complaints composed between 1272 and 1553. However, this concentration on the influence of the law and legal structures creates an inherent bias towards the study of social and political complaint and, by its own admission, Scase’s study does not offer detailed analysis of the amatory aspects of the form.¹⁸

The second type of categorisation which has been applied to complaint is organisation by author, and analyses of the form organised in this manner concentrate exclusively on the work of Chaucer. The definitive study of complaint in Chaucer’s work remains that by Davenport:¹⁹ Davenport establishes a dichotomy between ‘complaint’ and ‘narrative’, arguing that these two disparate forms are central to Chaucer’s poetry. Davenport associates the difficulty of satisfactorily defining complaint with the fact that there are no fixed technical grounds upon which a text can be designated a complaint; Davenport’s primary concern is with amatory complaint, and he identifies the sole criterion for the identification of an amatory complaint as its inclusion of ‘the lover’s expression of his suffering’.²⁰ Davenport is correct to identify Chaucer as a central figure within the English tradition of complaint, but Chaucer continues to dominate studies of amatory complaint in particular, to the exclusion of other authors.

This thesis concentrates on the secular poetry of fifteenth-century Scotland. The focus on poetry rather than prose is a reflection of the dominance of poetry in fifteenth-

¹⁷ Scase (2007), p. 2.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Davenport (1988). Dean (1967), 1-27, is an example of an earlier study which engages with the idea of complaint in Chaucer’s work.

²⁰ Davenport (1988), p. 6. Complaint sometimes features in lists of the thirteenth-and fourteenth-century French *formes fixes* but, as Davenport correctly notes, its inclusion is so inconsistent that it clearly has no technical basis (Davenport [1988], p. 6).

century Scottish literature;²¹ where relevant, I do discuss prose complaints, such as those included in Bower's *Scotichronicon* (c. 1440-9),²² and the *Complaynt of Scotland* (c. 1550).²³ I confine my discussion to complaints which are primarily secular in subject-matter. Whilst much of the religious literature of medieval Scotland was destroyed during the Reformation,²⁴ a certain body of material does survive,²⁵ and there is some evidence of an interest in religious complaint.²⁶ However, given this relative paucity of evidence of Scottish religious complaint, the difficulties of dating what survives,²⁷ and Scottish secular complaint forms a much more distinctive, and innovative, corpus in this period.²⁸ I do not exclude devotional material completely, however: some Marian verse is discussed because, as I will demonstrate, it has a clear relationship with secular complaints of the period.²⁹

I adopt a different approach from previous studies of complaint as, within the above parameters, I assume an inclusive definition of complaint. I include any literary expression of a grievance, sorrow, or injustice; consider complaints which stand alone, as self-contained texts, alongside those which form part of a wider narrative; and I include both collective and individual complaints by speakers of either gender. In referring to complaint as a 'form', as I do throughout this thesis, I am not referring to a particular set of formal characteristics, but following Davenport in designating it a 'form of expression'.³⁰ In adopting such a broad definition of the term, but confining my analysis to the literature

²¹ Noted in Jack (1988), pp. 163-82 (163). See also Bawcutt and Hadley Williams (2006b), p. 1, and Royan (2007b), pp. 11-23 (11).

²² Discussed in chapter 3, pp. 163-6.

²³ Discussed in chapter 1, pp. 18-19; 34.

²⁴ See McRoberts (1962b), pp. 415-62; Lyall (1989b), pp. 33-47; and Bawcutt (2006b), pp. 119-31 (119).

²⁵ Surveyed in Bawcutt (2006b). On religious literature in Scotland, see also MacDonald (1988), pp. 91-104; MacDonald (1998), pp. 109-31; and the essays collected in Houwen ed. (2012).

²⁶ Bawcutt notes that the surviving evidence suggests a particular interest in the 'Appeal from the Cross' as a sub-type of devotional verse, and that one example survives in London, British Library MS Arundel 285 (c. 1540) entitled 'the Dollorus Complant of Our Lorde apoun the croce crucifyit'. See Bawcutt (2006b), p. 123.

²⁷ Apart from the *Legends of the Saints*, Scottish religious literature survives primarily from the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century. See Bawcutt (2006b), p. 120.

²⁸ Bawcutt notes the heavy debt of Scottish devotional literature to Latin, and also notes its relationship to surviving English material (*ibid.*, p. 121).

²⁹ See chapter 2, pp. 76-81 and chapter 5, pp. 241-7.

³⁰ Davenport (1988), p. 6.

produced within a single century, I am able to consider social and political complaint alongside amatory complaint, as well as laments for the dead and prison complaints. This thesis thus urges a reconsideration of the perceived boundaries between different kinds of complaint: whilst their subject-matter may differ, this thesis shows that there are certain characteristics common to all complaints, and the inclusive analysis presented here elucidates the significant overlap between the different kinds of complaint. This approach is particularly useful for a consideration of Scottish literature; it is widely recognised that, in fifteenth-century Scotland, traditional distinctions between the amatory and the political do not apply.³¹

This thesis is the first in-depth account of medieval complaint to concentrate specifically on Scottish literature.³² The identification of *traditions* within Older Scots literature is an emergent area in the field: romance has received the largest amount of attention in this respect, with the work of Caghey, Mainer, Purdie, and Wingfield arguing for a thriving and distinctively Scottish romance tradition.³³ Other studies which seek to elucidate the development of medieval Scottish literary traditions are: Mapstone's work on advice to princes literature;³⁴ Fisher's study of humour in Older Scots literature;³⁵ Couper's account of the relationship between reason and desire in Scottish literature;³⁶ Martin's work on kingship and love;³⁷ McHugh's analysis of the figure of the learned king;³⁸ and Murray's study of dream and vision in Older Scots and Scoto-Latin literature.³⁹ This thesis seeks to add to this growing understanding of generic and thematic traditions in Older Scots by

³¹ Mapstone (1997), pp. 51-69 (53; 62-3); Royan (2007b), pp. 11-23; Mapstone (2007b), pp. 207-19 (211); and Martin (2008a), pp. 1-3.

³² Lyall (1983) and McKim (1994), 32-46 focus exclusively on Scottish complaints, but they are both article-length studies.

³³ See Caghey (2010); Mainer (2010); the essays collected in Purdie and Royan, eds (2005); Purdie (2006), pp. 165-77; Wingfield (2010); Purdie and Cichon, eds (2011); and Purdie ed. (2013).

³⁴ Mapstone (1986).

³⁵ Fisher (1999).

³⁶ Couper (2001).

³⁷ Martin (2008a).

³⁸ McHugh (2008).

³⁹ Murray (2012b).

providing an account of complaint. Complaint has, as noted above, received a certain amount of critical attention in relation to medieval English literature, but only two articles address the issue in relation to Scotland.⁴⁰ Lyall's article concentrates on the socio-political aspects of complaint, arguing for the existence of a Scottish 'literature of reproof',⁴¹ whilst McKim's focuses purely on the female-voiced complainer. These studies acknowledge the importance of complaint in Older Scots literature, but their length is insufficient to provide a full account of the genre. They also reflect the same problem noted above in relation to studies of English complaint: a tendency to separate the study of socio-political complaint from amatory complaint, which elides similarities and interconnections between the two forms. This thesis aims to address this lacuna as far as possible, and accord complaint its proper place amongst the significant literary traditions of fifteenth-century Scotland.

The texts under discussion in this thesis have of course received critical attention elsewhere, which reflects the fact that the majority of fifteenth-century Scottish complaints occur as inset pieces within other texts, which often have generic classifications other than complaint. It also reflects complaint's status as a mutable form, one which can be adapted to a variety of contexts and a variety of purposes. This thesis is the first study to put all of these texts together in order to examine the shared characteristics of complaint.

II

Summary of Chapters

Chapter 1 is a study of the literary contexts from which the Scottish complaint tradition emerges. It identifies three key texts as paradigms of the complaint genre: Ovid's *Heroides*; Boethius's *De Consolatione Philosophiae*; and Alan of Lille's *De Planctu Naturae*. This choice of

⁴⁰ Lyall (1983) and McKim (1994).

⁴¹ Lyall (1983), p. 46.

texts reflects the central importance of Latin literature to the development of the Scottish complaint tradition; the fact that these date from the classical, late antique, and high medieval periods respectively also allows for the consideration of the development of the complaint form prior to the fifteenth century. This chapter demonstrates that Scottish readers had access to, and engaged with, a diverse range of complaint materials in Latin, French, and English, and argues that fifteenth-century Scottish complaints should be read within the wider context of a popular and diverse genre.

Chapter 2 analyses Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Arch. Selden. B. 24. This manuscript was produced c. 1489-c. 1513, probably in Fife; it is the only Scottish manuscript copy of Chaucer's complaints, and it also contains three unique Scottish examples of the genre. The manuscript's compilers had a strong interest in complaint and I argue that the ordering of the manuscript consciously reflects the intertextual relationships between the texts contained within it. The chapter reads Lydgate's *Complaint of the Black Knight* in the context of its distinctive Scottish reception history and argues that it was the most influential of the English complaint texts circulating in Scotland. The chapter asserts the importance of Chaucer's *Complaint of Mars* and his *Complaint of Venus* to an emergent Scottish complaint tradition, and also argues that Hoccleve's *Letter of Cupid* functions as a deliberate qualification of the dynamic attitudes towards amatory complaint expressed in the *Kingis Quair*. The chapter also offers original analysis of three unique Scottish complaint poems contained in the manuscript: the *Lay of Sorrow*; the *Lufaris Complaynt*; and the *Quare of Jelusy*. I argue that the *Lay of Sorrow* and the *Lufaris Complaynt* were intended to circulate as a pair, and that the *Lay of Sorrow* is a hitherto unrecognised Scottish rewriting of Chaucer's *Anelida and Arcite* which was chosen for inclusion in the manuscript in preference to Chaucer's text.

Chapter 3 explores the relationship between complaint and narrative by considering the role of the multiple inset complaints which occur in the Scottish romances of the second half of the fifteenth century. The chapter is primarily concerned with the *Buik of Alexander* (c. 1438); *Lancelot of the Laik* (c. 1460); Hary's *Wallace* (c. 1476-8); and *The Buik of King Alexander the Conquerour* (c. 1460-99), and also includes analysis of some complaints included in Walter Bower's *Scotichronicon* (c. 1440-9) and the anonymous *Liber Pluscardensis* (c. 1461). The chapter asserts that the intercalated complaints within these texts stimulate narrative movement and thus subvert the traditional conception of complaint as a static form, a dynamic understanding of complaint which is distinctive to Scotland.

Chapter 4 analyses the role of complaint in the narrative poetry of Robert Henryson. Henryson's significance as a central figure in fifteenth-century Scottish literature is well-attested and his works have received extensive critical attention, but this chapter presents new readings of the *Morall Fabillis* (c. 1480s); *Testament of Cresseid* (c. 1480-92); and *Orpheus and Eurydice* (c. 1490-2). Each of these texts contains a variety of intercalated complaints and the chapter offers a close reading of each of them, demonstrating their structural and interpretive significance within their wider narrative contexts. The chapter examines Henryson's use of the wider tradition of Latin and vernacular complaints, and ultimately argues for a distinctive development of the complaining voice across Henryson's work. Henryson develops, and then ultimately rejects, the idea that complaint can function as a means by which self-knowledge – and through self-knowledge, effective self-governance – can be achieved.

Chapter 5 is devoted to codicological analysis and argues that the presentation of complaints in their manuscript and printed witnesses can provide valuable insights into their immediate reception history. I argue that there was a perceptible continuity of literary

taste across the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in Scotland, with fifteenth-century complaints remaining popular, but I also argue that there is an alteration in the material presentation and treatment of complaint as the sixteenth century progresses; this change indicates that, whilst fifteenth-century complaints continued to be read, they were read and understood within the context of emergent trends in sixteenth-century Scottish literature.

This thesis concludes by arguing that an understanding of the fifteenth-century complaint tradition is essential to our reading of much sixteenth-century Scottish literature. Taking the work of David Lyndsay as a paradigmatic example, I demonstrate that the conventions of fifteenth-century Scottish complaint, as outlined in this thesis, exerted a powerful influence over sixteenth-century authors and texts. In addition to this discussion of the future of the genre, the conclusion outlines useful directions for future research into the role of complaint in Older Scots literature, indicating ways in which the research presented here might profitably be extended.

A Note on References and Transcriptions

Throughout this thesis I cite authors by their surname and year of publication. Where two or more authors share a surname I use their initials to distinguish between them, and where an author has two or more works published in the same year I use the letters *a*, *b*, *c*, and so on, to differentiate. Quotations from published editions of primary texts are transcribed as seen, but abbreviations are silently expanded.

In my own transcriptions from manuscripts and early printed books, I retain the distinction between **u** and **v**, **i** and **j**. **p** and **B** are retained, although long-*s* is normalised. Abbreviations are expanded and printed in italics, and I observe the following conventions:

- \ / enclose words and letters inserted by the scribe, between lines or in the margins;
- [] enclose letters supplied where the manuscript is deficient in some way;
- <...> denotes missing or otherwise illegible text.

A Note on *NIMEV*1507

As I discuss in detail in chapter 2 (pp. 72-4), this text is known by various titles. When referring to English versions of the poem I refer to it as the *Complaint of the Black Knight*, and when referring to Scottish versions I use the title *The Maying and Disport of Chaucer*.

Chapter 1

The Contexts of Older Scots Complaint

This thesis investigates the ways in which fifteenth-century Scottish writers negotiate and respond to the competing demands and tensions within the complaint form and, in order to provide a clearer picture, this first chapter will explore the origins of these demands and expectations. This chapter will examine in turn three texts which were of crucial importance to the development of complaint as a genre of writing in medieval Europe: Ovid's *Heroides* (c. 25-16 BC); Boethius's *De Consolatione Philosophiae* (524 AD); and Alan of Lille's *De Planctu Naturae* (c. 1160-65). The 'ubiquitous' and 'amorphous' nature of medieval complaint renders some process of selection necessary for the discussion of origins and sources,¹ and this particular choice of source texts provides the broadest possible account of the development of complaint conventions relevant to fifteenth-century Scottish literature within the space available. These three texts reflect the dominance of Latin in the development of the early complaint tradition; however, each of these texts exerted considerable influence over later vernacular authors and this chapter will thus consider not only the complaint paradigms established by these Latin texts, but the ways in which these paradigms are interrogated in later, predominantly French and English, pieces. The date range represented by these texts also allows for discussion of the development of complaint conventions prior to the fifteenth century and thus provides a representative view of the form. Through analysis of these three paradigmatic complaint texts, this chapter will examine the complaint conventions which were current in fifteenth-century Scotland, in Latin, French, and English.

¹ Complaint is described in these terms by Patterson (1995), pp. 55-71 (55). On the diversity of the form see also the Introduction to this thesis, pp. 4-6.

I

Ovid's *Heroides*

Inscribere meo causa invidiosa sepulcro.
aut hoc aut simili carmine notus eris:

PHYLLIDA DEMOPHOON LETO DEDIT HOSPES AMANTEM;
ILLE NECIS CAUSAM PRAEBUIT, IPSA MANUM.

[On my tomb shall you be inscribed the hateful cause of my death. By this,
or by some similar verse, shall you be known:

DEMOPHOON 'T WAS SENT PHYLLIS TO HER DOOM;
HER GUEST WAS HE, SHE LOVED HIM WELL.
HE WAS THE CAUSE THAT BROUGHT HER DEATH TO PASS;
HER OWN THE HAND BY WHICH SHE FELL.]

(*Heroides*, II. 145-8).²

These are the final words of Phyllis's epistle to Demophoon, the second of Ovid's *Heroides*,³ and they aptly demonstrate the centrality of the *Heroides* to the development of the medieval complaint tradition. They are written by Phyllis herself, a privileging of the female voice which distinguishes the majority of these epistles,⁴ and their implicit foretelling of Phyllis's death encapsulates the static despair which haunts complaint. Their description of Phyllis's epitaph also provides an excellent example of the way in which two further tenets of medieval complaint are rooted in the *Heroides*: epitaphs are used several times in the *Heroides* and they forge a link between elegiac commemoration of the dead and the complaint mode which endures into the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries;⁵ this particular epitaph also highlights a peculiarly Heroidean preoccupation with reading and

² All quotations, and accompanying translations, from the *Heroides* are from Showerman and Goold eds (1977); references are given by epistle and line number.

³ For discussion of the number and ordering of the *Heroides*, see Jacobson (1974), pp. 407-9.

⁴ Three of the twenty-one *Heroides* are voiced by men: XVI (Paris); XVII (Leander); and XX (Acontius). They belong to the second part of the collection, which contains paired letters. Their authenticity is questionable: see Tarrant (1983), pp. 257-86 (272).

⁵ For a recent book-length study of the significance of epitaphs in early modern literature, see Newstok (2009).

writing.⁶ Phyllis's inscription of her own tomb is an attempt to write both her own fate and her own reputation; her emphatic declaration to Demophoon that 'notus eris [you will be known]' also reflects a desire to fix his reputation, and these concerns have a particular relevance to fifteenth-century Scottish complaints. I will examine the ways in which these key features of the *Heroides* as complaints, exemplified by Phyllis's words, influence the development of fifteenth-century Scottish complaints, and I will begin by outlining Ovid's position in the literary tradition of medieval Europe, specifically the British Isles, and by analysing specific material evidence of the circulation of Ovid's works in fifteenth-century Scotland. I also consider in turn the four main tenets of Heroidean complaint outlined above (the female voice; stasis; commemoration of the dead; and a specific interest in writing), examining the ways in which each of these is developed in the *Heroides* and the kinds of models they provided for medieval authors. I will conclude by examining some fourteenth- and fifteenth-century examples of English authors interacting with Heroidean complaint, where there is clear evidence for the Scottish circulation of these examples. This section of the chapter will thus demonstrate a lively engagement with Heroidean complaint in fifteenth-century Scotland, both through direct use of Ovid's text and through later, 'filter' texts.

The centrality of Ovid's works to the cultural and intellectual landscape of medieval Europe has been widely acknowledged,⁷ and this interest in Ovid seems to have been a peculiarly medieval phenomenon; whilst the works of Virgil were central to both Roman and late-antique school curricula, securing for them canonical status from this period onwards,⁸ Ovid's popularity as an educational text (and the corresponding breadth of his influence) developed later on. The surviving material evidence bears this out: the earliest

⁶ This chapter will examine the tropes of reading and writing in the *Heroides* only in so far as they inform later complaints. For a broader consideration of their role in the *Heroides*, see Spentzou (2003).

⁷ See, for example, Cooper (1988), pp. 71-81 (72); Simpson (1999), 325-55; Dimmick (2002), 264-84; and V. Gillespie (2005), pp. 145-235 (187). See also the essays collected in Clark *et al*, ed (2011).

⁸ See Marrou (1956), pp. 229-352, and Desmond (1994), pp. 230-1, note 13.

surviving copy of any work by Ovid dates from the sixth century,⁹ and only one other manuscript survives which can be dated pre-800.¹⁰ However, ‘the number of extant Ovid manuscripts increases gradually in the ninth, tenth, and eleventh centuries, but the acceleration is rapid in the twelfth and even more marked in the thirteenth.’¹¹ This interest in Ovid’s texts is also reflected in the large amount of pseudo-Ovidiana produced in Europe during this period,¹² and by the late fifteenth century, Ovid was well established in both the educational canon and the popular imagination across Europe.¹³

The surviving copies of Ovid’s works situate his readers overwhelmingly within a clerical and educational context¹⁴ and, as Murray’s recent work has shown, the material evidence of Ovid’s circulation in fifteenth-century Scotland bears this out.¹⁵ The earliest surviving documentary evidence for a copy of works by Ovid in Scotland is from the 1436 inventory of Glasgow Cathedral Library, which lists a copy of the *Metamorphoses*,¹⁶ and in 1496, a copy of ‘Ovidius in epistolis’ formed part of Alexander Inglis’s bequest to the university at St Andrews.¹⁷ This text was almost certainly a copy of the *Heroides*, rather than the *Epistulae ex Ponto*: the study of references to Ovid in English library inventories pre-1500 leads to the conclusion that ‘The *Heroides* are regularly entitled “Epistulae”, and should not be confused for the *Epistulae ex Ponto*, which is generally titled “de Ponto”’.¹⁸ It is not unreasonable to assume that a similar convention applies to the Scottish library.

John Grierson’s 1522 book list records that he possessed ‘Methamorphoseos Ouidii

⁹ This is Wolfenbüttel MS 3036, a fragmentary copy of Ovid’s *Epistulae ex Ponto*. See Hexter (1986), p. 86.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 4.

¹¹ Ibid., note 5.

¹² The three most notable examples of medieval pseudo-Ovidiana are: the *De Vetula* (?1260); the *Ovid moralisé* (c. 1291-c. 1328); and Pierre Bersuire’s *Ovidius Moralizatus* (1340). Hexter notes that ‘...while the greater part of the *appendix Vergiliana* was compiled and known before the end of the first century A.D., the pseudo-Ovidiana are almost exclusively creations of the high Middle Ages’ (Hexter [1986], p. 4, note 6). See also Hexter (2011), pp. 284-309.

¹³ Moran Cruz (1985), p. 183; Orme (1989), p. 29; and V. Gillespie (2005), p. 187.

¹⁴ McKinley (1998), 41-85, demonstrates the widespread reading of Ovid’s works in English educational and ecclesiastical contexts.

¹⁵ Murray (2012b), pp. 13-15, is the first study of the circulation of Ovid’s Scottish reception, and my discussion is indebted to Murray’s findings of material, documentary, and literary evidence.

¹⁶ See Higgitt (2006), p. 141. I am grateful to Dr Kylie Murray for this reference. See Murray (2012b), p. 13.

¹⁷ The list of Inglis’s donations is reproduced in Higgitt (2006), pp. 382-3; on Inglis’s bequest, see p. 382.

¹⁸ McKinley (1998), 48.

volumen vnum',¹⁹ and an inventory of books in Edinburgh Castle taken after the abdication of Mary, Queen of Scots, also records the presence of 'The Epistles of Ouid in frenche meter'.²⁰ Certain fifteenth-century Scottish literary works also make explicit reference to Ovid, which suggests that Ovid had a wider lay readership in Scotland than the surviving documentary evidence indicates: for example, in the prologue to *Lancelot of the Laik* (c. 1460-9), the bird addressing the narrator states 'And of ovid ye autor schall yhow know / Of lufe that seith' (107-8),²¹ and the author of the *Spectacle of Lufe* (1492) notes how 'Ovyd wrytis in his bukis of methemorofocius'.²² John Ireland's *Meroure of Wyssdome* (1490) contains three references to the *Metamorphoses*,²³ Ireland also names Ovid, alongside Homer and Virgil, as one of 'þe noble poetis'.²⁴ The *Meroure* contains another reference to Ovid: Ireland states that 'and þus betuix þame mycht be diuisioun and discord as ovid argwis in his buk *de vetula*'.²⁵ The *De Vetula* (c. 1250) is not genuinely Ovidian: it is the work of an anonymous French author,²⁶ and is the longest of the surviving pieces of medieval pseudo-Ovidiana.²⁷ Ireland's references offer an insight into a different aspect of Ovid's reception in late-medieval Scotland: whilst Ovid is described as 'ye autor...Of lufe that seith' in *Lancelot of the Laik*, Ireland uses the works of Ovid as *exempla*. This is particularly apposite in the case of *De Vetula*, which seems to have been prized by medieval readers for its philosophical content: Robathan notes that it 'occurs in manuscripts where the emphasis is more of a serious didactic nature'.²⁸ Ireland's *Meroure* thus provides firm evidence that the

¹⁹ See Higgitt (2006), p. 251 (S20.67). According to Higgitt, Grierson was associated with the Dominican Convent at St Andrews.

²⁰ This list is S11 in Higgitt (2006). This list presents a range of difficulties, chief amongst them the fact that it is impossible to know whether the books to which it refers were brought to Scotland by Mary on her return to Scotland in 1561, or whether they were part of the Scottish royal library prior to this date.

²¹ Quotations from *Lancelot of the Laik* are from Skeat ed. (1865) and line numbers correspond to this edition. For detailed discussion of *Lancelot of the Laik*, see chapter 3. This reference to Ovid is also noted in Murray (2012b), p. 14.

²² Craigie ed. (1923-5), vol. I, p. 282 (9); also quoted in Murray (2012b), p. 14.

²³ See: F. Quinn ed. (1965), p. 85, line 31; and C. McDonald ed. (1990), p. 118, line 32 and p. 162, line 20.

²⁴ F. Quinn ed. (1965), p. 23, line 24.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 97, lines 9-11.

²⁶ Authorship and date discussed in Robathan ed. (1968), pp. 3-10.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 1; also Dimmick (2002), pp. 264-87 (275).

²⁸ Robathan ed. (1968), p. 30.

De Vetula was circulating in fifteenth-century Scotland, and formed part of Scottish readers' engagement with Ovid.

There is a later text which is one of our most important surviving sources of information about Older Scots literature: the *Complaynt of Scotland* (c. 1550) contains a lengthy and explicit list of literary texts circulating in sixteenth-century Scotland; many of these, such as 'vallace', 'the bruce', 'gauen and gollagrus', and 'lancelot du lac', are known to us, and significantly pre-date the composition of the *Complaynt*.²⁹ This list is invaluable because it provides information about several texts now lost to us;³⁰ however, it also names several stories that are clearly identifiable as versions of Ovid's. The narrator refers to:

...the tayl of quhou acteon vas transformit in ane hart and syne slane be his auen doggis
the tayl of Pirramus and tesbe, the tail of the amours of leander and hero, the tail quhou
Iupiter transformit his deit loue yo in ane cou, the tail quhou that iason van the goldin
fleice. Opheus kyng of portingal, the tayl of the goldin appil...³¹

Two of these tales are found in the *Heroides*: epistles XVIII and XIX tell the story of Hero and Leander, and the Judgement of Paris (involving a 'goldin appil') is related in Paris's epistle to Helen (XVI).³² The rest derive from the *Metamorphoses*: Actaeon's transformation and death occurs at III. 165-252; the story of Piramus and Thisbe at IV. 55-166; Jupiter and Io at I. 601-2; and Jason and the golden fleece at VII. 100-58. The story of Orpheus is also found in the *Meatmorphoses* (X. 1-11 and XI. 1-84); whilst 'Opheus kyng of portingal' is almost certainly a specific reference to the fragmentary Scottish romance *King Orphius* rather than to Ovid's version,³³ its inclusion in this list suggests that the author, presumably

²⁹ A.M. Stewart ed. (1979), p. 50. All quotations from the *Complaynt of Scotland* are from this edition.

³⁰ The evidence provided by this passage is discussed in Lyall (1989b), pp. 33-47; the very recent identification of one of these items is made in Bawcutt (2012), pp. 127-43 (140-3). The evidence provided by this list is most recently discussed in Murray (2012b), p. 11.

³¹ A.M. Stewart ed. (1979), p. 50.

³² Murray (2012b) notes that the Judgement of Paris appears to have had particular currency in medieval Scotland (p. 15); it is also possible that the *Kingis Quair* was influenced by this episode. See Fradenburg (1991), pp. 131-3; E. Elliott (2012), pp. 134-43; and E. Elliott (2013), pp. 5-18.

³³ See Bawcutt (2001), 112-14 (112). For an edition of *King Orphius*, see Purdie ed. (2013). The figure of Orpheus in Scotland is discussed in detail in chapter 4, pp. 210-24.

Robert Wedderburn,³⁴ also knew the tale in its Ovidian context. Aside from this list, the *Complaynt* also contains an allusion to Book III of the *Metamorphoses*: earlier in chapter VI, the narrator states that:

it aperit be presumyng & presuposing, that blaberand eccho hed beene hid in ane
houhole, cryand hyr half ansueir, quhen narcissus rycht sorye socht for his saruandis,
quhan he vas in ane forrest, far fra ony folkis, & there eftir for loue of eccho he drounit
in ane drau vel.

(p. 30).

Wedderburn was clearly very familiar with both the *Metamorphoses* and the *Heroides*, and expected his readers to be so; this familiarity bespeaks the widespread use of Ovidian material in an educational context, as well as its popularity.

To return to Wedderburn's list, the first of the Ovidian works cited is 'the tayl of quhou acteon vas transformit' (p. 50). However, this is immediately preceded by a reference to 'the paleis of honour', undoubtedly Gavin Douglas's poem of that name (c. 1501).³⁵ This poem has been described as 'remarkable... for its wealth of literary allusion...clearly the work of a bookish author, who likes to cite his "auctoritees", particularly classical ones, such as Ovid, Virgil, and Livy'.³⁶ Douglas is heavily indebted to the *Metamorphoses*, containing not just allusion, but also translation and close paraphrase;³⁷ there is strong evidence that he read the text in an early printed edition which contained the influential commentary by Raphael Regius.³⁸ The fact that in his list Wedderburn moves seamlessly from *The Palice of Honour* to the works of Ovid suggests that he recognised Douglas's Ovidianism in the *Palice*.

³⁴ It is generally assumed that the author of the *Complaynt of Scotland* was Robert Wedderburn (c. 1510-c. 1553) and this consensus will be accepted here. See A.M. Stewart ed. (1979), pp. viii-xx.

³⁵ For an edition of *The Palice of Honour*, see Bawcutt ed. (2003). The poem's authorship and date are discussed on pp. xxvii-xxviii.

³⁶ Ibid., p. xxix.

³⁷ Bawcutt ed. (2003) lists the major correspondences on p. xxix.

³⁸ First suggested in Cairns (1984), 17-38; Bawcutt extends Cairns's research to investigate precisely which edition Douglas could have used. The evidence presented by Bawcutt is that Douglas probably used an edition by Bernardinus Benalius, either Venice, 1493; Venice, 1497; or Lyons, 1497. A copy of Benalius: Venice, 1493 is now Edinburgh University Library Inc. 111, and appears to have been in Scottish ownership since the sixteenth century. See Bawcutt ed. (2003): pp. 302-6 and p. 323, note to ll. 1322-3.

The material evidence discussed so far, when considered alongside the numerous allusions to Ovid's works which can be found in fifteenth-century Scottish literary texts,³⁹ bespeaks widespread knowledge of Ovid in late medieval and early modern Scotland. What is more, it is clear that a range of Ovid's works was available to Scottish readers in this period. The present chapter's focus on the *Heroides* is not intended to minimise the importance of Ovid's other works to Scottish readers and writers; rather, the *Heroides*' status as a collection of complaints makes it a particularly apposite paradigm for a discussion of complaint literature. Outside of the context of a generic study of complaint, Ovid's wider *oeuvre*, particularly the *Metamorphoses*, clearly had equal cultural significance in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Scotland. It is also important to acknowledge that readers of the *Heroides* in Scotland in this period clearly had a broader knowledge of Ovid's works and were reading the *Heroides* in this context.

One fifteenth-century Scottish reader of the *Heroides* is of particular interest. David Guthrie was a doctor of both Civil and Canon Law, educated at St Andrews.⁴⁰ He taught Canon Law at Aberdeen University; it is not clear when this started, but he was certainly there by 1497.⁴¹ He was also provost of Guthrie, and was later elected Regent of King's College.⁴² Macfarlane notes that Guthrie would have been able to make use of Aberdeen Cathedral Library's extensive holdings in the field of canon law;⁴³ he also appears to have had more literary tastes. There are only three extant copies of Ovid's work which can be securely located to fifteenth-century Scotland,⁴⁴ and all three are associated with Guthrie, as

³⁹ This thesis will demonstrate extensive Ovidian allusion in the unique Scottish amatory poetry contained in Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Arch. Selden. B. 24 (chapter 2); *Lancelot of the Laik*, the *Wallace*, and the *Alexander* romances (chapter 3), and the works of Robert Henryson (chapter 4).

⁴⁰ Macfarlane (1995), pp. 319 and 377.

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 319.

⁴² Ibid.; also Durkan and Ross (1961), p. 110.

⁴³ Macfarlane (1995), p. 378.

⁴⁴ NLS Inc. Z. 137 is a print of Ovid's *Fasti* owned at one point by John Sinclair, Bishop of Brechin; however it is not known whether the print reached Scotland before 1500. Two prints survive which can be located to sixteenth-century Scotland: EUL W. 20. 29 (Lyons, 1511) appears to have had two, as yet unidentified early Scottish owners (see Durkan and Ross [1961], p. 173) and James Temple, prebendary of Bothans collegiate church, owned the *Metamorphoses* (Paris, 1524; now NLS K56.1a. See Durkan and Ross [1961], p. 153).

documented by Murray.⁴⁵ He owned manuscript copies of the *Metamorphoses*⁴⁶ and the *Epistulae ex Ponto*;⁴⁷ most interestingly for the purposes of this chapter, he also owned a print of the *Heroides* (Venice, 15 December 1481).⁴⁸ The flyleaf bears the inscriptions ‘guthri’ and ‘Turis david guthr’; the final leaf of ‘Cidippe Acontio’ is also signed ‘d.g. Deo Gracias dauid guthre / dauid guthre’.⁴⁹

The print contains *Heroides* I–XIV and XVI–XXI alongside a commentary by Antonius Volscus; these are then followed by *Heroides* XV, ‘Sappho Phaoni’, alongside a commentary by Georgius Alexandrinus.⁵⁰ This print bears Guthrie’s annotations throughout, suggesting that he consulted it with particular care. He has added running heads throughout for easy reference; the text is also peppered with his cramped (and only partially legible) interlinear annotations. The running heads are applied consistently to every component text, and twelve of the twenty-one epistles have additional annotations.⁵¹ There are two instances in which phrases from the Volscus commentary have been underlined (in what appears to be the same ink as Guthrie’s annotations); otherwise, the annotations all pertain to the text of the *Heroides* proper, rather than to the commentary, indicating that it was the text itself that was of primary interest to Guthrie.

Guthrie’s annotations can also give some clues as to what particular aspects of the *Heroides* interested him. *Heroides* I, ‘Penelope Ulixii’, is the most heavily annotated of the

⁴⁵ I am indebted to Dr Kylie Murray for first drawing my attention to Guthrie’s books. See Murray (2012b), pp. 13–14.

⁴⁶ Now Aberdeen University Library MS 165 (s. xiii. in). This manuscript has been identified with a copy of the *Metamorphoses* in the library of King’s College, Aberdeen (Higgitt [2006], S4.43, p.63); the same inventory suggests that the library possessed two other copies (S4.99 and S4.23). AUL MS 165 is described as a student copy in Murray (2012b), p. 13, note 9.

⁴⁷ Now Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland MS Adv. 18. 5. 5.

⁴⁸ Now Edinburgh University Library De. 4. 60 (Inc. 105). The final leaf bears the following colophon: ‘Venetiis per Batistam de Tortis: / M. cccclxxxi. die. xv. / Decembris.’

⁴⁹ Guthrie’s name has been erased from this signature, but it is visible under ultraviolet light.

⁵⁰ This ordering of material is not entirely surprising, as Hexter states that Sappho’s epistle appears in only one pre-fifteenth century manuscript (Frankfurt, Universitätsbibliothek MS Barth. 110). See Hexter (1986), p. xiii. Thus ‘For the medieval reader...the *Epistula Sapphus* was missing entirely’ (Hexter [1986], p. 141). The inclusion of Sappho in this print, but separated from the other epistles and with a discrete commentary, reflects its relatively recent reintroduction to the corpus of the *Heroides* at this point.

⁵¹ The annotated epistles are: Penelope (I); Phyllis (II); Oenone (V); Hypsipyle (VI); Dido (VII); Hermione (VIII); Medea (XII); Paris (XVI); Helen (XVII); Leander (XVIII); Acontius (XX) and Cidippe (XXI).

epistles in Guthrie's print, and these annotations are particularly revealing. On leaf a1^r, which contains the first eight lines of Penelope's epistle, the words 'O utinam tunc cum lacedaemonia classe petebat / Obrutus insanis esset adulter aquis:' ['O would that then, when his ship was on the way to Lacedaemon, the adulterous lover had been overwhelmed by raging waters!'] are annotated as follows: '<...> paris priami filius <...> qui paris <...> helenam rapuit'.⁵² This annotation suggests that Guthrie was interested in relating the epistles to each other (the letters exchanged between Paris and Helen occur later in his print); it also suggests that he was both familiar with, and particularly interested in, the matter of Troy. This Trojan interest is expressed even more strikingly on aii^r: this leaf contains ll. 27-44 of 'Penelope', in which Penelope refers to the legends of the Trojan war recounted by returning soldiers. Guthrie has annotated this passage particularly heavily, and although these annotations are only partially legible, the line 'Hic steterat priami regia celsa senis' is annotated '<...> priami domus'. Penelope's reference to the river Simoeis is surrounded by annotations, amongst which the words 'troiana urbis', 'Primi troiani', and 'troia primo' are legible. Clearly Guthrie, an active and engaged reader of Ovid's *Heroides*, was also interested in the matter of Troy, and in looking for references to one within the other.

There is thus tangible evidence of a fifteenth-century Scottish interest in Ovid's *Heroides*, an interest which seeks to place them within a broader context of literary and cultural interests. It therefore makes sense to turn to a consideration of the complaint paradigms established by the *Heroides*, to which Scottish readers and writers were exposed. The fact that Ovid's *Heroides* are voiced by women gives them a unique place within the tradition of Latin elegy,⁵³ and the origin of the fact that 'complaint fosters impersonation of the feminine in ways which raise interesting questions about gender' certainly lies with

⁵² Quotations from EUL De. 4. 60 are my own transcription; translations are as before. Transcriptions of the annotations are also my own.

⁵³ Desmond (1994), p. 34.

the *Heroides*.⁵⁴ Dronke's list of female-voiced complaints from the period 1000-1150 indicates that the phenomenon was widespread both in Latin and in a range of early medieval vernaculars, including Anglo-Saxon,⁵⁵ and a case has been made for Ovidian influence upon even the earliest of these texts.⁵⁶ The influential role of the *Heroides* on the female-voiced poetry of medieval Europe is not in doubt; what I seek to demonstrate here is that gender in the *Heroides* is intimately bound up with notions of stasis as opposed to narrative movement, and that gender is specifically linked to anxieties about the physical acts of reading and writing. I will thus argue that gender is inextricably linked to other features of the complaint form within the *Heroides*; the ways in which Ovid negotiates his relationship between femininity and form influence the persistence of the association between complaint and the female voice in later medieval literature.

Throughout, the *Heroides* emphasise their status as physical texts; Ovid's female voice in the *Heroides* is a *written* voice, rather than a spoken one. For example, *Heroides* IV ('Phaedra Hippolyto'), opens with a self-conscious reflection on the act of letter writing. Phaedra states the difficulty of expressing herself verbally to Hippolytus, recalling that 'Ter tecum conata loqui ter inutilis haesit / lingua, ter in primo restitit ore sonus' ['Thrice making trial of speech with you, thrice hath my tongue vainly stopped, thrice the sound halted at first threshold of my lips'] (IV. 7-8). The composition of the epistle is characterised as the means by which this physical inability to speak can be overcome: 'dicere quae puduit, scribere iussit amor' ['with me, what modesty forbade to say, love has commanded me to write'] (IV. 10), and the written word is also given a power much greater than that of the spoken word, as Phaedra claims that Love has assured her of her letter's success: 'ille mihi primo dubitanti scribere dixit: / "scribe! dabit victas ferreus ille manus"' [''Twas he who spoke to me when first I doubted if to write or no: "Write; the

⁵⁴ Kerrigan (1991), p. 2.

⁵⁵ Dronke (1970), pp. 27-8.

⁵⁶ Imelmann (1920) and Reuschel (1938), 132-42 (133).

iron-hearted one will yield his hand”] (IV. 13-14). The act of writing is figured as necessary to attain both self-expression and power throughout the *Heroides*; in epistle XIV, for instance, the imprisoned Hypermnestra laments the physical restrictions which prevent her from saying all that she wishes to Lynceus. She opines that ‘Scribere plura libet, sed pondere lapsa catenae / est manus’ [‘I would write more; but my hand falls with the weight of my chains’] (XIV. 131). She complains of her imprisonment only in so far as it impedes her ability to write. The crucial importance of the physical ability to write for all of these women is succinctly expressed in Sappho’s epistle to Phaon:

Ecquid, ut adspecta est studiosae littera dextrae,
 Protinus est oculis cognita nostra tuis –
 an, nisi legisses auctoris nomina Sapphus,
 hoc breve nescires unde movetur opus?

[Tell me, when you looked upon the characters from my eager right hand, did your eye know forthwith whose they were – or, unless you had read their author’s name, Sappho, would you fail to know whence these brief words come?]

(XV. 1-4).

Here, Sappho describes her letter as if it is somehow inscribed with the essence of her identity; Phaon’s inability to recognise the characters she has written on the page is made to stand for his inadequacy as a lover.

Ovid’s use of the written female voice in the *Heroides* is, first and foremost, an act of assertion. His heroines all have a place in classical literature and mythology beyond the *Heroides* and Ovid constructs a complex dialogue between the *Heroides* and the other texts in which these women can be found. Every item in the *Heroides* is responding to an earlier text and they can thus be read as a kind of gloss, offering ‘rhetorical commentary on past events which have already been recorded and represented in other texts’.⁵⁷ One example is Oenone’s re-insertion of herself into the narrative of the love affair between Paris and Helen, but perhaps the clearest example of this glossing function is *Heroides* VII, ‘Dido

⁵⁷ Desmond (1993), 56-68 (60).

Aeneae', which is a self-conscious response to the events of Book IV of Virgil's *Aeneid*. Ovid expands and recasts the short lament allowed to Dido by Virgil, and by removing Dido's lament from the narrative framework of the *Aeneid*, Ovid 'allows Dido to indulge her passion to a much greater extent';⁵⁸ it also allows her frustrated and thwarted passions to develop into something else. Paradoxically, in detaching Dido's voice from the original narrative of the *Aeneid* Ovid does not decontextualise her. A full understanding of *Heroides* VII depends on prior knowledge of *Aeneid* IV 'in order to activate layers of reference and intertextual meaning';⁵⁹ *Aeneid* IV provides the context for Dido's lament and *Heroides* VII is thus, to a certain degree, dependent on Virgil's earlier narrative. Ovid's Dido blames herself for her misfortunes: 'haec mihi narraras – sat me monueres! merentem ure; minor culpa poena futura mea est.' ['This was the story you told me – yes, and it was warning enough for me! Burn me; I deserve it! The punishment will be less than befits my fault.'](VII. 85-6); as well as confronting Aeneas with his cruel treatment of her, Dido berates herself for her misunderstanding of Aeneas's character and behaviour. Virgil's Dido fails to correctly interpret Aeneas's narrative of the fall of Troy and his subsequent wanderings,⁶⁰ and is thus unable to comprehend what has happened to her, whereas the Dido of the *Heroides* recognises (albeit belatedly) that the signs of Aeneas's capacity for betrayal were evident from the early stages of their relationship. When read together, *Aeneid* IV and *Heroides* VII thus represent a progression on the part of Dido: she has moved towards a position of greater self-knowledge from which she is able to acknowledge her own (partially culpable) role in the events of *Aeneid* IV. Ovid is playing with the relationship between the two texts; by removing Dido's complaint from the narrative of the *Aeneid*, thus creating an apparently static and decontextualised piece, he actually provides an expansive gloss on the original narrative. Ovid's manipulation of the

⁵⁸ Desmond (1994), p. 37.

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 35.

⁶⁰ On Dido as a 'mis-reader' of these events, see Desmond (1993), 59.

relationship between his own text and Virgil's is acknowledged by Chaucer in *The House of Fame*, when he disingenuously remarks of Dido that:

...alle the wordes that she seyde,
Whoso to knowe hit hath purpos,
Rede Virgile in Eneydos
Or the Epistle of Ovyde,
What that she wrot or that she dyde

(*The House of Fame*, 376-80).⁶¹

Chaucer calls attention to the differences between Virgil's Dido and Ovid's Dido by eliding them; it has been remarked that Chaucer privileges Ovid's Dido.⁶² The complex relationship between the Didos of Virgil, Ovid, and then Chaucer is acknowledged by a Scottish reader of all three; in the Prologue to his translation of the *Aeneid* (1513), Gavin Douglas comments that:

Bot sikkyrly of resson me behufis
Excuß Chauser fra all maner repruffis
In lovyng of thir ladeis lyly quhite
He set on Virgill and Eneas this wyte,
For he was evir (God wait) all womanis frend

(Prol. I, 445-9).⁶³

Douglas here explicitly acknowledges the tensions between the different representations of Dido circulating in medieval and early modern Scotland, and shows himself to be aware of the potential for dialogue between self-contained complaint texts and other narratives.

These intertextual relationships create a kind of narrative context for the *Heroides*, but it is a narrative context which remains very much outside the texts themselves. Narrative movement can only be projected onto the *Heroides* by the reader, who brings to bear knowledge of other texts. There is no sense of progression within the epistles themselves, and this static circularity is one of their most influential characteristics. This

⁶¹ Quotation from Benson ed. (1987).

⁶² Holton (2008), p. 62.

⁶³ Quotation from Coldwell ed. (1957-60), identified by book and line number.

stasis is most clearly in evidence in the epistles' treatment of death: none of Ovid's heroines is able to envisage a solution to her predicament; several of them can in fact envisage nothing in the future apart from their own death. As seen above, Phyllis's epistle closes with her composition of her own epitaph, and Dido's epistle also does this, in a very similar form of words. By summarising their grief in an epitaph, both Phyllis and Dido are acknowledging the helplessness of their situation (they have no future) whilst simultaneously trying to deny it by creating a lasting textual monument. The efficacy of these attempts is called into question within the *Heroides* themselves, however: in *Heroides* V, Oenone recalls how Paris carved the following words into the bark of a poplar tree:

CUM PARIS OENONE POTERIT SPIRARE RELICTA,
AD FONTEM XANTHI VERSA RECURRET AQUA.

[IF PARIS' BREATH SHALL FAIL NOT, ONCE OENONE HE DOTH SPURN,
THE WATERS OF THE XANTHUS TO THEIR FOUNT SHALL BACKWARD TURN]

(V., 29-30).

We have thus a complicated relationship between narrative progression and the act of writing: the heroines seek to evade the stasis of their situations by explicitly figuring their complaints as letters and including written textual monuments within them, whilst the enduring character of these written texts is simultaneously undermined. Thus the concepts of stasis, epistolarity, and the act of writing are explicitly linked within the *Heroides*. The link between these concepts is also figured as something peculiarly feminine: the three male-voiced epistles are paired with a female counterpart. Unlike the first fifteen, all six of these epistles (XVI to XXI) relate to the beginning of a love affair rather than to its end, and the same sense of hopeless stasis is thus not present – these epistles are all looking forward to future progress and changes. Similarly, the act of pairing the epistles allows the reader to access two different perspectives on the same event, enabling them to resist the isolated, limited perspectives of the single letters. When the male voice is introduced into the *Heroides* it is in a context which manages to evade their characteristic stasis: it is only the

single letters, those associated exclusively with the female voice, in which narrative is completely evaded. This particular association between female-voiced epistles and stasis is an important trope in late medieval and early modern literature;⁶⁴ as I will demonstrate in my analysis of Scottish texts in chapters 2, 3, and 4, where the male voice is associated with static complaints it is usually an act of deliberate feminisation.

I have already briefly alluded to Chaucer's debt to Ovid: this has been the subject of extensive critical investigation,⁶⁵ and whilst it has been suggested that 'there is little evidence that Chaucer knew the love poems at first hand',⁶⁶ it is clear that Chaucer had a very broad knowledge of Ovid's *oeuvre* which derived both from the Latin texts themselves and from their use by later writers.⁶⁷ In addition to the material evidence of the circulation of the *Heroides* themselves, there is also evidence of the Scottish circulation of some of Chaucer's most explicitly Ovidian texts. Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Arch. Selden. B. 24, produced in Scotland in the late fifteenth century,⁶⁸ contains a copy of the *Legend of Good Women* alongside several other Heroidean texts by Chaucer; it also contains a copy of *Troilus and Criseyde*, and it is with a brief consideration of this Scottish copy of *Troilus* that I will conclude this section of the chapter. Containing twenty-five interpolated letters, songs, and complaints,⁶⁹ Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* provides an interesting counterpoint to the idea that 'Chaucer's Ovid ... is the Ovid of narrative'.⁷⁰ *Troilus* is a seminal text for our understanding of Chaucer's use of the *Heroides*, as Heroidean models are central to

⁶⁴ See Cherewatuk and Wiethaus eds (1993) and Rust (2004), pp. 111-38.

⁶⁵ Chaucer's major borrowings from Ovid are surveyed in Shannon (1929) and Hoffman (1966). More recent studies are Fyler (1979); Calabrese (1994); Holton (2008); and McKinley (2011), pp. 197-230.

⁶⁶ Cooper (1988), pp. 71-81 (71).

⁶⁷ Both Arn (1980), 1-10 and Fumo (2003), 278-314 offer detailed individual examples of borrowings from Ovid in *Troilus and Criseyde* which strongly indicate knowledge of the *Heroides* in Latin; Cooper (1988) acknowledges Chaucer's knowledge of Ovid through the works of writers such as Machaut (p. 75).

⁶⁸ For more information on the production and dating of this manuscript, as well as a detailed study of its contents, see chapter 2.

⁶⁹ For a full list, see Butterfield (1988), Appendix B, pp. 271-2.

⁷⁰ Cooper (1988), p. 75.

these interpolations within the narrative,⁷¹ and Arch. Selden. B. 24 presents a unique Scottish reading of Chaucer's Heroidean complaints.

The presentation of *Troilus* within Arch. Selden. B. 24 suggests a particular interest in epistolarity: whilst the use of decorative features to mark book and proem divisions is relatively common, the Selden manuscript 'provides a particularly emphatic example'.⁷² The letters exchanged between Troilus and Criseyde in Book V are marked out for special attention: the end of Troilus's letter is given both a coloured initial capital and a painted demi-vinet (f. 111^v); the opening of Criseyde's reply is given a coloured initial (f. 114^v). This kind of decoration is used elsewhere in the manuscript only to mark major divisions between books and texts;⁷³ this level of decoration thus marks these letters out as both privileged within, and different from, the wider narrative to a much greater extent than is found in any English copy of the poem. Of the sixteen surviving manuscript copies of *Troilus and Criseyde*, Arch. Selden. B. 24 is the most heavily annotated, containing more marginal annotations than all but one of the other copies.⁷⁴ Whilst some critical attention has been paid to the particularities of these annotations,⁷⁵ I would like to argue that, alongside the decoration, they also indicate an interest in the epistolary form. Folios 30-3 are particularly densely annotated, and this part of the text is Book II, ll. 1000-220, the initial exchange of letters between Troilus and Criseyde. Part of the density of the annotations in this section can be accounted for by the fact that it represents a dialogue between Criseyde and Pandarus, and the Selden manuscript (like several of the others) often gives character names in the margin in order to give a clear visual representation of

⁷¹ See, for example: Dean (1967), 1-27; Davenport (1988); and Patterson (1992).

⁷² Butterfield (1995), 55.

⁷³ Ibid.; see also chapter 2, pp. 65-8.

⁷⁴ Benson and Windeatt (1990), 33-53 (35-6); Boffey (1995), 1-17; and Butterfield (1995), 49-80 (52-3).

⁷⁵ Butterfield (1995) briefly considers the annotations as part of a wider comparative study of the *mise en page* of all sixteen manuscripts and Rust (2004) considers the presentation of letters in Arch. Selden. B. 24 as part of a reading of Criseyde's character (see especially pp. 131-3). Murray (2012a), pp. 121-39, demonstrates the significance of several of these annotations to our understanding of Scottish interpretations of the dream-vision episodes within the narrative.

speech exchanges.⁷⁶ However, nine of these seventeen annotations refer either to the reading or the writing of letters, as listed below:

1. f. 30^r (II. 1002): ‘here pandarus gave consell to troylus [t]ill writ to his lady’
2. f. 30^v (II. 1030): ‘[p]andar^{us} conselling troylus first lettir’
3. f. 30^r (II. 1065): ‘*prima littera* Troil[i] missa ad creseid’
4. f. 31^r (II. 1085): ‘here endis troylus his first lettir’
5. f. 31^r (II. 1088): ‘<...>er troylus <...>rs singnet <...>first lettir as <...> may rede’
6. f. 31^r (II. 1093): ‘here panda[r] presenttit fi[rst] troylus lettir’
7. f. 31^v (II. 1100): ‘Creseid desyryng to here of pandarus & his message fra troylus’
8. f. 32^v (II. 1170): ‘How creseid Rede first troylus lettir’
9. f. 33^r (II. 1220): ‘*prima littera* cras<...> missa troilye’⁷⁷

Only three of these lines are annotated across all of the other fifteen manuscript witnesses; this list thus demonstrates a particular interest in the exchange of letters on the part of the Selden annotator.⁷⁸

This of course raises the question of the identity of the ‘Selden annotator’. The manuscript is copied in two hands; *Troilus* is copied by scribe 1, and the annotations are also in his hand. The identities of the two scribes, and the relationship between their copying stints, is discussed in detail in chapter 2;⁷⁹ what I wish to consider at this point is not the identity of scribe 1 as an individual, but whether or not he is responsible for the *content* of the *Troilus* annotations or copied them from another source. On balance, it is likely that these annotations derive largely, even perhaps exclusively, from the exemplar:

⁷⁶ Butterfield (1995), 54-5.

⁷⁷ Transcriptions of these annotations are my own.

⁷⁸ II. 1002 (1 in the above list) is also annotated in Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Rawlinson poet. 163. II. 1065 (3) is also annotated in Rawlinson poet. 163, alongside London, British Library MSS Harley 2392 and 4912, and Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Arch. Selden. Supra 56. II. 1093 (6) is also annotated in Harley 4912 and Rawlinson poet. 163. For a transcription of the relevant annotations as they appear in these manuscripts, see Benson and Windeatt (1990), 41.

⁷⁹ Chapter 2, pp. 62-8.

Troilus is the only text in Arch. Selden. B. 24 to have been annotated in this way, and it would be a curious quirk if an annotator were to have engaged so actively with *Troilus* and not with any of the other texts in the manuscript. This hypothesis is supported by the fact that scribe 1 does exhibit a tendency to copy extraneous material from his exemplars: in Cambridge, St John's College MS G. 19, a copy of John Mirk's *Festial* and *Quattuor Sermones* produced by scribe 1 for Oliver Sinclair, he reproduces the colophon from his exemplar, a Rouen print of 1499, on f. 164^v. As Boffey has noted, something akin to a hierarchy of scripts is perceptible in the Selden *Troilus* annotations:⁸⁰ some of which are written in a very cursive, secretary style, and some of which have a more formal, rubricated appearance, despite being the work of the same hand.⁸¹ The apparent arbitrariness of these differences renders it likely that they derive from multiple exemplars: the fact that Arch. Selden. amalgamates two textual traditions of *Troilus*, sharing readings with witnesses from both group B and group G, also suggests more than one exemplar.⁸² It is of course impossible to know whether the Selden scribe was collating as he copied, or whether his exemplar represented an earlier process of amalgamation. All of the evidence thus suggests that scribe 1 of Arch. Selden. B. 24 was copying these annotations rather than recording his own response to the text; however, their orthography indicates that they probably originate in Scotland, and thus represent a distinctively Scottish set of responses to *Troilus and Criseyde*.⁸³

Several of the *Troilus* annotations in Arch. Selden. B. 24 indicate an interest in complaint as a mode of expression. For example, on f. 6^r, I. 351 is annotated with the

⁸⁰ Boffey (1995), 5.

⁸¹ These differences can be observed very clearly on, for example: f. 6^v; f. 11^r. Although some of the annotations are in Scots and some are in Latin, the differences in presentation do not seem to be related to language: ff. 95^v and 106^v are two examples of Scots annotations which demonstrate the engrossing and boxing.

⁸² Boffey (1995), 6 and Hanna (1996a), p. 116. Most recently discussed in Murray (2012b), p. 93.

⁸³ The origin of the responses represented in these annotations thus presumably lies with the owner or owners of one or more Selden exemplars. Both James I and Robert Henryson have been suggested (see Boffey [1995], 14 and Murray [2012b], pp. 92-4), but until further evidence about the exemplars used by the Selden scribes comes to light, it is impossible to do more than speculate.

words '[...] eftir troylus past first to his chalmyr till complene', and on f. 70^v, IV. 260 with '[h]ere maketh troylus his compleynt vpon fortune'. The Selden annotator's interest in complaint remains perceptible throughout the text: each of the four stanzas of Troilus's complaint on discovering Criseyde's infidelity in Book V is specifically designated 'complemt' (ff. 115^v-16^f).⁸⁴ There are significantly fewer annotations to Book III than to any other part of the Selden *Troilus*; Book III, the most optimistic of the constituent books in which the affair between Troilus and Criseyde is consummated, appears to have interested the Selden annotator much less than others. Aside from this obvious privileging of the complaint form there is another, more subtle, indicator of the Selden annotator's understanding of complaint. *Troilus and Criseyde* contains four songs and they are all annotated in Arch. Selden. B. 24, three of them with the word 'Cantus'.⁸⁵ 'Cantus' is used once elsewhere in the Selden *Troilus*: at I. 659, Pandarus summarises the contents of a letter supposedly sent from Oenone to Troilus's brother, Paris. This is actually a paraphrase of *Heroides* V,⁸⁶ and in Arch. Selden. B. 24 it is annotated as 'Cantus Oenonee' (f. 10^v). This use of the term 'Cantus' to annotate a clear reference to the *Heroides* indicates a particular interest in Ovidian complaint on the part of the Selden annotator; it also makes an explicit link between the interpolated songs in *Troilus and Criseyde* and Heroidean complaint, a visual link which does not appear in any of the English manuscript copies.⁸⁷

What this analysis demonstrates is that there is clear evidence for the circulation of Ovid's *Heroides* in Scotland, and also compelling textual evidence of sophisticated engagement with Heroidean complaint and related issues by early Scottish readers. Ovid's

⁸⁴ These annotations have no parallel in any of the other manuscripts.

⁸⁵ Troilus's song at I. 400-20 is annotated on f. 6^v as 'Canticus Troili'; Antigone's song at II. 826-75 is annotated on f. 27^v as 'Cantus Antigonee'; Troilus's song at III. 1744-71 bears the comment '[T]roylus song [...] luf vide' (f. 66^f); and his song of lament at V. 638-58 is marked 'cantus troili' on f. 102^v.

⁸⁶ For a detailed study of the relationship between *Troilus and Criseyde* and the *Heroides* at this point, see Arn (1980).

⁸⁷ 'Cantus' also appears as a marginal annotation in Arch. Selden. B. 24; it marks the nightingale's inset song in the *Kingis Quair* (f. 195^f). This is the only marginal annotation to a text other than *Troilus and Criseyde* in Arch. Selden. B. 24 and creates a visual link between the two texts. For a more detailed discussion of the *Kingis Quair* in the context of complaint, see chapter 2, pp. 97-104.

Heroides establish two essential paradigms: one of highly individualised, feminised complaint; and one which relates to the interplay between complaint and narrative, showing that complaint can exist outside a narrative context whilst participating in a complicated matrix of intertextual relationships. Scottish readers' active engagements with these nuances, both within the *Heroides* and Heroidean texts, account for the importance of these two paradigms for fifteenth-century Scottish complaints. There is, however, one aspect of the *Heroides* to which Scottish complaints choose not to respond: as far as we know, no fifteenth-century Scottish author composed a collection of multiple, self-contained complaints, which nonetheless fit together as a whole. It is this structural model which creates the most striking and distinctive relationship between the *Heroides* and Chaucer's *Legend of Good Women*. Despite having access to both of these texts, the idea of a collection of complaints does not appear to have been important to Scottish authors; as I demonstrate later in the thesis, the Scottish interpretation of the relationship between complaint and narrative appears to have been quite different.

II

De Consolatione Philosophiae

There for it is grit arrogance and na les folie quhen ony person gloris in his hie genologie
considerand that euyre person is discendit of ane origyne, as boiecius de consolatione hes
reherisit in his thrid beuk. Omne hominum genus in terris simili surgit ab ortu.

(*Complaynt of Scotland*, ca. XVII, p. 120).

This reference to Boethius's *De Consolatione Philosophiae* in Wedderburn's *Complaynt of Scotland*, which contains both paraphrase and direct quotation,⁸⁸ is not made by the narrator, but by the allegorical figure Dame Scotia, as part of a reproach addressed to her eldest son, the nobility or 'first estate' of Scotland. A piece of prose invective probably composed to counter English propaganda published during the conflict of the 1540s,⁸⁹ the *Complaynt* is an adaptation of Alain Chartier's *Quadrilogue Invectif* (1422). It has a complicated structure and contains two complaining voices: the narrator, who addresses the implied reader, and also Dame Scotia; the second complainer is Dame Scotia herself, who addresses the narrator, and each of her three sons in turn. Scotia is the central figure in 'The vision that aperit befor the actor in his sleipe' (p. 54); not only does Scotia cite Boethius explicitly but the complex structure of the text, based around dialogue conducted largely within the frame of a vision, is strikingly Boethian. This brief explicit reference to 'boiecius' in a text that was deeply influenced by *De Consolatione* is one small example of a significant strand within the development of complaint literature in Scotland. The influence of the *Consolation of Philosophy* on the literature and thought of medieval Europe is

⁸⁸ The line quoted is Book III, metrum vi, 1. Quotations from *De Consolatione* are from Stewart, Rand, and Tester eds (1973) and will be identified parenthetically within the text by book, prose/metrum, and line number.

⁸⁹ References made by the narrator in chapter X to texts written by 'The oratours of Ingland at there protectors instance' (pp. 64-5) indicate that the impetus behind the composition of the *Complaynt* was probably the publication of the *Epistle or Exhortacioun* issued by Protector Somerset in 1548; this pamphlet was the Edwardian regime's most widely circulated item of propaganda. On the importance of the *Epistle*, see Armitage (2000), p. 43; for a book length study of the conflict, see Merriman (2000).

beyond doubt;⁹⁰ in this section of the chapter I will demonstrate its importance to Scottish complaints. I will examine the material evidence for the circulation of *De Consolatione* in medieval Scotland, and I will also consider how the text functions as a complaint, illustrating the ways in which Boethius creates a rhetoric of imprisonment which became a model for later writers, and paying particular attention to the relationship which develops in the text between complaint, consolation, and self-knowledge, primarily within the context of imprisonment. This relationship was profoundly influential for fifteenth-century Scottish complaints, particularly the *Kingis Quair*, *Lancelot of the Laik*, *The Wallace*, and Robert Henryson's *Orpheus and Eurydice*.

As Murray's recent work has shown, there is substantial material evidence of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Scottish readers' engagement with Boethius.⁹¹ Murray has identified the earliest example as Glasgow University Library MS Hunter 279 (c. 1120-40), a copy of *De Consolatione* which has clear Scottish connections.⁹² Another manuscript, containing a commentary on the *Consolation* and a variety of related materials, also has demonstrable Scottish connections: Aberdeen University Library MS 263, dated c. 1470-1510, belonged to the grammarian John Vaus and was donated by him to the library of King's College, Aberdeen; this manuscript has recently been identified as a teaching text.⁹³ Four printed copies of *De Consolatione*, all produced on the Continent in the first decade of the sixteenth century, also show evidence of early Scottish ownership.⁹⁴ Edinburgh University Library N. 19. 18 (Lyons, 1503) bears the ownership inscriptions of three sixteenth-century Scottish owners: John Philipson, Canon of Scone; Denis Abercromby;

⁹⁰ I am here following Machan (1985), pp. 128-9 and E. Elliott (2012), p. 1, note 1 in distinguishing between *De Consolatione Philosophiae*, as written by Boethius, and the *Consolation of Philosophy*, a title reflecting the wide variety of forms, versions, and languages in which the text circulated in medieval Europe.

⁹¹ Murray (2012b), pp. 34-46, is the first study to engage with the reception of Boethius in Scotland. I am grateful to Dr Murray for sharing this research with me, and for allowing me to draw on the evidence she presents.

⁹² Murray suggests that this manuscript bears an annotation which dates from before the accession of David II in 1329, and argues persuasively for a Dunfermline provenance for the manuscript and its close associations with the Canmore dynasty. See Murray (2012b), pp. 35-42.

⁹³ Murray (2012b), pp. 42-5. This commentary is identified in Murray (2011b), pp. 120-3.

⁹⁴ See also Murray (2012b), pp. 45-6.

and Duncan Campbell.⁹⁵ David Black, a monk of Arbroath, appears to have owned another Lyons edition (1505),⁹⁶ and an unidentified James Fenton, whose inscription describes him as a notary and pedagogue, once owned the 1506 Rouen print that is now Edinburgh University Library N. 18. 21.⁹⁷ William Gordon, Bishop of Aberdeen (d. 1577), also owned a print of *De Consolatione* (Florence, 1507) at some point in his career.⁹⁸

There is also some documentary evidence for Scottish-owned copies of Boethius which have either not survived or not yet been identified: the Glasgow Cathedral Library Inventory of 1433 contains a reference to ‘Item liber Boecii cum glosa Treuet’, which not only attests that the library owned the *Consolation*, but also that their copy included the commentary by the Dominican Nicholas Trevet (c. 1300).⁹⁹ John Grierson’s booklist indicates that he possessed ‘Boecius de consolatione volumen vnum’,¹⁰⁰ and the Edinburgh Castle inventory includes a record of a printed copy of a French translation of the text.¹⁰¹ The *Consolation of Philosophy* was thus clearly circulating in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Scotland in both manuscript and printed versions; the surviving documentary evidence situates it primarily within a clerical and educational context.

There is, however, additional evidence which suggests that lay readers were also conversant with Boethius in this period. The reference to *De Consolatione* in the *Complaynt of Scotland* quoted above of course assumes a degree of familiarity with the text on the part of the audience; yet the *Complaynt* was composed in 1550, and the bulk of the evidence for lay engagement with the *Consolation* pre-dates it. The *Kingis Quair* (c. 1424) is the most widely-

⁹⁵ Durkan and Ross (1961), p. 135.

⁹⁶ This print is now in the possession of the Dick Institute, Kilmarnock. See Durkan and Ross (1961), p. 76.

⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 96.

⁹⁸ Now Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland J.H.S. 86. See Durkan and Ross (1961), p. 34.

⁹⁹ Trevet’s commentary was the most influential of all medieval Boethius commentaries, and survives in over 100 manuscripts. See Nauta (1997), pp. 41-67 (pp. 41-2). Trevet’s commentary was a major source for the *moralitas* to Robert Henryson’s *Orpheus and Eurydice*: see chapter 4, pp. 210-24.

¹⁰⁰ Higgitt (2006), S20.63 (p. 251).

¹⁰¹ Ibid., S11.31 (p. 112).

recognised example of Scottish knowledge of Boethius;¹⁰² tellingly, the imprisoned narrator describes himself reading the *Consolation* ‘In his faire latyne tong’.¹⁰³ The *Kingis Quair* survives uniquely in Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Arch. Selden. B. 24, which also contains one stanza (ll. 83-90) of Walton’s English translation of the *Consolation* (c. 1410).¹⁰⁴ This stanza is found on f. 119^r and is attributed to Chaucer; it forms part of a run of short filler items, all but one attributed to Chaucer, which follow *Troilus and Criseyde*.¹⁰⁵ The fact that this stanza is found in the same manuscript as the *Kingis Quair* has led to the suggestion that the author of the *Kingis Quair* may have been using Walton’s translation;¹⁰⁶ however, as the evidence in this chapter shows, there is more evidence for the Scottish circulation of *De Consolatione* in Boethius’s Latin than there is for Walton’s translation. This stanza is also found in two further Scottish manuscripts: London, British Library MS Cotton Vitellius E. XI (s. xv med; f. 4^v);¹⁰⁷ and Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland Adv. MS 1. 1. 6 (the Bannatyne Manuscript, c. 1568; f. 75^v).¹⁰⁸ There is no surviving Scottish copy of any other part of Walton’s Boethius translation; it is possible that, of this particular version of the *Consolation*, only this one stanza was known, although we cannot be certain on that point. What the survival of Walton’s stanza in these three Scottish witnesses does suggest is that by the fifteenth century in Scotland, as in England, the *Consolation* was no longer exclusively associated with a clerical readership, but that it formed part of the wider literary landscape to which the literate laity had access.

Lay knowledge of the *Consolation of Philosophy* is also suggested in John Ireland’s *Meroure of Wyssdome*, an advice to princes text in prose written during the reigns of James III

¹⁰² For example, three recent pieces of scholarship elucidate strong philosophical links between *De Consolatione* and the *Kingis Quair*: see Summers (2004), pp. 60-89; E. Elliott (2012), pp. 123-43; and Murray (2012b), pp. 108-37.

¹⁰³ *Kingis Quair*, l. 44. Quotation from Norton-Smith ed. (1971). Noted in Murray (2012b), p. 34.

¹⁰⁴ NIMEV 2820.

¹⁰⁵ The use of filler items in Arch. Selden. B. 24, and its Chaucer attributions, are discussed in detail in chapter 2.

¹⁰⁶ Petrina (1997), p. 10. See also Kratzmann (1980), p. 10.

¹⁰⁷ This is a copy of John of Fordun’s *Chronica Gentis Scotorum* (1374-7). See Boffey (1995), 37-47 (39).

¹⁰⁸ This manuscript is discussed in detail in chapter 5, pp. 254-61.

and James IV, which Ireland completed and presented to James IV in 1490.¹⁰⁹ Ireland uses ‘the doctrine of the clerk boece in the fyft buk of consolacioun’ as an *exemplum*,¹¹⁰ in a manner which assumes prior knowledge of the text. The *Meroure of Wyssdome* was intended for a courtly audience, and Ireland implies a reader well-read in vernacular literature: he makes reference to ‘...gowere, chauceire, the monk of berry and mony wthire’,¹¹¹ and he clearly expects his audience to be familiar with a range of Chaucer’s works including the ‘buk of troylus’ and the ‘persounis taill’.¹¹² These latter references are made in the context of Ireland’s discussion of predestination and free will; Ireland acknowledges Chaucer’s treatment of these ‘sad and gret materis’, but expresses some unease about it, suggesting that ‘it pertenis mare to my crafft þan to chauceire’.¹¹³ Leaving Ireland’s anxieties aside, his words here reveal that the Boethianism in Chaucer’s works, primarily *Troilus and Criseyde*, which has now become a critical commonplace,¹¹⁴ was also recognised by fifteenth-century Scottish readers; Chaucer’s *Troilus*, which is preserved in Arch. Selden. B. 24 along with Walton’s *Boethius* and the *Kingis Quair*, thus provided another conduit through which Boethian philosophy reached late-medieval Scotland.

There is thus compelling evidence for the circulation of the *Consolation of Philosophy* in fifteenth-century Scotland. As this thesis will demonstrate, the *Consolation* establishes a paradigm of complaint which underpins much of the use of the form in Older Scots literature; it is therefore necessary at this point to examine the role of complaint within *De Consolatione*. Its first metrum consists of a self-contained verse complaint, which in many ways fulfils our expectations of the genre according to a Heroidean model. The narrator

¹⁰⁹ This text is analysed in detail in Mapstone (1986), pp. 356-452, and McHugh (2008), pp. 208-67.

¹¹⁰ I am indebted to Dr Sally Mapstone for this reference. F. Quinn ed. (1965), p. 143. Ireland makes similar references elsewhere in the *Meroure*: see also Quinn ed. p. 82, and C. McDonald ed. (1990), p. 109.

¹¹¹ Macpherson ed. (1926), p. 164.

¹¹² Ibid., p. 74.

¹¹³ Macpherson ed. (1926), p. 74. These lines are discussed in Bawcutt (2001-2), 1-12 (7); Mapstone (2005b), pp. 3-13 (3-9); and Murray (2012b), pp. 85-6.

¹¹⁴ Chaucer’s interest in Boethius has stimulated a large amount of critical attention. An exhaustive list is not possible here, but some representative studies include: Bloomfield (1957), 14-26; Curry (1960); Minnis (1993); and Mann (2003), pp. 93-111.

describes his distress, with no contextualising information at all; as with the *Heroides*, this complaint has essentially begun *in medias res*. The only information we can glean about the narrator from this complaint is his advancing age, yet even this detail is offered as a means by which to emphasise the depth of his sorrow rather than as biographical context: ‘Venit enim properata malis inopina senectus / Et dolor aetatem iussit inesse suam’ [‘For age has come unlooked for, hastened by ills, / And anguish sternly adds its years to mine’] (I, m. 1, 9-10). Similarly, the narrator notes regretfully that ‘Dum levibus male fida bonis fortuna faveret, / Paene caput tristis merserat hora meum’ [‘While fortune favoured me – / How wrong to count on swiftly-fading joys – ’] (I, m. 1, 17-18). We have an allusion to the narrator’s past, but expressed only through a description of his present desperate state; the pleasures of his past are defined only by their absence from his present. Thus, we have a completely detached complaint in which sorrow is not qualified or mediated by any immediately obvious narrative context.

In the prose which follows this complaint, the narrator explicitly identifies it as such, and self-consciously refers to the act of writing it down. He makes an explicit link between his sorrows and the written word, and deliberately elides the idea of complaint as an act of speech: ‘Haec dum mecum tacitus ipse reputarem querimoniamque lacrimabilem stili officio signarem’ [‘While I was thinking these thoughts to myself in silence, and set my pen to record this tearful complaint’] (I, pr. 1, 1-2). These lines act as a retrospective qualification to the verse that has gone before them; they formally designate the narrator’s words as a complaint, emphasising their existence in a form separate from the wider context of the work. They also make a direct link between silent thought and the physical act of writing. Complaint does not have any kind of oral element here – the trajectory is directly from mind to page. These ideas are in fact a more explicit reiteration of ideas suggested more obliquely in the complaint itself. The complaint opens with the following lines:

Carmina qui quondam studio florente peregi,
 Flebilis heu maestos cogor inire modos.
 Ecce mihi lacerae dictant scribenda camenae
 Et veris elegi fletibus ora rigant.

[Verses I made once glowing with content;
 Tearful, alas, sad songs must I begin.
 See how the Muses grieftorn bid me write,
 And with unfeigned tears these elegies drench my face.]

(I., m.1, 1-4).

Poetry is here used as a metonym for the narrator's past and present existence, the change in the nature of his writing reflecting the change in his circumstances. The image is then taken further: in declaring that 'veris elegi fletibus ora rigant' the narrator makes a direct link between the written object, formally identified as 'elegi', and the tears which are the physical manifestation of his sorrow. These tears are also characterised as 'veris'; this insistence on the honesty of the written complaint privileges the form, implying an uncorrupted link between the distress and the *written* means of its expression.

The narrator presents this act of writing as something which is to a certain extent beyond his control. He implores the reader to note that the Muses are prompting and governing his complaint; they are invoked as a kind of authority here, and in this way the narrator resists the responsibility for his own words. This reference to the Muses is not the only invocation of a female authority figure within this brief complaint: it is here that the narrator first invokes Fortuna. He refers to the fact that 'quia fallacem mutavit nubila vultum' ['that her clouded, cheating face is changed'] (I., m.1, 19), and it is thus in this opening complaint that we have our first glimpse of the goddess who is such a dominant and fascinating presence in *De Consolatione*, despite never actually making a physical appearance in the text.

This double invocation of authority is significant because it prefigures the appearance of the text's true authority figure, Lady Philosophy, and sets up the opposition between Philosophy, the Muses, and Fortune that will be sustained throughout the text.

The narrator carefully establishes the Muses as the prompt for his complaint, but Lady Philosophy's first act upon appearing to the narrator is to question their presence and drive them away:

‘Quis,’ inquit, ‘has scenicas meretriculas ad hunc aegrum permisit accedere quae dolores eius non modo nullis remediis foverent, verum dulcibus insuper alerent venenis? Hae sunt enim quae infructuosis affectuum spinis uberem fructibus rationis segetem necant hominumque mentes assuefaciunt morbo, non liberant.’

[Who let these theatrical tarts in with this sick man? Not only have they no cures for his pain, but with their sweet poison they make it worse. These are they who choke the rich harvest of the fruits of reason with the barren thorns of passion. They accustom a man's mind to his ills, not rid him of them.]

(I., pr. 1, 29-34).

Philosophy's words here merit some close attention, because they reveal much about *De Consolatione's* attitude towards complaint as a mode of expression. Philosophy refuses to acknowledge that the Muses have any part to play in the situation, and this also represents a refusal to acknowledge or accept the usefulness of complaint. Just prior to Philosophy's outburst, the narrator recalls the image from the opening lines of his complaint when he says that Philosophy ‘poeticas Musas vidit nostro adsistentes toro fletibusque meis verba dictantes’ [‘she saw the Muses of poetry standing by my bed, helping me to find words for my grief’] (I., pr. 1, 26-7). This reiteration of the essential role of the Muses in the composition of the complaint serves to conflate the two: the Muses are the origin and source of the complaint, so in some ways the Muses and the complaint are one, and Philosophy's rejection of the Muses is a rejection of the complaint. When Philosophy declares that the Muses cannot console the narrator, she is actually stating that the act of complaining cannot console him, and that it will in fact exacerbate his distress. Philosophy's statement also reveals an important underlying assumption: by vilifying the Muses for their inability to offer consolation, she is figuring consolation for distress as an absolutely necessary goal.

Philosophy's attack on the Muses is based on the relationship between complaint and reason as she perceives it. She establishes an opposition between the 'fructibus rationis' and the 'infructuosis affectuum spinis', and firmly places the Muses (and, by extension, complaint) in the latter category. She is presenting a state of reason as desirable, and characterising complaint as a barrier to achieving it. She continues her attack in this vein, accusing the Muses of being especially reprehensible because they are victimising 'vero Eleaticis atque Academicis studiis innutritum?' ['this man, reared on a diet of Eleatic and Academic thought!'] (I., pr. 1, 38-9). According to Philosophy, the narrator's skilled use of reason – evidenced by his intellectual credentials – should separate him from poetry, particularly the poetry of complaint. Reason and complaint are thus designated irreconcilable opposites.

The structure of the text reveals the creation of this opposition to be somewhat disingenuous, however. As noted above, the narrator's complaint opens the text and is followed immediately by the sudden appearance of Lady Philosophy. Although the narrator has not invoked her explicitly, this structural arrangement suggests that it is his complaint which has summoned her. The narrator's complaint is therefore a catalyst for the text's key moment of narrative action: despite Philosophy's characterisation of complaint as the enemy of reason and consolation, it is a complaint which brings about her entrance into the text, which in turn allows the process of consolation and the return to reason to begin. Philosophy's unequivocal rejection of complaint is also apparently too hasty, as she has recourse to it herself. Prose 2 consists of a complaint in Philosophy's own voice, in which she (somewhat ironically) bemoans the narrator's lack of his reasoning faculties. Philosophy's complaint is presented as a partly unconscious act; she is moved to the act of complaint at the sight of the narrator's deep distress and the reader has the sense that, as with the narrator in Prose 1, she is not in full control of her actions at this juncture. She immediately reasserts her control, however, and does so by returning to her previous

position of rejecting complaint, on the basis that her purpose is to provide consolation and complaint is not a means to this end. She negates the complaint she has just uttered with the declaration that ‘Sed medicinae...tempus est quam querelae’ [‘But...now is the time for cure rather than complaint’] (I., pr. II, 1-2). Again, the oppositional dynamic is maintained – a cure is the desirable outcome, and complaint is not a means by which it can be achieved.

As we have seen, however, complaint is actually the structural impetus behind the whole text, and the text does present a clear movement towards consolation, and towards greater self-knowledge on the part of the narrator. He begins from a position of total ignorance in which he does not recognise Philosophy even though, as she herself says, he is a man ‘qui nostro quondam lacte nutritus nostris educatus alimentis in virilis animi robur evaseras’ [‘who was once nourished with my milk, once fed on my diet, till you reached your full manhood’] (I., pr. 2, 3-5). However, the text demonstrates a clear progression in the narrator’s position: by Book III, he has become a more active part in the discussion with Philosophy, and it begins to be more of a dialogue where previously it resembled a lecture. Early in Book IV, although still suffering to a certain degree from his distress, the narrator makes it clear that he has reached a point at which he can derive some comfort from Philosophy’s pronouncements:

Tum ego: ‘Papae,’ inquam, ‘ut magna promittis! Nec dubito quin possis efficere; tu modo quem excitaveris ne moreris’.

[Then I exclaimed, ‘Wonderful! What great things you promise me! Nor do I doubt that you can do them, but do not hold me back, whom you have now so aroused’.]

(IV., pr. 2, 1-3).

The narrator’s confidence in Philosophy’s abilities indicates how far his understanding has already progressed by this point in the text, and these lines also reveal a desire to continue moving forward. This distinctive narrative movement is fully realised in the final metrum

of prose of Book V; it is clear that the narrator has regained mental clarity as he is now able to comprehend certain facets of divine truth. The ending has been described as ‘affirmative yet provisional’;¹¹⁵ despite its self-imposed limitations, the narrator does achieve a sense of spiritual resolution.¹¹⁶ The relationship between complaint and narrative movement is thus manipulated in *De Consolatione*: complaint is characterised as a static (and therefore useless form), yet it plays a definitive structural role at the beginning of the text, allowing the establishment of the dialogue that leads to resolution. Boethius describes complaint as static, whilst making dynamic use of it.

De Consolatione Philosophiae has come to be understood as a narrative of imprisonment, even though the narrator never explicitly describes himself as dwelling inside a physical prison.¹¹⁷ The narrator suggests that Philosophy ought to recognise the room they are in, asking ‘Haecine est bibliotheca, quam certissimam tibi sedem nostris in laribus ipsa delegeras?’ [‘Do you not recognize the library, which you once chose for yourself as a secure dwelling-place in my house...?’] (I., pr. 4, 10-12) and these words suggest that, whilst the narrator is suffering under the weight of various accusations (as he describes in Book I, prose 4), his prison is psychological rather than physical – he is now unable to enjoy the ‘rooms’ in which he was once able to reason happily with Philosophy, and in this sense his state is one of exile rather than physical imprisonment. Complaint lies at the heart of the *Consolation of Philosophy*: its use of the tropes of imprisonment and exile, its use of more than one complaining figure, and its interest in both the composition and the physical act of writing complaints provide thematic models for fifteenth-century Scottish complaint, as this thesis will demonstrate. Its status as a prosimetric work, in which lyric is interwoven with narrative prose, provides a structural model for later Latin

¹¹⁵ Cherniss (1986), p. 27.

¹¹⁶ *De Consolatione* makes no overt use of Christian theology, and there are no explicit scriptural references, but the text is widely held to promote a coherent (albeit avowedly practical) spiritual agenda. See, for example, Chadwick (1981), pp. xv, 224, and Cherniss (1986), pp. 15-16.

¹¹⁷ Also noted in Summers (2004), p. 17.

writers including Alan of Lille; in turn, Boethius and Alan are the ultimate origin point for the interest in the inclusion of lyric complaint within a broader narrative which so interested fifteenth-century Scottish writers.¹¹⁸

III

De Planctu Naturae

De huiusmodi invehit Alanus, De Conquestione Nature, dicens: 'Probitatis gloriam degloriat livor inglorius'.

(*Scotichronicon*, III: Book v, ca. 7; p. 18, 52-4).¹¹⁹

Alan of Lille, *The Complaint of Nature*, inveighs against this sort of thing saying: 'Inglorious envy robs honourable glory of its glory'.

(III: p. 19, 62-4).¹²⁰

The author of the *Scotichronicon* (c. 1440-9), Walter Bower, is here criticising what he perceives to be a particularly English mode of writing history, in which the Scots are never given due credit for their deeds.¹²¹ The *Scotichronicon* was highly influential in Scotland in the decades immediately following its composition; its wide transmission and reception in the second half of the fifteenth century is well-documented.¹²² Bower's reference to Alan of Lille's *De Planctu Naturae*, and his incorporation of the text into the vehemently nationalist agenda of his chronicle, suggests that Alan's text also had significant cultural currency, and moral authority, in fifteenth-century Scotland.¹²³ This is further suggested by the use of 'antecladyane the buke', presumably Alan of Lille's *Anticlaudianus*, to support one of the didactic points made in the early fifteenth-century parental advisory text *Ratis*

¹¹⁸ This aspect of Older Scots complaint is discussed in detail in chapter 3.

¹¹⁹ All quotations from Bower's *Scotichronicon* are from Watt ed. (1987-98). I cite volume number first, then give book, chapter, page, and line number respectively.

¹²⁰ Translations are also from Watt ed. (1987-98), and are identified by volume, page, and line number.

¹²¹ Walter Bower (1385-1449) was abbot of the Augustinian foundation at Inchcolm in Fife from 1417 until his death in 1449. The *Scotichronicon* belongs to the period c. 1440-9. On Bower's biography, see Watt ed. (1987-98), vol. IX, pp. 204-8.

¹²² See the studies included in Watt ed., vol. IX, chapters 18-25 (pp. 234-362). See also Mapstone (1999a), pp. 31-55.

¹²³ They do not, of course, prove that Bower had read *De Planctu* in its entirety – they may derive from a florilegium.

Raving.¹²⁴ Alan of Lille's writings were thus clearly circulating in Scotland in this period: in this section of the chapter I will focus on his paradigmatic complaint text, *De Planctu Naturae*. I will examine the evidence for the transmission and reception of *De Planctu* in fifteenth-century Scotland, and I will then examine the ways in which it functions as a complaint, arguing that Alan's text eroticises Boethian complaint and provides a visionary amatory framework within which social, political, and philosophical concerns can be addressed. This framework is crucial to our understanding of the relationship between amatory and ethical concerns in the fifteenth-century Scottish complaints which I discuss later in the thesis. *De Planctu Naturae* has also been identified as a seminal text in the establishment of the 'complaint of the times' as a recognisable generic category;¹²⁵ I will thus conclude the section by considering the ways in which *De Planctu* influences Scottish complaints of the times, produced primarily in the mid-sixteenth century.

The aforementioned references to Alan's works in the *Scotichronicon* and *Ratis Raving* are the only known pieces of documentary evidence which point unequivocally to a Scottish readership for any of Alan's texts and, although *De Planctu Naturae* and *Anticlaudianus* are the only two of Alan's works named by fifteenth-century Scottish authors, they represent only a small part of his *oeuvre*.¹²⁶ The specific generic focus of this thesis, and the constraints of space, do not allow for a wider consideration of the reception of Alan of Lille's work in Scotland beyond a brief study of *De Planctu Naturae*; however, the transmission and influence of Alan's writing in Scotland would undoubtedly be a profitable direction for future research.

No extant copy of *De Planctu Naturae* is known to have Scottish provenance or connections. There are, however, some tantalising allusions in fifteenth-century texts which point strongly towards the Scottish circulation of *De Planctu*. The first is in fact not

¹²⁴ For an edition of *Ratis Raving*, see Girvan ed. (1939). Quotation is taken from this edition, p. 15, line 521. On the date of the text, see p. lxxii.

¹²⁵ Kerrigan (1991), p. 7 and Patterson (1995), p. 55.

¹²⁶ For a full list of works attributed to Alan, see Sheridan ed. (1980), pp. 11-31.

an allusion but a direct reference, preserved in an English text with a distinctive Scottish reception history. In Chaucer's *Parliament of Fowls*, the avian assembly is presided over by Dame Nature herself, and she is introduced with the following lines:

And *rycht* as Aleyne in the plaint of kynde
 Deuiß nature in suich array and face
 In suich array *men mycht* hir there fynd
 That *rycht* noble Emperice full of grace
 and ilke foule to take thair owne place
 As thei were wont / alweye fro 3ere to 3ere
 Seynt valentynis day to stonden there

(*Parliament*, ll. 316-22).¹²⁷

Here, the narrator of the *Parliament* explicitly draws attention to the fact that his vision of Natura is related to that included in *De Planctu Naturae*: this reference serves the ostensible purpose of brevity; but it also serves to foreground the *Parliament's* position within a wider literary tradition. The above quotation is taken from the copy of *The Parliament of Fowls* produced in Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Arch. Selden. B. 24:¹²⁸ it is reasonable to assume that the Scottish scribe and readers of the *Parliament* understood the reference to 'Aleyne', and the copy preserved in the Selden codex thus provides vital material evidence of one particular prism through which Alan's expression of socio-political ideas within an amatory and visionary framework reached Scotland.

George Economou's study of *The Parliament of Fowls* reads the text as a significant example of medieval literature in the Natura tradition.¹²⁹ Economou argues for the centrality of the philosophical and literary background of the goddess Natura to our understanding of Chaucer's poem, suggesting, for example, that the two gates described in the *Parliament* represent the conflict between Natura and Venus/Cupid,¹³⁰ as represented in

¹²⁷ Transcribed from Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Arch. Selden. B. 24, f. 146^r.

¹²⁸ *The Parliament of Fowls* is found on ff. 142^r-52^r.

¹²⁹ See Economou (2002), pp. 125-51. Seminal texts in the Natura tradition are: Martianus Capellanus's *De nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii* (c. 410-20); Bernardus Silvestris's *De Mundi Universitate* (c. 1150s); *De Planctu Naturae*; and the *Roman de la Rose* (c. 1225-75).

¹³⁰ See *The Parliament of Fowls* in Benson, ed. (1987), ll. 126-40.

De Planctu Naturae and the *Roman de la Rose*.¹³¹ Economou identifies the ending of the *Parliament* as the most significant facet of its treatment of Natura, however, arguing that Dame Nature retains overall control over the situation, despite the formel eagle's deferral of her decision,¹³² noting that 'the cause of "commune spede" has thus been served by Nature's intercession and by the birds' acceptance of her judgement'.¹³³ As has been noted, however, the copy of *The Parliament of Fowls* contained in Arch. Selden. B. 24 gives the text an alternative ending. This ending does not appear in any of the poem's eleven English witnesses, and it thus provides clear material evidence of a uniquely Scottish reception history for this most political of Chaucerian dream visions.¹³⁴ The Selden ending to the *Parliament* thus has important implications for our understanding of the transmission of the Natura tradition in Scotland: whilst Scottish readers were undoubtedly aware of the *Parliament's* debt to *De Planctu*, Dame Nature's role in the poem's ending is markedly different in the Scottish version of the text.¹³⁵ Nature's role appears to be one of deferential acquiescence: she '...bate on hir lip and sche smylit / And thocht the pacok had rycht wele ysaid' (f. 151^v). Thus, Economou's reading of the ending of the *Parliament* as a celebration and affirmation of 'the goddess who has brought them [the birds] out of chaos into a harmonious acceptance of and active participation in her law' does not hold true for the Selden text: in Selden, resolution is instigated by the peacock, who assumes an authoritative, instructional role in the Scottish text, in place of Nature.

¹³¹ Economou (2002), p. 130.

¹³² Ibid., p. 147.

¹³³ Ibid., p. 148.

¹³⁴ Arch. Selden. B. 24 diverges from the other witnesses at line 600. The Scottish ending to the *Parliament* is printed in Furnivall ed. (1871), pp. 2-26. It is discussed in Fradenburg (1991); Boffey and Edwards (1999), pp. 166-85 (169-71); Mapstone (1999b), 504-5; Murray (2012a), pp. 121-39; and Murray (2012b), pp. 96-108. *The Parliament of Fowls* is identified as Chaucer's most political vision in Benson (1982), pp. 123-44 and Davis (2003), pp. 161-91.

¹³⁵ The origin of this unique Scottish ending is unclear. It is possible that the ending was substituted for practical reasons, such as the loss of the text's ending, either during the copying process of Arch. Selden. B. 24 or during the copying of one or more exemplars behind the Selden text. See Stanley (1998), 29-62 (40-6). It is also possible that the Selden ending to the *Parliament* represents a calculated act of rewriting, although the identity of the author remains a mystery. In an unpublished paper, Mapstone has suggested a young Gavin Douglas as the possible author (quoted in Murray [2012b], p. 104), and Murray has suggested Robert Henryson as another potential candidate (Murray, [2012b], pp. 104-5).

This alteration of Dame Nature's role is particularly fascinating when viewed in the context of other, roughly contemporary, Scottish representations of the goddess. Richard Holland's *Buke of the Howlat* (c. 1450) is another bird-assembly poem,¹³⁶ and it has been argued that Holland's text influenced the Selden ending of the *Parliament*.¹³⁷ Nature also appears in Holland's poem, but her role within it is more prominent. She is figured as the ultimate *locus* of authority in Holland's text: when, after lengthy debate amongst themselves, the fowls are unable to resolve the howlat's predicament amongst themselves, they resolve 'That thai wald Natur beseike of hir gret grace / To discend that samyn hour as thair soverane' (*Howlat*, 862-3).¹³⁸ Nature's role as arbitrator continues: when the howlat's pride becomes insufferable, the birds once again 'plenyteit to Natur' (920). Nature is the undisputed ruler here and she is also adopts a morally authoritative position, rebuking the howlat for his inflated pride whilst informing him that his borrowed feathers are to be removed (931-40). This representation of Nature as both authoritative and instructive is also found in William Dunbar's 'Quhen Merche wes with variand windis past', in which Nature not only crowns the lion as the king of beasts but gives him advice on how best to comport himself in this role, asserting that he must 'Exerce iustice with mercy and conscience'.¹³⁹ This courtly dream vision was composed to mark the marriage between James IV and Margaret Tudor, eldest daughter of Henry VII, which took place in 1503, and Natura's advice is of course related to the long tradition of *speculum principis* literature which thrived in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Scotland. The fact that this advisory passage, in a poem so clearly associated with the public celebration of a high-profile event, attests the significance of the Natura tradition in Scotland. The full cultural

¹³⁶ Richard Holland was the secretary to Archibald Douglas, Earl of Moray, and the *Buke of the Howlat* was composed at Darnaway Castle in honour of Archibald's wife, Elizabeth. On the poem's date, see Riddy (1986), 1-10.

¹³⁷ Correspondences between the two texts were first noted in Mapstone (1996). Murray (2012b), pp. 102-8, dates the ending of the Selden *Parliament* to the period 1450-89 and argues that it contains deliberate references to Holland's *Howlat*.

¹³⁸ All quotations from the *Buke of the Howlat* are from Bawcutt and Riddy eds (1987).

¹³⁹ 'Quhen Merche wes with variand windis past', l. 106. See Bawcutt ed. (1998), vol. I, pp. 163-8 (166). This poem is 52 according to Bawcutt's numbering.

significance of Natura in medieval Scotland cannot be explored here: a dedicated study of the subject, exploring the relationship between *The Parliament of Fowls*, the *Buke of the Howlat*, and ‘Quhen Merche’, alongside the broader influence of the Natura tradition on allegory in medieval Scotland, would undoubtedly be invaluable. For the purposes of this thesis, however, it is important to note that the *Parliament*, the *Howlat*, and ‘Quhen Merche’ point to an ongoing interest in the figure of Natura in fifteenth-century Scotland, and that the *locus classicus* of this interest is certainly Alan of Lille’s *De Planctu Naturae*.

It is necessary at this point to examine the paradigms established in *De Planctu*, and I begin with a discussion of the text’s structure as a complaint. The simplicity of its title belies the complexity of its structure, as it contains not one complaint but two: Nature’s titular complaint, and one delivered by the narrator. The narrator’s complaint acts as prompt and frame for that of Nature, but it is not a truly narrative frame. The narrator’s voice is isolated and decontextualised; the opening of Metrum I sees him launching straight into a description of his woes without introductions or explanations:

In lacrimas risus, in luctus gaudia uerto,
In planctum plausus, in lacrimosa iocos,
Cum sua Naturae uideo decreta silere,
Cum Veneris monstro naufraga turba perit;

(*De Planctu Naturae*, p. 806, ll. 1-4);¹⁴⁰

[I turn from laughter to tears, from joy to grief, from merriment to lament, from jests to wailing, when I see that the essential decrees of Nature are denied a hearing, while large numbers are shipwrecked and lost because of a Venus turned monster]

(*The Plaint of Nature*, p. 67).¹⁴¹

This opening address manages simultaneously to be both individual and universal, describing his personal transformation into a state of distress whilst firmly locating the source of this distress at a broader social level (‘essential decrees of Nature’ and ‘large numbers’). Thus, even though the narrator’s state of distress is described in personal

¹⁴⁰ Quotations from Alan’s Latin text are from Häring ed. (1978), and identified by page and line number.

¹⁴¹ Translations are from Sheridan ed. (1980), identified by page number.

terms, it is made universal. Boethius was certainly Alan's major source for *De Planctu Naturae*;¹⁴² the structural parallels between them are striking indeed. Both begin with a distressed solitary figure to whom a female authority figure appears; the distress of the narrating voice is then explored and clarified through a dialogue structured around a series of questions and answers.¹⁴³ However, this conflation of the individual with the universal from the outset is an important point of difference between the two texts: whereas *De Consolatione* presents a structural movement from a particular aspect of human experience to a broader view of humanity, *De Planctu* combines the two throughout.¹⁴⁴

De Planctu Naturae also begins as it will continue: in the present tense. The narrator uses an *ubi sunt* formula to recall a happier and more hopeful past, asking '...quo Nature secessit gracia, morum / Forma, pudicitie norma, pudoris amor!' (p. 806; 11-12) ['Where has Nature with her fair form betaken herself? Where have the pattern of morals, the norm of chastity, the love of morals gone?' (p. 67)]. However, this is an oblique and allusive reference to the past – the past is not directly described, but its characteristics are implicitly defined through a description of their absence from the present. The narrator's primary focus is thus the current state of affairs: he is interested in the fact that 'Femina uir factus sexus denigrat honorem, / Ars magice Veneris hermafroditat eum' (p. 806; 17-18) ['A man turned woman blackens the fair name of his sex. The witchcraft of Venus turns him into a hermaphrodite' (p. 68)], but he is not initially concerned with reflecting on the past or offering any kind of detailed explanation as to why the vice of homosexuality has become so widespread. This concentration upon present evils rather than on retrospective distress is a distinctive marker of the social complaint or 'complaint of the times';¹⁴⁵ it is a feature

¹⁴² Häring ed. (1978), p. 804 and Cherniss (1986), p. 52.

¹⁴³ Aside from this obvious structural similarity, there are several correspondences of phrasing and thematic detail. These are listed in Sheridan ed. (1980), p. 63 and in Cherniss (1986), pp. 50-2.

¹⁴⁴ The only scholar to compare the structure of the two texts in detail is Michael Cherniss. I differ from him on this point: he suggests that, in *De Planctu*, the 'movement is from a merely personal, self-centered view of the narrator's own experience toward a cosmic view' (Cherniss [1986], p. 61).

¹⁴⁵ Kerrigan (1991), p. 7.

of the socially and spiritually radical English literature of the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries,¹⁴⁶ and it represents a departure from the limited individual subjectivity of the Heroidean model of complaint and an functions as an extension and modification of the Boethian.

A further significant departure from Boethius in *De Planctu* is its situation of the dialogue between narrator and female authority figure within a dream. The influence of Boethius on medieval dream and visionary literature has been amply elucidated, but *De Consolatione* does not actually include any references to falling asleep or to dreaming,¹⁴⁷ whereas *De Planctu* locates the entire encounter between Natura and the narrator within a visionary frame. However this vision, which begins at the opening of the first Prosa, is initially characterised in ambiguous (and certainly Boethian) terms: ‘Cum hec elegiaca lamentabili eiulatione crebrius recenserem, mulier, ab impassibilis mundi penitori delapsa palacio, ad me maturare uidebatur accessum’ (p. 808; 1-3) [‘As in mournful tones I kept repeating these elegiacs, a woman glided down from an inner palace of the impassable world and could be seen hastening her steps in my direction.'](p. 73). As in *De Consolatione*, there is no clear reference to a visionary state at this point in the text. However, the final lines of *De Planctu* resolve any potential ambiguity as to the visionary nature of the event: ‘Huius igitur imaginariae uisionis subtracto speculo, me ab extasis excitatum insompnio prior mistice apparitionis dereliquit aspectus’ (p. 879; 164-5) [‘Accordingly, when the mirror with these images and visions was withdrawn, I awoke from my dream and ecstasy, and the previous vision of the mystic apparition left me’ (p. 221)]. The reader is thus left in no doubt that the preceding events have taken place within a visionary context; what is interesting here is the way in which the text constructs the relationship between vision and complaint.

¹⁴⁶ See White (1944) and Prasad (1965), chapter 3.

¹⁴⁷ Murray (2012b), p. 34.

Vision and complaint are inextricably bound together in *De Planctu* and the effect is one of complex layering. The narrator's complaint, which comprises the whole of the first metrum, takes place outside the framework of the dream; in fact, it appears to be the narrator's complaint which prompts the appearance of Natura. Natura's appearance has such a dramatic effect on the narrator that he enters a kind of liminal state, somewhere between sleeping and waking, life and death:

Quam postquam michi cognatam loci proximitate prospexi, in faciem decidens,
mentem stupore uulneratus exiui totusque in extasis alienatione sepultus sensuumque
incarceratis uirtutibus nec uiuens nec mortuus inter utrumque neuter laborabam.
(pp. 824-5; 4-7);

[When I saw this kinswoman of mine close at hand, I fell upon my face, and stricken with mental stupor, I fainted; completely buried in the delirium of a trance, with the powers of my senses impeded, I was neither alive nor dead and being neither, was afflicted with a state between the two.]

(p. 116).

This represents a dream within a dream; the narrator falls into an ecstatic visionary state at the sight of Natura despite the fact that, as the very end of the narrative reveals, he is already in such a state. He lapses into this second trancelike state partly because 'Hac igitur amenante temporis iuuentute, nullis rerum exhilarata fauoribus priorem uirgo potuit temperare tristiticiem' (p. 824; 1-2) ['Despite the fresh youth of the charming season, by no applause from created nature could the maiden be cheered and moderate her above-mentioned grief' (p. 116)]. We thus have a mirror-effect; the narrator's complaint prompts Natura to appear to him in a vision, and then her state of grief and lamentation prompts him to fall into a second vision, contained within the first.

The narrator does in fact wake from this inset vision after Natura's explanation of her appearance: 'Et per hanc ammonitionem uelut quodam potionis remedio omnes fantasie reliquias quasi nauseans stomachus mentis euomit' (p. 830, 172-4) ['By the final instruction, as by some healing potion, the stomach of my mind, as if nauseated, spewed forth all the dregs of phantasy' (p. 126)]. However, although the narrator apparently

believes entirely in his wakefulness at this point, his subsequent dialogue with Natura of course takes place within the frame of the overarching vision. This layering is then complicated further as, in this dialogue, Natura answers every one of the narrator's statements and questions with an inset mini-complaint. For example, the narrator's initial questions as to the cause of Natura's sorrow receive the following reply: 'An ignoras que terreni orbis exorbitatio, que mundani ordinis inordinatio, que curie incuria, que iuris iniuria, ab internis penetralibus celestis archani in uulgaria terrenorum lupanaria me declinare coegit?' (p. 832; 2-5) ['Do you not know what deviation of earthly rotation, what disorder in the worldly order, what carelessness on the part of the world's caretakers, what injustice to justice have forced me to come down from the innermost depths of the secret realm to the common brothels of the earth?' (p. 130)]. Here, her account of the inversion of the natural order, focused around the idea of sexual deviance, reflects the account given by the narrator in metrum I. In fact, despite the narrator's repeated assertions that 'O regina celestis, affectuosiori desiderio quam huius questionis enodationem esurio' (p. 833; 8-9) ['O heavenly queen, there is nothing for which I thirst with greater desire and longing than I do for an explanation of the subject of my inquiry' (p. 130)], each of Natura's mini-complaints functions as an extension of issues which he himself raised in his initial complaint. Her disquisitions on the vices and disobedience of man, particularly with regards to sexual morality, all function as elaborate glosses on the narrator's own concerns – indeed, the narrator encourages Natura to push her invective to even greater heights of bitterness: 'Vellum ut, laxatis reprehensionis habenis, precordialis auariciae filios impugnares' (p. 857; 149-50) ['I would wish that you give rein to reproof and attack the sons of Avarice with even deeper feeling' (p. 180)]. His ignorance thus appears increasingly artificial as the text develops; it becomes clear that the purpose of the dialogue

is not to instruct the narrator but to provide an authoritative expansion of his views.

Natura's complaints thus function as a type of gloss.¹⁴⁸

This problematises the relationship between Natura and the narrator; although their dialogue appears to resemble the instructress-consolee relationship modelled in *De Consolatione Philosophiae*, unlike Lady Philosophy, Natura's responses deepen the narrator's understanding but they do not widen it, as she confines herself to issues of which the narrator is apparently already aware. Natura has, by her own admission, significant limitations:

Sed quia excedere limitem mee uirtutis non ualeo nec mee facultatis
Est huius pestilentie uirus omnifariam extirpare, mee possibilitatis regulam
prosecuta, homines predictorum uiciorum anfractibus irretitos anathematis
cauteriabo caractere.

(p. 870-1; 171-4);

[However, since I cannot pass the limits of my strength and it is not in my power to eradicate completely the poison of this pestilence, I will attain what is allowed my power and will burn with the brand of anathema men who are ensnared in the tangle of vices that I have mentioned]

(pp. 205-6).

Natura acknowledges that, whilst she can punish those who commit offences against her, she has no power to correct or prevent vices relating to reason or free will. As in *De Consolatione*, the lacunae in the powers of the authority figure must be resolved through divine grace, supplied by the reader from outside the framework of the narrative; however, unlike in *De Consolatione*, the narrator's concerns are not assuaged and the spiritual resolution of the text is denied. The cast of personified virtues summoned by Natura at the end of the text, headed by Genius, are unable to change anything; they too can merely punish. Natura's limitations go even further beyond these that she admits: she condemns Venus and Cupid, but is forced to acknowledge that Cupid's nature is intimately linked with her own and is unable to avoid lapsing into the mythological discourse that she herself

¹⁴⁸ Also suggested in Cherniss (1986), p. 60; see also Piehler (1971), pp. 46-68 (53-4) and Green (1956), 649-74 (652-4).

condemns. Wetherbee has identified this difficulty of Natura's complaint as the inherent impossibility of the desire to 'explain the inexplicable';¹⁴⁹ the effect is to undermine the consolatory potential of complaint. The vertical power structure between narrator and authority figure created in *De Consolatione* is subverted: although Natura provides a practical solution, in terms of the exclusion of sinners from favour, this solution exists only in negative terms, and *De Planctu* instead offers a static and dissatisfying state of spiritual irresolution. The circular pattern of the dialogue between the narrator and Natura creates a model in which complaints can be reiterated, glossed, expanded, and qualified, but never resolved: the Boethian paradigm of complaint as a part of instruction, leading to both consolation and resolution, is subverted. As I discuss in chapter 4, this interplay between complaint, instruction, and consolation which develops in later medieval literature in response to Alan's reworking of Boethius is highly significant for Henryson's use of complaint in all of his major narrative pieces.

The *Roman de la Rose* is heavily indebted to *De Planctu Naturae*, and there is material evidence of this text's transmission in Scotland.¹⁵⁰ Taking *De Planctu* as their model, the authors of the *Roman de la Rose*, and the fourteenth-century *chansons d'aventure* and *dits amoureux* which it inspired,¹⁵¹ offer a concept of complaint which brings together Boethian and Ovidian elements. Davenport has identified Machaut's *Dit de la Fonteinne Amoreuse* and *Remède de Fortune* and Froissart's *Paradys d'Amours* and *Espinette Amoreuse* as the texts which 'established the poem of complaint and comfort as a courtly kind';¹⁵² *De Planctu Naturae* represents an origin point for the fusion of these ideas. The interplay between amatory and philosophical/ethical concerns is one of the most distinctive features of Scottish complaint, and its influence, whether direct or indirect, can thus be perceived in all of the fifteenth-century Scottish texts under discussion.

¹⁴⁹ Wetherbee (2005), pp. 141-2.

¹⁵⁰ The evidence is outlined in full in Murray (2012b), pp. 71-3 and pp. 76-7.

¹⁵¹ See Wimsatt (1968) and Davenport (1988), pp. 6-7.

¹⁵² Davenport (1988), p. 7.

De Planctu Naturae also exerted a profound influence over sixteenth-century Scottish complaint. Fifteenth-century Scottish poetry demonstrates a developing preference for the integration of lyric complaint and narrative, an integration which undoubtedly has its roots in Latin prosimetric complaint; however, this preference is very much a fifteenth-century phenomenon. In the sixteenth century there is a perceptible breakdown of the relationship between complaint and narrative, and a proliferation of self-contained lyric complaints without narrative context. The political upheavals in Scotland following the death of James IV at the Flodden in 1513, which continued until James VI's full assumption of majority government in 1583, also led to a resurgence in the popularity of the 'complaint of the times' as a literary genre. As noted above, Robert Wedderburn's *Complaynt of Scotland* is a central text in this revival; this text appears to reject the models for complaint established over the fifteenth century, and the early part of the sixteenth – instead, it owes more to the 'clamour' literature of the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, which had a particularly strong tradition in England.¹⁵³ In several respects, Wedderburn's *Complaynt* is curiously reminiscent of Gower's *Vox Clamantis* (c.1377-81), another text influenced by *De Planctu*. Their thematic interrelationship is obvious – both texts present a brutal critique of all three estates, and are choked with references to scripture and classical literature. Whether or not Wedderburn was aware of the *Vox Clamantis*, the similarities between the two texts indicate that they belong to the same tradition of politically outspoken calls for orthodox social, political, and ecclesiastical reform.¹⁵⁴

'Vox clamantis' is also a quotation from the Book of Isaiah, Wedderburn's most frequently cited source, with long chunks of the *Complaynt* devoted to the translation of

¹⁵³ Scase (2007), pp. 83-110.

¹⁵⁴ Although no Scottish witnesses of Gower's works survive, Martin makes a convincing case for their circulation in Scotland. If Martin's conclusions are accepted, then Wedderburn may have known the *Vox Clamantis*. See Martin (2002).

‘Esaye’ into Scots. Despite his distaste for the prophecies of Merlin,¹⁵⁵ Wedderburn clearly found this brand of Gowerian forth-telling prophecy particularly appropriate for the delivery of his political message. Wedderburn displays many rhetorical characteristics which would later come to be associated with John Knox and other writers of the Reformation, as he ‘effectively transposed traditional concepts of kingship and the commonweal into a ‘godly’ register which derived its authority and legitimacy from the history of Old Testament Israel rather than from the antiquity and continuity of a distinctively Scottish kingship’.¹⁵⁶ Thus, by the mid-sixteenth century, the Scottish complaint tradition diverges in several directions: one of these is the prose complaint of the times, as exemplified by the *Complaynt of Scotland*. Whilst this thesis will argue for the influence of the balance between amatory and philosophical concerns, as inaugurated by *De Planctu Naturae*, as a key tenet of fifteenth-century Scottish complaints, it is also important to note that the strident voice of the sixteenth-century social complaint owes as much to Alan of Lille.

Conclusion

Ovid’s *Heroides* establishes complaint as an area where gendered voices can be ventriloquised; they connect complaint with notions of epitaphs, posterity, and reputation; by removing complaint from any kind of broader narrative context they also establish an oppositional dynamic between complaint and narrative. Boethius’s *De Consolatione Philosophiae* engages with the idea of complaint as part of an instructional dialogue, and locates complaint as a prompt for a specific kind of narrative action: the movement towards self-knowledge. Alan of Lille’s *De Planctu Naturae* qualifies the Boethian paradigm

¹⁵⁵ The narrator devotes the entirety of chapter X to a discussion of ‘quhou the inglismen gifis vane credens to the prophesies of merlyne’ (pp. 64-7).

¹⁵⁶ Mason (1998), p. 6.

of complaint as a means for consolation and improvement, and denies its power as a force for narrative change and movement. It also creates an association between complaint and the visionary framework. As this thesis will go on to demonstrate, each of these paradigms exerted a significant influence over fifteenth-century Scottish complaints. Within this chapter, Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Arch. Selden. B. 24 has been mentioned several times as a repository of tantalising indications of Scottish engagement with the complaint form, and it is to a detailed study of this manuscript, and its unique importance for our understanding of the development of the Scottish complaint tradition, to which this thesis now turns.

Chapter 2

Complaint in Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Arch. Selden. B. 24

The double sorowe of Troilus to tellen
That was the king *prīamus* sone of Troye
In loving how his auentures befallen
From wo to wele / and aftir out of Ioye

(*Troilus and Criseyde*, I. 1-4).¹

Troilus and Criseyde is the first text copied into Oxford, Bodleian Library Arch. Selden. B.

24.² This manuscript is uniquely important for Older Scots literature, as it provides the earliest and most substantial material evidence for the circulation of the works of Chaucer and other fourteenth- and fifteenth-century English poets in Scotland. It is also the unique witness to four Scottish texts: the *Kingis Quair*; the *Lay of Sorrow*; the *Lufaris Complaynt*; and the *Quare of Jelusy*. The material contained in the manuscript is primarily amatory in subject-matter, and complaint is the dominant form. *Troilus and Criseyde* establishes a paradigm of amatory experience which is reflected in the structure of the manuscript as a whole; there is also a shift away from narrative texts, and a developing preference for unframed complaints, within the codex. The material structure of the manuscript reflects the intertextual relationships between its contents: the items in the manuscript are unified by their interest in Cupid, Venus, and the courts of love, and they also reflect a cyclical movement 'From wo to wele / and aftir out of Ioye'. Arch. Selden. B. 24 is also the product of a clearly identifiable historical and cultural milieu; it is essentially a family book,³ and it provides valuable evidence about the literary tastes of one very particular reading community in late fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century Fife.

¹ Transcribed from Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Arch. Selden. B. 24, f. 1^r.

² *Troilus* is found on ff. 1^r-118^v.

³ The terms 'household' and 'family' book are explored in relation to Arch. Selden. B. 24 in Boffey (2000), pp. 125-34 (131-2).

Arch. Selden. B. 24 was produced in Scotland for Henry, third Lord Sinclair (c. 1460-1513), and it bears his ownership inscription, 'liber Henrici *domini* Sinclar' (f. 230^v). The arms of Henry Sinclair also appear on f. 118^v; he was awarded these arms in 1489, so this year provides a probable *terminus a quo* for the compilation of the manuscript.⁴ The 1480s and 1490s were marked by a series of major dynastic achievements for Henry Sinclair, and various of these have been suggested as the impetus behind the manuscript's commission. It has been argued, for example, that the production of the manuscript was intended to commemorate the marriage between Henry Sinclair and Margaret Hepburn, which took place in 1488.⁵ This seems unlikely, however, given the subject-matter of most of the texts contained within the manuscript; Arch. Selden. presents a view of amatory experience which is, at best, ambivalent. There are other possibilities: in 1488, Henry Sinclair was granted Ravenscraig Castle by royal charter; in 1489 he was granted a thirteen-year lease of Orkney and Shetland, and custody of Kirkwall Castle; and in 1493-4, he was granted Dysart and Newburgh, two further baronies in Fife.⁶ All of these events indicate that Henry Sinclair's star was in the ascendant and it may well have been a combination of them which led to the production of Arch. Selden. B. 24 as a celebratory deluxe object.⁷ As Ravenscraig Castle became Henry Sinclair's main base after 1488 it is probable that the manuscript was produced there.⁸ 1513 has traditionally provided a *terminus ad quem* for the manuscript, as Henry Sinclair died at the battle of Flodden in that year, but it is not certain that work on the manuscript ceased with Henry Sinclair's death.

It is possible that Henry Sinclair was directly involved in selecting texts for inclusion. He was a noted bibliophile, described by Gavin Douglas in the prologue to

⁴ On Henry Sinclair's acquisition of his arms, see Crawford (1985), pp. 232-53 and Crawford (2005), pp. 189-204. See also Mapstone (2005b), pp. 3-13 (4-5).

⁵ Suggested in Fradenburg (1991), p. 129.

⁶ See Balfour Paul ed. (1904-14), vol. XII, pp. 571-2.

⁷ These possibilities are also explored in Boffey (2000), 131-2, and Martin (2008a), p. 29, note 31.

⁸ First suggested in Mapstone (1999b), 504-5 and reiterated with more detailed evidence in Mapstone (2005b), p. 5. Also suggested in Martin (2008a), p. 29, note 31.

Book I of his *Eneados* as ‘fader of bukis’ (II., 5, 85),⁹ and the Sinclair family were more active literary patrons than the Crown in Scotland in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.¹⁰ Given his well-documented literary interests, it is likely that Henry Sinclair and perhaps other members of his family were involved in planning the structural and thematic layout of the codex. What is certain is that, despite the considerable length of time taken to produce the manuscript, there is evidence for significant continuity in its production, suggesting a controlling presence overseeing the operation.

The manuscript was copied by two scribes, and the evidence of their hands suggests that both scribes were notaries public, although neither has ever been convincingly identified. Scribe 1 appears to have been a relatively prolific copyist – his hand has been identified in three other Scottish manuscripts.¹¹ All three of these manuscripts can be connected securely to various branches of the Sinclair family and can be dated c. 1490-c. 1510, demonstrating that scribe 1 was employed by the Sinclairs as a literary copyist, amongst other administrative duties, for a considerable period of time.¹² It has been suggested that scribe 1 is the Scottish scribe James Gray, but this theory has now been refuted.¹³ A more plausible suggestion is that scribe 1 may have been Alexander Sinclair, brother of Earl William Sinclair of Caithness and Oliver Sinclair of Roslin.¹⁴

⁹ Quotations from Douglas’s *Eneados* are from Coldwell ed. (1957-60). Reference is by volume, page, and line number.

¹⁰ On the Sinclairs as literary patrons, see Mapstone (2005b), pp. 8-10.

¹¹ The other manuscripts in which scribe 1’s hand appears are: Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland MS Acc. 9523 (a copy of Sir Gilbert Hay’s prose works); Edinburgh, National Records of Scotland MS GD 43/31/I-II (Scots and Norse genealogical material), and Cambridge, St John’s College MS G. 19 (John Mirk’s *Festial* and *Quattuor Sermones*). See Chesnutt (1986), 54-95; Edwards (1996), pp. 53-67; Boffey (2000); Boffey and Edwards (2005), pp. 14-29; Mapstone (2005b); and Embree *et al*, eds (2012), pp. 36-53. All items copied by scribe 1 in these manuscripts are in prose, and Arch. Selden. B. 24 is the only surviving example of his copying of verse.

¹² On the wide range of duties performed by a notary public in Scotland in this period, see Durkan (1983), pp. 22-40. See also Mapstone (2005b), pp. 6-8.

¹³ Ker (1977), pp. 1-2. See also Boffey and Edwards (2005), p. 17, note 12. However, ‘Late Medieval English Scribes’ (www.medievalscribes.com) repeats the erroneous suggestion that Hand 1 in Arch. Selden. B. 24 ‘May be james [sic] Gray’:

<http://www.medievalscribes.com/index.php?browse=hands&id=210&navlocation=Oxford&navlibrary=Boyleian%20Library&msid=27&nav=off>, viewed on 05/08/2013.

¹⁴ Suggested in Mapstone (2005b), p. 6 and followed in Murray (2012b), p. 93.

Alexander Sinclair was vicar of Pentland and a notary public, and the possibility of his involvement is strengthened by the discovery of a link between Alexander Sinclair and Walter Chepman.¹⁵ If the first scribe was indeed Alexander Sinclair, this could support the idea that work on the manuscript may have continued after 1513, as Alexander did not die until 1521.

In contrast, we know nothing about scribe 2 outside the context of Arch. Selden. B. 24; as yet, no other example of his hand has been found. In the past it has been argued that scribe 2's hand is the same as that of 'V. de F.' in Cambridge, University Library MS Kk. 1. 5 but, despite certain similarities between their hands, this identification has not been accepted.¹⁶ However, there is one decisive clue to the identity of the second scribe. In the Arch. Selden. copy of Hoccleve's *Letter of Cupid*, line 286 of the text reads 'That art and part and subtiltee schuld faille' (f. 214^v),¹⁷ whereas the English copies universally read 'pat art and peyne and sotiltee may faille'.¹⁸ The phrase 'art and part' was a commonplace formula of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Scottish notarial language and culture, but is not a phrase used in English law.¹⁹ If, as all evidence suggests, scribe 2 was a notary public, then this substitution is almost certainly indicative of his origins.²⁰

As far as the collation of Arch. Selden. B. 24 can be reconstructed, the manuscript probably originally consisted of eighteen quires.²¹ Scribe 2's copying stint is predominantly restricted to quires XVII and XVIII, with the *Lay of Sorrow*, the *Lufaris Complaynt* and most of the *Quare of Jelusy* all occurring in what would have been quire XVII (ff. 213-24).

¹⁵ Dr Sally Mapstone has recently discovered that 'NRS GD 112/58 has a record of an instrument of sasine involving William earl of Caithness, the execution of which is facilitated by his brother Mr Alexander. The notary who draws up the instruments for the earl, in his (the notary's) lodgings is Walter Chepman. Date 21 August 1503.' (Private communication from Dr Mapstone, 15/08/2011). For discussion of Walter Chepman's importance to the literary culture of sixteenth-century Scotland, see chapter 5, pp. 235-42.

¹⁶ Boffey and Edwards, eds (1997), pp. 9-11.

¹⁷ My own transcription. All quotations from Hoccleve's *Letter* are from my own transcription of Arch. Selden. B. 24, unless otherwise stated.

¹⁸ Furnivall ed. (1892). This is line 288 in all English copies of the text.

¹⁹ *DOST*, '2. Airt, n.', sense 2.

²⁰ I am grateful to Dr Sally Mapstone for her advice on this point.

²¹ See Barker-Benfield (1997), pp. 29-60 (47-59).

Hoccleve's *Letter of Cupid* is also contained, for the most part, within quire XVII, but it begins on f. 211^v, the penultimate leaf in the preceding quire, which otherwise contains only the latter part of the *Kingis Quair*. The transition between quires XVI and XVII was a point of particular difficulty in the copying process, and the transitional text, Hoccleve's *Letter of Cupid*, plays a uniquely important structural role within the codex.

Scribe 2 writes a very competent bookhand, but the layout of the texts copied by him suggests that he was slightly less experienced in the copying of literary texts than scribe 1. When copying stanzaic poetry, scribe 1 adheres to a consistent pattern of five rhyme royal stanzas per page and, when copying couplets, he maintains a regular pattern of 33-5 lines per page.²² Scribe 2 is unable to maintain this pattern, and in all of the works copied by him stanzas are split across pages. This indicates that he was not sufficiently experienced to be able to compare his exemplar to the size of the leaves provided and adjust the size and spacing of his copying accordingly. Scribe 2 copies the final twenty stanzas of the *Kingis Quair*, and these lines have an even more erratic appearance than the rest of his copying stint. When completing the *Kingis Quair*, the scribe not only splits stanzas across pages, but also dramatically varies the size of his script on ff. 209^v-11^r, variation which does not occur in the other texts copied by him.

The most likely explanation for this disruption is that scribe 2 began copying Hoccleve's *Letter* before the *Kingis Quair* was complete. So close to the end of a text, and to the end of a quire, seems a curious point for the otherwise immaculately careful scribe 1 to cease copying, this can be explained by suggesting that the exemplar of the *Kingis Quair* was incomplete. Arch. Selden. B. 24 was constructed in several discrete stages, from a range of different exemplars,²³ and the evidence suggests that once the defective nature of the *Kingis Quair* exemplar was discovered, scribe 2 began copying Hoccleve's *Letter of Cupid*, the next

²² The competence of scribe 1's work in Arch. Selden. B. 24 suggests that he may have had experience of copying poetry beyond the confines of this manuscript, although no other example has yet been discovered.

²³ See Boffey and Edwards (1997), p. 17.

scheduled item in the manuscript, leaving space to enable the ending of the *Kingis Quair* to be inserted upon its recovery. The irregularity in the size of scribe 2's script when copying the *Kingis Quair* is suggestive of an attempt to make a certain amount of text fit into a space which had been rendered finite by the already extant following text. A leaf is missing from the end of quire XVI, an apparently blank leaf which seems to have been torn out from in between what are now folios 210 and 211.²⁴ The extremely large script used on f. 210 suggests that the scribe was attempting to expand his text to fit an overly generous available space but, when it became clear that this would be impossible, tore a leaf from the quire so that the *Kingis Quair* would finish on f. 211^r, as the beginning of the *Letter of Cupid* had already been copied on to the verso. Hoccleve's *Letter of Cupid* was thus not only the first complete text copied by scribe 2, but the first text to be copied into the manuscript by him at all. Unfortunately, there is no way to be whether or not scribe 2 had copied the *Lay of Sorrow*, *Lufaris Complaynt*, and *Quare of Jelusy* before completing the *Kingis Quair*.

There is a difference in the level of decoration between the portion of the manuscript copied by scribe 1 and that copied by scribe 2. The border on folio 1^r is the first of twenty-one demi-vinets included in the manuscript and establishes a decorative scheme adhered to throughout scribe 1's copying stint.²⁵ In contrast, the only decorations found in scribe 2's copying stint are pen-work initials. These calligraphic letters function in a very similar way to the more ornate decorations found in the first part of the manuscript, but the difference in elaborateness and quality has previously been interpreted as suggestive of a lower status for the items copied by scribe 2, and viewed as an indicator that these poems were '...an unscheduled, though nevertheless appropriate, addition to the

²⁴ Ibid., p. 57.

²⁵ These demi-vinets are used to mark the beginning of major narrative items. For a full list, see Boffey and Edwards, eds (1997), p. 13.

codex.²⁶ However I would argue that, rather than being subordinate to the better-known items of the first scribe's stint, the texts copied by scribe 2 prompted a major change in the manuscript's decorative scheme and that, by the time of the second scribe's copying stint at least, the compilers viewed the manuscript as a cohesive whole of which the materials copied by scribe 2 formed an important part.

Folio 1^r is the most elaborately decorated leaf in the codex: it displays an intricate historiated initial, the only miniature found in the manuscript, and consideration of this miniature is crucial to our understanding of the organising principles governing Arch. Selden. B. 24. Folio 1^r was copied by scribe 1, and of course occurs in the part of the manuscript associated with his work, but the evidence of the manuscript's paper stocks indicates that the copying of this leaf occurred during scribe 2's copying stint.²⁷ The manuscript contains seven different stocks of paper, designated from A to G, and their distribution provides firm evidence of the various stages of its production.²⁸ Folios 1-118 inclusive, which contain the copy of *Troilus and Criseyde*, are copied on five different stocks of paper, A to E. The rest of the manuscript, folios 119-229, is copied on only two stocks, F and G, despite, as Lyall notes, the much greater miscellaneity of the contents.²⁹ There is another perceptible division, however. The works copied by scribe 2 are primarily copied on to paper from stock G. Scribe 2 copies only the end of the *Kingis Quair* and the beginning of the *Letter of Cupid* on stock F; the *Lay of Sorrow*, the *Lufaris Complaynt*, and the *Quare of Jelusy* are copied on paper stock G. The shift from paper stock F to stock G occurs precisely at a division between two quires; f. 212 would have been the last leaf of

²⁶ Martin (2008a), p. 30.

²⁷ It has recently been suggested that all decoration within the manuscript was associated with scribe 1. See T.S. Miller (2012), 25-47 (28-9). However, Miller does not consider the evidence provided by the manuscript's paper stocks.

²⁸ The paper stocks in Arch. Selden. were first described in this manner in Lyall (1989a), pp. 239-56 (250-1). Lyall's description is used and elaborated upon in Boffey and Edwards, eds (1997), p. 4. There is slight variation between the two descriptions and, in referring to the paper stocks, I am using Boffey and Edwards's designations.

²⁹ Lyall (1989a), p. 251.

quire XVI, and f. 213 the first of quire XVII. Scribe 2's work, then, is most clearly associated with the final two quires of the manuscript, quires XVII and XVIII, and with paper stock G; paper stocks A to F are primarily associated with scribe 1's copying stint. Despite this clear rigid division of paper stocks, the very first leaf in the manuscript is also copied on paper from stock G, although in the hand of the first scribe. Clearly, folio 1 was removed at some point during the second scribe's copying stint, probably a considerable period after the copying of *Troilus* was initially completed. As this historiated initial is the only feature which differentiates folio 1^r from the rest of the works copied by scribe 1, it is likely that the leaf was replaced in order that it could be included.³⁰ The appearance of scribe 1's hand on paper so clearly associated with scribe 2 indicates that scribe 1 was still on hand to recopy that leaf, despite work on the manuscript apparently having been transferred to scribe 2. The availability of the same scribe, even so much later in the manuscript's production, is indicative of significant continuity over the period of the manuscript's production.

The historiated initial on f. 1^r is very unusual. Arch. Selden. B. 24 is one of only three manuscripts of *Troilus and Criseyde* to include any illustration whatsoever, and one of only two to include this type of historiated capital.³¹ The scene depicted in Arch. Selden. B. 24 reflects the unique concerns of the manuscript's scribes and compilers. In the top right-hand corner of the miniature, Cupid can be seen peering towards the foremost male figure and preparing to pierce his chest with a long golden arrow. This is presumably intended to depict the moment in Book I of *Troilus and Criseyde* when the God of Love hits Troilus 'atte

³⁰ Boffey and Edwards, eds (1997), p. 15.

³¹ Corpus Christi College, Cambridge MS 61 opens with a full-page illustration of a scene which has been described as Chaucer reading aloud to the court; whatever the truth of that, it certainly depicts an extratextual scene. For a more detailed description of this illustration and the scholarly debate surrounding it, see Parkes and Salter, eds (1978), pp. 15-23. New York, Pierpont Morgan Library MS M. 817 is the only other illustrated manuscript copy of *Troilus and Criseyde*, and has more in common with Arch. Selden. B. 24 as it contains a historiated initial capital on the first leaf which depicts a scene from the narrative. See Krochalis ed. (1986), pp. xxi-xxiv.

full' (f. 4^r).³² It is striking that, whilst scribe 2 was apparently copying Hoccleve's *Letter*, the text in which Cupid is most obviously dominant, a decision should have been taken to produce an illustration of this scene for the first leaf of the manuscript. This decision reflects the overall organisational sophistication of the manuscript: Arch. Selden. B. 24 is dominated by a concern for the amatory, particularly the roles of Venus and Cupid, and the re-illustration of f. 1^r serves to emphasise this central principle. The elaborateness of this leaf also accords *Troilus and Criseyde* high status within the manuscript, and reinforces the idea that *Troilus* represents an amatory paradigm for the manuscript as a whole.

Arch. Selden. B. 24 conforms to many of what have been described as 'the earlier fifteenth-century traditions of Chaucerian *compilatio*'.³³ The correspondences between Arch. Selden. and English Chaucerian manuscripts are illustrated fully in Appendix I (pp. 130-6), and this table shows that the contents of Arch. Selden. bear a particularly close resemblance to the four manuscripts usually referred to collectively as the 'Oxford group'.³⁴ When the contents of Arch. Selden. B. 24 are compared with these other collections, however, there is one notable omission: Arch. Selden. does not contain a copy of Chaucer's *Anelida and Arcite*. *Anelida* was one of the most widely circulated of Chaucer's shorter poems, surviving in thirteen manuscripts, and twelve of these manuscripts share at least one other item with Arch. Selden. A full list is given in Appendix II (pp. 137-8).³⁵ This table demonstrates that, of the twenty-five separate bibliographic items which survive in Arch. Selden. B. 24, ten occur alongside *Anelida and Arcite* in at least one other

³² The fact that this moment is of particular importance in Arch. Selden. is also suggested by the fact that it has been annotated: '<...>re þe gode of [lu]ve infect first [t]roilus w^{ith} lue' (f. 4^r).

³³ Boffey and Edwards, eds (1997), p. 19.

³⁴ Four manuscripts are usually referred to as the 'Oxford group' because of their similarities of content, date, and production methods. These are: Oxford, Bodleian Library MSS Bodley 638, Digby 181, Fairfax 16, and Tanner 346. See E.P. Hammond (1908), pp. 333-40; Brusendorff (1925), pp. 182-98; and Boffey and Thompson (1989), pp. 279-315 (pp. 280-3). All four appear to have been professionally produced in London. Fairfax 16 is the earliest, produced c. 1430-50; Bodley, Digby, and Tanner were all produced c. 1475-1500. Digby 181 was copied by the professional scribe John Brode. See A. Gillespie (2001), pp. 42-3. The link between the Oxford group manuscripts and commercial book production is also discussed in A. Gillespie (2006), pp. 47-8 and pp. 112-26.

³⁵ The only manuscript containing *Anelida and Arcite* which does not share any items with Arch. Selden. B. 24 (and which is therefore not included in the list) is London, British Library MS Harley 372.

manuscript witness. Thus, every major English narrative item in the manuscript and two filler pieces, are associated with *Anelida*; the majority of these pieces are found with *Anelida* in at least three witnesses. This renders it likely that the compilers of Arch. Selden. B. 24 would have come across *Anelida and Arcite* in some form.

The most interesting of the items which cross over between Arch. Selden. and the witnesses of *Anelida and Arcite* is Lydgate's *Complaint of the Black Knight*, because the Lydgate poem is found with *Anelida* in all six of its pre-1500 English witnesses. In four of these six witnesses (Oxford, Bodleian Library MSS Bodley 638, Digby 181, Fairfax 16, and Tanner 346), *Anelida and Arcite* follows the *Complaint of the Black Knight* directly; not only are both texts included, but they are adjacent. The placing of *Anelida and Arcite* next to the *Complaint of the Black Knight* is an Oxford group phenomenon; Pepys 2006 and Additional 16165 do not associate the texts so closely.³⁶ Later in the chapter I will argue that this is crucial to the distinctively Scottish amatory response developed in the manuscript: whereas English manuscript compilers connect Lydgate's *Complaint* to *Anelida and Arcite*, the Scottish compilers associate it with ethical material, specifically with Marian verse; the Scottish compilers also omit *Anelida*, when the evidence gathered from a comparison of the manuscript's contents suggests very strongly that they would have known the text. I will argue that one of the unique Scottish items contained within Arch. Selden., the *Lay of Sorrow*, was included in preference to *Anelida and Arcite*.

Arch. Selden. B. 24 was compiled over an extended period of time, yet there is evidence for significant continuity in its production and its organisation was governed by a sophisticated interest in the problems and possibilities of amatory literature. The result is a series of complex intertextual relationships between English Chaucerian materials and Scottish amatory poetry, and *Troilus and Criseyde* establishes a paradigm of movement which

³⁶ Pepys 2006 shares certain characteristics with the later three manuscripts in the Oxford group: it was produced professionally in London in the last quarter of the fifteenth century, but it is more closely related to Caxton's early quarto editions. See A. Gillespie (2001), p. 47 and A. Gillespie (2006), p. 47.

is reflected in the overall organisation of the manuscript. Lydgate's *Complaint of the Black Knight* and Chaucer's complaints of *Mars* and *Venus* build towards the 'wele' of the *Kingis Quair*, but the manuscript then moves 'out of Ioye' as the happy conclusion of the *Kingis Quair* is undermined by the *Letter of Cupid*, and rejected outright in the *Lay of Sorrow* and the *Lufaris Complaynt*. This movement is reflected in the gradual breakdown of narrative within the manuscript; after the *Kingis Quair*, unframed complaints dominate the codex. The manuscript reaches a distinctively Scottish finale in the *Quare of Jelusy*, a text in which all of the underlying tensions in the manuscript, between love and reason, between the amatory and the ethical, and between complaint, narrative, and frame, are brought explicitly to the foreground. The manuscript also provides a valuable insight into the ways in which a Scottish noble family were reading and interacting with these texts.

The first section of this chapter will focus on Lydgate's *Complaint of the Black Knight*.³⁷ The transmission and reception of this poem in Scotland is unique, and I will argue that Arch. Selden. B. 24 provides the earliest example of a particularly Scottish response to the text.

I

'the maying and disport of Chaucere'

Lydgate's *Complaint of the Black Knight* provides tangible evidence of the distinctively Scottish association between amatory and ethical concerns. The *Complaint* also establishes three crucial paradigms within the context of Arch. Selden. B. 24: the first is the potential of amatory complaint to provide both consolation and instruction; the second is the distinction between lovers who owe their allegiance to Venus and those who owe it to Cupid; and the third is the role of Venus as a benign and merciful intercessor. The

³⁷ NIMEV 1507.

Complaint is included early in MS Arch. Selden. B. 24: occurring on ff. 120^v-9^v, it is the first major narrative item in the codex after *Troilus and Criseyde*. Its positioning is crucial to the development of the manuscript's wider structural and thematic concerns and this poem forms a key part of the complex intertextual relationships at work within the codex. The Scottish recension of the *Complaint of the Black Knight* also reveals a material connection between amatory and ethical concerns, an agenda to which items included later in the manuscript actively respond.

The *Complaint of the Black Knight* is now conventionally dated c. 1427-9, but this remains a matter of conjecture.³⁸ It has previously been suggested that the *Complaint* could be dated to before 1412,³⁹ and an even earlier date of pre-1399 has also been implied.⁴⁰ This difficulty arises from the fact that the text itself reveals nothing of the circumstances of its own composition – any discussion of dating must rely exclusively on external, contextual evidence. I am inclined to agree with Pearsall's assertion that it would be 'dangerous to assume' that the *Complaint*, or any of Lydgate's other undated amatory poetry, belongs to the earlier part of his career,⁴¹ because no copy of the poem survives that can be dated pre-1420 and, due to the exigencies of Lydgate's biography, a date of pre-1400 is highly improbable.⁴² With no internal evidence, it is impossible to date the *Complaint* more precisely than to the first quarter of the fifteenth century. As will be

³⁸ Pearsall (1997), p. 31 and Sweet (2009), p. 272.

³⁹ Hanna (1996b), 95-105 (100).

⁴⁰ Bianco (2001), pp. 95-115 (102). Bianco suggests that the text contains two puns on Henry Bolingbroke's name, and one on the name of the Percy earls of Northumberland, and on that basis suggests that the *Complaint* formed part of 'a literary drama...which predates Bolingbroke's return to England'. Bianco also states that the text 'was almost certainly intended to be heard by a very exclusive group of the nobility. Indeed, the "Percy" found at the heart of the poem could only be discerned by someone in possession of the manuscript' (Bianco [2001], pp. 101-2). However, no material evidence exists which would support such an early date for the poem, or such a narrow and specialised readership.

⁴¹ Pearsall (1997), p. 14.

⁴² Lydgate was ordained as both acolyte and subdeacon at Bury St Edmunds in 1389, when he was approximately fifteen years old, and Pearsall suggests that, in the early part of his monastic career, he would not have been allowed the freedom to compose amatory poetry such as the *Complaint of the Black Knight*. See Pearsall (1997), pp. 13-14.

discussed later, the textual evidence suggests that the *Complaint of the Black Knight* was transmitted to Scotland very soon after its composition.

Unusually, the poem is given a title in all of its extant witnesses. The text's main modern editor refers to it as the *Complaint of the Black Knight*,⁴³ and this title derives from three of the English witnesses: Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Tanner 346; Magdalene College, Cambridge, Pepys Library MS 2006; and Thynne's 1532 print.⁴⁴ A similar title is given in a fourth English witness, British Library MS Additional 16165, in which the poem is entitled 'A complaynt of / An amorous knight' (f. 190^v). In three further witnesses (Oxford, Bodleian Library MSS Bodley 638 and Fairfax 16, and Wynkyn de Worde's print of c. 1531), the poem is given an alternative title, 'The complaynte of a louers lyfe',⁴⁵ and Bodleian Library MS Digby 181 offers, uniquely, 'Pe man in þe erber' (f. 31^v). The variation in the poem's title found across the English witnesses is not replicated in Scotland. In Arch. Selden., the poem has the explicit 'Here endith the mayng and disport of Chaucere' (f. 129^v), and this title is echoed in the other two witnesses. In the Chepman and Myllar print the poem has the incipit 'Here begynnys the mayng or disport of Chaucer', and the booklet containing the text concludes with a descriptive explicit in which the title is repeated.⁴⁶ The Asloan manuscript accords the same title and, like Chepman and Myllar, includes it in both incipit and explicit. Thus, all three pre-1540 Scottish witnesses agree on a title and an attribution,⁴⁷ neither of which has a precedent in the English witnesses. Only one of the English manuscripts offers an attribution for the poem's authorship: MS Additional 16165 contains a colophon describing the text as 'made by Lydegate', and four of the six different running titles used mention Lydgate by name.

⁴³ See MacCracken ed. (1934).

⁴⁴ *STC* 5068.

⁴⁵ In the contents list of Fairfax 16, this title has been corrected to 'the black knight' by a sixteenth-century hand, probably that of the printer Stowe. The identification of Stowe's hand is made in Krausser (1896), 211-90 (212).

⁴⁶ Mapstone ed. (2008a), pp. 109, 135.

⁴⁷ An additional twenty-one stanza excerpt from the poem survives in National Library of Scotland, MS Adv. 1. 1. 6 (the Bannatyne Manuscript; c. 1568). This excerpt is discussed in chapter 5, pp. 260-2.

This rubrication is the most secure evidence there is for identifying the *Complaint* as Lydgate's work.⁴⁸ The remaining manuscripts, and de Worde's print, treat the poem as anonymous, and whilst Thynne's inclusion of the *Complaint* in a collection of Chaucer's works has often been interpreted as an attribution of authorship, this is never made explicit and is a matter of ongoing debate.⁴⁹ As this chapter will focus primarily on the distinctively Scottish reception of the *Complaint*, from this point onwards I will refer to the text by its Scottish title, as *The Maying and Disport of Chaucer*. This title is the most appropriate for my discussion as it not only foregrounds the Chaucerian prism through which Scottish readers accessed the text but also reflects, as I will argue, a particularly Scottish set of interpretive concerns.

Unlike the majority of the English witnesses, the Scottish copies of the poem do not refer to the text as a complaint but, unlike all of the English titles, 'The maying and disport' derives directly from the text. Line 1 establishes May as the text's *locus amoenus*, and then at line 10 the narrator describes how 'nature bad thame riß and disport' (10; f. 120^v).⁵⁰ This choice of words is repeated at the end of the narrator's account of the knight's complaint – the narrator claims that 'like as I herd, and coud him to report / I haue here sett 30^{our} hertis in disport' (587-8; f. 128^v). On one level, then, it is quite clear why the Scottish witnesses should refer to the poem as 'the maying and disport', because the text essentially describes itself as such, but the title is also puzzling because 'disport' primarily suggests amusement and entertainment in both Middle English and Older Scots and this apparent lightheartedness does not marry well with the tone or subject-matter of

⁴⁸ Sweet (2009), p. 271.

⁴⁹ This matter is discussed in chapter 5, pp. 252-4.

⁵⁰ Unless otherwise specified, all quotations from the *Maying* are taken from my own transcriptions of Arch. Selden. B. 24, and line numbers relate to the text as it appears in this manuscript. For convenience, folio numbers are also given for quotations.

the text.⁵¹ However, I would suggest that the use of the term ‘disport’ in the text’s Scottish title is indicative of the way it was perceived north of the border. In Middle English, ‘disport’ could also mean ‘consolation; solace; a source of comfort’.⁵² The first use of ‘disport’ in the text, at line 10, is in the form of an injunction from Nature and directly follows a description of the consolation offered by the dawn:

And lucifer to chace away the nycht
 A3eyne the morow our~~e~~ orisont hath take
 To bid louer~~is~~ out of their slepe awake

 And hertes hevy for to reconfort
 From dreryhede of heuy nychtis sorowe
(ll. 5-9; f. 120^v).

Nature’s instruction that lovers should ‘hem disporte’ is explicitly associated with the concept of consolation. There is no record of ‘disport’ carrying this meaning in Older Scots; however, the possibility of complaint as a means of achieving consolation in sorrow is a recurring concern in the text, and the Scottish title is thus strikingly apposite.

In the most detailed textual analysis of the text undertaken, Krausser collates the variants from all of the poem’s witnesses and on the basis of his findings divides the witnesses into two groups.⁵³ The first, group X, comprises the three witnesses which title the poem ‘A complaynte of a louer’s lyfe’, MSS Bodley 638 and Fairfax 16, and de Worde’s print. The second, group Y, contains all others. Krausser goes on to split group Y into two further sub-groups, one of which contains the following witnesses: Arch. Selden. B. 24; the Chepman and Myllar print; and Additional 16165. It should be noted that the Asloan

⁵¹ See *MED* ‘disport’ (n.), 1:

<http://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/m/mec/medidx?size=First+100&type=headword&q1=disport&rgxp=constained>, viewed on 11/09/2013, and *DOST* ‘disport’ (n.).

⁵² See *MED* ‘disport’ (n.), 2b:

<http://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/m/mec/medidx?size=First+100&type=headword&q1=disport&rgxp=constained>, viewed on 05/08/2013.

⁵³ The article under consideration is Krausser (1896).

manuscript is excluded from Krausser's analysis as he was unable to consult it,⁵⁴ but as subsequent comparison of the Scottish copies has shown its close relationship to the Selden and Chepman and Myllar copies,⁵⁵ it is not unreasonable to assume that, had he seen it, Krausser would have included the Asloan Manuscript in group Y. Of Arch. Selden., Additional 16165, and the Chepman and Myllar print, Krausser states that 'Diese hs. nebst druck zeigen eine menge charakteristika, die darauf hinweisen, dass sie aus einer gemeinschaftlichen vorlage abgeleitet sind' ['these manuscripts and this print display many characteristics which indicate that they derive from a common exemplar'].⁵⁶ Krausser rejects the idea that any of the three texts could have been copied from the other; ultimately, he posits the hypothesis that Arch. Selden. B. 24 shared a common exemplar, and that this exemplar was a twin of MS Additional 16165.⁵⁷ Krausser's collations, combined with Fox's more recent scholarship which takes the Asloan manuscript into account, indicate that at least two witnesses are missing from the picture of the *Maying's* Scottish textual history. The first is the ancestor of both the Selden and Chepman and Myllar copies, and the second is another print, 'closely related to, but not identical with, the surviving Chepman and Myllar prints', from which Asloan seems to have been copied.⁵⁸ In the first instance, it is not precisely clear whether it is one or more witnesses which are missing. It is possible, of course, that Selden and the Chepman and Myllar print were produced from separate exemplars, and that these exemplars descend from some common copy, but on balance I think the connection between them is closer than that. The very notable textual similarity between the two copies, combined with their closeness in date, suggests that perhaps their common ancestor was immediate and they were copied from the same exemplar.

⁵⁴ Krausser (1896), 216.

⁵⁵ Fox (1977), p. 163.

⁵⁶ Krausser (1896), 220; my own translation.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 221.

⁵⁸ Fox (1977), pp. 156-71 (158).

This leaves Krausser's suggestion that the Scottish copies are related, albeit more distantly, to Additional 16165. This manuscript is one of five surviving manuscripts to have been copied in full by John Shirley, and it is the earliest of his surviving compilations.⁵⁹ A likely date of c. 1420-27 has been suggested for the manuscript.⁶⁰ Additional 16165 is certainly the earliest surviving copy of Lydgate's poem, and the date of the manuscript's production is unusually close to the date of the poem's composition.⁶¹ It is interesting that this very early copy should be the one which has the closest textual relationship to the Scottish witnesses. This suggests that the *Maying* reached Scotland very early in its textual history; given the dates involved, it is not impossible that James I, on his return to Scotland from captivity in England in 1424, provided the route by which the text was first transmitted to Scotland.

The positioning of the *Maying* within its three pre-1540 Scottish witnesses reveals that, north of the border, the text was universally associated with Marian verse. This association appears to be unique to Scotland. In Arch. Selden. B. 24, the *Maying* is followed directly by Thomas Hoccleve's 'Modyr of god',⁶² although the manuscript gives no title and the poem is misattributed.⁶³ Of the individual booklets which comprise the surviving Chepman and Myllar prints, some contain a single work or a number of shorter texts, whereas others contain one longer text with a short poem acting as a 'filler' to complete the booklet. The booklet containing the *Maying* is constructed on the latter principle, and the filler which completes it is the seven-stanza Marian lyric 'Qwhen be

⁵⁹ For a full account of Shirley's life and career, see Connolly (1998). The other four manuscripts copied entirely by Shirley are: Cambridge, Trinity College Ms R. 3. 20; London, British Library MS Harley 78; Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Ashmole 59; and Sion College MS E. 44. For a full list of manuscripts connected to John Shirley, see Griffiths (1992), 83-93 (91-3).

⁶⁰ This date is based partly on Additional 16165's relationship with another manuscript, Cambridge University Library MS Gg. iv. 27 – this manuscript is usually dated c. 1415-25, and the two are considered to be related because they are the first to include Chaucer and Lydgate together. See Hanna (1996b), 95, 99.

⁶¹ The five other English manuscripts were all produced later. The closest in date to Additional 16165 is Fairfax 16, which was probably copied c. 1430-50; the others were all copied c. 1475-1500. See A. Gillespie (2001), pp. 42-3, 47.

⁶² *NIMEV* 2221.

⁶³ See below, pp. 80-1.

dyvyne deliberation’.⁶⁴ The *Maying* is also associated with Marian material in the Asloan manuscript; it occurs in a part of the manuscript which is otherwise entirely devoted to religious and ethical material.⁶⁵ The quire containing the *Maying* is filled with three Marian poems: ‘Roß mary most of wertewe virginal’;⁶⁶ ‘Closter of crist riche Recent flour delys’;⁶⁷ and ‘Hale sterne superne’.⁶⁸

For the purposes of comparison, the following table indicates the extant witnesses in which the Marian texts associated with the *Maying* can be found:

Marian Lyric	Known witnesses
‘Qwhen be dyvyne deliberation’	Chepman and Myllar Bannatyne Manuscript
‘Modyr of god’	MS Arch. Selden. B. 24 Edinburgh, NLS MS Adv. 18. 2. 8 <u>Huntington Library MS HM 111</u>
‘Roß mary most of wertewe virginal’	Asloan Manuscript Edinburgh University Library MS 205 <u>British Library MS Harley 1703</u> Edinburgh, NLS MS Adv. 18. 5. 14
‘Closter of crist riche Recent flour delys’	Asloan Manuscript
‘Hale sterne superne’	Asloan Manuscript

⁶⁴ *SIMEV* 2579.5.

⁶⁵ For a more detailed discussion of the treatment of the *Maying* in the Chepman and Myllar prints and the Asloan manuscript, see chapter 5.

⁶⁶ *SIMEV* 2831.8; anonymous.

⁶⁷ *SIMEV* 1082.5; correctly attributed to Walter Kennedy.

⁶⁸ *IMEV* 636; correctly attributed to William Dunbar.

The English witnesses listed are underlined; this table thus demonstrates that the Marian poems associated with the *Maying* predominantly survive in Scottish witnesses. The two exceptions are ‘Roß mary’ and Hoccleve’s ‘Modyr of god’, both of which are attested in one English witness. San Marino California, Huntington Library MS HM 111, which contains ‘Modyr of god’, is an autograph manuscript copied by Hoccleve c. 1422-6; the poem appears on ff. 34-7 with the title ‘Ad *beatam virginem*’.⁶⁹ The sole English witness to ‘Roß mary’ is British Library MS Harley 1703, which was almost certainly copied from a Scottish exemplar.⁷⁰ On the basis of this evidence, it is reasonable to conclude that, apart from ‘Modyr of god’, the Marian poems associated with the *Maying* are examples of pre-Reformation Scottish devotional literature. The connection between the *Maying* and Marian material is not found in its English witnesses.

The connection between the *Maying* and Marian poetry is more than a coincidental pairing that occurred in one witness and was then reproduced three times over. What remains unclear is whether this association originated in Scotland, or whether the *Maying* travelled to Scotland in a witness which linked the two. The latter is an interesting supposition if we return to John Shirley’s production of Additional 16165. All the evidence suggests that Shirley copied the *Complaint of the Black Knight* into Additional 16165 from a short pamphlet produced very soon after the poem’s composition,⁷¹ and Additional 16165 is the English witness which bears the closest textual similarities to the Scottish witnesses. It seems likely, then, that the first Scottish readers and copyists of the *Complaint* accessed it in a form very similar (or even, perhaps, identical to) the pamphlet used by Shirley. We can also infer, from the treatment of another Lydgatean piece of similar length to the *Maying*, that short devotional verses – whether by Lydgate or not – did attach

⁶⁹ See Burrow and Doyle, eds (2002), p. xi.

⁷⁰ This manuscript was copied in 1581 by the Catholic priest William Forrest. It seems that Forrest copied the poem from a Scottish exemplar and anglicised it, also adding a further eighteen stanzas. For more detailed discussion, see Cunningham (1971-87), 32-40 (34).

⁷¹ Fredell (2006), 51-73 (62).

themselves to the poems of his which were circulating in pamphlet form. Cambridge University Library MS Kk. 1. 6 is a copy of Lydgate's *Churl and the Bird* which also contains ten shorter poems, and these are '...mostly what the scribe calls "prayers" or brief religious pieces, quite different from the secular *CB*'.⁷² It is thus possible that the *Maying* could have travelled to Scotland initially in a compilation not dissimilar to MS Kk. 1. 6; that is, in a pamphlet-derived copy, to which a selection of various short Marian materials had become attached.

If this hypothesis were correct, it would mean that the connection between the *Maying* and Marian verse was made first in England, not Scotland. However, the fact remains that it is an association preserved in all of the Scottish witnesses and none of the English ones. This suggests that, in Scotland, the connection between the *Maying* and Marian poetry was perceived to be genuinely thematic; in Scotland, this sustained association represents a particularly Scottish mode of reading and responding to the poem. Indeed, it has been remarked that there is a unique Scottish interest in situating amatory material within an ethical or religious context: Martin argues that the amatory and the ethical are inextricably bound together in medieval Scottish culture by the lexis used to describe amatory experience, describing amorous passion as '...the area of human experience which is natural, inevitable and so inescapable, and which therefore stretches the moral and ethical resources of the individual to their limits'.⁷³ This association is clearly established in Arch. Selden. B. 24: the inclusion of 'Modyr of god' directly after the *Maying* is of course the earliest example of the Scottish association between the *Maying* and Marian verse, but there are moments elsewhere in the manuscript where religious material is interspersed with amatory verse. Hoccleve's 'Modyr of god' is followed by Chaucer's *Complaint of Mars* and *Complaint of Venus*, and *Venus* is then followed by two further

⁷² Fredell (2006), 61.

⁷³ Martin (2008a), p. 2.

religious poems, ‘O Hie Emperice and quene celestiale’ and ‘This warldly Ioy is onuly fantasy’.⁷⁴ The compilers of Arch. Selden. B. 24 clearly deemed the inclusion of religious material within an anthology primarily consisting of amatory complaints to be entirely appropriate.

This association between amatory and ethical material is evident in another fifteenth-century Scottish manuscript, which supports the view that it is a wider Scottish interest and not a peculiarity of Arch. Selden. National Library of Scotland MS Adv. 18. 2. 8 is the second Scottish witness of ‘Modyr of god’, but it is known primarily as the sole surviving manuscript of John Ireland’s *Meroure of Wyssdome*. As noted in chapter 1, Ireland’s text is directed towards a courtly audience with a knowledge of Chaucerian and Lydgatean amatory verse;⁷⁵ Hoccleve’s ‘Modyr of god’ appears on ff. 112^v-15^r, at the end of the first two books of the *Meroure*, and Ireland clearly expected it to appeal to, and resonate with, his projected audience. ‘Modyr of god’ is attributed to Chaucer in Adv. 18. 2. 8, as it is in Arch. Selden. B. 24; in fact, the similarity between the attributions is striking. In Arch. Selden., ‘Modyr of god’ ends with ‘Explicit oracio galfridi Chaucere’ (f. 131^v), and in the Ireland manuscript, the poem opens with ‘Incipit Oracio Galfridi Chaucer’ (f. 112^v) and closes with ‘Explicit oracio Galfridi chaucer’ (f. 115^v). The only other surviving copy of ‘Modyr of god’ is San Marino, California, Huntington Library MS HM 744, a holograph manuscript of Hoccleve’s works, which does not, of course, attribute the text in this way. Its wording is also highly unusual amongst Chaucer attributions generally (both correct and incorrect); I have so far been unable to discover any other witness, manuscript or print, which also uses the phrase ‘oracio galfridi chaucer’. It is also unusual even amongst the Chaucer attributions in Arch. Selden. B. 24; whilst several of these are also in Latin,⁷⁶ only

⁷⁴ NIMEV 2461 and 3660 respectively.

⁷⁵ See p. 38.

⁷⁶ Walton’s *Boethius*, the *Complaint of Venus*, ‘O hie emperice and quene celestiall’, and the *Parliament of Fowls*, all bear Latin attributions.

two others are descriptive,⁷⁷ and they are both in the vernacular. The similarity between the attributions in the Selden and Ireland MSS indicates that more than one copy of 'Modyr of god' was circulating in Scotland in a version bearing this very particular attribution. Thus we can see a clear material association between amatory and ethical material in late fifteenth-century Scottish manuscripts, particularly in Arch. Selden. B. 24, and *The Maying and Disport of Chaucer* is the text which inaugurates this association in this manuscript. *The Maying and Disport of Chaucer* is also the text which provides the clearest material evidence of the connection between the amatory and the ethical in Older Scots literary and textual culture.

The *Maying* is constructed in three distinct parts. The first 217 lines form a narrative frame, and lines 218-574 consist of an inset complaint, ostensibly voiced by the knight of the English title, but mediated through the figure of the narrator. The third part, ll. 575-681, is marked by a return to the narratorial voice, and in this use of the original framing device the knight's complaint is qualified by a petition to Venus delivered by the (presumably male) narrator, and by two envoys. The *Maying* is composed entirely in rhyme royal stanzas, apart from the envoys, which are both eight-line stanzas rhyming *ababbcbc*.⁷⁸ The complex interaction between complaint and frame is crucial to our understanding of the text and, as well as exploring consolatory and instructional potential of complaint, ultimately presents complaint as a static mode.

The text initially associates May with joy and consolation for lovers. The narrator awakens suddenly, presumably in response to Nature's summons at line 10, and immediately offers the only real information the text contains about him: he is apparently suffering from some kind of acute personal sorrow. No details are divulged; he states

⁷⁷ 'Deuise prowes and eke humiltee' and *The Maying and Disport of Chaucer*.

⁷⁸ In all Scottish witnesses, stanzas 17 and 18 are omitted; as a result, in the Scottish copies, the three sections are ll. 1-203, 204-560, and 561-667 respectively. On the significance of these omitted stanzas, see below, pp. 83-4.

simply that ‘My sekenes sat ay so neigh myn hert’ (18; f. 120^v). The implication is that the narrator’s sorrow is amatory,⁷⁹ but this is never stated explicitly – indeed, later in the text, he declares that he has ‘no knowelage of suich matere’ (177; f. 123^f). Whatever the nature of his distress, the narrator is determined to seek consolation:

Bot for to fynden sorowe of my smert
Or at the leste sum relesche of my peyne
That me so sore held in euery veyne

I roos anone and tho^{cht} þat I wold gone
Into the wod

(19-23; f. 120^v).

The narrator’s entrance into the highly stylised landscape of the poem is thus intimately bound up with the notion of consolation; all following narrative action is occasioned by the narrator’s search for relief from his distress, and whilst the nature of this distress remains unspecified, the impression that it is likely to be amatory in nature is reinforced by the narrator’s representation of the woodland. This description is steeped in classical, specifically Ovidian, amatory mythology. In stanza 10, when describing the rich variety of trees contained within the wood, the narrator refers to the laurels as ‘daphin’ (64; f. 121^f), and later in the same stanza refers to ‘The filbart eke þat lawe dooth enclyne / Hir bewes grene vnto the erd adoun / Vnto his kny^{cht} callit demephoun’ (68-70).⁸⁰ The narrator then goes on to reference Narcissus, Pegasus, and Diana and Actaeon, all myths derived from Ovid,⁸¹ but here Lydgate draws on Ovidian examples in order to refute them. Upon seeing an enclosed, glassy pond, the narrator is careful to insist upon its wholesomeness, stating emphatically that it is

⁷⁹ The May setting is of course closely associated with fourteenth- and fifteenth-century amatory literature in England and Scotland, and this preference for a May setting is perhaps due to the fact that May was traditionally considered to be Cupid’s month. See Fleming (1971), 21-40 (29).

⁸⁰ Daphne’s transformation into a laurel tree is recorded in *Metamorphoses*, Book I. The story of Phyllis and Demophon is found in Ovid’s *Heroides* (II), but Ovid does not include Phyllis’s transformation into a tree. Lydgate’s version of the story, in which Phyllis is represented by a hazelnut tree, derives from Gower’s *Confessio Amantis* (Book IV, ll. 861-71). On Gower as the inventor of this detail, see Macaulay ed. (1900), p. 504, note to line 869. Lydgate also associates Phyllis with the hazelnut tree in the *Temple of Glass* (line 88).

⁸¹ All found in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, in Books III, V, and III respectively.

Noc~~h~~t like the well quhare as narcissus
 Slayn was through the vengeaunce of Cupide...
 Nor liche to the pitt of pegasee...
 Nor like the welle of pure chastitee
 Quhare as dyane *wit~~h~~* her nymphis kepte
 (87-8; 92; 94-5; f. 121^v).

Even as he is refuting these comparisons, however, the narrator is drawing them into the reader's mind, creating a textual locus rich in Ovidian amatory associations. The pools of Narcissus, Pegasus, and Diana are all associated with transgression and danger, but the narrator insists instead that this pool is associated with consolation and comfort, stating that the water 'So holsom was þat It wold assuage / Belyng hertes' (100-1; f. 121^v). The narrator's confidence in the wholesomeness of the pool is then shown to be well placed as, when he drinks deeply from the water, he '...was refreshed wel / Of the brynnyng that sate so nyghe my hert' (113-14).⁸² Thus it appears that the narrator has achieved his initial objective of deriving consolation from the landscape.

This is true only of the English *Complaint*: in the Scottish *Maying*, this consolation is denied. Stanzas 17 and 18 (ll. 113-26) are omitted in all Scottish witnesses, and this creates a crucial difference in the narrative frame. In the English text, the narrator drinks from the well and then, his own distress significantly lessened, walks on and comes to the arbour in which he finds the knight. However, in the Scottish copies we move abruptly from 'And of the watir drank a goode draucht' (112; f. 122^v) to 'This herbere was full of flouris of Inde' (127). Thus, in the *Maying*, the appearance of the knight complaining in the arbour has a suddenness and strangeness not present in the English text. It almost seems as if the narrator's drink of water has caused the knight and the arbour to materialise, and this devalues the narrator's previous assertions that there is nothing supernatural or unwholesome about this particular well. It also gives the episode a visionary quality quite

⁸² This quotation is from MacCracken ed. (1934).

unlike the English text. The narrator's descriptions twice link the knight's complaint with the dream vision tradition: at line 140, the narrator characterises the knight's condition as a 'suough', and then states that he was 'lying in a trance' (201; f. 123^v),⁸³ and in the Scottish text, these trancelike elements of the knight's complaint combine with the suddenness of his appearance in the text to create a double-layered visionary effect. The narrator is also, crucially, denied the consolation for his own sorrows which the English copies of the text afford him; in the English version of the *Complaint*, the narrator is 'An huge part relese of my smert' (116),⁸⁴ but not in the Scottish copies. In the Scottish recension, the narrator is still suffering under his own distress when he becomes privy to that of the knight.

The narrator acts as an intrusive and self-conscious mediator between the reader and the knight's complaint; before he actually presents the knight's complaint he offers an extended theorisation of the proper means by which complaints should be delivered and recorded. The narrator establishes himself in a deliberately voyeuristic position from the outset, noting that he '...gan anon so softly as I coud / Among the bushis me priuely to schroude' (132-3; f. 122^v), and he makes it clear to the audience that it was '...me þat herd all his compleynyng / And all the ground of his wofull chance' (157-8; f. 122^v). He thus foregrounds his position as mediator of the knight's words, and refers to himself as doing 'plesance' (159; f. 122^v) to the audience by adopting this position, a slightly odd description which does, however, marry well with the lighthearted note of the Scottish title.

The narrator takes great trouble to emphasise the importance of personal response to complaint at this point in the text. Firstly, he designates complaint as an entirely appropriate reaction to distress, declaring that 'vnto Wo acordyng \th/ compleynyng' (169; f. 122^v), but then turns to the particulars of his own feelings. He invokes the assistance of Myrrha, and is careful to note the effect that the knight's distress is having on him:

⁸³ Swoons are often associated with dream visions and other mystical experiences in Middle English and Older Scots literature. See Windeatt (2011), pp. 211-30 (225).

⁸⁴ Quotation and line number from MacCracken ed. (1934).

O eyen two lat now 3our teres reyne
 Into my penne / and help now in this nede
 Thou wofull myrr thou felest myn hert blede
 O pitouß wo / and my hand eke quake
 Quhan þat I write eke for this mannis sake
 (164-6; f. 122^v).

This extreme physical empathy is explained by the narrator's subsequent assertion that 'quhoso þat schall writen of distresß / In party nedeth to know felyngly / The cauß and rute of suich a malady' (173-5; f. 122^v). It would seem at this point that the narrator is establishing his own qualification as an appropriate re-teller of the knight's complaint. However, he subsequently negates this by declaring that he has 'no knowelage of suich matere' (177; f. 123^v). Here, the narrator's conception of his own position is highly contradictory – having insisted that personal knowledge of pain and distress is necessary in order to be able to record it, he then denies possessing any such knowledge himself, and then goes on to further complicate the matter by insisting nonetheless on the accuracy of his report. He declares that he will relate the knight's complaint 'evyn like without addicioun' (187; f. 123^v) and compares his situation to that of 'a scryuener / That can no more bot þat he schall write / Rycht as his master besyde him dooth endyte' (180-2; f. 123^v). These contradictions serve to emphasise the stylised nature of this narrative frame: the narrator is simultaneously manipulating two conventional *topoi* of complaint, that of sincerity and that of the naive and inexperienced narrator, and in so doing is exposing the fictionality of both. The narrator's figuration of himself as a scribe foregrounds the tension in the text between the narrator's aural experience of the knight's complaint, and the reader's encounter with the written version of this aural experience.

This is followed by the apparent shift to the knight's voice for the complaint proper. The overwhelming mood of this complaint is one of circularity and stasis; for example, the knight characterises the depth of his physical and emotional distress in the

first four stanzas (204-31; f. 123^v) by repeating the comparison between hot and cold. This circular hopelessness pervades the entire complaint – not only is the knight unable to imagine any possible relief for his distress, but he also asserts that ‘Or I was borne my destyne was sponne / by *parcas* sustren...’ (473-4; f. 127^r). The knight repeatedly insists that death will provide the only possible resolution to his distress, and indeed the narrator implies that the knight is close to death when he first encounters him in the arbour. However, such is the circularity of the knight’s complaint that the text denies even this resolution. The knight concludes with specific reference to his own death, bequeathing everything he has to his faithless lady: ‘And if I dye/ in my testament / My hert I send / and my spirit also / Quhat euer sche list with thame for to do’ (544-6; f. 128^r),⁸⁵ and declaring that ‘thus I mak an end’ (560; f. 128^r). Despite his lady’s rejection, the knight remains completely bound to her service, and the narrator makes it clear that the ostensible end of the complaint is not actually the end – he records how:

...at the last / the wofull man aroos
 And to a luge went there beside
 Quhare all the may his custum was to byde
 Sole to compleynen of his peynes kene
 From 3ere to 3ere vndir the bewis grene
 (570-4; f. 128^v).

With these lines, it becomes clear that the knight’s complaint is not an isolated incident; it is something which he is doomed to repeat for the whole of May, every year. This revelation that the knight’s complaint is an endlessly repeated action compounds its painful, static circularity.

The knight’s complaint reveals that he holds the arbitrariness of Cupid responsible for his distress. Lines 255-91 (f. 124^{r-v}) appear to be a direct address to the Christian God,

⁸⁵ This moment may well inform Cresseid’s bequest to Troylus at ll. 575-91 of Henryson’s *Testament of Cresseid*. See chapter 4, p. 208.

and in these lines the knight conceptualises his distress in primarily judicial terms, presenting himself as a victim of oppression who has been able to gain no legal redress – the situation is presented as a poorly conducted trial:

Atournay mowe none admyttit be
 To excuß treuth now inward to speke
 To feith nor sothe the Iuge list *nocht* see
 There is no gayn bot he will be wreke
 O lord of treuth to the I call and cleke
 How maistou see thus in thy *presence*
 Withouten *mercy* murder innocence
 (267-73; f. 124^r).

The mismanagement of this trial ultimately results from the fact that knight's situation has been judged 'wi t^hout avisement' (264; f. 124^v), and it swiftly becomes clear that the primary figure who acts without 'avisement' in the text is Cupid. The knight alludes to the dangers of love when he states that 'blynd chance...In loue hath most his experience' (295-6; f. 124^v), and these concepts are explicitly connected to the figure of Cupid when the knight states that 'Without avise he lattith his arow go / For lak of sight and also of resom' (450-1; f. 126^v). The knight is both servant and victim of Cupid; in the *Maying*, certainly insofar as they relate to Cupid, amatory matters are associated with a dangerous lack of reasoned governance, with injustice, and ultimately with powerlessness.

At line 422, the knight thanks both 'venus and the god Cupide' (f. 126^v) for his situation, and this is the only moment at which the knight mentions Venus. Otherwise, a rigid dichotomy is preserved in the text: the knight is Cupid's servant, and the narrator is associated with Venus. This association between the narrator and Venus develops a concept of amatory complaint which is quite different from that suggested by the knight's complaint, and in this way the narrative frame both glosses and reinterprets the central intercalated complaint. The narrator's interest in Venus, which forms the final section of the poem, returns to the concept of consolation suggested at the beginning of the text, and

which has been so conspicuously absent from the knight's complaint. After noting his own speed and accuracy in recording the knight's complaint, the narrator (who has remained outside, at the scene of the overheard complaint) notices planetary Venus rising in the evening sky. He immediately makes a connection between the appearance of Venus and the relief of sorrow, asserting that Venus appears 'hevy hertis onely to releve' (600; f. 129^v). The narrator then drops to his knees and offers a prayer to Venus, in which he asks her mercy for 'thame þat be in sorowe bound' (617; f. 129^v), particularly the knight in the arbour. The narrator here figures Venus as a powerful intercessory figure, and the terms in which the narrator addresses her are strongly reminiscent of Marian devotional verse – she is described as 'Confort to carefull' (613; f. 129^v), and she is able to 'inclyne' human hearts to mercy (627; f. 129^v).

The *Maying* thus ends on an essentially hopeful note; the static despair of the knight's complaint has given way to the possibility of consolation. The narrator concludes by addressing his text to '3e loue^rs all þat ben trewe' (639), and is confident 'That eche of 3ow may haue suich a grace' (643). The concept of the amatory, presented as so dangerous in the knight's complaint, is redeemed somewhat and the prospect of consolation is reintroduced; however, this consolation is only possible if the arbitrary and unreasoned Cupidian concept of the amatory is mediated through devotion to the merciful, ethical Venus who is presented at the end of the text.

As noted above, the *Maying* is directly followed by 'Modyr of god' in Arch. Selden. B. 24. However, the next major item in the manuscript is Chaucer's *Complaint of Mars*, which is directly responsive to the *Maying*. *Mars* is in turn followed by the *Complaint of Venus*; these texts are treated as a pair in Arch. Selden. B. 24 and this pairing provides a model to which the *Lay of Sorrow* and *Lufaris Complaynt*, included later in the manuscript, adhere. *Mars* and *Venus* are separated from the next major narrative item in the

manuscript, Clanvowe's *Boke of Cupide*, by two religious lyrics: 'O hie emperice and quene celestiall' and 'This worldly Ioy is onuly fantasy'. Thus the association between Chaucerian amatory material and Marian verse established by the positioning of the *Maying* continues in the manuscript; the *Maying* has established both structural and thematic paradigms

II

The Complaint of Mars and the Complaint of Venus

Chaucer's *Complaint of Mars* and *Complaint of Venus* are the next major items in Arch. Selden. B. 24 after *The Maying and Disport of Chaucer*. The end of the *Maying* is separated from *Mars* by Hoccleve's 'Modyr of god'; however, this piece is attributed to 'galfridi Chaucere' (f. 131^v). Through the positioning and attribution of texts at this point in the manuscript an authorial identity is created for 'Chaucer' which can illuminate our reading of the unique Scottish texts included in the later parts of the manuscript. *Mars* and *Venus* work together as a complementary pair in Arch. Selden., illustrating an oppositional model of gendered complaint which is both imitated and subverted in the *Lay of Sorrow* and the *Lufaris Complaynt*.

The *Complaint of Mars* occurs on ff. 132-6^r, and the *Complaint of Venus* on ff. 136-7^r. As with all major narrative items copied by scribe 1, the opening of the *Complaint of Mars* is decorated with a demi-vinet; a demi-vinet and decorated initial capital is also used on f. 134^r to mark the division between the prologue and the part of the text designated 'The compleynt of mars' (f. 134^r). The separation between *Mars* and *Venus* is not presented with the same elaborateness, however: *Mars* ends halfway down f. 136^r and *Venus* begins directly beneath it. The only decoration is a penwork initial that is no more elaborate than those used by scribe 1 at the top of each leaf, and in the stanza break is simply written 'The compleynt of Venus Folowith' (f. 136^r). This suggests that what we now recognise as two

separate bibliographic items were not regarded as such by the scribes and compilers of Arch. Selden. B. 24, and that the division between them was perceived as less significant than that between the prologue and Mars's complaint proper. Scattergood has argued that it is inaccurate and potentially reductive to regard *Mars* and *Venus* as companion pieces,⁸⁶ but there is strong internal evidence to suggest that they were intended to be read as a pair.⁸⁷ For the purposes of my analysis, whether or not they were composed as companion pieces is largely irrelevant, as the evidence suggests that some scribes and compilers believed them to be a pair and treated them as such, which in turn influenced later readings and transmission. In the majority of their manuscript witnesses, as in Arch. Selden. B. 24, the two poems are presented together, with the *Complaint of Venus* following the *Complaint of Mars*. Indeed, the poems are often explicitly linked: in Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Fairfax 16, for example, the texts are preceded by an illustration on f. 14^v which depicts Mars and Venus, facing each other but separated by a narrow border, each raising their arm in a gesture of supplication, with Jupiter presiding over the scene. In contrast, it is a lack of decoration which indicates their connection in Arch. Selden. B. 24. The *Complaint of Venus* finishes at the bottom of f. 137^r and 'O hie emperice and quene celestiall' begins on the verso; the opening of this text is decorated with a demi-vinet, despite being a short, non-narrative piece. The separation between *Venus* and 'O hie emperice' is thus much more visually striking than that between *Mars* and *Venus*; it seems that the scribes and compilers of Arch. Selden. B. 24 regarded the complaints of *Mars* and *Venus* as very closely related: they either believed them to be one text which contained several subdivisions, or merely chose to present them as such. The structure of the texts themselves lends itself to this kind of pairing: the *Complaint of Mars* opens with a 154-line prologue in rhyme royal, and the *Complaint of Venus* closes with a 10-line envoy. Thus, when read together as they

⁸⁶ Scattergood (1994), 173.

⁸⁷ For a detailed list of the exact correspondences between *Mars* and *Venus*, see Merrill (1973), 3-61.

are presented in Arch. Selden. B. 24, they create a complete and self-contained poetic unit.⁸⁸

If we accept that *Mars* and *Venus* are a pair in Arch. Selden. B. 24, then it is reasonable to assume that the attribution ‘*Quod galfridus Chaucere*’ (f. 137^v) with which the *Complaint of Venus* closes applies equally to both texts. This attribution is important as it situates *Mars* and *Venus* within an unbroken run of texts in the manuscript which alternate between amatory and Marian materials, all of which are attributed to Chaucer. This unbroken run begins on f. 119^r, which is also the first leaf in quire IX, and continues across into quire X.⁸⁹ The texts included are: *Truth*,⁹⁰ *The Maying and Disport of Chaucer*; ‘Modyr of god’; *Mars*; *Venus*; and ‘O hie emperice and quene celestiall’. This poem is then followed by ‘This warldly Ioy is onuly fantasy’ and Clanvowe’s *Boke of Cupide*; neither of these bears any attribution, so this particular sequence is broken on f. 138^r at the end of ‘O hie emperice’. The sequence may have resumed, however: one leaf is missing, in between f. 141^v and what is now f. 142^r. This missing leaf would have contained the end of Clanvowe’s *Boke*, and the beginning of *The Parliament of Fowls*. It is possible that the Clanvowe was attributed to Chaucer and the attribution has been lost: this view is tempting, as the next two texts which follow Clanvowe (*The Parliament of Fowls*, and the *Lengend of Good Women*) are both attributed to Chaucer, but we cannot be certain either way.

We can, however, be certain that from f. 119^r, at the beginning of quire IX, to f. 138^r, more than halfway through quire XI, there is an alternating sequence of amatory and ethical materials all attributed to Chaucer. This particular arrangement indicates that the scribes and compilers of Arch. Selden. B. 24 viewed the relationship between the amatory and the ethical as an important structuring principle for the manuscript, and it also tells us

⁸⁸ In both Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Fairfax 16 and Cambridge, Magdalene College Pepys Library MS 2006, there is no indication of separation between *Mars* and *Venus* at all, and the envoy to *Venus* is thus presented as applying equally to both.

⁸⁹ For an illustration of the quiring, see Barker-Benfield (1997), p. 54.

⁹⁰ This text ends ‘Explicit chauceris counsaling’ (f. 119^v).

something about their view of Chaucerian poetry. Whether or not they believed all of these texts to be by Chaucer, an authorial identity is created: at this point in Arch. Selden. B. 24, 'Chaucere' is the author of both amatory and religious materials which sit side by side and complement each other. It is this particular 'Chaucere' to which the unique Scottish materials included later in the manuscript actively respond.⁹¹

Mars and *Venus* offer two different gender paradigms for the complaining voice. In the *Complaint of Mars*, the prologue serves to contextualise Mars's actual complaint, by relating his love of, and subsequent betrayal by, Venus. The prologue characterises their love affair as something which has emasculated Mars: the narrator states that 'sche hath take him In subiection' (32; f. 132^v) and 'bridilit him In her manere' (41; f. 132^v).⁹² Mars is persistently characterised as 'feble' (127; f. 133^v) throughout the prologue; he is the weaker, submissive partner in their affair, which infuses his subsequent complaint with a sense of feminised helplessness, much like that of the knight in the *Maying*. Mars is also allied to the knight in the helpless circularity of his complaint: just as the knight of the *Maying* is doomed to repeat his complaint, year in year out, Mars's complaint is also presented as a kind of continuous action rather than an isolated incident. Mars's actual complaint is distinguished by the use of a heading in Arch. Selden. B. 24 (f. 134^r), as in the majority of its manuscript witnesses, but the complaint is also marked by a formal shift. The rhyme royal of the prologue gives way to a 9-line stanza rhymed *aabaabbcc*,⁹³ but the transition from prologue to complaint is not as clearly defined as it initially appears. Before the change of stanza form, which indicates the switch to Mars's voice from that of the narrator, the narrator states that Mars 'walkith softly a pas, / Compleynyng that pietee was

⁹¹ On the creation of another peculiarly Scottish identity for Chaucer, see Ives and Parkinson (1999), pp. 186-202.

⁹² All quotations from *Mars* and *Venus* are from my own transcriptions of Arch. Selden. B. 24.

⁹³ This stanza form is not used elsewhere by Chaucer, and seems to be a combination of rhyme royal and the 9-line *aabaabbab* complaint stanza used in *Anelida and Arcite*. It is also used by Gavin Douglas for Book III of *The Palice of Honour* (c. 1501) and the Prologue to Book V of his *Eneados*.

to here' (134-5; f. 133^v), and describes him dwelling 'furth In his aduersitee / Compleynyng euir in on the departing' (148-9; f. 134^r). Thus, as in the *Maying*, the inset complaint is not figured as one isolated moment in time but is presented instead as representative of an ongoing posture, a static mode of expression and way of being.

The *Complaint of Venus* complements *Mars* in that it offers a precisely opposite perspective, but it also offers a contrasting picture of complaint. Even when the two texts are read together as one, so that the prologue to *Mars* can be taken as also applying to *Venus*, it does not create a narrative frame for her complaint as it does for his, because the prologue concentrates exclusively on Mars, and does not offer any insight at all into Venus's perspective. Thus, even if the texts are viewed as one, the sudden introduction of Venus's voice has an intrusive effect, and her complaint feels just as frameless as it does read in isolation. She offers no explanation of her situation whatsoever, concentrating instead on a direct and highly subjective account of her distress. The majority of her complaint is a direct address to Love, but it concentrates on her own experiences, stating for example that 'Than haue 3e caught me' (59; f. 137^r). In contrast, Mars's complaint repeatedly switches from the personal to the universal and he presents his own experience as paradigmatic: 'So fareth by thir louers and by me' (263; f. 135^v). Mars is also very self-conscious about the fact that his complaint exists within a broader tradition – it opens with the reflection that:

The ordour of compleynt requireth skilfully
That gif a wight shall pleyne piously
There most beæn cauß quharefore þat men pleyne
Or men may deme he pleyneþ folily
And caußles /. allace that am noch I.
(155-9; f. 134^r).

Here, Mars acknowledges that his complaint exists in the wider context of amatory complaint as a genre, and that it will be interpreted according to the conventions of this

tradition. Indeed, his complaint must have a verifiable, justifiable cause, lest it be invalidated by being ‘cauþles’. There is no trace of this self-consciousness in Venus’s complaint; hers is purely introspective, and displays no awareness of anything external to herself unless it can be directly related to her own situation – her tirade against the evils of jealousy, for example, is firmly rooted in the fact that ‘Ielousye me *turment*’ (53; f. 137^v). In Mars’s complaint, despite the high concentration of the personal pronouns ‘I’ and ‘my’ suggesting that this complaint is a private matter, the phrase ‘men may deme’ belies its nature as a kind of public performance, open to the scrutiny and judgement of others.

The complaints of *Mars* and *Venus* thus present two opposing models of complaint: one male-voiced and anchored by a narrative frame in the manner of the knight’s complaint in the *Maying*; the other, female-voiced, frameless, and fractured. The *Complaint of Mars* self-consciously defines itself as a rhetorical posture and expresses the protagonist’s distress in terms of a wider tradition; conversely, the *Complaint of Venus* expresses the protagonist’s hopeless isolation through its relentless, unmediated introspection. Despite the apparent feminisation of Mars in the prologue, the female complaining voice as it appears in *Venus* is quite different. This gendered difference, and the dissociation which occurs between the female voice and narrative context in these texts provides a crucial model for the *Lay of Sorrow* and the *Lufaris Complaynt*. These texts mirror the gendered opposition exemplified in *Mars* and *Venus* but they also rework it: they recall *Mars* and *Venus* but their positioning undermines the importance of narrative. They do not occur directly after *Mars* and *Venus*, and this reinforces the idea that they were not intended as an imitative rewriting; instead, they serve to illustrate how, post-*Kingis Quair*, the manuscript turns away from narrative and away from the possibilities of consolation. *Mars* and *Venus* and the *Lay of Sorrow* and the *Lufaris Complaynt* are separated by several other items, however: most notably the *Kingis Quair*. The distance between the two pairs of

gendered complaints highlights this structural movement in the manuscript. This chapter will now consider the *Kingis Quair*, the pinnacle of amatory ‘wele’ in Arch. Selden. B. 24, alongside Hoccleve’s *Letter of Cupid* which, due to its position within the manuscript, functions as a provocative response to the *Quair*.

III

The *Kingis Quair* and Hoccleve’s *Letter of Cupid*

The *Kingis Quair* provides a uniquely optimistic vision of amatory experience. As the first Scottish poem in the codex, its inclusion does mark something of a watershed in the production of the manuscript, and it seems that this watershed was intended to inaugurate a new literary phase of the manuscript.⁹⁴ I will argue, however, that the *Kingis Quair* does not establish a paradigm to which the following texts adhere; the *Quair* offers a reinterpretation of the Chaucerian amatory texts which precede it in Selden, most notably *The Maying and Disport of Chaucer*, by offering a satisfactory resolution to amatory distress. However, the *Quair* is framed in the manuscript by Chaucer’s *Legend of Good Women* and Hoccleve’s *Letter of Cupid*, and the *Quair*’s happy conclusion thus occurs in a provocatively qualified context. The *Kingis Quair* is also the final text in the manuscript with a primarily narrative structure: not only is the *Quair*’s reasoned pursuit of married love apparently rejected by the texts which follow it, but the end of the *Kingis Quair* also marks the complete breakdown of narrative within the manuscript.

The *Kingis Quair* is twice attributed to James I in MS Arch. Selden. B. 24. On f. 191^v, the space left after the completion of the copying of the *Legend of Good Women* contains the following note, in a sixteenth-century hand: ‘Heirefter followis the quair Maid

⁹⁴ The text which precedes the *Kingis Quair*, Chaucer’s *Legend of Good Women*, ends on f. 191^v. The inking on this leaf is very faded in comparison to that of the opening of the *Kingis Quair* on f. 192^r, which may suggest a significant amount of time elapsed between the completion of the first text and the beginning of the next, during which time f. 191^v was left exposed to light.

be / King James of Scotland þe first / Callit the kingis quair and / Maid quhen his
 Maj[estie] Wes In / England', and the text concludes on f. 211^r with 'Explicit &c &c /
 Quod Iacobus Primus scotorum rex Illustrissimus'. Whilst these attributions have been
 challenged,⁹⁵ there is more and stronger evidence to support the case for James's
 authorship of the *Quair* than there is to refute it, and his authorship of the text is now
 generally accepted.⁹⁶ The precise circumstances of the text's composition remain opaque,
 however: James was sent, at the age of ten or eleven, from Scotland to France for his own
 protection, and captured by the English whilst *en route*.⁹⁷ James remained a prisoner in
 England until 1424, when he returned to Scotland with his English bride, Joan Beaufort,
 and assumed the governance of his kingdom. It is generally assumed that the initial
 composition of the *Kingis Quair* occurred c. 1424, around the time of James's marriage to
 Joan, but this is not certain, and it is not known whether the poem was written before or
 after James returned to Scotland. However, the *Kingis Quair* was certainly composed
 considerably earlier than the compilation of Arch. Selden. B. 24, so the *Quair* as it survives
 in Arch. Selden. may not accurately represent the text's original form.⁹⁸

The *Kingis Quair* opens with the sleepless narrator, who notes that he '...toke a boke
 to rede apoun a quhile / Of quhich the name is clepit properly / *Boece*...' (14-16). By
 invoking *De Consolatione* here, the *Quair* immediately situates itself within the broader
 tradition of medieval prison complaint, even before the reader is aware that the narrator is

⁹⁵ Most notably in Brown (1896).

⁹⁶ See Mapstone (1997), pp. 51-69; Mapstone (1998), pp. 321-38; Mapstone (1999a), pp. 31-55; and Martin (2008a), pp. 19-20.

⁹⁷ See Lawson ed. (1910), pp. xvi-ii. For detailed biographical information, see also Melville (1936) and Brown (1994).

⁹⁸ Quinn has recently argued that James I could have produced two different versions of the *Quair*, 'one manuscript...specifically intended for the pleasure of his intended bride, Joan Beaufort, and her circle of influence in England; a second, expanded version of his *Quair* was reissued sometime thereafter to be read by a somewhat broader audience in Scotland.' (Quinn [2011], 189-214 [190-1]). Quinn's argument is ultimately unconvincing, however; the disruption in the copying of the *Kingis Quair* can be explained by the physical evidence of the manuscript, without needing to posit alternative versions of the *Quair* for which there is no firm evidence.

himself a prisoner.⁹⁹ The narrator first refers to his position ‘in strayte ward and in strong prisoun’ at line 169; it is after this that the first of four short intercalated complaints in the *Kingis Quair* occurs, and these lines significantly recast the tradition of prison complaint. The complaint is delivered in the narrator’s own voice and focuses on his lack of physical freedom, drawing comparisons between the liberty enjoyed by ‘The bird, the best, the fisch eke in the see’ (183) and his own ‘thraldome’ (191). This complaint is brief – only twenty-one lines – and its content is conventional, referring several times to the lack of justice in the narrator’s situation. However, it is this very generality which makes the complaint interesting: the complaint is not presented as a rhetorical set-piece delivered by the narrator. The narrator specifies that these thoughts are ‘in ward’ (176) rather than spoken aloud, and at the very beginning of the complaint he notes that ‘full oft I wold bewaille’ (176). He goes on to state that ‘in my mynd...I wold argewe’ (187-8) and ‘Than wold I say’ (190), and his repetition of ‘wold’ emphasises the general nature of this complaint. These lines give the impression that this kind of Boethian complaint is a constant posture at this point in the narrative, and the fact that the narrator is complaining is more important than his exact words.

From Boethius onwards, prison complaints are normally associated with adulthood and with the loss of previously held power and influence.¹⁰⁰ This is not true of the *Quair* narrator, however; at this early point in the text, his inexperience is emphasised. He refers to his youth at the time of his capture, recalling that ‘Though nature gave me suffisance in youth, / The rypenesse of resoun lak [it] I / To gouerne with my will’ (107-9), and although ‘the space of yeris twise nyne’ (173) has apparently elapsed since this incident, the

⁹⁹ On the importance of Boethius to the wider tradition of prison complaint, see chapter 1, pp. 34-45.

¹⁰⁰ This is certainly true of Charles d’Orléans, for example, another royal prisoner whose time in captivity in England overlaps with that of James I. Charles d’Orléans, captive in England 1415-1440, wrote extensively in English and French, and over 300 lyrics composed by him during his imprisonment survive. Recent scholarship has begun to uncover evidence of contact, literary collaboration and book exchange between noble prisoners and their custodians in fifteenth-century England - most notably, between Charles d’Orléans and his younger brother Jean d’Angoulême, a hostage in England 1412-1444. (See Ouy [2007]; also Askins [2000], pp. 27-45).

narrator still feels that ‘my scole is ouer yong’ (46). This unusual positioning of a prison complaint changes its entire character: in the *Kingis Quair*, imprisonment and the associated complaint form part of an apprenticeship or educative process. However, this is something of a false impression: this complaint is framed by a narrative which is self-consciously reflective and retrospective, and the reader is aware that this complaint is held at one remove from the narrative and does not represent present experience. This implied temporal difference between narrative and complaint allows this prison complaint to become a catalyst for progress and movement;¹⁰¹ unlike the majority of frameless, self-contained complaints, the *Kingis Quair* does not concentrate on present emotional experience and the focus is on moving forward from imprisonment.

After noting how ‘The long[e] dayes and the nyghtis eke / I wold bewaille my fortune in this wise’ (197-8), the narrator is almost immediately confronted with the means of his deliverance: love. Love is presented as a powerful transformative force, and as the means by which the narrator’s release can be achieved. The wretched, complaining narrator overhears the nightingale’s *cantus*, and he instantly begins to question whether love might offer a solution to his predicament, asking ‘May he [love] oure hertes setten and vnbynd?’ (257).¹⁰² The narrator also suggests that an unconscious transgression against Love might be the reason for his present imprisonment:

For gif he be of so grete excellence
That he of euery wight hath cure and charge,
Quhat haue I gilt to him or doon offense,
That I am thrall, and birdis gone at large,
Sen him to serue he myght set my corage?
(260-4).

¹⁰¹ This association between prison complaint and the early education of a leader is also made in Hary’s *Wallace*. Wallace’s lament at II. 173-206 occurs during his youth, before he has assumed the position of leadership predicted at the beginning of the narrative. See chapter 3, pp. 155-61.

¹⁰² The nightingale has been associated with carnal love from the troubadours and *Carmina Burana*; see Bain (1964), 19-29. On the nightingale’s ambiguous associations, see E. Robertson (2005), pp. 302-23 and E. Leach (2006) 187-211.

Here, the narrator is returning to the image used in his initial prison complaint, comparing his situation unfavourably with that of the birds, but it is completely recontextualised – whereas in the first part of the text, Fortune is held responsible for the narrator's situation, that responsibility has now been given to love. The narrator immediately pledges himself to Cupid's service, believing that the god has the power to 'maken thrallis free' (269). It is important to note that this pledge, in which the narrator asks Cupid to 'hable me vnto his seruice digne' (271), occurs before the narrator has seen the lady in the garden. The narrator's interest in love is thus based purely upon his belief in its power to liberate him from his state of imprisonment. The narrator's enthusiastic acceptance of his status as a lover sets him apart from the narrators of the Chaucerian dream visions which the opening of the *Kingis Quair* so explicitly recalls: Chaucer's dream visions commonly figure lovers and poets as separate, but here the narrator is characterised as both.¹⁰³

After pledging his service to Cupid, the narrator becomes aware of the lady walking below him in the garden, as if her appearance is a direct answer to the narrator's plea. The narrator describes the lady as 'Full secretly new cummyn hir to pleyne' (276) and this situation closely resembles the overhearing scene in the *Maying*, with the narrator's concealment and the lady's position in an enclosed garden. However, the lady does not actually speak in the text – if she has indeed come to the garden to deliver a complaint, the substance of this is apparently not important, and the narrator does not make it clear whether or not he has overheard her speaking. The significant words uttered in this particular enclosed garden are those of the nightingale, as they prompt the narrator's commitment to love. The lady's appearance in the garden allows the narrator to make good on his pledge to Cupid, and embrace love as the means of his release. The narrator is

¹⁰³ Spearing (2000) makes a connection between this feature of the *Kingis Quair* and the writings of Charles d'Orléans, arguing that the characteristics of the poet and the lover can only be effectively combined in a royal figure. This is also discussed in Martin (2008a), pp. 23–4. Firth Green (1980), pp. 101–35 (109–10), also considers the role played by social rank in the creation of the lover in fifteenth-century English and French literature.

captivated by the lady but perceives this captivity as a kind of freedom, stating that ‘...my hert became hir thrall / For euer, of free wyll’ (285-6). The narrator also recognises the lady’s significance in relation to his own plea to Cupid, asking ‘...ar ye god Cupidis owin princesse / And cummin ar to louse me out of band?’ (295-6). Both the narrator and the reader are made aware of the transformative power of love at this point; the narrator’s entrance into love’s service has caused every aspect of his being to be ‘changit clene ryght in anothir kynd’ (315).

After this transformation, the text shifts from the rhetoric of imprisonment to the rhetoric of amatory complaint. The lady’s departure from the garden prompts the narrator to deliver a complaint which, like his earlier prison complaint, focuses on the stasis of his present situation. Despite the narrator’s focus on his plight, likening himself to Tantalus in hell, an element of hope does exist. The narrator can see no hope for his deliverance ‘bot Venus of hir grace / Will schape remede or do my spirit pace’ (482-3). This reflects an important change: after seeing the lady, the narrator pledged ‘homage and sacrifice’ (359) to Venus; though he initially presents himself as a servant of Cupid, from this point in the text the narrator owes his allegiance to Venus, and Cupid is relegated to a secondary position.¹⁰⁴ The reason for this change in allegiance is not made explicit in the text; after his pledge to Venus in stanza 52, the narrator does not mention Cupid again. However, I would argue that the narrator’s developing preference for Venus’s guidance in his amatory affairs is responsive to the concept of Venus as a merciful intercessor developed in the *Maying*. The *Quair*-narrator’s petition to the goddess describes her as ‘planet merciable’ (688), and ‘of carefull ertes cure’ (695), terms which explicitly recall lines 613 and 627 of

¹⁰⁴ When the narrator journeys to Venus’s court, Cupid is present, but he does not speak to or interact with the narrator or any of the other petitioners. This secondary role for Cupid is reminiscent of *The Parliament of Fowls*, ll. 211-7, where Cupid sits making arrows outside the temple of Venus.

the *Maying*. The hopeful, consolatory note on which the *Maying* ends appears to have influenced the *Quair*'s presentation of Venus's role.¹⁰⁵

In the *Kingis Quair* the concepts of love and reason are repeatedly conflated, and it is reason which is ultimately able to exert a measure of control over the machinations of Fortune and deliver the happy conclusion to the narrator's amatory distress; the figure of the ethical Venus is critical to this final, peaceful coexistence of passion and reason. The narrator's complaint after his lady's departure, apparently fruitless and circular (he spends the entire 'long[e] day' [498] delivering it), occasions the most important moment of narrative action in the text. This complaint prompts the narrator's vision of his journey to the court of Venus; he states explicitly that his distress has 'Ourset...bothe hert and mynd' (507) and has left him 'Half sleping and half suoun' (510).¹⁰⁶ The complaint is thus a catalyst for crucial narrative action, as it is this celestial journey which ultimately enables the poem's happy conclusion. After the narrator has presented his petition to Venus, she simultaneously recalls and corrects his earlier words at ll. 482-3 when she takes the unprecedented step of referring him to Minerva, goddess of wisdom. Venus assures the narrator that Minerva '...may be thy supplye / And put thy hert in rest, als wele as I' (783-4). It is clear that the dreamer, and by extension the poem, is unable to come to any resolution until he has put into practice advice from both the goddess of love and the goddess of wisdom.

This close association between love and wisdom, made explicit at this point in the narrative, is prefigured in the narrator's description of the lady. The narrator notes that she possesses 'Wisedome, largesse, estate, and connyng sure' (347); however, she is also presented as a sensual figure – she wears a heart-shaped ruby at her throat, which casts its

¹⁰⁵ See above, pp. 87-8.

¹⁰⁶ The narrator's position here is reminiscent of the knight's state in the *The Maying and Disport of Chaucer* (154); both texts recall the ambiguous state of *De Planctu*'s narrator during his 'vision within a vision'. See chapter 1, pp. 52-4.

glow onto her skin.¹⁰⁷ This duality in the characterisation of the lady is mirrored in the presentation of Venus, who is figured as uncharacteristically modest, with ‘A mantill cast ouer hir schuldris quhite’ (671).¹⁰⁸ However, she receives her petitioners whilst lying on a bed, which does imply a degree of sexual and sensual abandon. Yet neither Venus’s nor the lady’s sensuality is presented as dangerous or threatening in any way; the narrator’s passion for the lady is mediated through Venus, and her assistance is then mediated through the influence of Minerva. Sensuality is within the control of reason at all times within the poem.

The *Kingis Quair* does not, however, have the last word on the subject. It is immediately followed in Arch. Selden. B. 24 by Hoccleve’s *Letter of Cupid*, and the positioning of the *Letter* is very apposite, qualifying and ultimately rejecting the reasoned, ethical conception of the amatory presented within the *Kingis Quair*. The *Letter of Cupid* (c. 1402), Hoccleve’s first major work, is an adaptation of Christine de Pizan’s 1399 *Epistre au dieu d’Amours*,¹⁰⁹ and the textual evidence suggests that the *Letter of Cupid* was transmitted to Scotland relatively early in its textual history.¹¹⁰ These dates are significant because the *Kingis Quair* shows some signs of having been influenced by the *Letter*, although in terms of composition the direction of influence is from the *Letter* to the *Quair*, within the context of Arch. Selden. B. 24, the *Letter* responds to, and qualifies, the optimism of the *Kingis Quair*.

In the *Letter*, Cupid is of course the dominant deity, and the *Letter* is effectively a complaint in his voice. Cupid’s complaint has itself been prompted by an act of

¹⁰⁷ This association between ruby jewellery and happiness in love contrasts with Troilus, V. 549 and the *Lay of Sorrow*, 69-70. For a more detailed study of the lady, see Spiller (1984), pp. 217-27. Bain (1961), 232-43, makes a case for reading the lady as a portrayal of Joan Beaufort. Most recent discussion of the lady’s appearance is Murray (2012b), p. 130.

¹⁰⁸ See Tinkle (1996), p. 207.

¹⁰⁹ On the critical background to Hoccleve’s *Letter of Cupid*, see Ellis ed. (2001); Fenster and Erler, eds (1990); Fleming (1971), 21-40; and Mitchell (1968).

¹¹⁰ Alongside Arch. Selden. B. 24, the *Letter* survives in nine other manuscripts, ranging in date from the mid-fifteenth to the mid-sixteenth century. One other is of Scottish provenance – the Bannatyne Manuscript – while the remaining eight were produced in England. For a full list, see Appendix I, pp. 129-35. One of these manuscripts (San Marino, California, Huntington Library MS HM 744) is a holograph copy, produced by Hoccleve in 1422. The Selden copy is clearly related to the earlier, non-holograph textual tradition.

complaining; in the second stanza, Cupid declares that ‘ladies of honoure *and* \of/ reuerence / And othir gentill haue We / herd the trew complaynt in *our* audience’ (9-11; f. 211^v).¹¹¹ A dichotomy between male and female complaint is immediately established; whilst female complaint is characterised as entirely justified, and is the reason behind Cupid’s own anger, male complaint is presented as deliberately dishonest. Although ‘Thir wordis ben spokyn generaly / with so pitouß a chere and countenance (21-2; f. 211^v), men’s words cannot be trusted because they habitually ‘dissymilen and feyne’ (18; f. 211^v). The text is undermining complaint at this point by casting doubt on its sincerity and efficacy, and by focusing on the difficulty of establishing what kinds of complaint are justified.

Hoccleve’s Cupid is, by his own admission, committed to sensual values: the text contains a stanza which commends ‘Thou preciouß geme / o martir margrete’ (420; f. 216^v), but Cupid is careful to qualify that ‘I *commende* hir *nocht* / by enchesoun of hir virginitee... for euer I werre y ageyn chastitee’ (429-30; f. 216^v). Cupid is also associated with sensuality in the *Kingis Quair*: before he encounters Venus, the narrator encounters the other petitioners at the court of love and the voice guiding the narrator on this part of the journey identifies a group of religious, wretched servants of Cupid. They are condemned in the *Quair* not, as one might expect, for serving such a sensual master as Cupid, but for the fact that they only served him secretly, and ‘forsuke him opynly’ (621). Here, Cupidian values are being privileged over conventional Christian sexual morality in a way which is reminiscent of Cupid’s words in the *Letter*. However, in the *Kingis Quair*, Cupid’s privileging of the sensual amatory above all other values is mediated by the presence of Venus, whose influence ultimately eclipses that of Cupid, and who is inextricably linked with ethical reason. In Hoccleve’s *Letter*, Cupid’s sensuality is subject to no such moderating influence. Thus, in the manuscript context of Arch. Selden. B. 24, the

¹¹¹ Quotations from the *Letter of Cupid* are from Furnivall ed. (1892).

ultimately chaste, reasoned, and controlled court of Venus in the *Kingis Quair* gives way to the lustful court of Cupid depicted in Hoccleve's *Letter*. The positioning of the *Letter of Cupid* at this point in the manuscript is a rejection of cleanly resolved narrative in favour of frameless, contextless complaint, and questions the central thematic premise of the *Kingis Quair*, that reason can, and must, subdue and channel passion in order to achieve a satisfactory amatory resolution.

IV

The *Lay of Sorrow* and the *Lufaris Complaynt*

The *Lay of Sorrow* and the *Lufaris Complaynt* are the first of the unique texts in MS Arch. Selden. B. 24 to have been copied by the second scribe. The *Lay of Sorrow*, so called because the narrative voice describes it as 'this lay of sorow' in the first line of the text,¹¹² occupies ff. 217^r-19^r and directly follows Hoccleve's *Letter of Cupid*. The *Letter* and the *Lay* are separated by the 'Explicit &c' which concludes the Hoccleve poem and by the large pen-work initial with which the *Lay of Sorrow* opens. The text is a lament by a single (presumably female) voice, relating her distress after being abandoned by her lover. The text ends, as did Hoccleve's *Letter*, with a simple 'Explicit', and is followed by the *Lufaris Complaynt*.¹¹³ The *Lufaris Complaynt* recounts a similar betrayal in love, but from an apparently male perspective. These two relatively short and obscure poems have traditionally been neglected in favour of the other, longer and more accessible, materials in the manuscript (both English and Scottish);¹¹⁴ although recent work has accorded them

¹¹² All quotations from the *Lay of Sorrow* and the *Lufaris Complaynt* are taken from my own transcriptions.

¹¹³ This title derives from the poem's explicit on f. 221^v, which reads 'Here Endis the lufaris complaynt &c'.

¹¹⁴ Some work has previously been done on the *Lay of Sorrow* and the *Lufaris Complaynt*, which predominantly concentrates on the problems of editing the texts as opposed to detailed literary analysis. See Wilson ed. (1954), 708-26; McCrum ed. (1969); Mooney and Arn, eds (2005); and Boffey (2006), pp. 63-74.

greater importance, primarily on the basis of their relationship to the *Kingis Quair*.¹¹⁵ I will argue that these texts are crucial to our understanding of the development of amatory complaint in Scotland, and that they were intended as companion pieces, each reflecting on different aspects of disappointment in love. A number of structural and verbal parallels indicate that they are probably the work of the same author, although the author's identity remains unknown, and the inclusion of these two poems at this point in the manuscript offers further exploration of some of the problems raised in earlier texts in the manuscript. The *Lay of Sorrow* and the *Lufaris Complaynt* respond directly to *Troilus and Criseyde*, the *Complaint of Mars*, the *Complaint of Venus*, and the *Kingis Quair*; they thus form a significant part of the uniquely Scottish response to amatory concerns which is developed in MS Arch. Selden. B. 24.

The *Lay of Sorrow* and the *Lufaris Complaynt* share a complex and unusual formal structure. They are both composed predominantly in a combination of 9- and 16-line stanzas: the 9-line stanzas are rhymed *aabaabbab* and are all decasyllabic, and the 16-line stanzas are rhymed *aaabaaabbbbabbba* and contain both octo- and decasyllabic lines.¹¹⁶ This particular stanzaic patterning was almost certainly invented by Chaucer for his *Anelida and Arcite* and was not widely imitated; its use in both the *Lay of Sorrow* and the *Lufaris Complaynt* is revealing both in terms of their relationship to each other and in terms of the reception of *Anelida and Arcite* in Scotland.

Anelida has a diptych structure, with its two parts normally designated the 'Story' and the 'Complaint', and in modern editions they are printed together as a single text, with the Story preceding the Complaint.¹¹⁷ This presentation of the text only reflects its arrangement in seven of its manuscript witnesses, however: Oxford, Bodleian Library MSS

¹¹⁵ Murray (2012b), pp. 129-31.

¹¹⁶ On the development of the decasyllabic line in Older Scots, see McClure (2005), pp. 147-64, especially p. 162.

¹¹⁷ See Benson ed. (1987), pp. 376-81 and Edwards (1988), 177-88 (178-9)

Bodley 638 and Fairfax 16 present the poem with the Complaint preceding the Story, whilst four other witnesses contain only the Complaint, presenting it as a self-contained text.¹¹⁸ This indicates that the Story and the Complaint circulated as two separate parts.¹¹⁹ The Story (including the Invocation) comprises the first 211 lines of the text, and is composed in rhyme royal, while the following 138 lines are made up of the more formally elaborate and experimental Complaint.¹²⁰ In four of the manuscripts, Anelida's Complaint is followed by a single stanza in rhyme royal, which purports to continue the Story, and it was apparently never intended to form part of the Complaint.¹²¹ The close structural affinities between the *Lay of Sorrow* and the *Lufaris Complaynt* and *Anelida and Arcite* apply to the Complaint only; it is possible that the author(s) of these works knew *Anelida and Arcite* from a witness which contained only the Complaint, or which contained the two parts separately.¹²²

Anelida's Complaint is structured in an alternating pattern of 9-line stanzas rhymed *aabaabbab* and 16-line stanzas rhymed *aaabaaabbbbabbba*. A further layer of complexity is added with the syllabic structuring of the lines: as noted, the 16-line stanzas contain both octo- and decasyllabic lines. When the stanza is broken down into groups of four lines which rhyme *aaab aaab bbba bbba*, the first three lines of each group are octosyllabic, and every fourth line is decasyllabic. There is no known example of either the 9- or 16-line stanza in English or French poetry before Chaucer,¹²³ and Chaucer himself only used it for

¹¹⁸ These are: Cambridge University Library Ff. 1. 6; Magdalene College, Cambridge, Pepys 2006; Trinity College, Cambridge, R. 3. 20; and San Marino, Huntington Library HM 140. The thirteenth witness, British Library MS Additional 17492, contains a single stanza of the Complaint (lines 308-16).

¹¹⁹ Edwards (1988), 179.

¹²⁰ Lines 211-350 inclusive. All quotations from *Anelida and Arcite* are from Benson ed. (1987).

¹²¹ This problematic stanza is preserved in Longleat MS 258, Cambridge MS Ff. 1. 6, and also in Oxford MSS Digby 181 and Tanner 346. On the textual history of this stanza, and its debatable authenticity, see Norton-Smith (1981), pp. 81-100 and Edwards (1988), 181-2.

¹²² British Library MS Additional 16165 separates the two parts of *Anelida and Arcite* and treats them as discrete texts.

¹²³ Smith (1934), p. 162. The 16-line stanza probably ultimately derives from a similar 16-line stanza used by Machaut. See Davenport (1988), p. 6.

Anelida and Arcite, with the result that it is conventionally referred to as the ‘Anelida stanza’.¹²⁴

In contrast to the acknowledged sophistication of *Anelida and Arcite*,¹²⁵ the structure of both the *Lay of Sorrow* and the *Lufaris Complaynt* has been characterised as haphazard and inexact by the only critic to have considered the matter in any detail.¹²⁶ However, the *Lay of Sorrow* and the *Lufaris Complaynt* reproduce the form of *Anelida and Arcite* more closely than any other extant text in Middle English or Older Scots. In fact, apart from *Anelida* itself, no English poem survives which uses it. The stanza occurs in ten separate works from fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Scotland, and three of the ten are found in Arch. Selden. B. 24.¹²⁷ In addition to the *Lay of Sorrow* and the *Lufaris Complaynt*, the *Quare of Jelusy* also uses the 9-line Anelida stanza,¹²⁸ and thus Arch. Selden. B. 24 contains a significant proportion of all the poetry ever known to be written using this stanza form. The *Lay of Sorrow*, *Lufaris Complaynt*, and *Quare of Jelusy* are also probably the earliest examples of the use of this stanza form in Scotland, and this has significant implications for the question of the Scottish circulation of *Anelida and Arcite*.¹²⁹ The *Lay of Sorrow* and the *Lufaris Complaynt* are thus the only texts which reproduce both of the stanzaic forms used in *Anelida’s Complaint*, and the *Lay of Sorrow* also contains a proliferation of verbal echoes of Chaucer’s poem. As I will make clear in the following analysis, the author(s) of the *Lay of Sorrow* and the *Lufaris Complaynt* certainly knew *Anelida*

¹²⁴ Chaucer uses a different 9-line stanza for lines 164-298 of the *Complaint of Mars*, but this stanza form is rhymed *aabaabbcc*, is exclusively decasyllabic, and is not interspersed with any longer stanzas.

¹²⁵ See Norton-Smith (1981), p. 87.

¹²⁶ Wilson ed. (1954), 710.

¹²⁷ The seven not found in Arch. Selden. are: Hary’s *Wallace* (c. 1476); Henryson’s *Testament of Cresseid* (c. 1470-90); Dunbar’s *Goldyn Targe* (c. 1500-13); the Prologue and first two books of Douglas’s *Palice of Honour* (c. 1501); the Prologue to Book III of Douglas’s *Eneados* (1513); David Lyndsay’s *Dreme* (c. 1526; ll. 1036-126) and his *Testament and Complaynt of Our Soverane Lordis Papyngo* (c. 1530; ll. 1-72).

¹²⁸ The *Quare of Jelusy* uses the 9-line *aabaabbab* stanza, but not the 16-line stanza.

¹²⁹ A lack of sufficient internal or external evidence makes it difficult to date the *Lay of Sorrow*, *Lufaris Complaynt*, and *Quare of Jelusy* more precisely than to say that they pre-date the compilation period (c. 1489-c. 1513) of Arch. Selden. B. 24.

and Arcite, and they provide the strongest, and indeed the earliest, evidence which exists to indicate the availability of *Anelida and Arcite* to Scottish readers.¹³⁰

The structures of both the *Lay of Sorrow* and the *Lufaris Complaynt* closely resemble that of *Anelida's Complaint*, as illustrated in Appendix III (p. 139). Both contain certain anomalies, however. Stanzas 8 and 9 (ll. 64-79; ff. 217^v-18^r) of the *Lay of Sorrow* are only eight lines in length, even though they are presented in just the same way as those 9-line stanzas which precede them; the scribe has left a characteristically clear line break to indicate the stanzaic division. However, the rhyme scheme of stanza 8 (ll. 64-71)¹³¹ is *aaabaaab*, and stanza 9 (ll. 72-9; f. 218^r) then rhymes *bbbabbba*, mirroring the rhyme of the preceding stanza. Thus, if these stanzas are read without the line break, they form a single 16-line stanza rhyming *aaabaaabbbbabbba*, exactly as in *Anelida and Arcite*. The same phenomenon is observable at stanzas 19 and 20 (ll. 160-17; f. 219^r): they are presented as one 9- and one 7-line stanza in the manuscript yet, when read together, they produce another 16-line stanza rhymed *aaabaaabbbbabbba*. It seems likely that the author of the *Lay of Sorrow* intended to replicate exactly the rhyme scheme of *Anelida and Arcite*, because when stanzas 8 and 9, and 19 and 20, are read together as they also recreate the syllabic patterning found in *Anelida and Arcite*, with a switch to octosyllabic lines from the habitual decasyllabic, apart from at every fourth line. The first four lines of stanza 19 demonstrate this:

And now no more of all this thing
 Nocht helpith me this veymenting
 In rest my carefull hert to bring
 That all torent with lufe is *and* totore
 (160-4; f. 219^r)

¹³⁰ There are perceptible echoes of *Anelida and Arcite* in the works of Robert Henryson, and it is almost certain that Henryson knew *Anelida and Arcite* directly. See Fox ed. (1981), pp. xc-xci and Patterson (1973), 696-714.

¹³¹ Stanza 8 is split across f. 217^v and f. 218^r.

The rhyme scheme and the syllabic patterning indicate that ll. 64-79 and ll. 160-75 were both originally intended to be 16-line stanzas, but were erroneously copied at some point. It is unclear whether the error lies with the second scribe of Arch. Selden. B. 24 or whether the exemplar was faulty. The first nine stanzas of the *Lufaris Complaynt* are composed in rhyme royal and form a prologue,¹³² and the rest of the text is composed in stanzas of nine decasyllabic lines, rhymed *aabaabbab*, apart from stanza 15, which contains sixteen lines rhymed *aaabaaabbbbabbba*. This stanza does not accurately reproduce the syllabic patterning of *Anelida* and the *Lay of Sorrow*, however – these lines (108-23) contain a mixture of eight, nine, and ten syllables. I do not agree with the *Lufaris Complaynt*'s most recent editors, who suggest that ll. 108-23 'may rather be two 8-line stanzas with "mirrored" rhymes', and emend the text accordingly,¹³³ as the conjunction of the 9- and 16-line stanzas only occurs in *Anelida*, the *Lay of Sorrow*, and the *Lufaris Complaynt* – the form is so unusual that its use here is almost certainly intentional. There is one anomalous stanza in the *Lufaris Complaynt*: stanza 19 (ll. 151-9) is rhymed *aabaaaaaa*, but there is no obvious textual explanation for this deviation.¹³⁴ The *Lay of Sorrow*, however, adopts the form of *Anelida*'s Complaint very precisely throughout.

The author of the *Lay of Sorrow* does not only follow the form of Chaucer's complaint but makes use of the same technique to mark the end of the complaint as a self-contained textual unit. In *Anelida and Arcite*, the final line of *Anelida*'s complaint echoes

¹³² The first nine stanzas are separated from the rest of the text by the words 'Explicit Prologus' (f. 220^r). The first line of the text contains a large pen-work initial capital, and this occurs again at line 64. Line 64 is the first line of text which comes after the prologue; the use of a decorative initial capital here reinforces the impression that this is a separate section of the text.

¹³³ See Mooney and Arn, eds (2005), p. 189. The text is presented on pp. 191-6.

¹³⁴ Both the *Lay of Sorrow* and the *Lufaris Complaynt* contain an anomalous 8-line stanza. In the *Lay of Sorrow*, stanza 14 (ll. 116-23) consists of eight lines rhymed *aababbab*. This is almost certainly due to the omission of a line (rhyming *a*) between lines 119 and 120. This would account both for the lapse in the rhyme scheme here and for the strangeness of 'I nocht' at line 120, which does not fit well with the line preceding it. In the *Lufaris Complaynt*, stanza 10 (ll. 64-71) is also eight lines, rhyming *aababbab*. Interestingly, the probable error occurs at the same point in the stanza as the omitted line in stanza 14 of the *Lay of Sorrow* – the line omitted was almost certainly the fifth line of the stanza, intended to fall between lines 67 and 68. It has been suggested that it is not one line missing here, however, but two half-lines; this is certainly possible. See Mooney and Arn, eds (2005), p. 202, note to line 67.

the first: ‘So thirleth with the poynt of remembraunce / The swerd of sorowe...’ (211-2) opens Anelida’s complaint, and it ends with ‘How that Arcite Anelida so sore / hath thirled with the poynt of remembraunce’ (349-50). The same device is employed in the *Lay of Sorrow* – the first line, ‘Befor my deth this lay of sorow I sing’ (1; f. 217^v) is echoed in the final line: ‘And thus of deth þe soroufull lay I Syng’ (175; f. 219^v). In both texts, this epanalepsis serves to reinforce both the idea of the complaint as an isolated unit and the idea that the predicament of the abandoned woman is a circular one, and that despite the production of the complaint, the female complainers are trapped in an intractable position of stasis.

There are also multiple verbal echoes of *Anelida and Arcite* in the *Lay of Sorrow*, revealing that its author was familiar with the lexicon and range of images used in Chaucer’s poem. For example, the verb ‘thirlen’, repeated by Chaucer in the first and final lines of Anelida’s complaint, meaning to pierce or stab. This is an unusual word to occur in the context of an amatory text, appearing much more frequently, as one might expect, in historical narratives recounting deeds of war.¹³⁵ Interestingly, however, a Scotticised form of the verb appears in a similar context in the *Lay of Sorrow*, when the complainer declares ‘I dee I dee so thrillith me that thorne’ (27; f. 217^v). The texts are also united by their common use of images relating to music, and legalese. The *Lay of Sorrow* contains a plethora of images relating to song and musicality; aside from the obvious resonances in the first two lines, when the complainer asserts her intention to ‘...sing / With carefull melodye and entunyng’(1-2; f. 217^v), the text also contains some more complex musical images. For example, the complainer addresses her faithless lover directly as ‘O 3e that was both wrast and string / Of all my mirth and my glaiding’ (64-5; f. 217^v). ‘Wrast’ here means ‘a tool for tuning a stringed instrument; a plectrum’,¹³⁶ and the complainer is

¹³⁵ *DOST*, 6.‘thirl, v.’, senses 1 and 2.

¹³⁶ *DOST*, ‘wrest(e)’, n. 1.

figuring herself as a musical instrument, of which her lover was an essential component part. This musical imagery is highly reminiscent of the recurrent focus on musicality throughout *Anelida and Arcite*, particularly in Anelida's complaint, when the heroine declares, for instance, that 'I fare as doth the song of *Chaunte-pleure*' (320) and '...as the swan...So singe I here my destinee or chaunce' (346-8). The complainer of the *Lay of Sorrow* also refers to her relationship with her lover as a '...brokyn...cōnant' (26; f. 217^v), and orders her lover to 'Geue me no wyte of þis misgouirnanse' (150; f. 218^v), and this recalls Anelida's assertion that she is 'Withoute gilt' and '...nedeth no witnesse' (298). These similarities of vocabulary and imagery suggest strongly that the author of the *Lay of Sorrow* was intentionally modelling his text on the type of female-voiced complaint exemplified by Chaucer in *Anelida and Arcite*. Indeed, the correspondences between the two texts are so strong I think it likely that the *Lay of Sorrow* was composed as a direct response to *Anelida and Arcite*; as discussed above,¹³⁷ correspondences between the contents of Arch. Selden. B. 24 and comparable English manuscripts show that it is very unlikely that the scribes and compilers of Arch. Selden. did not know *Anelida and Arcite*. The *Lay of Sorrow*, a unique Scottish response to *Anelida*, seems to have been chosen for inclusion instead.

The narrator of the *Lay of Sorrow* is determined to prove the injustice of her treatment at the hands of her lover. In the very first stanza of the poem, she identifies herself as a justified complainant, stating that '...In this warld nys creature leving / That hath more cauß than I of languissing' (4-5; f. 217^v), but then slightly later in the text she characterises the justification of her cause as difficult to express: 'How sall I best myne Innocent acquite / Can I *nocht* fynde' (40-1; f. 217^v). Her innocence is illustrated through an extended contrast of imagery which runs through the poem. Stanza 13 opens with an *ubi sunt* motif, as the narrator asks:

¹³⁷ See above, pp. 68-9.

Allace quhare ar becum the Ioyfull dayis
 The suete loue / so full of mirth and playis
 That I with 3ou my tendir aduersarye
 led here tofore the new and fresch arrayis
 (107-10; f. 218^v).

Here, the happiness she shared with her lover before he ‘Vnkyndely’ (12; f. 217^r) abandoned her is characterised through playful imagery – their love is figured as a game that is ‘quite of all contrarye’ (112; f. 218^v). However, ludic language is also used euphemistically throughout the text to describe the end of their relationship. In the ninth stanza, the narrator figures her lover as a hawk, stating that ‘..brok is now bell and ges / And Is flowin vnto vildimeß’ (77-8; f. 218^r).¹³⁸ The hawking imagery continues into the following stanza, when the narrator reflects that her lover’s behaviour is not that of ‘a bird of gentill kind’ (80; f. 218^r), and closes the stanza by referring to the game of chess, stating that ‘3e matit haue my play’ (88; f. 218^r).¹³⁹ The language of play has taken on a sinister aspect, with both hawking and chess implying aggressive pursuit, and an unequal balance of power. The narrator indicates this imbalance by characterising the position of women in love as one of utter subjection:

O men O men vnkyndast of nature
 [...] Vnkyndenness so rutit Is in 3ou
 Thouth 3e default 3it mon we bow
 Of oure obeisance ben 3e so sure
 (98-105; f. 218^r).

Her lover’s betrayal and abuse of his power over her seems more serious because of the implied formality of their relationship. The narrator repeatedly refers to vows and promises that existed between the lovers, referring to their relationship as a ‘coⁿnant’ (26; f.

¹³⁸ This line also has the effect of implying that her lover was a captive, imprisoned by her desire. See also chapter 3, pp. 146-53.

¹³⁹ One word on line 82 (the fifteenth line of text on f. 218^r) is partially obscured by a thick pen-stroke, which looks like an erasure. On the basis of the hawking imagery found in this stanza, Wilson suggests the emendation ‘And for a formell forsakith his *rycht* pray’. (Wilson ed. [1954], p. 724, note to line 82). However, this emendation does not resemble the letters visible beneath the erasure.

217^v) and referring to the ‘mony fermyt oth’ (133; f. 218^v) which he made to her. She also notes that ‘The ruby fall Is fro þe ryng / That 3e me gaue In witnessing’ (69-70; f. 218^r), an image which not only symbolises the fractured nature of their relationship, but which implies that it was publicly acknowledged (although it is not made clear whether or not they were actually married).¹⁴⁰ Here, the *Lay of Sorrow* directly contradicts the *Kingis Quair*, in which mutual, publicly acknowledged love is the happy culmination of the poem. The views of the narrator of the *Lay of Sorrow* are more closely aligned with the presentation of marriage in the *Quare of Jelusy*; she refers to her lover’s behaviour as ‘þis misgouirnance’ (150; f. 218^v), implying a failure to govern himself which has resulted in him misleading her. The ideal of reasoned self-governance advanced in the *Kingis Quair*, which leads to such a happy conclusion of the amatory project, is completely absent from the male lover’s behaviour in the *Lay of Sorrow*, and it leads to a complete breakdown in the narrator’s ability to govern herself:

But now so Dullit Is my remembrance
 Throu mynd of 3ou þat so fer haue outraid
 fro rycht quhare throu my wittis bene affraid
 So sore that all my walking Is a trance
 And eke sen 3e haue broken þe balance
 Of my resoun...

(144-9; f. 218^v).

It is this disintegration of reason which causes the hopeless stasis of the poem. Her lover, through his own inability to govern his desires, has damaged the narrator’s reason ‘So fer þat there Is no recouiring’ (164; f. 219^r).

There is one abrupt change of voice in the poem: this is a feature which does not derive from *Anelida and Arcite* and indicates that the author was familiar with a wider range of Chaucer’s works. The *Lay of Sorrow* is written exclusively in the voice of the female

¹⁴⁰ The image is also reminiscent of the brief *ubi sunt* lament in Book V of *Troilus and Criseyde* in which Troilus declares ‘O ryng fro quhiche the ruby is out fall’ (*Troilus*, V. 549; f. 99^r).

complainer until the final stanza (ll. 176-85; f. 219^v), when an authorial voice interjects. As previously mentioned, line 175 – the last line to use the complainer’s voice – echoes line 1, and this circularity indicates that the complaint is now over. This is reinforced by a formal change in the final stanza, which contains ten decasyllabic lines, rhymed *aabaabbaab*. This 10-line stanza is written in the form of an envoy from the poet, declaring:

Princes full graciouß and excellent
 How dar I 3ou for verray schame present
 This rude compleynt vncorrek euery quhare
 That makit is vnto none othir entent
 Bot to obey 3oure hie commandment
 (176-80; f. 219^r).

This closing envoy suddenly and self-consciously exposes the preceding text as a complete fiction. The sense of a private and helpless outpouring of emotion that has been so carefully crafted earlier in the text is dismantled by the revelation that the text was ‘makit ...vnto none othir entent’ (179) than to please an audience. Ostensibly, this envoy provides the only contextual evidence about the poem’s composition, stating as it does that the *Lay of Sorrow* is the result of a specific commission. As nothing is known about the poem outside the immediate context of Arch. Selden. B. 24, the identity of the alleged patron would be impossible to discover. However, this envoy should not be read as a literal explanation of the circumstances of the *Lay of Sorrow*’s composition; rather, it forms part of the text’s response to the wider Chaucerian amatory tradition.

The envoy to the *Lay of Sorrow* bears a striking resemblance to the envoy to Chaucer’s *Complaint of Venus*. Both texts use a conventional modesty topos, although the *Lay of Sorrow*’s ‘rude compleynt vncorrek euery quhare’ (178; f. 219^v) is more strongly self-deprecating than Chaucer’s ‘litill suffisance’ (75; f. 187^v), and both envoys close with a reference to a greater literary authority than the author. The most arresting similarity,

however, is of course the use of the problematic 'Princes' as the opening address.¹⁴¹

'Princes' is just as ambiguous in the *Lay of Sorrow* as it is in the *Complaint of Venus* and, as in the English text, the poem itself provides no further evidence as to who the princes, or indeed the princess, might be. The stanzaic form of this envoy, its opening address, and its use of a modesty topos indicate that it is modelled on the envoy to the *Complaint of Venus*, as does its position as an addendum to a frameless amatory complaint that is based primarily upon a different source text. Perhaps the author of the *Lay* recognised that his loose rewriting of *Anelida* was not dissimilar to Chaucer's loose rewriting of Granson's *Cinq balades*; certainly, the author of the *Lay of Sorrow* expresses a consciousness of writing within a wider tradition, and acknowledges the possibility that his work will be compared with someone else's when he suggests that the *Lay*

may nocht compere vnto the grete extent
Of him / the quhich enherytt hath þe vent
Of fair langage to all þe worldis ere
(183-5; f. 219^v).

By including this envoy, the author of the *Lay of Sorrow* is revealing an awareness of the French tradition of closing a short, non-narrative amatory poem with an honorific envoy to a literary authority.¹⁴² By appending an envoy to a rewriting of *Anelida's Complaint*, which does not have one, the author of the *Lay* is showing an understanding of the conventions which underpin some of Chaucer's techniques.

As the *Lay of Sorrow* borrows the form of its envoy from the *Complaint of Venus*, the *Lufaris Complaynt* borrows the form of its prologue from the *Complaint of Mars*. Thus, the *Lay of Sorrow* and the *Lufaris Complaynt* mirror *Mars* and *Venus* – both are pairs of amatory

¹⁴¹ The first envoy to *The Maying and Disport of Chaucer* also begins with 'Princes'; this envoy has a different form, however, consisting of eight lines rhyming *ababbcb*.

¹⁴² The identity of the authority referred to simply as 'him' (184) is of course not made explicit in the *Lay of Sorrow*. It is perhaps most likely, given the depth of Chaucerian allusion found in this text, that the poet is referring to Chaucer, but this is not necessarily the case.

complaints which lack any true narrative context, and each pair ostensibly represents both a male and female perspective, the ‘male’ poem with a rhyme royal prologue set apart from the stanzaic complaint, and the ‘female’ poem with a formally distinct envoy. It is not possible to know in what form the author(s) of the *Lay of Sorrow* and the *Lufaris Complaynt* might have encountered *Mars* and *Venus*, but the fact that they occur consecutively in Arch. Selden. B. 24 indicates that they probably reached Scotland in a witness which paired them. The resemblances between *Mars* and *Venus* and the *Lay of Sorrow* and the *Lufaris Complaynt* supports the view that the two Scottish complaints ought to be viewed as companion pieces, although the order in which they are presented in the Selden manuscript – with the female-voiced *Lay* preceding the male-voiced *Complaynt* – transposes the order in which *Mars* and *Venus* are conventionally found together in manuscripts. This subverts the effect of the presentation of *Mars* and *Venus* in Arch. Selden.: whilst the prologue to *Mars* and the envoy to *Venus* bracket the two complaints and create the effect of a self-contained whole, the inclusion of the *Lay of Sorrow* with its envoy before the *Lufaris Complaynt* and its prologue denies any sense of narrative progression or completeness. Whilst the *Lay* and the *Complaynt* are a pair, they do not create a cohesive unit with linear movement: the effect is disjointed, and the stasis of frameless complaint is privileged over narrative progression.

Read together, the *Lay of Sorrow* and the *Lufaris Complaynt* represent gendered responses to two different types of Chaucerian complaint. The *Lay of Sorrow*’s highly intimate and personal tone is created in part by the repeated use of very direct modes of address within the poem, but this feature is completely absent from the *Lufaris Complaynt*. The complainer in the *Lay of Sorrow* addresses her lover repeatedly throughout the poem, often beginning stanzas ‘O 3e...’ and then proceeding to direct a plethora of accusations towards him. The pronouns ‘3e’ and ‘3ow’ refer almost exclusively to her betrayer; the

only exception is in the twelfth stanza of the poem, ll. 98-105 (f. 218^v). This stanza begins ‘O men O men’ (98; f. 218^v), and lines such as ‘How suld we sely women with 3ou dure’ (99; f. 218^v) are clearly intended to refer collectively to all men. However, the *Lufaris Complaynt*, voiced by an apparently male speaker, makes much less use of direct address, and not a single one of the few direct pleas in the poem is addressed to either his false lady or to women in general. The only such addresses in the poem are directed either towards gods or other figures drawn directly from classical sources. This lack of directness in the *Lufaris Complaynt* explicitly recalls several of Chaucer’s male-voiced complaints which, when compared to the complaints of Anelida and Dido, display a comparable level of detachment. Chaucer’s female complainers address their lovers directly, berating them for their behaviour and leaving no ambiguity as to whom they are complaining about and what they have done. The somewhat half-hearted ‘To quhom sall I compleyne of my distresß? ... Schall I compleyne vnto my lady free? / Nay...’ (*Mars*, 191-3; f. 134^v) is replaced by a stridency which is perceptible in all of Chaucer’s female complainants. The extensive repetition of the pronouns ‘yow’, ‘ye’ and ‘youre’ underscore the fact that these complaints are direct, individual and personal. The false lady of the *Lufaris Complaynt* is a shadowy figure, and although her abandonment of her lover is apparently the occasion for the composition of the *Complaynt*, she has no presence within the text.

This gendered difference is best illustrated, however, by an examination of the primary frame of reference within the *Lufaris Complaynt*. The rhetoric of this text is embedded from the outset in a literate, particularly Latinate culture: a culture to which the *Lay of Sorrow* makes only scant, allusive reference. For example, in direct contrast to the *Lay*’s emphasis on orality, particularly song, the prologue of the *Lufaris Complaynt* contains three separate references to itself specifically as a written text. The first of these occurs in the opening stanza, when the complainer declares himself ‘...determyte...Sum thing to writt

þat euery wy^{cht} may knawe' (4-5; f. 219^r),¹⁴³ and the second at line 13, when he refers to '...teris In my pen to rayne / Bot sic as fallis fro myn eyne twayn' (f. 219^v). The third of these references occurs in the final couplet of the prologue: 'Bot furth my letter as I can It write / I will proceid thareof to the endite' (62-3; f. 220^r). The epistolary form has thus been claimed in this Scottish text as a feature of male-voiced complaint. In direct contrast to Ovid's *Heroides*, and to the *Legend of Good Women* (included earlier in Arch. Selden., on ff. 152^v-91^v), the author of the *Lufaris Complaynt* has appropriated the epistolary form as a defining feature of his male-voiced, and presumably male-authored, complaint.

This emphasis on the narrator's monologue as a written text in the *Lufaris Complaynt* functions as an interpretive framework through which the rest of the poem must be read. It is not a true narrative frame, such as those in the *Kingis Quair* and the *Quare of Jelusy*, but serves as a prism through which the reader can access the text. The narrator uses the prologue to locate his complaint firmly within a wide textual and historical tradition of male-voiced complaint, by explicitly referring to other authors, texts and famous incidents. His self-assured declaration that '...gif that worthy Chaucere wer one lyve' (29; f. 219^v) he would have recorded the narrator's present woe in preference to any of the other complaints he composed because 'The accident is trew and more pitouß / Than was the double sorou of troilus' (34-5; f. 219^v), contextualises the *Lufaris Complaynt* specifically within the tradition of Chaucerian male-voiced complaints and establishes the intercalated complaints included in *Troilus and Criseyde* as points of comparison for the reader. The narrator's paraphrase of Boethius's *Consolation of Philosophy* (Book II, metrum iv) in stanza 8 (ll. 50-6; ff. 219^v-20^r) assumes a certain level of literacy and cultural

¹⁴³ These lines recall the *Kingis Quair*-narrator's resolution 'Sum new[e] thing to write' (89). Noted in Murray (2012b), p. 130, as part of a wider discussion of evidence for the *Quair*'s influence on the *Lufaris Complaynt*.

knowledge amongst his intended readers and also further highlights the relationship between male-voiced complaint and Latinate literary culture.¹⁴⁴

In the prologue to the *Lufaris Complaynt*, the narrator states that ‘I will non othirⁱs dolourⁱs feyne nor vß / Nor borow teris In my pen to rayne’ (12-13; f. 219^v), and this line is striking in its closeness to both *Troilus and Criseyde* and *The Maying and Disport of Chaucer*. In the very first strophe of Book I of *Troilus* the narrator invokes Tisiphone, calling upon her to help him compose ‘This woful vers that weping as I wryte’ (*Troilus*, I. 7; f. 1^r). The narrator of the *Maying* then deliberately recalls the *Troilus*-narrator’s words with the following exclamation:

But quho schall help me now for to compleyne
Or quho schall now my stile gy or lede
O eyen two lat now 3our teres reyne
Into my penne /

(162-5; f. 122^v).

By making such a clear reference to both *Troilus* and the *Maying*, the *Lufaris Complaynt* is reinforcing its association with the wider tradition of fourteenth- and fifteenth-century male-voiced amatory complaint as it is represented in Arch. Selden. B. 24. The wording used in line 13 of the *Lufaris Complaynt* resembles lines 164-5 of the *Maying* more closely than the *Troilus* line, and this is particularly important because these lines of the *Maying* contain a reading unique to the three Scottish versions of the text. In all English copies of the *Complaint of the Black Knight*, line 178 (164 in the Scottish *Maying*) reads ‘O Nyobe! Let now *thi* teres reyn...’;¹⁴⁵ however, as quoted above, the corresponding line of the *Maying* reads ‘O eyen two’. In the English version of the *Complaint* the narrator is, like the *Troilus*-narrator who invokes Tisiphone at I. 6-7, requesting help from an external force in order

¹⁴⁴ This explicit reference to Boethius also recalls the *Kingis Quair*, lines 14-17. Murray (2012b), pp. 130-1, specifically compares the Boethian tenor of the *Lufaris Complaynt* with that of the *Kingis Quair*.

¹⁴⁵ Quotation is from MacCracken ed. (1934); my italics.

to help him relate the sorrows of another. This is not true of the Scottish version, however: the *Maying*-narrator calls for help from his own 'eyen'. The *Lufaris Complaynt* is therefore not just invoking the Lydgate text, but specifically the Scottish version, in his insistence that he will not 'borow teris' (13) but use his own. Similarly, with the words 'I will non othir^{is} dolour^{is} feyne nor uß' (12), he insists on the sincerity of his own text. This emphasis on the originality and individuality of the plaint might seem paradoxical in a text which repeatedly attempts to define itself by its relationship to other texts; however, this avowal of sincerity is actually an important part of the tradition within which the *Lufaris Complaynt* is locating itself. The doctrine of sincerity in love-lyrics appears to originate in twelfth-century France with troubadour poets such as Bernart de Ventadorn,¹⁴⁶ who declared that:

Chantars no pot gaire valer
 si d'ins dal cour no mou lo chans;
 ni chans no pot dal cor mover,
 si no i es fin' amors coraus.

[Singing can scarcely be of value if the song
 does not come from within the heart, nor can
 the song come from the heart if heartfelt true
 love is not there]

(II, 1-8).¹⁴⁷

In the work of Bernart de Ventadorn we see the earliest expression of the idea that a love-lyric is worth nothing if it does not proceed from the genuine feelings of the poet. It has been noted that this sincerity topos was 'central to the courtly lyric of love as it is transmitted from Occitania to northern France and from there to England',¹⁴⁸ but it was not adopted by Chaucer in his amatory poetry. Chaucer preferred the figure of a narrator inexperienced in matters of love, but the convention of the love complaint purporting to

¹⁴⁶ Spearing (2005), p. 178.

¹⁴⁷ This quotation from Ventadorn, and the accompanying translation, is from Spearing (2005), p. 179.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 180.

express the poet's own feelings remained popular, with several anonymous examples surviving,¹⁴⁹ and it is this tradition upon which the *Lufaris Complaynt* is drawing.

This intertextual frame which is created in the prologue to the *Lufaris Complaynt* exposes the inadequacy of male-voiced complaint as a mode of individual expression. After the prologue, the complaint itself opens with the words 'Quho may compleyne my langoure *and* distresß / But help of 3ou that are in pane endleß...' (64-5), and the narrator proceeds to invoke a plethora of famous abandoned men, including 'soroufull troilus' (69). The most significant phrase here is 'But help'; the implication is that without the assistance of other male complainers, without their laments to act as an interpretive framework, the *Lufaris Complaynt* would be both unwritable and unreadable. Thus the narrator carefully dismantles the fiction of originality so stridently asserted at the start of the poem; as with the helpless circularity of the final stanza of the *Lay of Sorrow*, the *Lufaris Complaynt* provides an excellent example of a Scottish author interrogating, and ultimately exposing the expressive inadequacies of, various established modes of Chaucerian complaint.

Conclusion

'here begineth þe quare of Jelusy / a viß 3e gudely folkis and see'

Throughout this chapter I have argued that the texts in Arch. Selden. B. 24 are related to each other, that their shared manuscript context is a material illustration of complex interactions between the texts. I have also argued that a gradual breakdown of narrative occurs in the manuscript, with complaint – an important mode in the codex from the outset – ultimately dominant. I would like to conclude by suggesting that the final major item in the manuscript, the *Quare of Jelusy*, is so positioned because it serves to close the

¹⁴⁹ Spearing (2005), p. 181.

dialogue about the correct governance of lovers which is established in the manuscript, particularly in the *Kingis Quair*, the *Lay of Sorrow*, and the *Lufaris Complaynt*. The *Quare of Jelusy* is usually read as a response to the agenda of the *Kingis Quair*,¹⁵⁰ and it is certainly true that the inclusion of the *Quare* at this point marks a return to narrative in the manuscript. However, I will argue that it is not a return to the narrative agenda of the *Kingis Quair*; the *Quare of Jelusy* is more closely responsive to *The Maying and Disport of Chaucer*, and this return to a conception of amatory experience in which the arbitrary forces of Cupid are in control and lovers are subject to the wrath of the Christian God is ultimately a rejection of the *Kingis Quair*'s figuration of amatory complaint as positive and transformative. The fact that the final major text in the manuscript responds so directly to the *Maying*, the text which establishes the relationship between the amatory and the ethical in the manuscript, foregrounds the tension between love, ethics, and reason, both in the *Quare of Jelusy* and in the codex as a whole. However, narrative ultimately breaks down in the *Quare*, as in the manuscript, and we are denied a resolution both to the *Quare of Jelusy* and to the question of the correct governance of lovers that has come to dominate the manuscript.

The *Quare of Jelusy* runs from f. 221^v to f. 228^v and, at 607 lines, is the longest of the anonymous Scottish texts included in Arch. Selden. B. 24. Its structure is sophisticated: a stylised narrative frame surrounds two intercalated complaints, the first by an unnamed woman, and the second by the (presumably male) narrator. It is the construction of the narrative frame which aligns the *Quare* so closely with the *Maying*. The *Quare* opens in 'This lusty Maii' (1):¹⁵¹ the *Maying* opens 'In May, when Flora, the fresche lusty quene' (1; f. 120^v). The *Letter of Cupid* also claims to have been composed in 'the lusty moneth of maye' (471; f. 217^v). As the narrative frame develops, it becomes clear that the text's most important

¹⁵⁰ Martin (2002), p. 113.

¹⁵¹ All references to the *Quare of Jelusy* are to Norton-Smith and Pravda, eds (1976). The setting is also strikingly similar to that of the prologue to the *Avonis of Alexander* and to the prologue of *Lancelot of the Laik*. See chapter 3, pp. 146-53.

influence in this respect is the *Maying*. The narrator of the *Quare of Jelusy* characterises his situation as follows:

The sonne...forth his bemys sent,
Throu quhich he makith euery lusty hert
Out of thair sleuth to walkyn and astert
And vnto Maii to done thair obseruance,
Tho fell it me into remembrance
A thing the quhich noyith me full sore,
That for to rest auailith me no more
(8-16).

May, the season of lovers, has a very different effect on the narrator, and serves to set him apart from 'euery lusty hert'. This is deliberately reminiscent of the *Maying*; Lydgate's narrator characterises the usual effect which May has on lovers, but then states that 'My sekenes sat ay so neigh myn hert' (18; f. 120^v). The similarities in situation continue; both narrators resolve to go for a walk to counter their sleeplessness, and ultimately find themselves overhearing, and reporting, the complaint of another. There is a crucial difference in the way that the *Maying* and the *Quare* set up these intercalated complaints, however: as discussed earlier in this chapter, the narrator of the English version of the *Complaint of the Black Knight* concentrates on the wholesome refreshment he finds in the landscape, and the corresponding alleviation of his distress, but the narrator of the *Quare of Jelusy* remains preoccupied. The narrator's inability to find consolation allies the *Quare* more closely to the Scottish recension of the *Maying*, in which the two stanzas documenting the relief of the narrator's distress are omitted; this suggests that the author of the *Quare of Jelusy* probably knew Lydgate's poem from a copy produced in Scotland. The *Quare*-narrator describes himself as 'remembring to and fro / All on this warldis changeing and his wo' (23-4), and he is also preoccupied by some kind of private 'suffrance', the nature of which he does not disclose. With these words, the narrator

establishes a connection between the individual and the universal, a dichotomy between public and private distress which will become increasingly important as the text develops.

In alluding to his own sorrows here, the narrator also introduces the idea of complaint into the text for the first time, and he does so by rejecting it. He states very clearly that ‘to no wicht I will compleyne nor mene’ (30), because ‘thare is non that likith to support / Nor power has’ (28-9). Complaint, certainly in so far as it relates to individual pain, is characterised as pointless and ineffectual. The narrator then comes upon a lady during the course of his walk, and she delivers a complaint (ll. 59-92) which marks the only change of voice in the text. The lady’s complaint is strikingly similar to the *Lay of Sorrow*: she does not give precise details of her predicament, although it is clear she is being persecuted by a jealous husband, but the manner in which she expresses herself is very similar to that used by the narrator of the *Lay of Sorrow*. The lady repeatedly stresses her innocence, insisting that ‘I am both hole and innocent’ (70) and ‘I am sakelese’ (83). She also characterises herself as a just complainer, calling for Jupiter’s compassion with the words ‘thou wote that my complaynt is treuth’ (87). Ultimately her complaint is as fruitless and static as the *Lay of Sorrow*; it ends with her desire to die, which recalls the *Lay of Sorrow* and, indeed, the *Lufaris Complaynt*. Unlike in the *Lay of Sorrow*, there is some prospect of help – the lady invokes Hymen, Diana, and Jupiter to help her and bear witness. However, after delivering her complaint, the lady leaves abruptly in the company of another woman, and she does not appear again in the text. The reader is cheated of any resolution to her trouble; the implication is that there is none. This lack of resolution is prefigured by the narrator’s refusal to complain himself; the stasis of the lady’s complaint is hardly surprising when that complaint is framed by a reflection on complaint’s ineffectiveness.

Different sections of the *Quare of Jelusy* are indicated by changes in stanzaic form: the poem uses decasyllabic couplets; the 9-line *Anelida* stanza; rhyme royal; and a 10-line

stanza rhymed *aabaabbcb*. There is no change in stanzaic form for the lady's complaint – the decasyllabic couplets with which the text began are maintained. I would argue that this is because the lady's complaint is not the text's central complaint; her complaint is composed in the same form as the rest of the narrative frame because it is intended to form part of that frame. A complex 'layering' effect is created by using a complaint to frame another complaint; the lady's complaint is static, hopeless, and frustratingly unspecific, but it is deliberately so. This static complaint actually occasions some narrative movement, by prompting the text's major complaint.

The narrator overhears the lady's complaint from his hiding place and, from the outset, the privacy of her complaint is emphasised. The lady is partially hidden 'among the levis grene' (35) – the landscape creates an enclosed space in which she can deliver her complaint.¹⁵² The lady's desire for privacy is made absolutely explicit – the narrator comments that 'So sobirly sche spak that I no mycht / Not here one word quhat that sche said aycht' (54), but he has hidden himself deliberately in order to overhear her words. He declares that '...preuely I hid me of entent' (45); the purpose of his action is never in doubt. The same is true of the *Maying*, in which the narrator states that 'I gan anon...me priuely to schroude' (132-3; f. 122^v). However, the two narrators react differently to the complaints they overhear. In the *Maying*, the narrator states that 'my self I kepte cloß' (568; f. 128^v), choosing to remain hidden and not expressing any desire to reveal himself to the knight. In the *Quare of Jelusy*, however, the narrator records his intention 'To confort hir and counsele of hir wo' (110). Here, the *Quare*-narrator is subverting the conventional trope of overhearing by planning to break its voyeuristic power.¹⁵³ He is cheated of the opportunity to do so by the lady's swift departure, but what is important here is the impetus to action:

¹⁵² Physical enclosure is a common feature of female love laments. On Henryson's use of enclosed space in the *Testament of Cresseid*, see chapter 4, p. 206.

¹⁵³ On overhearing in English and Scottish complaints, see McKim (1994), 32-46. It is possible that the convention of overhearing as part of a narrative frame derives originally from Oton de Granson; this suggestion is made, but not developed, in Norton-Smith and Pravda, eds (1976), p. 63, note to ll. 45-50.

the narrator has been galvanised by the lady's words, not merely into recording them in the manner of the narrator of the *Maying*, but into attempting to participate actively in her situation and, ultimately, to deliver his own complaint.

The true complaint in the *Quare of Jelusy* is the narrator's disquisition on jealousy. This complaint is somewhat odd, as its insertion completely changes the tone of the text. This complaint shifts the emphasis in the *Quare of Jelusy* from the amatory to the advisory,¹⁵⁴ yet it is composed in stanzaic forms which are clearly associated with amatory writing. The narrator's complaint can be divided into three sections, each using a different stanzaic form. Lines 191-316 are composed in the 9-line Anelida stanza, lines 317-463 are composed in rhyme royal, and lines 464-581 are composed in the 9-line stanza used by Chaucer in the *Complaint of Mars*, which rhymes *aabaabbcc*. The first section is an impassioned defence of women, which implores lovers to have compassion on their sufferings and complain on their behalf, whilst the second section focuses on 'full mony ensample' (387) of the wrongs which have been done in the name of jealousy.¹⁵⁵ The final section is addressed directly to jealousy and jealous lovers. Across the three sections of his complaint, the narrator characterises jealousy in extremely broad terms, which encompass social, political, and ethical aspects.¹⁵⁶ The complaint is primarily concerned with jealousy as a form of misgovernance – the narrator refers to women as 'Vnder thraldome and mannis subiection' (200), and refers to the 'varyit tyrannyis' (239) to which women are subjected. The alignment of jealousy with misgovernance occurs in fifteenth-century advisory literature,¹⁵⁷ and misgoverned love is of course an anxiety addressed in the *Kingis*

¹⁵⁴ The insertion of advisory material into an amatory context aligns this text with the *Buik of Alexander*, *Lancelot of the Laik*, and *The Buik of King Alexander the Conquerour*. See chapter 3, pp. 174-9.

¹⁵⁵ The *Quare's* defence of women may well be related to the late fourteenth-century French tradition, of which Pizan's *Epistre* and, by association, Hoccleve's *Letter* were a part – protesting against certain 'misrepresentations' of women in the *Roman de la Rose*. See Phillips (1997), pp. 71-97 (p. 95).

¹⁵⁶ Martin (2008a), p. 32.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

Quair. However, unlike the *Kingis Quair*, the narrator of the *Quare of Jelusy* calls for reform in lovers' behaviour, without projecting it as something which is possible.

Lines 572-81 are unique within the text, as they are written as a 10-line stanza, rhymed *aabaabbcbc*. This stanza functions as a kind of envoy, concluding the complaint proper, and the narrator then returns to decasyllabic couplets for ll. 582-607, in which he excuses his text and refers all false lovers to the judgment of 'euery god that regneth' (597). These final lines do hint at one possibility for redemptive progression – the narrator's injunction to 'Belevith the dyte and takith the entent' (589). The narrator also declares that 'My counsele is playnly and for to see' (574); the *Quare of Jelusy* is presenting itself as a didactic piece, with the potential to instruct and reform its readers, but it is not ultimately optimistic. The idealistic vision of sexual love governed by ethical reason presented in the *Kingis Quair* is ultimately rejected in the final lines of the *Quare of Jelusy*, with their apocalyptic invocation of 'the falouschip of hell' (606) which awaits all unsuccessful lovers.

The *Quare of Jelusy*'s title derives from the note inserted at the beginning of the poem on f. 221^v. A sixteenth-century hand has written 'here beginith þe quare of Jelusy / a viß 3e gudely folkis and see'. It has been suggested that this hand occurs at one other point in the manuscript, as an annotator of *Troilus and Criseyde*.¹⁵⁸ As discussed in chapter 1, Arch. Selden. B. 24 contains the most heavily annotated text of *Troilus* that survives;¹⁵⁹ these annotations are in both Scots and Latin, and are in the hand of scribe 1. The title note to the *Quare of Jelusy* is in a hand very similar to the annotations in the Selden copy of *Troilus*; it is possible, therefore, that this title was added to the *Quare* by scribe 1.¹⁶⁰ This title-note displays the distinctive form of long *s* and the abbreviation *-is* which are characteristic of both hands in this manuscript; the title also displays a tall ascender on the

¹⁵⁸ This identification is made in Norton-Smith and Pravda, eds (1976), p. 62; also noted in Martin (2008a), p. 31.

¹⁵⁹ See chapter 1, pp. 29-32.

¹⁶⁰ I am indebted to Dr Sally Mapstone for first making this suggestion.

letter *v* in ‘aviß’ – indeed this word is used in the marginal annotation of the eighteenth line of text on f. 15^r, and the resemblance is striking.¹⁶¹ The title note also displays a directly vertical descender on *q*, which we can also see in the Selden annotations,¹⁶² and very clear ‘horns’ on *g*.¹⁶³

If this title note was inserted by scribe 1, this has significant implications for our understanding of the manuscript’s construction. It provides further evidence that scribe 1 was still somehow involved in the production of Arch. Selden., even during scribe 2’s copying stint; scribe 1 thus provides a consistent, controlling presence throughout the not inconsiderable period of the manuscript’s construction. This title note also shows that scribe 1, the one figure who can be associated with the entirety of the manuscript’s production with any degree of certainty,¹⁶⁴ was alive to the finely balanced tension between amatory and ethical material in Arch. Selden. B. 24. The title offers an indication of the way in which scribe 1, and possibly also the compilers of Selden, intended the *Quare* to be received. The imperative is ‘a viß’, emphasising the didactic thrust of the poem, and also suggesting that the scribe and/or compilers believed this instructive potential to be the poem’s most important feature – it is the one singled out for comment. This is a final piece of evidence that the manuscript was produced at the heart of the Sinclair family, by someone closely connected to them: considering the interventionist slant of this title note alongside the careful thematic structure of the manuscript, it seems likely that scribe 1 at least, and perhaps also scribe 2, exerted a strong influence over the manuscript’s

¹⁶¹ There is another annotation on f. 15^r, in the left-hand margin at the bottom of the writing area, which demonstrates another two examples of this distinctive form of *v*.

¹⁶² E.g. f. 25^r, between stanzas 1 and 2.

¹⁶³ Compare to the single annotation in the left margin on f. 31^r.

¹⁶⁴ Scribe 1’s hand reappears on f. 229. As Boffey and Edwards have noted, the ‘renewal of a stint for a single leaf seems puzzling’ (Boffey and Edwards ed [1997], p. 9); they make the suggestion that it may have been displaced from elsewhere in the manuscript, but there is no gap where this leaf would appear to fit in. The text on f. 229^v appears to be incomplete; it seems more probable to suggest that scribe 1 copied further items into the manuscript which have now been lost, and that the manuscript as we now have it ends imperfectly.

compilation. In the absence of additional evidence, Alexander Sinclair remains the most likely suggestion for the identity of scribe 1.

Arch. Selden. B. 24 represents a questioning response to English Chaucerian amatory materials: the authors of the *Kingis Quair*, the *Lay of Sorrow*, the *Lufaris Complaynt*, and the *Quare of Jelusy* certainly knew *Troilus*, the *Maying*, *Mars*, and *Venus*, and the author of the *Lay* certainly knew *Anelida and Arcite* as well. The inclusion of these Scottish texts in the manuscript reflects a sophisticated understanding of their relationships with these English materials, and their position in the later part of the manuscript foregrounds their responsiveness. It also allows the scribes and compilers of Arch. Selden. to use this intertextuality to create a movement across the manuscript ‘From wo to wele / and after out of Ioye’, with the dominance of frameless complaint in the latter sections of the manuscript representing the ultimate rejection of ‘Ioye’. The scribes and compilers of Arch. Selden. B. 24 also experiment with a kind of material intertextuality; by juxtaposing texts which probably did not share any conscious relationship, such as the *Maying* and ‘Modyr of god’ and *Venus* and ‘O hie emperice and quene celestiall’, the manuscript creates a distinctively Scottish interpretive framework within which to read Chaucerian amatory complaint. The breakdown of narrative in the manuscript, and the overwhelming dominance of complaint by the second scribe’s stint, also demonstrates a developing preference for the decontextualised, unframed love lyric within the literary milieu of the Sinclair family. However, this rejection of narrative is not an accurate overall representation of fifteenth-century Scottish complaints. This thesis now turns to one of the most significant aspects of the genre’s development in Scotland in this period: the desire to integrate complaints within wider historiographical and romance narratives.

Appendix I

The following table details the contents of Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Arch. Selden. B. 24, and indicates their other manuscript witnesses. Manuscripts produced in Scotland are indicated in bold type.

Arch. Selden. Item	Folios	<i>NIMEV</i> no.	Other witnesses
<i>Troilus and Criseyde</i> ¹⁶⁵	1r-118v	3327	Oxford, Bodleian Library MSS: Digby 181; Selden supra 56; Rawlinson poet. 163. Cambridge: University Library MS Gg. 4. 27; Corpus Christi College MS C61; St John's College MS 235. London, British Library MSS: Harley 1239; Harley 2280; Harley 2392; Harley 3943; Harley 4912; Add. 12044. Durham University Library MS Cosin V. ii. 13. New York, Pierpont Morgan Library MS M. 817. San Marino, California, Huntington Library MSS:HM 114; HM 143.

¹⁶⁵ The Selden copy of *Troilus and Criseyde* is complete, so for the purposes of comparison, only complete copies are included in this table. The many fragments and excerpts of *Troilus and Criseyde* which survive are indexed separately in *NIMEV*.

'Greeneacres'	118 ^v	524	Manchester, John Rylands Library English MS 2
'Truth' ¹⁶⁶	119 ^r	809	Oxford, Bodleian Library MSS: Arch. Selden. B. 10; Fairfax 16; Bod. Hatton 73. Oxford, Corpus Christi College MS C203. Cambridge: University Library MSS Gg. 4. 27 and Kk. 1. 5; Magdalene College, Pepys Library MS 2006; Trinity College, MS R. 3. 20. London, British Library MSS: Cotton Cleo D. vii; Harley 7333; Lansdowne 699; Add. 10340; Add. 22139; Add. 36983. Lambeth Palace MS 344. Leiden University MS Vossius Germ. Gall. 8. 9. San Marino, California, Huntington Library MSS: EL 26. C. 9; HM 140. Coventry City Record Office, Acc. 325/1. Nottingham University Library MS MeLM 1.
Walton's <i>Boethius</i> (8 lines)	119 ^r	2820	London, British Library MSS: Harley 2251; Royal 20.B.X.V;

¹⁶⁶ Was originally also found in Cotton Otho A. xviii, and the final stanza survives in Trinity College, Cambridge MS R. 3. 21.

			Add. 29729; Cotton Vitellius E. xi. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland MS Adv. 1.1.6. Yale, Beinecke Library MS 163. Manchester, John Rylands Library MS Lat. 201. San Marino, California, Huntington Library MS 26. A. 13. Princeton University Library, Taylor MS 5.
'Deuise prowes and eke humylitee'	119 ^v -20 ^r	679	Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland MS Adv. 1. 1. 6
<i>Complaint of the Black Knight / Maying and Disport of Chaucer</i>	120 ^v -29 ^v	1507	Oxford, Bodleian Library MSS: Digby 181; Bodley 638; Fairfax 16; Tanner 346. Magdalene College Cambridge, Pepys Library MS 2006. London, British Library MS Add. 16165. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland MSS: Acc. 4233; 16500; Adv. 1. 1. 6.
'Modir of god'	130 ^r -1 ^v	2221	Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland MS Adv. 18. 2. 8.

			San Marino, California, Huntington Library MS HM 111.
<i>Complaint of Mars</i>	132 ^r -6 ^r	913	Oxford, Bodleian Library MSS Fairfax 16; Tanner 346. Cambridge: Magdalene College, Pepys Library MS 2006; Trinity College MS R. 3. 20. London, British Library MS Harley 7333. Longleat House MS 258.
<i>Complaint of Venus</i>	136 ^r -7 ^r	3542	Oxford, Bodleian Library MSS: Ashmole 59; Fairfax 16; Tanner 346. Cambridge: Magdalene College, Pepys Library MS 2006; Trinity College MS R. 3. 20. London, British Library MS Harley 2251.
'O hie emperice and quene celestiall'	137 ^v -8 ^r	2461	Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland MS 16500
'This warldly Ioy is onely fantasy'	138 ^r	3660	Cambridge: University Library MS Ll. 5. 10; Magdalene College, Pepys Library MS 2553. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland MS Adv. 1. 1. 6.
<i>Boke of Cupide</i>	138 ^v -41 ^v	3361	Oxford, Bodleian Library MSS: Bodley 638; Fairfax 16; Tanner 346.

			Cambridge University Library MS Ff. 1. 6.
<i>Parliament of Fowls</i>	142 ^r -52 ^r	3412	Oxford, Bodleian Library MSS: Laud misc. 416; Digby 181; Bodley 638; Tanner 346; Fairfax 16. Oxford, St John's College MS 57. Cambridge University Library MSS: Ff. 1. 6; Gg. 4. 27; Hh. 4. 12. Cambridge: Magdalene College, Pepys Library MS 2006; Trinity College, MS R. 3. 19. London, British Library MS Harley 7333. Longleat House MS 258.
<i>Legend of Good Women</i>	152 ^v -91 ^v	100	Oxford, Bodleian Library MSS: Bodley 638; Fairfax 16; Tanner 346; Rawlinson C. 86. Cambridge University Library MSS: Ff. 1. 6; Gg. 4. 27. Cambridge, Magdalene College Pepys Library MS 2006. Cambridge, Trinity College MS R. 3. 19 London, British Library MSS: Add. 12524; Add. 9832; Add. 28617;
<i>Kingis Quair</i>	192 ^r -211 ^r	1215	-

<i>Letter of Cupid</i>	211 ^v -17 ^r	666	Oxford, Bodleian Library MSS: Digby 181; Bodley 638; Fairfax 16; Tanner 346. Cambridge: University Library MS Ff. 1. 6; Trinity College MS R. 3. 20. London, British Library MS Add. 17492. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland MS Adv. 1. 1. 6. Durham University Library MS Cosin V. ii. 13. San Marino, California, Huntington Library MS HM 744.
<i>Lay of Sorrow</i>	217 ^r -19 ^r	482	-
<i>Lufaris Complaynt</i>	219 ^r -21 ^v	564	-
<i>Quare of Jelusy</i>	221 ^v -28 ^v	3627.5	-
'My frende gif thou will be a seruiture'	229 ^r	2242	-
'Thy bagynyng is barane brutulness'	229 ^v	3727	-
'Man be als mery as thou...'	229 ^v	2043	-
'O lady I schall me dress	231 ^r ; 230 ^r	IMEV 2478	-

with besy cure'			
'Go fro my window'	230 ^r	-	-

Manuscripts with four or more texts in common with Arch. Selden. B. 24 are listed below.

The number of common texts is given in parentheses, and those belonging to the Oxford group are underlined.

Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Fairfax 16 (7);

Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Tanner 346 (6);

Cambridge, Magdalene College Pepys Library MS 2006 (6);

Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Bodley 638 (5);

Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Digby 181 (4);

Cambridge, Trinity College MS R. 3. 20 (4).

Appendix II

The following table illustrates which Selden items are found with *Anelida and Arcite* in at least one other manuscript witness (in order of their appearance in Arch. Selden.):

Arch. Selden. Item	MSS witnesses which also include <i>Anelida</i>
<i>Troilus and Criseyde</i>	Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Digby 181.
‘Greneacres’	Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Fairfax 16.
‘Truth’	Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Fairfax 16. Cambridge: Magdalene College Pepys Library MS 2006; Trinity College MS R. 3. 20. London, British Library MS 7333.
<i>Complaint of the Black Knight /Maying and Disport of Chaucer</i>	Oxford, Bodleian Library MSS: Bodley 638; Digby 181; Fairfax 16; Tanner 346. Cambridge, Magdalene College Pepys Library MS 2006. London, British Library MS Additional 16165.
<i>Complaint of Mars</i>	Oxford, Bodleian Library MSS: Fairfax 16; Tanner 346; Cambridge, Magdalene College Pepys Library MS 2006. Longleat House MS 258.
<i>Complaint of Venus</i>	Oxford, Bodleian Library MSS: Fairfax 16; Tanner 346; Cambridge, Magdalene College Pepys Library MS 2006.

Boke of Cupide

Oxford, Bodleian Library MSS:
 Bodley 638;
 Fairfax 16;
 Tanner 346.
 Cambridge University Library MS Ff. 1. 6.

Parliament of Fowls

Oxford, Bodleian Library MSS:
 Bodley 638;
 Digby 181;
 Fairfax 16;
 Tanner 346.
 Cambridge: University Library MS Ff. 1. 6;
 Magdalene College Pepys Library MS 2006.
 London, British Library MS Harley 7333.
 Longleat House MS 258.

Legend of Good Women

Oxford, Bodleian Library MSS:
 Bodley 638;
 Fairfax 16;
 Tanner 346.
 Cambridge: University Library MS Ff. 1. 6;
 Magdalene College Pepys MS 2006.

Letter of Cupid

Oxford, Bodleian Library MSS:
 Bodley 638;
 Digby 181;
 Fairfax 16;
 Tanner 346.
 London, British Library MS Add. 17492.

Appendix III

The following table illustrates the structure of Anelida's Complaint (lines 211-350 of Chaucer's *Anelida and Arcite*) alongside the *Lay of Sorrow* and the *Lufaris Complaynt*.¹⁶⁷

Anelida's Complaint 14 stanzas 140 lines	<i>Lay of Sorrow</i> 21 stanzas 185 lines	<i>Lufaris Complaynt</i> 21 stanzas 177 lines
		Stanzas 1-7 (Prologue): Rhyme royal
Stanzas 1-5: 9 lines; <i>aab aab bab</i>	Stanzas 1-7: 9 lines; <i>aab aab bab</i>	Stanzas 10-14: ¹⁶⁸ 9 lines; <i>aab aab bab</i>
Stanza 6: 16 lines; <i>aaab aaab bbba bbba</i>	Stanza 8: 8 lines; <i>aaab aaab</i> Stanza 9: 8 lines; <i>bbba bbba</i>	Stanza 15: 16 lines; <i>aaab aaab bbba bbba</i>
Stanzas 7-11: 9 lines; <i>aab aab bab</i>	Stanzas 9-18: ¹⁶⁹ 9 lines; <i>aab aab bab</i>	Stanzas 16-21: ¹⁷⁰ 9 lines; <i>aab aab bab</i>
Stanza 12: 16 lines; <i>aaab aaab bbba bbba</i>	Stanza 19: 8 lines; <i>aaab aaab</i> Stanza 20: 8 lines; <i>bbba bbba</i>	
Stanzas 13 and 14: 9 lines; <i>aab aab bab</i>	Stanza 20 (Envoy): 10 lines; <i>aab aab baab</i>	

¹⁶⁷ The structure and line numbers of Anelida's Complaint are based on the text as it is laid out in Benson ed. (1987), pp. 379-81.

¹⁶⁸ Stanza 10 comprises only 8 lines, and rhymes *aab ab bab*.

¹⁶⁹ Stanza 14 comprises only 8 lines, and rhymes *aab ab bab*.

¹⁷⁰ Stanza 19 has the anomalous rhyme pattern *aab aaa aaa*.

Chapter 3

Complaint in Romance Narrative

The function and significance of complaint changes when the complaint no longer stands alone, but forms part of a wider narrative. The historical and romance narratives composed in Scotland between c. 1438 and c. 1500 contain different types of intercalated complaint, and these complaints are significant structural forces within the texts. The *Buik of Alexander* (c. 1438); *Lancelot of the Laik* (c. 1460); *The Wallace* (c. 1476-8); and *The Buik of King Alexander the Conquerour* (c. 1460-99) all contain, to varying degrees, complaints which invoke the established traditions of amatory complaint, prison lament, *memento mori* laments, and advisory petitions. This chapter will examine the role of these complaints within their narrative contexts, as well as the interrelationship of the different types of complaint themselves, and will assess what their inclusion in these narratives reveals about the development of the complaint form in Scotland in the mid to late fifteenth century.

The octosyllabic *Buik of Alexander*, hereafter *OA*, survives in a single witness, a print produced by Alexander Arbuthnet in Edinburgh, probably c. 1580.¹ The poem is likely to have been composed over a century earlier, however – an epilogue, preserved in Arbuthnet's print, refers to the birth of Christ and then comments that the text was completed '... past ane thousand 3eir, / Four hundreth and threttie thair-to neir, / And aucht and sumdele mare, I wis.'² *OA* is an anonymous translation of two romances: *Li Fierres de Gadres*,³ and *Les Voeux du Paon*.⁴ However, the Scots translator divides *Les Voeux du Paon* into two parts, creating a text which comprises three distinct sections: the *Forray of*

¹ The textual history of *OA* is discussed in Wingfield (2010), pp. 23-60 and Wingfield (2011b), 210-16.

² Ritchie ed. (1921-9), vol. IV, p. 442, ll. 37-9. All quotations from *OA* are from this edition, and references will be given parenthetically within the text by volume, page, and line number.

³ *Li Fierres de Gadres* is attributed to Eustache and dates from the twelfth century. See Caughey (2013), pp. 97-111 (110, note 5).

⁴ *Les Voeux du Paon* (c. 1310) is attributed to Jacques de Longuyon, and is derived from the *Roman d'Alexandre*. See Ritchie ed. (1921-9), vol. I, pp. xxxiii-xxxvi.

Gadderis; the *Avonis of Alexander*; and the *Great Battell of Effesorn*. *OA*'s focus, as in its French sources, is the propagation of Alexander's reputation as an omnipotent conqueror-king, and it contains several laments for the dead that are used to exemplify ideal military and personal qualities possessed by various characters throughout the narrative. *OA* was also influenced by the amatory complaint tradition – whilst it does not contain any specifically amatory complaints, there are several conscious references to the genre, and the amatory complaint tradition clearly plays an important role in the text's treatment of love and desire and their relationship to governance and power.

In this thesis I provisionally assume a date of c. 1460 for *Lancelot of the Laik*.⁵ Composed primarily in decasyllabic couplets, *Lancelot* is, like *OA*, an anonymous adaptation of a French romance. It is a partial reworking of the thirteenth-century French prose romance, *Lancelot do Lac* (c. 1215-30); this circulated originally an independent romance, and later as part of the *Vulgate*-cycle; it is not known whether the author of *Lancelot of the Laik* knew the whole cycle, or just *Lancelot do Lac*, as he translates only a small part (Phase IV) of his French source.⁶ This is acknowledged explicitly in the prologue: the narratorial voice resolves to tell only a small part of the tale because 'that story is so pasing larg',⁷ but does provide a brief summary of the events in the source text which he omits. *Lancelot of the Laik* has traditionally been viewed as a divided text and this is due, in part, to the fragmentary nature of the poem as it now survives: *Lancelot of the Laik* is extant in a single manuscript, Cambridge University Library MS K.k.1.5.⁸ The text ends abruptly at line

⁵ Lyall states that *Lancelot* is a 'pre-1460 work and possibly as early as the second quarter of the fifteenth century'. This hypothesis is recorded in Mapstone (1986), p. 144; Mapstone (1991), 410-26 (419, note 37); and Mapstone (2001c), pp. 129-44 (135, note 19). Mapstone (2001c) suggests that *Lancelot of the Laik* might be dated between the late 1450s and c. 1480, because of similarities between it and Sir Gilbert Hay's *Buke of the Governauce of Princis* (p. 136, note 25) and Hary's *Wallace* (p. 137, note 26). In the face of these uncertainties, and in the absence of more conclusive evidence at the present time, I will ascribe *Lancelot* to the period c. 1460, as this is regarded as possible by both Lyall and Mapstone.

⁶ Wingfield (2013), pp. 85-96 (88).

⁷ *Lancelot of the Laik*, l. 209. Quotations from *Lancelot* are from Skeat ed. (1865) and are identified by line number.

⁸ Further discussion of the presentation of *Lancelot* in this manuscript can be found in chapter 5, pp. 229-30.

3486, and there has been much speculation about the length and content of the missing portion.⁹ Critics have identified a central thematic dichotomy in the text, between amatory and advisory political material, and this perceived dichotomy has informed recent studies of *Lancelot*: Elizabeth Archibald concludes that the poem is ‘...a tract on good kingship with a secondary plot about love...[it] does seem to lose sight of its main theme and purpose’.¹⁰ Sally Mapstone has argued that the linking of amatory and advisory discourses is a particular feature of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Scottish literature,¹¹ and Joanna Martin has convincingly applied this view to *Lancelot of the Laik*,¹² but this chapter will argue that the amatory and advisory materials in the poem are more intimately connected than has previously been acknowledged, and will suggest that any perceived tension between the two types of discourse can be resolved by studying generic shifts within the text. I argue that the complaint form is the controlling structural and thematic principle behind the poem: the prologue establishes, in an amatory context, a paradigm of complaint as a dynamic redemptive force, and this paradigm is repeatedly mirrored throughout the poem in a variety of contexts. Underpinned by an interest in exemplarity, the *speculum* analogy is manipulated and the image of the complaint as transformative, in both the public and private spheres, is refracted throughout the text.

Like *Lancelot of the Laik*, *The Wallace* (c. 1476-8)¹³ is composed primarily in decasyllabic couplets. It is an amalgamation of materials derived from multiple sources, with considerable additions and rewritings, rather than a translation or adaptation of a single source text, and its major sources are: John Barbour’s *Bruce* (c. 1375); Andrew of Wyntoun’s *Orygynale Cronykel* (c. 1408-20); and Walter Bower’s *Scotichronicon* (c. 1440-9), but

⁹ See Archibald (2005), pp. 71-82 (73) and Cooper (2003), pp. 147-62 (154).

¹⁰ Archibald (2005), pp. 77-8.

¹¹ See Mapstone (1997), pp. 51-69.

¹² Martin (2008a), pp. 41-60.

¹³ There is sufficient internal evidence to date *The Wallace* c. 1471-9, and external contextual evidence places its composition in the second half of that decade. See McDiarmid ed. (1968-9), vol. 1, p. xiv-xxvi.

the author also makes extensive use of a variety of other texts. The identity of *The Wallace's* author remains persistently mysterious: the earliest witness makes no reference to the poem's authorship whatsoever;¹⁴ indeed the first attempt to ascribe an author to *The Wallace* was made by John Mair in his *Historia Majoris Britanniae* (Paris, 1521) almost fifty years after the poem's probable composition date.¹⁵ Mair informs his readers that *The Wallace* was composed by a poet by the name of Henry who was blind from birth, and although McDiarmid firmly refutes the latter claim in his edition,¹⁶ Mair's description has remained influential in discussions of *The Wallace's* authorship up until the present day. McDiarmid also refers to references made to a 'Blynd Hary' in *The Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer of Scotland*, but points out the unusual infrequency of these references, and notes that it is not possible to prove that they pertain to the 'Hary' whom Mair believed to have written *The Wallace*.¹⁷ Added to this is the problematic occurrence of the apparently fantastical '...nakit blynd hary / That lang has bene in þe fary' in *The Manere of the Crying of Ane Playe*,¹⁸ it becomes clear that the epithet 'Blynd Hary' is as determinedly separated from the certain identity of a real author as it is firmly attached to the author of *The Wallace*. The only information which is certain is the author's encyclopaedic knowledge of battle and warfare, alongside his thorough knowledge of several major historical and literary works, both classical and medieval, in Latin and the vernacular. *The Wallace* contains six intercalated complaints, which are not derived directly from any of the major sources.¹⁹ This chapter will examine the role of these complaints within the wider narrative context of *The Wallace*, focusing on the way in which they further the development of the

¹⁴ The earliest witness is Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland Adv. MS 19. 2. 2. The textual history of *The Wallace* is discussed in chapter 5, pp. 230-4.

¹⁵ For more detailed discussion of Mair's reading and reception of *The Wallace*, see McDiarmid ed. (1968-9), vol. 1, pp. xiv-xv.

¹⁶ Ibid., vol. 1, p. xxx.

¹⁷ Ibid, p. xxix.

¹⁸ *The Manere of the Crying of Ane Playe*, ll. 10-11. Quotation from Craigie ed. (1923-5), vol. II, p. 149. For discussion of the figure of 'blynd hary' in this text, see Fisher (1999b), 19-58.

¹⁹ These complaints occur at: II. 160-359; IV. 745-55; V. 229-40; VI. 1-104; XI. 566-82; and XII. 1109-38.

protagonist's identity as a heroic figure and their contribution to the discourses on kingship, power and military leadership which are central to the text.

The Buik of King Alexander the Conquerour, hereafter *BKA*, has traditionally been attributed to Sir Gilbert Hay, who obtained his MA from St Andrews c. 1418-19 and then spent many years in France, initially on military service, after which he appears to have served at the French court.²⁰ Hay is the author of three substantial prose works: the *Buke of the Law of Armys*; the *Buke of the Order of Knychthede*; and the *Buke of the Governauce of Princis*, completed in 1456 at Roslin Castle and now preserved in Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland MS Acc. 9213. Hay appears to have completed *BKA* around 1460,²¹ yet both of the extant manuscript witnesses date from the following century: it is preserved in London, British Library MS Add. 40732 (c. 1530) and Edinburgh, NRS MS GD/112/ 71/9 (c. 1575-1600). It is likely that Hay's poem was subject to some revisions, and that the version of the text which now survives dates from c. 1499.²² Several complaints occur towards the end of *BKA*, primarily relating to Alexander's death, but also a number of advisory petitions addressed to Alexander. The nature of these complaints, and their occurrence in a concentrated group in the latter stages of the narrative, indicates that complaint is being used as a vehicle to cement Alexander's reputation. Elegiac complaint is used by the characters within the text as an attempt to give a final assessment and definition of Alexander and his rule, whilst advisory complaint offers a subtle critique of certain policies and reveals how the author's presentation of Alexander has evolved throughout the narrative. Within this text, complaint is inextricably linked to Alexander's fame and reputation.

²⁰ Hay may have served as chamberlain to Charles VII of France, and his involvement with the French court was perhaps coincided with the marriage of Princess Margaret of Scotland to the Dauphin in 1436. For more detailed information on Hay's life, and the influence that his time in France had on his literary career, see Mapstone (1986), pp. 28-53. For the most recent discussion of Hay's life and career, see M. Brown (2013), pp. 17-30.

²¹ Cartwright (1986), pp. 229-38 (29). The most detailed discussion of the textual history of *BKA* is Wingfield (2010), pp. 61-116.

²² Martin (2008a), p. 63.

All four texts concentrate on a male protagonist of mythical renown, and the ultimate focus of each text is the creation of, or at least a contribution towards, the literary and historical reputation of its protagonist. The texts invoke four different complaint traditions – the amatory, prison complaint, lament for the dead, and advisory or petitionary complaint – and use them as *exempla*. Examination of the role of each of these types of complaint in turn, across all four narratives, reveals a distinctive relationship between complaint and narrative in fifteenth-century Scotland in which complaint becomes part of wider discourses on kingship and rule within the texts, and a means by which authors can examine and ultimately recast the literary reputations of their protagonists.

I

The Influence of Amatory Complaint

The Avonis of Alexander, the second part *OA*, opens with a prologue not found in its French source. Neither the *Forray of Gadderis* nor the *Great Battell of Effesorn* has such a prologue, and initially it appears incongruous – although written in the same octosyllabic couplets as the rest of *OA*, it is markedly different in style from the material which both precedes and follows it. It is possible that this prologue was added after the majority of *OA* had been written, or that it is the work of a different author but, on balance, this is unlikely. Positioned at the start of the second part of the text, this prologue establishes an amatory frame for the *Avonis* which does not exist for the *Forray of Gadderis*, and thus marks a shift in narrative concerns within *OA*.

The prologue opens ‘In mery May, quhen medis springis / And foullis in the forestis singis’ (II: p. 107, 1-2). The May setting is firmly associated with amatory

conventions of fourteenth- and fifteenth-century literature;²³ the prologue is also dominated by elaborately alliterative description of the ‘...woddis winnis thare winfull wedis’ (II: p. 107; 10). The narrator explicitly acknowledges the amatory connotations of his description of the landscape by referring to ‘...ane, the lustyest that is wrocht, / That I haue luffit’ (II: p. 107; 13-14), but records dolefully that he ‘...neuer gat thing of my will’ (II: p. 107; 15). The narrator then makes the following declaration:

For-thy I will set myne intent
To get lessing of my torment,
For to translait in inglis leid
Ane romains quhilk that I hard reid,
Of amourus, armis and of droury,
Of knight-heid and of cheualry.

(II: p. 107; 19-24).

This statement posits the rest of the *Avonis* as a complaint composed by the narrator to ease his sorrows in love and to preserve him from ‘foly’ (II: p. 107; 27) and ‘musardy’ (II: p. 107, 28). The physical act of writing is presented as a means for easing lovesickness; the plaintive state can be turned into one of literary creativity. The narrator’s choice of ‘romains’ is crucial here: he does not perceive any contradiction between this amatory frame and the ensuing narrative of battles and conquests, having drawn an explicit link here between ‘armis’ and ‘droury’, or service in love.²⁴ This framing prologue, and its presentation of the *Avonis* as an amatory complaint, almost certainly accounts for the greater number of embedded laments in this part of the *Buik* than in the *Forray*. Although *OA* does not present laments as elaborate set-pieces, and does not stop the narrative for them, this prologue reveals conscious consideration of their function and purpose and defines them as significant thematic and structural forces within the text.

²³ The idyllic May setting is very similar to that of *The Maying and Disport of Chaucer* and the *Quare of Jelusy*. See also Pearsall and Salter (1973), pp. 161-205 and Davidoff (1988).

²⁴ *DOST* ‘2. Drowry, n’, sense 1.

At the mid-point of the *Avowis*, the narrator provides a brief summary of action to orientate the reader, and in this summary makes a clear reference to the prologue. The narrator informs the reader that ‘This was in middes the moneth of May, / ... And foulis singis of soundis seir’ (III: p. 248; 5015-17), and describes the colourful abundance of flowers, before stating again that ‘That tyme fell in the middes of May’ (III: p. 248; 5025). Whilst brief, this repeated description of the May scene emphasises the prologue’s relationship to the wider narrative. *O4* also has an epilogue, and this epilogue explicitly invokes the amatory tradition suggested in the prologue to the *Avowis*. The narrator states that:

Bot thocht I fail3eit of ryming
Or meter or sentence, for the rude,
Forgif me, for my will was gude
To follow that in franche I fand writtin!

(IV: p. 441; 4-7).

This extended modesty topos is clearly related to the Chaucerian tradition;²⁵ the fact that this is then followed by the assertion that ‘I seuin 3eir had sittin’ (IV: p. 441; 8) clearly identifies the author of this epilogue as the author of the whole work. We can thus see a sustained use of the conventions of *chanson d’aventure* across the text, which supports the idea that the inclusion of the prologue to the *Avowis* was a deliberate authorial decision.

The prologue occurs at the beginning of the *Avowis*, rather than at the beginning of *O4* as a whole, because it marks a change in narrative preoccupation at this point in the text. Love and desire, which do not feature strongly in the *Forray of Gadderis*, suddenly occupy a prominent position in *O4*. After the amatory prologue, Alexander’s first act in the *Avowis* is ‘To se Candas, the fair of face, / That had him lukkin in luffis lace’ (II: p. 108, 9-10). This is the first of several references to love as a type of imprisonment from this

²⁵ The use of the modesty topos is now closely associated with Chaucer’s work: however, its roots are in Latin literature. For a concise history, see Curtius (1979), pp. 82-5.

point onwards: Cassamus says of Bauderane that ‘fyne lufe festnys him, I wys’ (II: p. 215; 3941), and Marcian remarks to Bauderane and Porrus that ‘3e ar baith in luffis presoun!’ (III: p. 290; 6377). This repeated insistence on love as imprisonment is a distinctly positive force within the text, however: Marcian declares that ‘...the presoun is / Licht and ioly and full of blis’ (III: p. 304; 6826-7), and Betys is inspired to heroic martial action by thinking of ‘...Venus chalmer, quhen the Bauderane / In presoun was with preue pane’ (II: p. 229; 4405-6).

Love and martial success are implicitly connected in the *Avowis*: as noted above, this relationship is heralded by line 23 of the prologue. However, Cassamus draws an explicit link between prowess on the battlefield and amatory concerns when he declares:

To-day airly at myne arming
 Hir lufe sho taucht me with ane ring,
 And Now I wald but lossingery
 Lufe hir and serue iolely
 With sword of steill that wele can shere,
 With helme and haubrek, sheild and spere.

(II: p. 132; 1311-16).

The lady’s presence while Cassamus arms himself, and Cassamus’s desire to serve her with his weapons of war, foregrounds the interaction between the amatory and the military: love becomes an important part of this narrative of conquest. In fact, love has become not just important but essential: after the men have taken their vows, Emenydus tells Alexander that:

The beginning of lufing
 Hes shapin to vs the bargaining.
 The grants of lufe sall vs be sald,
 And amorous thochtis mony-fald.

(III: p. 280; 6051-4).

With these words, Emenydus openly acknowledges that love is central to the events of the narrative. Love’s centrality is then demonstrated by the fact that, in the manner of

Cassamus's lady's presence at his arming, 'Ladyes war at thare avowing' (III: p. 280, 6050); Emenydus goes on to explain that both Bauderane and Porrus will draw strength from love. The final, and definitive, moment at which the amatory exerts a positive influence on narrative events comes in the *Great Battell of Effesorn* (IV: 10,575 ff.), when the marriages of Alexander's men serve to seal his peace treaty. Thus an interest in the dynamic power of love develops in the *Avonis*, and this is sustained throughout *OA*: whilst the text does not contain any amatory complaints proper, the prologue to the *Avonis* draws heavily on the tradition, and the prologue heralds the introduction of *OA*'s concern with the relationship between the martial and the amatory.

It is likely that the prologue to the *Avonis of Alexander* is a direct precursor of the prologue to *Lancelot of the Laik*.²⁶ It shares the *chanson d'aventure* setting: the prologue to *Lancelot* opens at dawn in 'lustee Aperill' (1), with the narrator pacing in a garden, sadly reflecting on his present lovesick condition. He has no idea how to please his lady or win her affection, and he believes her to have no knowledge of his pitiful situation. His situation has become so hopeless that he is unable even to find adequate means of expression: 'And in my self I can nocht fynde the meyne / In to quhat wyß I sal my wo compleine' (41-2). The narrator continues to walk through the garden, when he suddenly '...became In to one exasy, / Ore slep...So me betid o wondir aventur' (76-80). Having fallen into this visionary state, the narrator is visited by a green bird, which makes an insulting and dismissive speech in which he describes the narrator as '...of wit al destitude' (96). The bird informs him that the god of love is displeased with his lack of action and inability to resolve the situation; citing Ovid as his authority, he assures the narrator that it is better to show love than to conceal it. The bird ends with a clear and firm injunction to the narrator:

²⁶ Parallels between the two are noted in Ritchie ed. (1921-9), II., p. xlii and Archibald (2005), p. 75; Murray (2012b), pp. 240-3, is the only study to pursue the comparison in depth.

Complen and sek of the ramed, the cwre...
 The god of love thus chargit the, at schort,
 That to thi lady yhoue thi wo Report;
 Yf yhoue may not, thi plant schall yhov writ.

(117; 135-7).

This speech by the bird lays bare the structural premise of *Lancelot of the Laik*. The entire creative impulse behind the narrator's translation of the French prose *Lancelot* is the need to compose an amatory complaint. The thematic nature of what is produced is explicitly acknowledged to be subordinate to the form of expression; the bird tells the narrator that his text may treat 'Of love, ore armys, or of sum othir thing' (147), but what is of paramount importance is that the narrator should:

Se, as yhoue cane, be maner oft endit
 In metir, *quhich that no man haith susspek*,
Set oft tyme thai contenyng gret effecc;
 Thus on sume wyß yhow schal thi wo dwclar.

(138-41; my italics).

This statement demonstrates an awareness of amatory complaint as a tradition, within which the narrator will become a participant. The bird's instruction that he should choose a form 'quhich that no man haith susspek' (139) implies an understanding of appropriateness. Clearly, in the bird's view, some metrical forms are more suited to the composition of amatory complaints than others, although the appropriate form is not specified – apparently that is a judgement which the narrator must make for himself. 'Set oft tyme thai contenyng gret effecc' suggests a precedent; the composition of an amatory complaint has apparently provided a solution to this kind of problem before. These lines may well be referencing the *Kingis Quair*: the avian interlocutor is a narrative device obviously reminiscent of the *Quair*, and the 'gret effecc' (140) could refer to the *Quair*-narrator's eventual success with his lady. In the prologue to *Lancelot*, complaint is thus figured as an active solution to the narrator's problems, the 'cwre' (117) for his apparently

hopeless situation. The god of love himself is, via his avian intermediary, actively encouraging the written, literary expression of amatory woes as a course of action which will please both him and the object of the narrator's desire. Upon waking from his visionary state, the narrator is unsure whether what he has just witnessed is '...of troucht, or of Illusioune' (161), but nonetheless resolves that 'Sen it apperith be of lovis charg...I schal one honde tak / This litil occupatioune for hire sak' (164-7). Amatory complaint is unequivocally established as the guiding principle behind the act of composition in the text, and the reader has been primed to regard the narrative which follows as part of the narrator's own complaint.

Lancelot's prologue closely resembles that of Chaucer's *Legend of Good Women*.²⁷

Aside from the beautiful garden setting, the G-version of the prologue to the *Legend* also makes use of avian messengers, with a lark informing the narrator that '“I se,” quod she, “the myghty god of Love. / Lo! Yond he cometh! I se his wynges sprede!”' (Prol. G. 141-3).²⁸ The dynamic of the *Lancelot* prologue is slightly different, however – in the *Legend of Good Women*, the narrator meets Cupid and Alceste, and commences writing the legends because Alceste has commanded him to do so 'upon thy lyf' (Prol. G. 538). In the prologue to *Lancelot of the Laik*, the narrator has no direct contact with the God of Love. Cupid's advice is communicated to the narrator by the bird, and is also much less explicit than that in Chaucer. The bird simply tells the *Lancelot* narrator that Cupid wishes him to compose an amatory complaint – the exact content and style is left to the narrator's own discretion, provided he choose a '...metir quich that no man haith susspek' (139). The narrator's choice of military subject-matter, a complaint 'That boith of loue and armys can conten' (200), is entirely his own, and thus the prologue reflects the influence of *O4*, the *Kingis Quair*, and Chaucer's prologue. As discussed in chapter 2, Bodleian Library, MS

²⁷ This parallel is widely documented: see Scheps (1967), 167-75; Spearing (1976), pp. 187-8; Edwards (2000), pp. 61-73 (72); Archibald (2005), p. 74; and Martin (2008a), p. 43.

²⁸ Quotation is from Benson ed. (1987).

Arch. Selden. B. 24 provides material evidence of the Scottish circulation of the *Legend of Good Women*. It contains a copy of the prologue and eight of the individual legends (ff. 152^v-191^v); it should be noted, however, that the Selden manuscript contains the F-version of the prologue. The parallels in *Lancelot of the Laik* are to the G-version; *Lancelot* thus provides evidence of the circulation of another version of the *Legend* in Scotland.

II

Prison Complaint

The first inset complaint in *Lancelot of the Laik* occurs at 696-717. The complaint is in Lancelot's own voice; the narrator explains that Lancelot is being held prisoner by the Lady Melyhalt, and that he is suffering '...gret distresse / Of presoune and of loues gret suppris' (690-1). Lancelot's complaint then follows, but it is a curiously generic and unspecific account, and the narrator takes particular care to present it as such. In his preamble, the narrator explains that:

He wepith and he sorowith in his chere,
And euery nyght semyth hyme o yere.
Gret peite was the sorow that he maad,
And to hyme-self *apone this wiß* he saade:
(695-8).

The use of the phrase 'apone this wiß' gives the impression that the subsequent complaint may be a generalised rather than specific account – the fact that Lancelot is delivering a complaint, and the mode in which he is doing so, is more important than what he is actually saying. Certainly, the ensuing complaint gives no precise details of Lancelot's plight, and without the contextual information provided by the wider narrative, it would be impossible to discover the identity of the complainer or the exact nature of their situation. The narrator goes on to say of Lancelot that 'Thus neueremore he sesith to compleine'

(719). This reinforces the impression that the complaint is representative of Lancelot's general situation, rather than an exact depiction of a precise moment. For Lancelot, the state of imprisonment is also a state of complaint.²⁹

Lancelot's prison complaint is also distinctively amatory, referring back to the Chaucerian tone established within the prologue; indeed, the state of physical imprisonment and 'loues gret suppris' (691) are conflated and confused, so that it is unclear which aspect of the 'suord of double peine and wo' (701) is troubling him more.³⁰ This conflation of amatory sorrows and physical imprisonment is illustrated most clearly by the form of the lament. *Lancelot of the Laik* is composed exclusively in decasyllabic couplets, apart from these twenty lines of Lancelot's prison lament, where a metrical shift occurs. This complaint consists of four five-line stanzas, rhymed *aabba*. This is an unusual stanza form associated exclusively with the tradition of amatory vision. The only other text in which it is used is Sir John Clanvowe's *Boke of Cupide*, which is composed entirely in the five-line *aabba* stanza.³¹ It is likely, therefore, that the *Boke of Cupide* is a major source for Lancelot's prison lament. As with Chaucer's *Legend of Good Women*, MS Arch. Selden. B. 24 provides material evidence of the circulation of the *Boke of Cupide* in fifteenth-century Scotland, where it is preserved on ff. 138^v-41^v.³² The use of such a comparatively rare stanza form in *Lancelot of the Laik* suggests that the author was acquainted with Clanvowe's text, and a number of distinctive verbal echoes reinforce this impression. In the *Boke of Cupide*, the narrator states that 'For all though I be old and vnlusty / 3it haue I felt of that

²⁹ This is reminiscent of the Knight's position in *The Maying and Disport of Chaucer*, ll. 570-4 (see chapter 2, p. 86), and the narrator's position in the *Kingis Quair*'s opening complaint (ll. 176-90; see chapter 2, p. 97).

³⁰ This 'suord of double peine and wo' recalls the narrator's words at ll. 28-9, linking Lancelot's position as a complaining lover to that of the narrator.

³¹ Elizabeth Archibald has noted the stanzaic correspondence between the two poems, but does not pursue the connection. See Archibald (2005), p. 78.

³² The *Boke of Cupide* as it appears in MS Arch. Selden. B. 24 is incomplete, however – the final nine stanzas, lines 246-90, are missing. This is because a leaf has been lost at the end of quire X, between f. 141^v and f. 142^r; there is no reason to suppose that the Selden copy of Clanvowe's *Boke* was always defective. See chapter 2, p. 91, and Barker-Benfield (1997), pp. 29-60 (54).

sekenes this may',³³ presenting himself as an aged, yet nevertheless tormented, lover. The narrator of *Lancelot* casts himself in a similar light in the prologue, when he states that the garden he enters is inhabited by Priapus, a figure associated with the concept of the elderly lover.³⁴ Similarly, the reference to Melyhalt being smitten with 'loues fyre dart' (1227) is a clear echo of the *Boke of Cupide*, line 45, where the narrator refers to the insomnia which must be endured by all 'In quhom þat love his fyre dart wole smyte'.³⁵ Lancelot's prison lament is thus deliberately and explicitly linked to the wider tradition of Chaucerian amatory materials, and this in turn conflates the physical imprisonment of the body and the psychological imprisonment of love, a concept which dates back to Froissart.³⁶

A metrical shift is also used to indicate the beginning of a formal prison complaint in *The Wallace*; Wallace's prison complaint occasions a shift to a complex and unusual Chaucerian verse form. In Book II, lines 171-359, the text switches from its established narrative trajectory to framed lament, and the decasyllabic couplets in which the bulk of the narrative is composed are replaced by nine-line stanzas rhymed *aabaabbab* (the *Anelida*-stanza). The use of this particular stanza form, which at the time of *The Wallace*'s composition was associated exclusively with amatory complaint,³⁷ for the relation of a non-amatory episode within an epic-style historical narrative is a striking gesture. What it achieves, however, is the separation of this episode from the rest of the narrative; the stylised individuality of the verse at this point foregrounds this section of the text not only within the context of Book II, but within the narrative as a whole. The events in this complaint section are crucial to the development of Wallace as a hero and a leader within the text. Their inclusion within a framed stanzaic lament rather than in the usual narrative

³³ *The Boke of Cupide*, ll. 37-8. This quotation is from my own transcription of Arch. Selden. B. 24 (f. 139^r). For an edition of *The Boke of Cupide*, see Scattergood ed. (1975).

³⁴ Brown (1970), 31-40, and Martin (2008a), p. 43.

³⁵ *The Boke of Cupide*, l. 45, quoted from Arch. Selden. B. 24, f. 139^r.

³⁶ Busby (1998), pp. 81-100 (82; 86).

³⁷ For a detailed discussion of this stanza and its uses elsewhere, see chapter 2, p. 105. For a discussion of the development of the decasyllabic line in Older Scots literature which particularly relates to *The Wallace*, see McClure (2005).

form lends them a self-conscious aspect - pivotal, epiphanic scenes are deliberately expressed in a metrical form that is specifically associated with performative self-expression.³⁸

After recounting the details of Wallace's arrest in the marketplace in Ayr at II. 141, the narrator signals an ostensible break in the onward narrative trajectory with the words 'Leyff I him thus in-to that paynfull sted' (II. 159).³⁹ Ten lines of reported lament, in which the narrator implies that he is speaking for the entire Scottish nation, follow this statement: the narrator reports 'the pittows wementyng' (II. 161) and assures the reader that Wallace's capture was 'The tormentyng of euery creatur' (II. 163). Whilst the content of these lines clearly reveals them to be a lament, and the narrator's opening statement divorces them unmistakably from the preceding narrative thread, and they do not actually form part of the inset complaint proper. These lines are written in decasyllabic couplets and are therefore more closely related to what precedes than what follows. At this point, the author's content is that of the very traditional 'complaint of the times', as the people of Scotland reportedly cried out that:

Lefand as now a chifftane had we nane
Durst tak on hand bot 3oung Wallace alane.
This land is lost, he caught is in the swar.
Prophesye out, Scotland is lost in cayr.'
(II. 167-70).

These lines are followed immediately by the shift to the 9-line *aabaabbab* stanza form. The stanzaic complaint initially opens with the narrator's voice, describing the meagre rations and poor conditions of Wallace's confinement. This narratorial reportage that occurs both before and after the switch to the stanzaic form acts as a frame for Wallace's complaint,

³⁸ For a convincing historical account of the development of the complaint as a theatrical, self-conscious mode of expression in England, see Kerrigan ed. (1991); and in a Scottish context, McKim (1994), 32-46.

³⁹ All quotations from *The Wallace* are from McDiarmid ed. (1968-9) and are identified by book and line number.

with the narratorial (and allegedly national) view of his predicament providing the interpretive context for Wallace's own complaint.

The following section of the complaint (II. 174-206) is in Wallace's own voice. This section of the complaint is addressed directly to the Christian God, and sees Wallace bewailing the evils of his present condition and impending death, not out of concern for himself but because he does not believe he has served Scotland to the full extent of his capabilities: 'Our few Southrone on-to the dede I drawe' (II. 177). The most striking characteristic of these lines is the extensive debt which they owe to the wider tradition of medieval prison lament, and it is this extant corpus of prison writing which Wallace's lament in Book II 173-206 simultaneously invokes and recasts.⁴⁰

The fact that Wallace delivers a prison complaint is significant in itself, given the long association of the genre with captive kings and leaders.⁴¹ However, it occurs at an unusual point in the narrative. Whilst the laments of Edward II and Charles d'Orléans were composed during the authors' adulthood, and reflect a decline of power and the loss of a previously held position of leadership, at this early stage in the text Wallace has not yet become any kind of leader, official or otherwise. Up until this point, he has committed only individual acts of vengeance, which arise purely from circumstance, and are not part of any coherent programme of resistance. For example, the act for which Wallace has been imprisoned in the first place, the murder of Lord Percy's steward, arose out of a disagreement over fish between the steward and a servant of Wallace's uncle. In this respect, Wallace's prison lament most closely resembles the *Kingis Quair* in terms of the time of its occurrence. Like James I, Wallace's imprisonment and the arising lament occur in his youth, before he has assumed the role 'ane rycht famous of renowne / Of worthi blude that ryngis in this regioun' (I. 17-18) anticipated at the very beginning of the

⁴⁰ On prison complaint as a tradition deriving ultimately from Boethius, see chapter 1, pp. 34-45.

⁴¹ See Boffey (1991), pp. 84-102; Busby (1998); Epstein (2003), 159-98; and Summers (2004).

narrative. Unlike their English counterparts, these fifteenth-century Scottish prison laments are a feature of a leader's apprenticeship, the performance of a necessary educative process which forms part of the preparation for national leadership.

This inset complaint in Book II develops into an epiphanic scene in which the destiny of the protagonist undergoes a significant change. The narrator relates Wallace's apparent death from dysentery and his foster mother's rescue of his body from the 'draff myddyn' (II. 257) into which it has been cast; however, upon discovering his heartbeat, the foster mother undertakes, with the help of her daughter, to restore Wallace to full health.

Hyr dochtir, had of xii wokkis ald a knyaff,
 Hir childis pape in Wallace mouth scho gaiff.
 The womannys mylk recomford him full swyth.
 Syn in a bed thai brocht him fair and lyth.

(II. 273-6).

This episode is suffused with imagery of resurrection and rebirth, with Wallace's return to the care of his wet nurse and his revival by breast milk representing not just his return to health and vigour but a re-experienced childhood and a reinvented adulthood. The intensely feminine manner of his resurrection recalls the visit of the women to Christ's sepulchre, recorded in all four gospels, during which they alone are vouchsafed knowledge of his resurrection.⁴² McDiarmid notes that there is a comparable episode in Valerius Maximus' *Factorum et Dictorum Memorabilium*,⁴³ composed between AD 14 and AD 37.⁴⁴ This is an exemplary text designed to illustrate the correct application of virtue through stories, with each particular type of virtue demonstrated by a variety of stories from both the Roman and non-Roman traditions. Valerius contains two stories which could have provided a source for Wallace's revival in Book II, and they both occur in Book V, chapter

⁴² Also noted in McHugh (2008), p. 175.

⁴³ McDiarmid ed. (1968-9), vol. 2, pp 147-8, note to lines 273-5.

⁴⁴ The text is dedicated to the Emperor Tiberius, which locates its composition somewhere during his reign. See Shackleton Bailey ed. (2000), vol. I, p. 1. All quotations and translations from Valerius Maximus are taken from this edition.

iv. The first, which allegedly occurred in Rome, describes a daughter breastfeeding her imprisoned mother in order to sustain her, keeping her alive long enough to secure her release.⁴⁵ The second, which dates back to Hyginus' *Fabulae*, no. CCLIV,⁴⁶ records how Pero (Xanthippe) suckled her father Myco to prolong his life.⁴⁷ Valerius Maximus was known in Scotland – this is clearly attested by Wyntoun's *Orygynale Cronykeil*, one of *The Wallace's* major sources.⁴⁸ However, the author of *The Wallace* presumably knew Valerius Maximus as a text in its own right, rather than from one of his sources, because this incident has no known precedent in Older Scots or Scoto-Latin literature. This is certainly plausible: Valerius Maximus survives in over 600 manuscripts from fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Europe, and the 1436 inventory of Glasgow Cathedral Library does record that they possessed 'Item Valerius Maximus'.⁴⁹ Book V, chapter iv of the *Factorum et Dictorum*, which contains the incidents that presumably inspired Wallace's resurrection, is entitled 'De Pietate Erga Parentes Et Fratres Et Patriam' ['Of piety towards Parents and Brothers and Country']. This incident, in which Wallace is effectively reborn as Scotland's leader, apparently derives from a set of *exempla* relating to patriotism, and which link the parent-child relationship to that which exists between citizen and nation.

There are similar accounts, relating to the miraculous healing powers of the Virgin Mary's breast milk, which are frequently included in Latin *mariales* of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries; they also appear in London, British Library MS Royal 20 B XIV, an Anglo-Norman religious miscellany dating from the fourteenth century.⁵⁰ The manner of Wallace's 'resurrection' thus has precedents in classical, folkloric, and Christian devotional

⁴⁵ Shackleton Bailey ed. (2000), vol. I, pp. 500-1.

⁴⁶ See Marshall ed. (2002), p. 184.

⁴⁷ Shackleton Bailey ed. (2000), vol. I, pp. 500-1.

⁴⁸ See Amours ed. (1903-14), VI. 1852-58.

⁴⁹ Higgitt (2006), S12.57 (p. 141). No Scottish copy of Valerius Maximus survives, but the *Complaynt of Scotland* also provides demonstrable evidence of its circulation. The narrator refers to Valerius Maximus by name four times (see A.M. Stewart ed. [1979], pp. 87; 87; 105; 116), and includes three other *exempla* which derive from Valerius Maximus, although the source is not explicitly cited (pp. 77; 107; 117).

⁵⁰ For further discussion of these collections of Marian miracles, see Meale (1990), pp. 115-36.

traditions, but its position in the early part of the narrative is a subversion of generic expectation: a revelatory scene in which the ultimate ‘purpose’ of the narrative is disclosed, and the mysteries within it revealed, traditionally belongs to the close of the romance.⁵¹ Rather than providing the resolution to the text, this epiphanic scene in *The Wallace* is the transformation which enables Wallace to assume the role of Scotland’s messianic leader and protector against the English. The fact that it is written in the *Anelida*-stanza, despite not forming part of the complaint proper, serves to associate this scene with the complaint rather than the narrative. The events are accorded prominence, but this also emphasises their separateness. The different verse form of Wallace’s complaint creates a self-contained space for reflection within the narrative; the use of the same verse form for the description of his transformation implies that it is a fundamental, psychological transformation – something has happened to Wallace internally, as well as externally. Equally, it emphasises the transformative power of complaint and elides the stasis traditionally associated with the form.

This scene of Wallace’s resurrection not only allows the reader to witness his transformation into a leader, but provides an opportunity for Wallace to prove his worthiness to authority figures within the text itself. This proof is achieved through the figure of Thomas the Rhymer, a seer whose predictions are strongly associated with the Wars of Independence.⁵² Although belief in Wallace’s death is widespread, ‘Thomas Rimour’ (II. 288) is sent by a minister to discover the truth of his own prediction and, upon meeting Wallace, delivers a second prophecy:

...‘Forsuth, or he deces,
 Mony thousand in field sall mak thar end.
 Off this regioun he sall the Sothroun send,
 And Scotland thris he sall bryng to the pes.

⁵¹ Frye (1976), pp. 25-43 (pp. 31-4). See also Cooper (2004), pp. 5; 96-7; 362.

⁵² See Murray (2011a), pp. 322-39 and Murray (2012b), pp. 195-204.

So gud off hand agayne sall neuir be kend.'

(II. 346-50).

The structural importance of this prophecy within the wider narrative context of *The Wallace* has been previously discussed,⁵³ but the fact is that it is also the final event in this stanzaic interlude in Book II. As such, it is associated with Wallace's complaint, and serves to emphasise the position of complaint as a significant force within the text.

III

Lament for the Dead

Lament for the dead, or the literary commemoration of a deceased person or persons, forms a significant sub-category of intercalated complaint in fifteenth-century Scottish romance narratives. It is closely related to the wider phenomenon of the self-contained mourning lyric which had developed in insular literature in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, itself derived from the Graeco-Roman elegiac tradition. The inclusion of laments for the dead in *The Wallace*, *BKA*, and *OA*, concentrating as they do upon the deaths of kings and other figures of leadership within the texts, reflect on the qualities and characteristics that define good governance, and help to create a strong association between complaint and exemplarity in these texts.

Gregory Nagy notes that the term 'elegy' originated in Ancient Greece, and its connotations were originally purely formal, denoting only text that had been composed in a combination of elegiac hexameter and pentameter – that is, the elegiac couplet.⁵⁴ Nagy goes on to define 'lament' as he believes it would have been understood by the Greeks, stating that 'lament is an act of singing in response to the loss of someone or something

⁵³ See Hall (2004), 177-94 (183); Murray (2011a); and Murray (2012b), pp. 202-4.

⁵⁴ Nagy (2010), pp. 13-45 (13).

near and dear, whether that loss is real or only figurative', and whilst acknowledging the lack of scholarly consensus over the reasons for the association, asserts that in Ancient Greece 'elegy evolved from traditions of songs of lament'.⁵⁵ However, the strict formal characteristics of Greek and, later, Roman elegies has caused certain difficulties for modern critics when attempting to apply the term effectively to medieval English and Scottish literature. Indeed, it has recently been argued by Jamie Fumo that 'Elegy as a "pure" or self-articulated form did not exist in medieval England; when employed by modern critics...the term is no more than a matter of critical convenience'.⁵⁶ Fumo then states that 'When occasional lyric poems of mourning were composed in medieval Britain...they were most likely to be labeled "complaint", "lament", or *planctus*' and that medieval English and Scottish authors freely combined traditionally elegiac subject-matter with the 'literary machinery of dream-vision, debate, apocalypse, allegory and fable'.⁵⁷ This association of the complaint form with elegiac subject matter is crucial. Whilst it is clear that the strict formal requirements of classical elegy were not often or consistently adhered to by medieval authors, the Graeco-Roman association between elegy and mournful composition had been preserved and led to the development of a specifically elegiac mode of complaint: the lament for the dead.

The development of the lament for the dead as such a specific and identifiable genre is due largely to the influence of Geoffrey de Vinsauf's *Poetria Nova* (c. 1210). This manual of rhetorical *exempla* included a lament for Richard I of England, which achieved widespread renown.⁵⁸ It is the longest of the *exempla* in Vinsauf's text, and appears to have been accorded particular attention by readers; in manuscripts of the *Poetria Nova*, it is often

⁵⁵ Nagy (2010), p. 13.

⁵⁶ Fumo (2010), pp. 118-34 (120).

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ The text of this lament is printed in Richmond (1966), pp. 132-5.

individually rubricated.⁵⁹ This lament, originally intended to provide a model for rhetorical instruction, became a paradigm of the newly evolving lament for the dead tradition and appeared in multiple later exemplary works, as well as circulating independently.⁶⁰

Nicholas Trevet's inclusion of this lament in the life of Richard I in his *Annales sex regum Angliae qui a comitibus Andegavensibus originem traxerunt* (c. 1307) marks the first point at which an independently-composed and circulated literary elegy was included in a historical chronicle. From this point onwards it became more usual to include a stylised lament when chronicling the death of an important figure, and the laments themselves grew increasingly popular in their own right.⁶¹

These commemorative complaints primarily mark the death of kings.⁶² A notable example is a lament for Edward I, presumably composed soon after the king's death in 1307, which is preserved in London, British Library MS Harley 2253.⁶³ This lament primarily focuses on two themes: the piety of Edward I, and the desire that Edward II should come to resemble his late father. Throughout the lament, Edward I is depicted as a pious crusader – the narrator describes how the Pope, on receiving the news of Edward's death, cried 'is Edward ded? / of cristendome he ber þe flour!' (47-8) and later, whilst 'þe pope of peyters stod is at masse, / wiþ ful gret solempnete' (57-8) the pontiff laments again that 'Ierusalem, þou hast i-lore / þe flour of al chiualerie!' (65-6). This recurring theme of Edward's piety is combined with anxiety about England's future under the new king. The narrator records, in direct speech, the following injunction from Edward I:

'Clerkes, knyghtes, barouns,' he sayde,
'y charge ou by oure sware,

⁵⁹ Young (1944), 172-82 (p. 172).

⁶⁰ Young (1944), p. 176 and Richmond (1966), pp. 17-18.

⁶¹ Richmond (1966), pp. 18-19.

⁶² A lament for Sir John Berkeley of Wymondham (d. 1413) is preserved in Nottingham University Library, MS Mi 01; however this appears to be a highly unusual composition. For the text of the lament and some analysis, see Turville-Petre (1982), 332-9.

⁶³ This lament is most easily consulted in Robbins ed. (1959); it is 5 in Robbins's numbering. All quotations and line references are from this edition.

þat 3e to engelonde be trewe...
 helpeþ mi sone & crouneþ him newe...'
 (19-23).

The dying king's concerns about his son's ability to inspire loyalty in his subjects are later reflected by the narrator with the words 'Nou is Edward of Carnaruan / king of engelond...god lete him ner be worse man / þen is fader...' (73-5). The dual concerns of this lament exemplify two of the most important features of the developing lament for the dead: a eulogistic appreciation of one or several virtues of the deceased, and anxious, semi-prophetic reflections on the future.

These two motifs are reflected in other historical laments for the dead which survive from fourteenth- and early fifteenth-century England, including laments for Richard II, Henry V, and Edward IV,⁶⁴ all three of which consider the merciless implacability of Death and Fortune, the uncertainty of the future, and the unique virtues and talents of their subjects, showing that by the mid-fourteenth century these features had become conventional characteristics of lament for the dead in England. The development of the lament for the dead as a distinct genre was very different in Scotland. Whilst responsive to the thematic paradigms of the genre seen in the fourteenth- and fifteenth-century English examples, Scottish laments for the dead evolved their own particular characteristics and a unique relationship with the wider genre of historical narrative: the laments for the dead in *OA*, *The Wallace*, and *BKA* play a pivotal role in its establishment.

The earliest examples of Scottish laments for deceased persons of high rank are found in the fifteenth-century chronicles. Bower's *Scotichronicon* (c. 1440-9) includes four eulogistic laments, commemorating David I, Robert I, David II, and James I respectively. As Mapstone has noted, these are all kings judged by Bower to have been 'successful' in

⁶⁴ Robbins ed. (1959), numbers 39, 40, 41 and 42. They are preserved in: the Vernon Manuscript; San Marino, California, Huntington Library, MS HM 111; Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Douce 302; and Manchester, John Rylands Library, Eng. MS 113 respectively.

their establishment of peace and good governance within the realm of Scotland.⁶⁵ These ‘powerfully laudatory’ laments for rulers associated by Bower with positive reform and innovation form part of a broader practice in the *Scotichronicon* of using historical rulers (both Scottish and foreign) as exemplary figures within the text.⁶⁶ Book v, chapters 45-62, contain the lament for David I: Bower attributes its authorship to Ailred, and accounts for his own inclusion of it in exemplary terms:

Quisquis igitur felici morte se moriturum affectat, eiusdem Deo dilecti regis vitam, et sequentem pro morte sua legendo lamentacionem, sue felicissime mortis exemplo mori discat.

(III: Book v, ca. 44; p. 138, 40-3).⁶⁷

[Therefore whoever desires to die a happy death, let him learn to die from the example of his most happy death by reading the life of the king beloved of God and the lamentation of his death that follows.]

(III: p. 139, 46-9).⁶⁸

Bower’s presentation of David I as an exemplary figure of course tallies with his pious reputation,⁶⁹ and in this comment Bower explicitly states that the lament for his death forms an important part of his exemplary identity as it is created in the *Scotichronicon*.

The death of Robert I occurs in Book xiii, chapter 13, and is accompanied by a brief narratorial lament on behalf of Scotland, in which the narrator declares: ‘Deducant oculi tui, O desolata Scocia! lacrimas per diem et noctem et non taceant;’ (VII: Book xiii, ca. 13; p. 42, 11-12); [‘Scotland, how forasaken you are! Your eyes fill with tears day and night and are not at rest’] (VII: p. 43, 13-14). The true lament for the king’s death is delivered in chapter 14, however, and consists of two epitaphs, through which Bower

⁶⁵ Mapstone (1998), pp. 321-38 (325).

⁶⁶ Mapstone (1998), p. 325.

⁶⁷ All quotations from the *Scotichronicon* are from Watt ed. (1987-98), and are identified first by volume number, then by book, chapter, page, and line.

⁶⁸ All translations are from Watt ed. (1987-98), and are identified by volume, page, and line.

⁶⁹ David I belonged to the Canmore dynasty, son of Malcolm III and Queen Margaret. A cult grew up around Margaret after her death in 1093, and she became the only Scottish saint to be venerated by the Roman church. See Dunlop (2005); M. Hammond (2010), pp. 61-85; and Coll-Smith (2010), pp. 67-114. On his death in 1153 David I was buried in Dunfermline Abbey, alongside his parents, and a minor cult seems to have become associated with him. See M. Hammond (2010), pp. 67-9.

reflects on the king's virtues and the events of his life. This is very similar to the way in which Bower laments the death of David II: the details of his death are recounted in Book xiv, chapter 34, and his epitaph is given in chapter 35. The epitaph records that:

Hic rex sub lapide David inclitus est tumilatus
vir stirpis nitide, per climata magnificatus;
non vixit cupide, sed dapsilitate probatus,
gesture lepide dulcedine mellificatus.

(VII: Book xiv, ca. 35; p. 360, 1-4).

[This renowned king David was buried under a tombstone
a man of glittering ancestry, highly praised throughout the regions of the world.
he was not ruled by passion in his life, but was a man of tested generosity,
sweetened by his delightful charming behaviour.]

(VII: p. 361, 1-7).

Bower's use of epitaphs as a vehicle for expressing laments for the dead gives them a 'monumental' quality; Bower uses the epitaphs to summarise clearly the virtues of the deceased, and emphasise their exemplarity, in a form associated with permanent commemoration.

After detailing the circumstances of James I's assassination in Book xvi, Bower includes a lengthy prose lament, reflecting on each of James's talents and virtues, and the myriad benefits his reign brought to Scotland. This prose commemoration runs for ten chapters, 28 to 38 inclusive. In chapter 35, however, a shift occurs. This chapter is largely taken up with a verse lament, which is given the rubric 'Hic deflet auctor seculum nequam et regnum sine rectore' (VIII: Book xvi, ca. 35; p. 324); ['Here the author laments the wretchedness of the age and the rulerless kingdom'] (VIII: p. 324). This is intriguing, because the location of this complaint of the times in the middle of a eulogy for a king explicitly links the two kinds of lament – it consciously highlights the socio-political implications of the death of a ruler and its negative vision of the future throws James I's exemplary qualities into sharp relief. This, and the other laments for the dead included

within the *Scotichronicon*, forms a fully integrated part of his presentation of kingship in the text.

The *Liber Pluscardensis* is a Latin chronicle of the history of Scotland up to 1435, composed by an anonymous author for the abbot of Dunfermline, and completed by 1461.⁷⁰ It is based primarily on Bower's *Scotichronicon* and John of Fordun's *Chronica Gentis Scotorum* (c. 1374-7). In two of the six surviving manuscript copies of the *Liber Pluscardensis*, a unique lament for the dead is preserved. It occurs in Book XI of the *Liber*, and it mourns the death of Princess Margaret of Scotland (c. 1424-1445), eldest child of James I and his wife Joan Beaufort. She died in France, where she had been living since her marriage to the dauphin in 1436.⁷¹ The chronicler of the *Liber Pluscardensis* declares that 'Sed heu prodolor! quod me oporteat scribere quod dolenter refero de ejus morte:' (I: p. 381); ['But woe is me that I should have to write what I sorrowfully relate about her death!'] (II: p. 288),⁷² and then explains that Margaret died at Chalons after a short illness. The chronicler introduces the lament with the following words:

Cujus epithapium sequitur consequenter hic, quod super ejus tumbam positum fuit post mortem in lingua Gallicana; modo hic in lingua Scoticana translata, ad praeceptum inclitae memoriae regis Jacobi secundi, fratris ejusdem dominae.

(I: p. 382).

Here follows her epitaph, which was placed upon her tomb after her death, in the French tongue; only it is here translated into the Scottish tongue, by command of that lady's brother, King James II. of famous memory.

(II: p. 288).

The chronicler's assertion that the lament was originally composed 'in lingua Gallicana' was previously something of a mystery. However, Bawcutt has identified the French source as

⁷⁰ On the date of the *Liber Pluscardensis*, see Mapstone (1999a), pp. 31-55 (34, note 23).

⁷¹ Son of Charles VII and later Louis XI.

⁷² All quotations from the *Liber Pluscardensis*, and the accompanying translations, are from Skene ed. (1877-80). They are identified by volume and then by page number.

the anonymous *Complainte pour la morte de Madame Marguerite d'Ecosse, dauphine de Viennoys*, preserved exclusively in Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, MS 3523.⁷³

This lament in the *Liber Pluscardensis* is the earliest extant example of a lament composed in Scots for a named figure of high rank, and the inclusion of a vernacular verse lament in a Latin prose chronicle is striking. There is no evidence to indicate the author of the Scots translation – it may have been the author of the *Liber*, but he makes no such claim in any of the prefatory material.⁷⁴ Bawcutt has noted that ‘There are sufficient verbal resemblances to show that the *Complainte* did indeed provide a starting-point for the Scottish poet’, but also acknowledges that ‘the rendering is extremely free’.⁷⁵ The Scots poem does indeed preserve many features of the French original, not least its diptych structure. The structure of the French *Complainte* is exactly symmetrical – it consists of two sections, each containing eighteen 10-line stanzas, rhymed *aabaabbbcc*. The first section consists of the ‘complainte’; the second, of the ‘consolacion’;⁷⁶ the Scottish translator maintains this distinction between the ‘Playnt’ and the ‘Ansuere of Resoune’ but subverts the symmetry of the source.⁷⁷ Whilst the ‘Ansuere of Resoune’ does contain eighteen stanzas, as in the French text, the ‘Playnt’ has only five. These five stanzas begin with an address to God, quickly followed by an exhortation to the whole of the natural world, including ‘...all the ayre that in the hycht above is, / And all the wyndis that vnder the hevyn amovis’ (p. 382) to take up the narrator’s complaint. However, the momentum of the ‘Playnt’ is abruptly broken by a narratorial intervention in prose, which declares:

Bot nocht withstandyng thaire is mare of this lamentacioun, xviii coupill, and in the Ansuere of Resoune als mekill, this ma suffice; for the complant is bot fenyeit thing. Bot

⁷³ Bawcutt (1988), 5-13 (7).

⁷⁴ The author of the French *Complainte* is also unknown – Bawcutt contests the rubric in the *Liber Pluscardensis* which posits the dauphin himself as the author. See Bawcutt (1988), 6.

⁷⁵ Bawcutt (1988), 9.

⁷⁶ Extracts from the French *Complainte* are printed in Bawcutt (1988).

⁷⁷ The Older Scots text is printed in full in Skene ed. (1877-80), vol. I, pp. 382-8. Quotations are from this edition and are identified by page number, and then by line within that page.

be caus the tother part, quhilk is the Ansuere of Resoun, is verray suthfastnes, me think it
gud to put mare of it; quhilk folowis thus efterwarte:-

(I: p. 383).

Bawcutt has argued that this alteration of the poem's structure represents a belief on the part of the writer that '...poetic fiction, is inferior to moral and religious truth'.⁷⁸ However, this structural alteration also reveals the Scottish author's view of the purpose of complaint as a genre. The French *Complainte* is a perfectly balanced dialogue, but the Scots poem privileges the consolatory response over the original statement of grief. The 'Ansuere' addresses the speaker of the original 'Playnt' directly throughout, addressing specific points raised in the 'Playnt', but also addressing some which are not, thus allowing the reader to infer some of the content of the missing first section. The 'Ansuere' admonishes the complainer with the words:

Thow suld weill know that He that all as made
As langand gouernance of his Godhade
Nathing mysfaris, bot all dois for the best;
And all this world, that is baith lang and braid,
He ordande for refeccioun of manhaid;

(p. 384, 24-8).

The 'Ansuere of Resoun' thus teaches the complainer an orthodox Christian view of death and grief, a lesson which is constantly repeated. As well as reminding the complainer that 'Theire is nocht heire bot vayn and vanite' (p. 385, 31) and 'we haue heire na cete permanent' (p. 386, 15), the answer reminds the complainer that 'Thow suld traist that scho was virgyn pure and cleyn... Dyd neuir of plycth the pointer of a preyn / Tynt nocht hir madenheid for hir maritage' (p. 387, 19-24). The foreshortening of the 'Playnt', so that the 'Ansuere' and its instructional theme comprise the majority of the lament, turns the poem into an actively exemplary piece. Not only are the virtues of Princess Margaret

⁷⁸ Bawcutt (1988), 7.

recounted in detail, but the occasion of her death is turned into an opportunity for moral reflection and teaching.

The Wallace, *BKA*, and *OA* are responsive to the tradition of embedding laments for the dead within a wider historical narrative, as exemplified in both the *Scotichronicon* and the *Liber Pluscardensis*. The most obvious purpose of the laments for the dead included in these texts is to emphasise and reflect upon the virtues of some of the most notable characters, and by doing so the laments contribute significantly to the establishment of core value systems in all three texts. In *The Wallace*, for instance, Wallace's lament after the death of his faithful companion John Graeme in Book XI, lines 566-82, is essentially a catalogue of Graeme's virtues, but its structural position within the narrative and the effect it has on Wallace lead to the illustration of one of *The Wallace's* central paradoxes. Wallace praises Graeme for a host of qualities, including 'gentrice' and 'stedfastnes' (XI. 576), and describes him as a 'Martyr...for Scotlandis rycht' (XI. 581). This lament accompanies Graeme's burial, and the whole event occurs directly before Wallace's second meeting with Robert Bruce. The juxtaposition of this meeting against Wallace's lament lends additional pith and vigour to Wallace's opening address. His '...salusyng was bot boustous and thrawin. / "Rewis thou", he said, "thow art contrar thin awin?"' (XI. 593-4). Here, Bruce's continued and apparently perverse refusal to abandon the English and claim the Scottish crown as his birthright is directly contrasted with Wallace's ferocious anti-English sentiments. Wallace concludes his lament for Graeme by vowing that 'I sall the wenge or ellis tharfor to de' (XI. 582), and Bruce's lack of commitment is clear by comparison. The location of Wallace's elegy for Graeme at this precise point in the narrative reveals one of *The Wallace's* most significant paradoxes – the man who has the right to the Scottish crown

by blood fails to measure up to men of less exalted lineage in terms of his commitment to the Scottish national cause.⁷⁹

In *BKA*, the *douȝepers* laments for Alexander's death combine the two basic elements of the tradition of lament for the dead, mingling extravagant praise for Alexander's achievements with prophetic anxiety about the fate of his kingdom. The narrator refers to the sorrowful complaining of the people who assemble to view Alexander's body, describing how 'The pepill 3amerit with a sorrowfull sang, / With sic ane hedious lamentatioun' (18491-2), and this reference to 'sang' recalls the original sense of 'elegy' in its purest classical form. Alexander's body is then entombed, and this is followed by the laments of the *douȝepers*, who each take a turn to deliver a eulogy on Alexander's virtues. Each man takes a different aspect of Alexander's character or reign – Gotunus, for example, reflects on Alexander's particular blessedness, declaring that 'he was ane send of God almycht' (18783), whilst Archemenelaus asserts that Alexander '...was mair dred for his word or his bill / Nor all the kingis in earth...' (18800-1). This elaborate collaborative lament for the dead king truly marks the end of Alexander's reign – immediately after it is concluded with the final 'Amen', Aristotle 'Fullfillit the poyntis of the testament' (18815). Thus, the final elegiac lament for Alexander heralds the disastrous splintering of his kingdom. Alexander's exemplary kingship is held up before the eyes of the reader immediately prior to the destruction of the empire which was anticipated much earlier in the narrative:

Be Alexander I say, and vther ma,
 Pocht he þis warld be fortoun conquest sua,
 His airis þareof had bot litill part,
 And full schort was his iosing eftirwart.

(5887-90).⁸⁰

⁷⁹ The opposition established between Bruce and Wallace is discussed by Mapstone, who notes that 'Bruce's kingliness is profoundly problematic in Hary's poem and exists in a tense dynamic with the positive representation of Wallace'. See Mapstone (2005d), pp. 304-34 (312). The juxtaposition of Bruce and Wallace is also discussed in McHugh (2008), pp. 199-206, and Murray (2012b), pp. 206-13.

In his elegiac lament on the death of the protagonist, the narrator of *The Wallace* refuses to lament the specifics of Wallace's fate. The text instead reinforces the image of Wallace as Scotland's divinely ordained, Christian national hero and avoids addressing the fact that Wallace's death was that of a common criminal.⁸¹ The narrator, who elsewhere in the text has revelled in graphic descriptions of violent death, shies squeamishly away from describing the physical facts of Wallace's execution, simply stating '...Wallace end in warld was displesans / Tharfor I ces and puttis it nocht in rym' (XII. 1230-1). Instead, the narrator concentrates on assuring the reader of Wallace's place in heaven, including first a vision by a monk of Bury, whose dead former abbot appears to him and tells him that Wallace will assuredly omit purgatory and instantly achieve 'lestand hevin' (XII. 1274).⁸² The narrative then turns back to Wallace, describing how the Archbishop of Canterbury heard his confession and granted absolution, despite Edward I having forbidden any priest to do so, and how even at the hour of his death, 'A psalter buk Wallace had on him euir' (XII. 1393). By rejecting the traditional lament for the dead hero at this point, the text focuses on Wallace's identity as an ideal Christian hero and his ultimate salvation.

This narratorial lament for Wallace is addressed directly to the Scottish nation in a series of rhetorical questions:

Allace, Scotland, to quhom sall thow compleyn?
 Allace, fra payn quha sall the now restreyn?
 ...Thi best chyftane in braith bandis is bound.
 Allace, thow has now lost thi gyd off lycht.
 Allace, quha sall defend the in thi rycht?

(XII. 1109-14).

⁸⁰ On the role of prophecy and prognostication in *BKA*, see: Cartwright (1991a), 61-72; Caughey (2010b), pp. 139-59; and Murray (2012b), pp. 29-31.

⁸¹ In Book XII of the *Scotichronicon*, Bower also avoids giving details of Wallace's death. This reluctance to go into the details of Wallace's ignominious end is a specifically Scottish reaction - the English accounts of the event present Wallace's death in macabre detail. For a more detailed comparison of the ways in which Scottish and English authors portrayed Wallace's execution, see Mapstone (1986), p. 228.

⁸² This account of Wallace's salvation occurs in Bower's *Scotichronicon* and in 'The Hartis Tale' in *The Talis of the Fyve Bestes* (c. 1480-1513), although these two accounts are more similar to each other than to the account contained in *The Wallace*. See Mapstone (1986), pp. 220-31 (221). See also Murray (2012b), pp. 229-34.

These anaphoric lines bear all the hallmarks of the traditional lament for the dead – the uncertainty as to further action is a common response to the loss of a leader.⁸³ However, the terms in which Wallace is described are particularly extravagant for a man who was not of royal, nor even aristocratic, blood. Wallace is immortalised by the narrator at this point in glowing terms: the phrases ‘gyd off lycht’ (XII. 1113) and ‘grettast gouernor’ (XII. 1117) reflect the status of ruler that Wallace attained by the end of his life. They also recall the style of lament for the dead used by Bower in the *Scotichronicon*. Both David II and James I, although judged to be successful monarchs by Bower, died young, before the lasting impact of their reforms and innovations could be tested. The tragic fact of their early deaths works to preserve their reputations, however – no later blunders can sully their achievement. The narrator’s lament for Wallace at the end of Book XII is reminiscent of the narratorial lament included in the *Scotichronicon* after the death of Robert I: as in the *Scotichronicon*, the narrator allegorises Scotland as a grieving figure and addresses her directly in order to highlight the political implications of the death. This similarity also associates Wallace with the kings praised by Bower; his death is presented as the end of a successful reign.

‘Gyd off lycht’ also implies wise and prudent governance, but the emphasis in this lament is very much on Wallace’s warlike qualities. He is described as the ‘best chyftane’ (XII. 1112), and at line 1122, the narrator poses the key question: ‘Allace, in wer quha sall thi helpar be?’. With these words the narrator makes it clear that Wallace is, and has been throughout the text, a wartime champion rather than a peacetime governor – Wallace’s passing is to be lamented because the narrator still perceives ‘the Saxons’ (XII. 1124) as a danger to Scottish ‘rycht’ (XII. 1114), not because he was, or would have been, a good king. Wallace’s abilities to defend Scotland are described using highly emotive religious

⁸³ Richmond (1966), p. 38.

terminology - ‘Quha sall the now radem? / [...] Sen gud Wallace may succour the no mar’ (XII. 1123-27). This religious imagery deliberately recalls Wallace’s Christ-like ‘resurrection’ in Book II, reinforcing the perception of him as a self-sacrificing, divinely chosen leader.⁸⁴

This lament also carries poignant political implications. The narrator’s certainty that ‘The los off him [Wallace] encessit mekill cair’ (XII. 1128) implies a dissatisfaction with Scotland’s remaining leader, Robert Bruce. For the author, Bruce is tainted by his relations with the English,⁸⁵ and throughout the text is shadowed by unfavourable comparisons with Wallace’s unwavering devotion to Scotland and the ideal of Scottish independence. The suggestion is that the Scottish nation cannot live in ‘rychtwysnace’ (XII. 1126) without a warlike leader prepared to defend it against the ‘harmys’ (XII. 1120) brought by the English, an insinuation which would not have been lost on James III and his advisers as they strove to avoid further conflict and reach a peaceful settlement with England.⁸⁶

OA also uses the traditional lament for the dead in order to exemplify the qualities necessary for effective leadership and rule, but in the most striking instance does so by using a negative example. When King Clarus is killed, his men remark that ‘We sould not greit, bot lauch full loud’ (IV: p. 393; 9591), and this is followed by Marcian’s lament for his uncle’s death. However, the catalogue of vices included in Marcian’s lament is highly unusual: he reflects on his uncle’s ‘Pride, inuy and skarsite, / Couatyce, reif and succudry’ (IV: p. 393; 9607-8). These comments explicitly recall an earlier episode in the *Avonis of*

⁸⁴ Religious iconography is used elsewhere in *The Wallace* to validate the protagonist’s position, most notably in Book VII. During a substantial dream-vision sequence (VII. 68-112), Wallace meets St Andrew; he also meets a female figure. She is not named, but the narrator implies that she is the Virgin Mary. See McHugh (2008), pp. 181-4 and Murray (2012b), pp. 211-13; 217-19.

⁸⁵ See above, p. 170, note 79. Robert Bruce is viewed particularly censoriously by the *Wallace*-narrator after his murder of Comyn, a fellow Scot (see Mapstone [2005d], p. 312).

⁸⁶ *The Wallace* ‘was composed outwith the immediate royal circle’ (Mapstone [2005d], p. 310); Hary’s immediate patrons were the border lairds Sir William Wallace of Craigie and Sir James Liddale, who were vehemently opposed to James III’s pursuit of peaceful relations with England. See Mapstone (2005d), p. 311. On Craigie and Liddale, see also Macdougall (1982), pp. 118, 270.

Alexander: when Clarus is planning his ambush of Alexander's men, Porrus asks Marcian: 'Sall we ga slay ws for 3one man, / That reiffis ws all that euer he can, / Disheresis ws and reiffis our gude?' (II: p. 178; 2777-9). After Cassamus has learned of Clarus's plan, he praises Alexander's largesse,⁸⁷ and this praise of Alexander stands in direct contrast to Porrus's criticism of his king. Alexander himself has previously commented on Clarus's poor reputation, stating that 'The King Clarus is wyse in were / Richt stout and hardy of affere, / Bot his men him hates as the dede' (II: p. 140; 1547-9). In fact, Alexander uses Clarus's poor reputation to justify his war against him, stating that 'sen he is hated, I warne 3ow this / We sall discumfete him and his' (II: p. 140; 1551-2). Marcian's lament at Clarus's death thus serves to recall the previous criticism of him, from all sides, and his reputation is fixed.

After Clarus, the next significant death is that of Cassamus; Emenydus' brief lament for Cassamus, which reflects on his 'Bounte, largenes and manhede' (IV: p. 431; 10808), stands in stark contrast to Marcian's lament for Clarus in the same way as Porrus's rebuke of Clarus and Cassamus's praise of Alexander are juxtaposed earlier in the text. This pattern of contrasts is completed when the narrator records that:

Vpon Clarus toumbe thay wrait
His lyfe, his power and his stait,
And how he lufit dame Fesonas,
That was sa fare of fax and face

(IV: p. 432; 10835-8).

This inscription on Clarus's tomb is a physical written representation of his reputation, as sealed by his nephew's assessment of him at his death. The author of *OA* uses lament for the dead to confirm Clarus as a poor king, unsuccessful due to his avarice and his inability to inspire loyalty in his people. Clarus is Alexander's most consistent enemy in the text, and the character who is most often seen in contrast with Alexander; the use of lament for

⁸⁷ II: p. 183; 2935-48.

the dead to consolidate Clarus as a negative example reinforces the positive presentation of Alexander's rule in *OA*.

The inscription placed upon Clarus's tomb is a further example of the association between physical textual commemoration and the literary lament for the dead; it is part of the same tradition seen in Bower's *Scotichronicon*, and in the lament for the death of the Dauphine included in the *Liber Pluscardensis*.⁸⁸ In *OA*, as in *The Wallace* and *BKA*, lament for the dead is associated explicitly with the firm establishment of a reputation for exemplary purposes, whether the example is intended to be emulated or rejected.

IV

Complaint and Advice

Both *BKA* and *Lancelot of the Laik* are informed and influenced by the pseudo-Aristotelian *Secretum Secretorum*,⁸⁹ and the advisory nature of these texts has been subject to extensive critical comment.⁹⁰ In this section of the chapter I discuss the way in which, in both texts, *complaint* is accorded a specifically advisory role: the texts contain large amounts of advisory material, and complaint is integrated into the wider advisory aims of the narrative, with both the petitionary complaint and the complaint of the times being used to deliver advice to Arthur and Alexander. Complaint forms an integral part of the broader socio-political concerns of the texts, primarily through their consideration of the nature of kingship and rule.⁹¹

⁸⁸ The use of epitaph is also significant in Henryson's *Testament of Cresseid*; see chapter 4, pp. 207-9.

⁸⁹ The *Secretum Secretorum* has been described as 'one of the principal sources of the whole *speculum principis* tradition'. See Lyall (1976), 5-29 (17). Its popularity with medieval readers, particularly monarchs, is discussed in Sutton and Visser Fuchs (1997), p. 112.

⁹⁰ See Mapstone (1986); Martin (2006), pp. 75-88; Martin (2008a), pp. 41-60 and pp. 61-78; and Caughey (2010a), pp. 139-48.

⁹¹ For a recent study of female advice in both texts, see Wingfield (2013).

In *BKA*, towards the end of Alexander's life, his queen Roxane addresses six petitionary complaints to her husband, in which she reminds Alexander both of his responsibilities as a ruler, and of his personal qualities and capabilities. This presentation is unlike any other in the medieval Alexander tradition, and *BKA* thus presents a distinctively Scottish conception of her role as queen, her position in relation to Alexander, and the purpose and possibilities of complaint as a form.⁹² In this episode, traditionally gendered aspects of complaint are reversed, with Alexander assuming the helpless and static posture conventionally assigned to female complainers.⁹³ Realising he has been poisoned, Alexander conceals the extent of his injury from Roxane for as long as possible, until he is forced to withdraw, and then 'He lenyt him doun and made a drery mane' (18043). Despairing of his life, he delivers an *ubi sunt* lament, declaring:

'Quhat waill3eis now all my governyng?
I may nocht helpe me, pocht I be a king...
Quhat vail3eis me my septoure and my croun,
Quhilk in schorte tyme sa law mon be lade doun?'

(18056-7; 18072-3).

This recognition of the vanity of worldly possessions because of the ability of Fortune to cast them down is reminiscent of the mutability of Fortune expressed in prison laments. With this lament, the relentless pace of Alexander's hubristic conquests draws to an abrupt end – this realisation forces upon Alexander the sudden knowledge that his 'state imperiall' (18074) is worthless. Rather than having a positive effect, however, this sudden access of knowledge is debilitating, rendering Alexander impotent at this crucial moment in his kingship, when plans must be made for the future governance of his many kingdoms. Roxane is accorded the responsibility for changing Alexander's view at this point. After a brief and intimate lament to herself in which she bids 'Adew my lufe, my lord, and my

⁹² Martin (2006), p. 85.

⁹³ See Davenport (1988), Lipking (1988), and McKim (1994), pp. 32-46.

lamen' (18106), she conceals her distress 'to mak him confortig' (18110) and reminds Alexander of his prudence and wisdom, qualities which result in such praise of his kingship earlier in the text. She attempts to persuade Alexander to 'think how 3e are a king' (18111), telling him that '3e haue sic witt and knowlege of ressoun - / Now at a nede schaw 3oure discretioun' (18114-5). Indeed, these injunctions are repeated in further petitions. Roxane becomes exclusively responsible for Alexander at this point in the text, and she prevents him from taking his own life by asking him "'Ar 3e nocht king and empreoure, / Quhilk neuer 3itt had lak na dishonoure?"' (18201-2).

The effect of these repeated expressions of Alexander's despair, and the petitions by Roxane which accompany them, is to create an extended complaint in the form of a dialogue.⁹⁴ As in the lament for the death of Princess Margaret of Scotland, complaint is paired with consolation, although unlike the diptych structure of the *memento mori* lament, the two are interwoven in *BKA*. The author of *BKA* combines and manipulates two distinct modes of complaint, the despair of *ubi sunt* and advisory petition. These complaints form a significant part of the increasingly questioning and critical attitude towards Alexander's kingship that develops towards the end of the text.⁹⁵ There is a pervasive sense that advice is coming too late: as Martin has noted, Alexander has previously demonstrated the 'ability to move from hopelessness to self-knowledge',⁹⁶ but that sense of individual progress is not perceptible here, as the narrative builds towards its final denouement, the destruction of the empire after the succession of Alior. These laments, the content of which is ostensibly advisory, recall the language and tone of the laments for the dead, even though Alexander is still alive and still the king.

⁹⁴ The dialogue structure is reminiscent of Latin prosimetric complaint, specifically Boethius's *Consolation of Philosophy* and Alan of Lille's *De Planctu Naturae*. See chapter 1, pp. 34-58.

⁹⁵ Martin (2008a), p. 75.

⁹⁶ Martin (2006), pp. 75-88 (85).

Lancelot of the Laik is, like *BKA*, closely aligned to the *speculum principis* tradition as derived from the *Secretum Secretorum* – significant verbal parallels can be drawn between the Scots recension of the *Secretum*, Hay's *Buke of the Governaunce of Princis*, and Amytans's advice to Arthur in *Lancelot*.⁹⁷ Amytans's advice also echoes the main broad points of the *Secretum*, concentrating on the importance of Justice, Virtue, Largess, Pity and Truth.⁹⁸ However, Amytans's advice to Arthur has several features in common with the complaint of the times, and the success of Amytans's advice illustrates the redemptive powers of complaint within the text.

Unlike Lancelot and the narrator, Arthur himself does not deliver any direct complaints, but the complaints of others have a positive, galvanising effect on him, ultimately resulting in his greater self-knowledge and more effective kingship. In Book I, Arthur's kingship is presented ambivalently. The narrative opens with Arthur and his knights encamped at Carlisle, and the king is introduced as '...the worthi conqueroure / Arthure, wich had of al this worlde the floure / Of cheuelry auerding to his crown' (343-5). However, Arthur's two successive dreams immediately call this portrayal into question by portending disaster. He dreams first that he loses his hair; secondly, that his vital organs fall out of his body to lie beside him on the bed. Under threat of execution, Arthur's clerks reluctantly reveal that:

...we have fundyne so;
 All erdly honore ye nedis most for-go,
 And them the wich ye most affy in-till
 Shal failye 3ow, magre of ther will;
 (497-500).

On discovering that his dreams foretell his downfall, Arthur enquires anxiously whether there is '...possibilittee, fore to reforme / His desteny' (505-6), only to be informed by his

⁹⁷ Martin (2008a), pp. 49-54.

⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 51.

clerks that any alteration of his fate is ‘...obscure and dyrk till our clergye’ (511). Arthur is unable to see the way to his own redemption and therefore does not alter his behaviour, but remains troubled by prophetic dreams and associated sleeplessness.⁹⁹ These dreams illustrate Arthur’s anxiety and supply the reader with a perspective on his state of mind; unlike Wallace, Lancelot, and Alexander, Arthur does not complain aloud.¹⁰⁰ Complaint does play a role though; Arthur’s troubles are lamented for him by Amytans in a scathing complaint of the times which acts as the preamble to his formal advice to Arthur. Meeting Arthur in his pavilion, Amytans berates him for forgetting that he holds his high offices only by the grace of God, stating that ‘...yow art so confussit / With this fals world, that thow haith hyme Refusit’ (1337-8). Amytans also berates Arthur for his neglect and oppression of the poor in his kingdom, calling upon the examples of Old Testament Israel to support his arguments, reminding Arthur of what ‘daniell saith’ (1365) on the subject of the most vulnerable in society. By positioning such a scathing indictment of Arthur’s government of his kingdom directly before the main advisory tract in the text, the author of *Lancelot* is subtly expanding the advisory section. Here, complaint of the times is used to reflect negative examples which become part of the instructional process.

The redemptive power of Amytans’s advice to Arthur is clear. Although he does not become an ideal monarch, he is greatly rehabilitated by the advisory episode. The narrator declares that Arthur’s relations with his subjects are much improved: ‘So discretly his puple he haith cherit / That he thar hartis holy haith conquerit’ (2157-58). However, it has only been possible for Arthur to return to favour by submitting to Amytans’s advice. This central paradox of the necessity to submit to advice in order to be able to rule effectively is present in the *Secretum*, in which it is made clear that ‘Alexander conquered the

⁹⁹ These dreams are discussed in Mapstone (2001a); Archibald (2005); Martin (2008a), pp. 44-51; and Murray (2012b), pp. 245-51.

¹⁰⁰ Martin (2008a), p. 51, notes Arthur’s lack of interiority in comparison to Lancelot.

world because he was conquered by Aristotle'.¹⁰¹ This contrasts directly with King Clarus in *OA* who, when given advice by Marcian on how to gain the trust and loyalty of his subjects, declares that 'I haue hard all thy carping. / Bot I will do thairof na thing' (II: p. 175; 2676-7). It thus becomes clear that, across these texts, the ability to listen to and act upon advice, whether delivered in complaint form or not, is of primary importance if a faulty reputation is to be repaired.

Conclusion

In *OA*, *Lancelot of the Laik*, *The Wallace*, and *BKA*, the complaint form is intimately connected with the concept of exemplarity. The diverse use of amatory conventions in these texts reflects a distinctively Scottish interpretation of earlier literary *exempla*, and the uses of prison complaint, lament for the dead, and advisory complaint are explicitly exemplary in their own right. Each of these texts is self-consciously concerned with the development and presentation of the protagonist's reputation, and the use of complaint allows the introduction of multiple exemplary foils, in characters such as *OA*'s King Clarus, a figure who is irredeemable himself but who functions as an important counterpoint to Alexander, and also with *Lancelot*'s Arthur, who provides a flawed, but ultimately redeemable, model of kingship. The use of lament for the dead, in particular, reveals a concern for the enduring reputation of the texts' protagonists, with the connection between physical epitaphs and literary lament indicating a desire for a kind of textual permanence or fixity.

All of the complaints discussed in this chapter subvert the association between complaint and stasis; indeed, they all create opportunities for narrative movement and dynamic change within the text. This rejection of the traditional, static complaint posture

¹⁰¹ Ferster (1996), p. 45. I am grateful to Dr Sally Mapstone for this reference.

arises from their rejection of the traditional female complaining figure: complaint in these texts is a resolutely masculine activity. *OA* and *Lancelot* contain no female-voiced complaints at all; *The Wallace* does contain one, but it is extremely brief. It occurs at IV. 747-55, and is delivered by Wallace's lover: overcome with guilt at having betrayed Wallace to the English, she laments her own falseness:

‘Allace,’ scho said, ‘in world that I was wrocht!
Giff all this payne on my self mycht be brocht!
I haiff seruit to be brynt in a gleid.’

(IV. 753-5).

Her complaint is thus a token gesture: it enables her confession and Wallace's escape, nothing more. As with the other complaints, it serves as a catalyst for significant narrative action but, unlike the complaint delivered by Wallace himself, it is not transformative for the complainer. This sense of partial inadequacy is also reflected in Roxane's petitions, the only female-voiced complaints in *BKA*: as noted above, Roxane's petitionary address to Alexander shows her to be a wiser and more effective governor than he is at this point in the text, but they prove ultimately fruitless. Alexander is unable to learn from Roxane, and this contrasts sharply with his increased self-knowledge after his own solitary laments in the Garden of the Trees of the Sun and the Moon and the 'Wale Perrelus'.¹⁰²

In these texts, female complaint is subordinate to male complaint. The Heroidean model of static female complaint is replaced by a new model of dynamic, male-voiced complaint, with *voiced* being the operative word; the Heroidean representation of feminised lament as written, adopted for male complainers in several fourteenth- fifteenth-century texts, is also rejected here.¹⁰³ In *OA*, *Lancelot*, *The Wallace*, and *BKA* complaint is an oral and masculine posture: the connection between epitaph and *memento mori* lament is the only

¹⁰² See above, pp. 175-6, and Martin (2006), p. 85.

¹⁰³ As discussed in chapter 2, male-voiced complaint is associated with the acts of reading and writing in *Troilus and Criseyde*, the *Kings Quair*, the *Letter of Cupid*, and the *Lufaris Complaynt*.

association between complaint and the physical act of writing in these texts. As I have shown in this chapter, the use of epitaph allows laments for the dead to act as a final seal on a character's reputation – epitaphs serves as *exempla* within these texts. The persistent association between complaint and exemplarity across these texts creates ample opportunity for the protagonists' development, particularly in their ability to govern themselves, as well as the lands and people under their rule.

The relationship between complaint and governance, both of the self and of others, is crucial to the poetry of Robert Henryson, whose work belongs to the last three decades of the fifteenth century and is thus roughly contemporary with *The Wallace*, and relatively close to the other texts under discussion in this chapter. Whilst Henryson's poetry is ostensibly very far removed from lengthy historiographical and romance narratives, it has a great deal in common with these texts, most particularly in its treatment of advice, governance, and rule. Complaint forms a vital part of all of Henryson's narrative poetry, and it is to a consideration on Henryson's use of complaint which this thesis now turns.

Chapter 4

Complaint in the Poetry of Robert Henryson

Thairfoir I counsell men of euerilk stait / To know thame self...
(*Morall Fabillis*, 2609-10).¹

This advice is given by the narrator of Henryson's *Morall Fabillis* in the *moralitas* to the eleventh fable, 'The Wolf and the Wether'.² The importance of self-knowledge was a crucial tenet of fifteenth-century Scottish political thought, most succinctly expressed by Sir Gilbert Hay in his *Buke of the Governauce of Princis*. Hay's *Buke* is a translation of the pseudo-Aristotelian *Secretum secretorum*, produced by Hay in 1456 for William Sinclair, Earl of Orkney and Chancellor of Scotland: in it, Hay states that 'a man suld ken hym self and namely a prince'.³ Hay posits self-knowledge as an essential facet of kingly virtue, whilst Henryson's narrator takes a more inclusive view, advising the importance of self-knowledge for all: this is representative of Henryson's attitude across his works, where self-knowledge is presented as a virtue for royals and commons alike. Self-knowledge is important to Henryson, and indeed to Hay, because it is a vital part of self-governance, and this chapter will explore the ways in which Henryson uses complaint to explore the concept of effective governance, both of the self and of society, in his three major narrative poems: the *Morall Fabillis*; the *Testament of Cresseid*; and *Orpheus and Eurydice*.

Many details of Henryson's biography remain uncertain, but the evidence indicates that he was university educated (almost certainly at Glasgow), and that he then became a

¹ Quotation from Fox ed. (1981). All quotations from Henryson's works are from this edition, and references are given by line number.

² Although there are significant differences in the number and ordering of the *Fabillis* in their different witnesses, the modern critical consensus is that the order of the fables as preserved in the 1570 Lekpreuik/Charteris print (*STC* 185) and the 1571 Bassandyne print (*STC* 185.5) is likely to be correct, and this will be accepted here. See Fox ed. (1981), pp. lxxv-lxxxv (lxxvi) and Lyall (2006), pp. 89-104 (90).

³ *The Buke of the Governauce of Princis*, chapter 35, ll. 1-2. Quotation from Glenn ed. (1993), p. 121. On the importance of this text in fifteenth-century Scotland, see Mapstone (1986), pp. 45-142. See also Martin (2008a), p. 101, note 93.

schoolmaster at the grammar school associated with the Benedictine abbey at Dunfermline in Fife.⁴ Henryson also appears to have worked as a notary public in the Dunfermline area, and the familiarity with legal formulae and conventions which this implies, alongside his high level of education, accounts for the broad legal and literary frames of reference invoked throughout his works.⁵

Henryson's literary career belongs to the period 1460-1500, and it is likely that his three major narrative poems were composed in the middle of this period, c. 1470-90, although we do not know for certain in what order the works were composed.⁶ The *Morall Fabillis* are conventionally dated to the 1480s; this is largely based on circumstantial contextual evidence.⁷ The *Testament of Cresseid* is generally thought to have been written after the *Fabillis*, and it is usually dated pre-1492 because of a perceived allusion to it in *The Spectakle of Lufe*, copied in that year.⁸ Whilst it is not certain which is the direction of influence between the *Testament* and *The Spectakle*,⁹ it is reasonable to date the *Testament* c. 1480-92. The dating of *Orpheus and Eurydice* is more controversial than that of either the *Fabillis* or the *Testament*: it was previously regarded as an early, experimental work, but this view has since been challenged, and in this thesis I accept the hypothesis that *Orpheus* dates from the early 1490s, meaning that was either contemporary with, or slightly later than, the *Testament*, and that it may well have been Henryson's final work.¹⁰ In this chapter I follow this probable chronology, discussing Henryson's use of complaint in the *Fabillis*, the *Testament*, and *Orpheus* in turn. I seek to elucidate the origins of Henryson's complaints and demonstrate that complaint functions as an essential and fully integrated part of

⁴ See Gray (1979); Fox ed. (1981), pp. xvi-xviii; Fox (1983), pp. 109-27 (116-17) and MacQueen (2004).

⁵ On the role and importance of the notary public in fifteenth-century Scotland, see Robertson (1977), pp. 136-52 and Durkan (1983), pp. 22-40.

⁶ Fox ed. (1981), pp. xiii-xxv.

⁷ Lyall (2006), p. 92.

⁸ See Whiting (1945), 46-7.

⁹ Whilst the conventional view is that the author of the *Spectakle* was influenced by Henryson's *Testament*, the opposite has been argued. See Long (1972), 97-101.

¹⁰ This view is expressed in Martin (2008a), p. 79; Mapstone (2009), pp. 243-55 (244); and followed in Murray (2012b), p. 276.

Henryson's narratives. Across his works Henryson moves towards an ethical conception of complaint in which complaint is essential to the development of self-knowledge, through which the successful governance of the self and society can be achieved. Successful governance is never fully realised, however: Henryson toys with the dynamic possibilities of complaint, but ultimately rejects them.

I

Morall Fabillis

Henryson's *Morall Fabillis* is the earliest vernacular fable collection known to have originated in Scotland, but it descends from a rich and varied tradition. Latin fables can be documented from 169 BC, although the first collection of multiple fables does not appear until the first century AD.¹¹ The most important classical fable collection was produced around four hundred years later in Gaul, and is generally referred to as the *Romulus*, in reference to its supposed author; this collection has been described as the ultimate source for all later fable collections.¹² However, the most popular and influential fable collection in the medieval period was the Elegiac Romulus, a collection of sixty Latin fables produced c. 1175.¹³ The primary reason behind the popularity of this collection was its inclusion in the *auctores octo*, an anthology of work by eight influential Latin authors which was used as the main basis of elementary education across medieval Europe.¹⁴ Over 160 manuscripts of this work survive (either as part of the *auctores octo* or as a stand-alone text), which

¹¹ See Bitterling (2005), pp. 70-82 (74).

¹² Ibid., p. 75.

¹³ This collection is often attributed to 'Gualterus Anglicus'; however, this identification is based on a single, doubtful manuscript attribution, and has now been abandoned by scholars of the medieval Aesopic tradition in favour of 'Anonymous Neveleti' or 'elegiac Romulus'. See Wheatley (2004), pp. 3-4. In this thesis I follow Lyall (2006) in using elegiac Romulus (see Lyall [2006], p. 89, note 4). 'Gualterus Anglicus' is still occasionally used in Henryson studies: see, for example, MacQueen (2006), pp. 14-15.

¹⁴ See Wheatley (1994), 70-99 (70).

testifies to its wide circulation.¹⁵ The fables contained within this text are the direct descendants of the early classical tradition and are usually considered to represent the Aesopic tradition. There is a second strand of fabular tradition, which can be characterised as Reynardian; this descends primarily from the French *Roman de Renart* (c. 1190). Henryson makes use of both the Aesopic and Reynardian traditions in his *Fabillis*: the prologue and seven of the *Fabillis* derive directly from the elegiac Romulus; four from the Reynardian tradition; and two appear to be of mixed origin.¹⁶ Henryson's probable role as a schoolmaster makes it almost certain that he knew the elegiac Romulus directly,¹⁷ but he also seems to have known the text in another form.

Heinrich Steinhöwel, a German doctor, compiled an extensive collection of diverse fabular materials.¹⁸ This collection was printed in Ulm in 1475 in Latin, German, and parallel text recensions. This *Esopus* was technically mis-titled, as it contained a much broader range of fabular texts: in addition to the fables of the elegiac Romulus, Steinhöwel's edition also contained texts from the older recension of the prose Romulus; the 1474 *Vita Aesopi*; seventeen of the *Romulus extravagantes*; seventeen fables by Rinuccio da Castiglione; twenty-seven fables by Avianus; fifteen exempla from the *Disciplina clericalis* of Petrus Alphonsus; a selection of *facetiae* by Poggio Braccioloni; and several minor related works. In turn, Julien Macho produced a French translation of Steinhöwel's text in 1480, and the printer William Caxton published an English *Esope* in 1484 which was derived directly from Steinhöwel's edition.¹⁹

Henryson appears to have known either Steinhöwel's *Esopus* or a closely related collection: the tenth and eleventh of Henryson's *Fabillis* ('The Fox, the Wolf, and the

¹⁵ For a full list of the manuscripts in which the elegiac Romulus survives, along with manuscripts containing commentaries on it, see Grubmüller (1977), p. 82, note 180.

¹⁶ A full breakdown of likely sources is given in Lyall (2006), p. 90. It has also been suggested that Henryson knew Lydgate's *Isope*; see Sweet (2013), pp. 31-45.

¹⁷ Rewriting the fables of the elegiac Romulus, in both shortened and lengthened forms, was a common exercise in fifteenth-century schools across Europe. See Wheatley (1994), 71.

¹⁸ On Steinhöwel's biography, see Dicke (1994), pp. 1-5.

¹⁹ See Lyall (2002), 362-81 (362).

Husbandman' and 'The Wolf and the Wether' respectively) are unusual fables; neither appears in Gualterus Anglicus or the *Roman de Renart*. The earliest instance of them occurring in the same collection is in Steinhöwel's edition.²⁰ Whilst this evidence is incontrovertible, it is not known exactly which version of Steinhöwel's text Henryson had access to, or indeed in which language(s) he read it; this has been the source of significant debate.²¹ The relatively late date of Caxton's version renders any insistence on this as the source problematic, but there are some parallels between Henryson's work and Caxton's which have not been otherwise accounted for thus far.²² However, it has also been pointed out that 'In almost every case where Caxton is held to provide a significant parallel to Henryson, Macho is there before him'.²³ Lyall also suggests that Henryson is more likely to have been able to read Macho's French than Steinhöwel's German.²⁴ Yet too little is known about the details of Henryson's life to say for certain whether or not he was able to read German, and there is also the possibility that Henryson encountered Steinhöwel in the Latin version.

Steinhöwel's text is known to have had an impressively wide circulation, the Latin text in particular – after its initial print run in 1475, it was reprinted at least 27 times before 1500,²⁵ and there is also some material evidence that Steinhöwel's Latin text made it to Britain soon after it was printed.²⁶ Steinhöwel himself also had an oblique connection with Scotland. His reputation as a skilful doctor, and a financially advantageous marriage, led to Steinhöwel – the son of a merchant – becoming extremely well-connected amongst the nobility of the southern German and Austrian states.²⁷ He knew Archduke Sigmund of

²⁰ Lyall (2002), 364.

²¹ See, for example, Jamieson (1972), 26-36 (27-8).

²² See Jack (1978), 157-65.

²³ Lyall (2002), 374.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ See Keidel (1896) and Jamieson (1972).

²⁶ Two copies remain which contain reader annotations in fifteenth-century English hands. See Lyall (2002), 363, note 5, and Bitterling (2005), p. 81.

²⁷ There is evidence that he treated Philip of Burgundy, Margaret of Savoy, Elisabeth of Brandenburg, and Archduke Albrecht VI of Austria. See Dicke (1994), p. 3.

Tirol, the husband of Princess Eleanor of Scotland;²⁸ in 1475, the same year in which he printed his *Esopus*, Steinhöwel dedicated his translation of the *Speculum vitae humanae* to Sigmund and his translation of Boccaccio's *De claris mulieribus* to Eleanor.²⁹ Whilst no evidence has yet come to light to indicate that this connection had any influence on the circulation of Steinhöwel's work in Scotland, it is possible that Henryson did indeed know Steinhöwel's text directly, not merely Macho and Caxton's renderings of it.

Henryson used the diverse range of fabular sources available to him to create a highly particularised form of social critique. The *Fabillis* are preoccupied with notions of human frailty and of justice: across the corpus, Henryson explores ideas of governance through the concept of power. The *Fabillis* examine the ways in which power can be won and lost; they are also concerned with the ethical exercise of power once it has been obtained. The *Fabillis* include five complaints – found in 'The Cock and the Fox', 'The Sheep and the Dog', 'The Lion and the Mouse', 'The Wolf and the Wether', and 'The Wolf and the Lamb' respectively – and these complaints function simultaneously as a means by which the need for social reform can be articulated, and as a means by which its efficacy can be called into question.

The first complaint incorporated into the *Fabillis* is ll. 495-508 of 'The Cock and the Fox'. This is the third fable in the corpus and is derived from Chaucer's *Nun's Priest's Tale*, which in turn is a retelling of a common Reynardian fable. The complaint occurs at the precise centre of the fable: it comprises stanzas fifteen and sixteen of thirty-one.³⁰ Delivered by Pertok, one of the hens in Chantecler's harem, it is an expression of grief at

²⁸ Eleanor (?1433-80) was one of the daughters of James I and Joan Beaufort.

²⁹ Dicke (1994), p. 3. Sigmund and Eleanor developed a reputation as bibliophiles and literary patrons; see Cherry (1987) and Bawcutt (1988), 5-13 (6). Edinburgh University Library MS 195 (s. xv med.) is a deluxe presentation copy of Virgil's *Aeneid*, thought to have been owned by Eleanor: f. 65r has a decorated border which contains the Royal Arms of Scotland, and the monogram 'P.L.' (presumably 'Principissa Leonora') occurs three times in the same border. Eleanor is also known to have translated the romance *Pontus and Sidonia* from French to German, and she received a 'buch des lancilot' from Albrecht of Bavaria in 1478. See A.M. Stewart (1989), pp. 129-49, and Bawcutt and Henisch (1999), pp. 45-55 (51).

³⁰ For a recent book-length study of Henryson's works which argues for the importance of mathematics within Henryson's poetry, and for the importance of the numerical structure of his works, see MacQueen (2006). On the structural patterning of the *Fabillis*, see also Mapstone (2009), pp. 246-7.

Chantecler's capture by the fox, and his presumed death. The delivery of this avian complaint is actually enabled by the complaint of a human figure in the text. The widow who owns the hens is provoked to an excess of distress by Chantecler's disappearance:

As scho wer woid, with mony 3ell and cry,
 Ryuand hir hair, vpon hir breist can beit;
 Syne paill off hew, half in ane extasy,
 Fell down for cair in swoning and in sweit.
 (488-91).

These lines reflect the close relationship between a state of semi-consciousness and complaint;³¹ the widow's hysterical expressions of grief are clearly posited as the cause of her swoon. However, the relationship is rendered completely absurd, as the widow's insensibility does not enable her own complaint, but that of the hens: Pertok's complaint is delivered 'quhill this wyfe wes lyand thus in swoun' (493).

The absurdity is sustained throughout Pertok's complaint. Much of what she says is drawn from the traditional lexis of amatory complaint, such as her references to 'our dayis darling' (497) and 'our lemman' (502);³² this is also combined, in lines 502-5, with the *ubi sunt* formula common to the laments for lost kings.³³ The grandiosity of these forms of lament achieve an obvious comic effect when voiced by a hen, within the comic situation of the fable as a whole, but more than that: Pertok's *ubi sunt* lament for the loss of Chantecler emphasises their bestiality, and links it to physical excesses of various kinds. She laments that:

With his sweit bill he wald brek vs the breid;
 In all tis warld wes thair ane kynder thing?
 In paramouris he wald do vs plesing,
 At his power, as nature list him geif.
 (504-7).

³¹ There is an explicit and significant link between vision and complaint in Boethius's *Consolation of Philosophy* and Alan of Lille's *De Placitu Naturae* (chapter 1, pp. 52-3); this link is also preserved in the *Kingis Quair*.

³² *DOST*: '1. Darling, n.' and '1. Lemman, n.'.

³³ See chapter 3, pp. 160-75.

These lines make it clear that Pertok grieves for the loss of Chanteclair because, without him, she predicts that she will be unable to fulfil her various carnal appetites. The base physicality to which Pertok's complaint descends renders it farcical; it is also shown to be completely worthless, as Pertok is swiftly persuaded to abandon her affection for Chanteclair, and is described by the narrator as '...Pertok...that fein3eit faith befoir' (523).

The first complaint which occurs in Henryson's *Fabillis* is thus an overt mockery of the form. It undermines the status of complaint within the corpus; the impulses behind complaint are presented as somewhat sordid, and there is no sense that either Pertok or her companions learn anything from the complaint. The reader is encouraged to distrust the form as both ridiculous and insincere; this humorous and cynical approach to complaint arises from the fact that 'The Cock and the Fox' derives from the Reynardian tradition. Broadly speaking, Reynardian fables tend to be more lighthearted than their Aesopic counterparts, with the emphasis on trickery rather than brutality.³⁴ The four other fables in the corpus which make use of complaint all derive from the Aesopic tradition, and are closely related to each other. It is striking that complaint should be so strongly associated with Henryson's Aesopic narratives, rather than with the Reynardian ones: this may of course be due to the comedic value of the Reynardian fables, which naturally lend themselves less well to the melancholy aspects of literary complaint. It may also be due to the slower narrative pace within the Aesopic fables. The pre-Henrysonian Latin tradition of Aesopic fables has been noted for its slowness of narrative pace;³⁵ Henryson augments this feature by greatly expanding his Aesopic fables, with the result that their pace is even more leisurely than that of their Latin counterparts.³⁶ The slower narrative pace of the fables derived from the elegiac Romulus means that they lend themselves to the reflective qualities of the complaints which Henryson inserts. The complaint included in 'The Cock

³⁴ See Varty (2000b), pp. 163-74; also Mapstone (2009), p. 247.

³⁵ Harvey Wood ed. (1958), p. xv.

³⁶ MacQueen (2006), p. 14.

and the Fox' is thus different from Henryson's use of complaint elsewhere in the *Fabillis*; its position as the first in the corpus provides a backdrop of cynical humour against which to read the other complaints, and undermines the integrity of the form.

The next complaint in the corpus occurs in the sixth fable, 'The Sheep and the Dog'. 'The Sheep and the Dog' is the second in a sub-group of four consecutive fables which focus explicitly on instruments of justice and on the concept of just governance. The fable is an account of a sheep exploited by the machinations of the ecclesiastical court, and it concludes with a *moralitas* that establishes a straightforward binary in which the '...selie scheip...the figure / Of pure commounis' (1258-9) is pitted against 'This volf...ane schiref stout' (1265). However, once the narrator has established these basic facts, he retreats from the *moralitas*, the rest of which is made up of a complaint in the sheep's voice. The narrator makes use of the common topos of the overheard complaint, stating:

Bot of this scheip and of his cairfull cry
I sall reheirs, for as I passit by
Quhair that he lay, on cais I lukit down,
And hard him mak sair lamentatioun.
(1282-5).

We thus have a frame for the sheep's complaint which is not dissimilar to the frames used in *The Maying and Disport of Chaucer* and the *Quare of Jelusy*:³⁷ the complaint is ostensibly delivered by the sheep, but it is mediated through the narratorial presence. The fact that this complaint is delivered by the sheep himself, in spite of its position in the *moralitas*, means that the narrator has retreated from his primary sphere of influence within the *Fabillis*; the ultimate moral judgement in this fable is left to one of the characters. The sheep's complaint intrudes into the part of the text in which the narrator would be expected to deliver the final authoritative judgement. Throughout the *Fabillis*, the sheep is

³⁷ See chapter 2, p. 125. Henryson also uses the trope of overhearing in *The Preaching of the Swallow* (ll. 1727-75; 1789-1817; 1853-65; 1882-6).

presented as a weak and vulnerable figure, most commonly described as ‘selie’, and he is clearly a figure by which Henryson sets some store – here, in the *moralitas* to ‘The Sheep and the Dog’, Henryson gives the last word to the proverbial sacrificial lamb. Within this *moralitas*, the narrator does not function as an authoritative guide for the reader.

The sheep’s complaint is addressed directly to God, and its opening, ‘O lord, quhy sleipis thou sa lang?’ (1295), derives from Psalm 44.³⁸ The complaint continues in a similarly accusatory tone, with the sheep asking ‘...quhy tholis thou it so?’ (1313). The direct address to God indicates that the sheep does not anticipate the prospect of any restitution on earth; all that can be hoped for is ‘in heuin gude rest’ (1320). Despite the focus on the judicial process which runs throughout the fable, the prospect of achieving justice is ultimately rejected. The sheep does not invoke any earthly authority, which implies an absence of strong, authoritative governance, which corresponds with the narrator’s withdrawal from the text; this absence of temporal authority is particularly noticeable because ‘The Sheep and the Dog’ is situated between ‘The Trial of the Fox’ and ‘The Lion and the Mouse’, the two fables in which the lion king appears. The sheep thus delivers a Biblically-derived complaint of the times, in the tradition of Gower’s *Vox Clamantis*, in which all secular authority has vanished from the world.

Secular authority reappears in the next fable, however. ‘The Lion and the Mouse’ is the central fable in the collection; it is the seventh in the group of fourteen texts, and the corpus is structured so that there are 200 stanzas at either side of this fable. It seems that Henryson deliberately placed this fable at the centre of the corpus. The position of ‘The Lion and the Mouse’, combined with the fact that, unlike any of the other fables, it contains a dream vision prologue, suggests that this fable has particular interpretive

³⁸ Line 1295 is a translation of Psalm 44 (43 in the Vulgate), verse 23: ‘Exsurge quare dormis Domine’. This quotation is particularly apposite as the preceding verse makes use of the imagery of the vulnerable sheep upon which Henryson is undoubtedly drawing here: ‘Nonne Deus requireret ista ipse enim novit abscondita cordis quoniam propter te mortificamur omni die aestimati sumus sicut oves occisionis’ [‘Shall not God search out these things: for he knoweth the secrets of the heart. Because for thy sake we are killed all the day long: we are counted as sheep for the slaughter’]. See also Fox ed. (1981), note to *Fables*, line 1295.

significance for the corpus as a whole.³⁹ ‘The Lion and the Mouse’ also contains the most stylised formal complaint in the corpus.

Henryson extends the lion’s role as a king beyond the information available in his sources, making the lion’s sovereignty the central issue of the fable. To briefly contextualise the lion’s complaint: a group of mice run and dance over the lion’s still, dormant body, and the lion, waking from his heavy slumber and realising what they have done, captures the ‘maister mous’ (1418). He threatens her with execution; however, after her extended plea for mercy which reflects in detail on a king’s obligation to provide justice, the lion is persuaded to release her. The lion then immediately resumes his habitual practice of hunting, but soon finds himself trapped in a hunter’s net. It is from this captive position that he delivers his complaint and the mice, overhearing his words and mindful of his earlier clemency, chew through his bonds in order to release him. The positioning of the lion’s complaint after the mouse’s advisory discourse is significant: the helpless *ubi sunt* motif of his complaint signifies that the lion has learned nothing permanent from the mouse’s advice.

The lion’s initial violent rage at the mice’s behaviour signifies a lack of control, an arbitrariness which is distinctly threatening when displayed by a figure which, as the mouse reminds the lion, ‘mercy and reuth suld be’ (1468), but it seems initially, however, that the mouse’s pleas for mercy have affected a real improvement in the lion’s governance of his own passions. The narrator reports that:

...the lyoun his language
Paissit, and thocht according to ressoun,
And gart mercie his cruell ire asswage,
And to the mous grantit remissioun,
(1503-6).

³⁹ See Spearing (1982), 247-61 (253-7) and von Kreisler (1973), 391-403 (393-7). On the importance of this fable see also Mapstone (2009), pp. 247-9.

Here, the lion has allowed himself to be governed by reason rather than anger, in response to wise counsel. However, his complaint allows the reader to establish that the lesson is not permanent – his complaint is delivered in an ecstasy of rage, ‘Welterand about with hiddeous rummissing’ (1524), and he is once again the wrathful monarch of the first part of the fable.

The lion’s complaint is only eleven lines long (ll. 1531–41), and it is a very traditional lament using the *ubi sunt* motif; the lion’s mind is fixed on the question of ‘Quhair is the mycht off thy magnyfycence’ (1532). The use of ‘magnyfycence’ emphasises the royal context of the complaint,⁴⁰ and this combined with the fact that the lion is speaking from ‘pane off this presoun’ (1541) serves to align the lion’s words with the *de casibus* tradition. His position as a captive king recalls that of the narrator in the *Kingis Quair*, and also that of William Wallace who, as we saw in chapter 3, is presented as a king-like figure throughout *The Wallace*. The lion perceives his own position to be completely hopeless – he acknowledges that he can ‘se nane vther grace’ (1537). This complaint marks the final point at which the lion’s voice is heard within this fable, and indeed the corpus as a whole. In this context, his hopelessness is revealing: no indication is ever given to suggest that the lion has learned anything from his imprisonment and subsequent release. So, whilst good counsel leads to temporary reform within the fable, the complaint does not occasion any progress towards self-knowledge at all. The lion is at the end of the fable as he was at the start: a fundamentally flawed monarch, and this image of him is crystallised, as he is absent from the *Fabillis* from this point onwards.

The eleventh fable, ‘The Wolf and the Wether’, contains a brief comic complaint which recalls that included in ‘The Cock and the Fox’; the complaint in ‘The Wolf and the Wether’ is even more darkly cynical, however. The complaint occurs very close to the beginning of the fable and, like that contained in ‘The Cock and the Fox’, is a comic

⁴⁰ *DOST*, ‘1. Magnificence, *n.* : Glory, grandeur, nobility, majesty; greatness of attainment or reputation’.

reinterpretation of a *memento mori* lament. The correspondences between the two are very close: like Pertok, the Shepherd opens with ‘Allace’, and he laments the loss of his ‘darling’ (2471). Pertok refers to Chantecler as her ‘darling’ at line 497; these two instances are the only points at which Henryson uses the word ‘darling’ across the corpus of his works, apart from the *Testament of Cresseid*, when Troylus recalls ‘fair Cresseid, sumtyme his awin darling’ (*Testament*, 504). Its usage in the *Testament* reflects the word’s expected amatory context; Henryson’s use of ‘darling’ in both ‘The Cock and the Fox’ and ‘The Wolf and the Wether’ has the effect of rendering both the speaker and their complaint ridiculous. The effect in ‘The Wolf and the Wether’ is strikingly different to that achieved in ‘The Cock and the Fox’, however: although both complaints mock highly stylised laments, both *memento mori* and amatory, ‘The Wolf and the Wether’ is a much shorter and more brutal fable than ‘The Cock and the Fox’; the humour of the complaint sits less easily in the context of this fable’s violence. As with ‘The Cock and the Fox’, the absurdity of this complaint calls the sincerity of the form into question. The shepherd’s complaint is what prompts the wether to dress in the dog’s skin, and it is this action which is heavily censured in the *moralitas*. In this fable, complaint achieves nothing – indeed it occasions the fable’s disturbing turn of events. This provides a bleak context in which to read the narrator’s complaint in the *moralitas* of the following fable, ‘The Wolf and the Lamb’.

‘The Wolf and the Lamb’ is the twelfth fable in the corpus, and it mirrors ‘The Sheep and the Dog’.⁴¹ This short and brutal fable recounts how a lamb, unfairly persecuted by a wolf, attempts to defend himself through the due legal process, but is murdered nonetheless. The wolf accuses the lamb of polluting the stream by drinking from it; the lamb, aware that the wolf’s accusations are arbitrary and unreasonable, challenges the wolf. He demands: ‘Set me ane lauchfull court; I sall compeir / Befoir the lyoun, lord and leill iustice’ (2686-7). The lamb firmly believes in the lion as an able

⁴¹ MacQueen (2006), p. 125.

governor, and one who would uphold justice; this belief cannot be tested, however, as the lion does not appear in the fable – the lamb has no opportunity to plead his case to the higher authority of the lion, as the wolf slaughters him for attempting to ‘intruse ressoun’ (2693). Sheer physical brutality and bodily appetite triumph over the lamb’s logic. The *moralitas* contains a complaint addressed to mankind, very similar to the complaint found in the *moralitas* to ‘The Sheep and the Dog’, which charges the representatives of justice and authority to better represent the ‘pure pepill’ (2707) in a diatribe which firmly places all blame for oppression on human greed.

Unlike ‘The Sheep and the Dog’, however, this complaint is delivered in the narrator’s own voice. This is more conventional for a *moralitas* in theory, but the narrator’s voice has taken on many qualities of the sheep’s. Like the sheep, the narrator does not expect any help or succour from those in authority, accusing the ‘man of law’ (2721), ‘mychtie men’ (2729), and ‘men of heritage’ (2742) of abusing their position of power over the commons, ultimately referring his complaint to God. Whereas ‘The Sheep and the Dog’ lacks any overarching regal authority, and the common people are presented as the victims of a corrupt local justice system, ‘The Wolf and the Lamb’ depicts a world that is devoid of any representatives of law, justice, or authority – not only is there no king in this fable, but there is no court or justice system either. By this point in the corpus a complete breakdown of authority has occurred. Not only have the representatives of the law, so roundly criticised earlier in the *Fabillis*, now vanished from the text entirely, but the narrator, whose primary role has been to mediate the moral of each fable to the reader, has adopted the complaint as his mode of expression. Complaint is used by the narratorial voice and, whilst this does not necessarily lead the reader to question the narrator’s assessment, it does support the view that, by this point in the corpus, the structures of authority which underpin the text have completely broken down.

The most telling statement in this complaint is the final couplet of the *moralitas*, which also succinctly expresses Henryson's attitude to complaint in the *Fabillis*. The narrator asks God to '...saif our king, and gif him hart and hand / All sic wolfis to banes of the land' (2775-6). With these words, the narrator is characterising his complaint as an opportunity to draw attention to social evils, a role which it also fulfils in 'The Sheep and the Dog'. However, the position of this statement at the very end of a fable from which all instruments of authority and justice are conspicuously absent leaves it sounding hollow: in the *Fabillis*, Henryson uses complaint as a mode of social criticism, but here he negates any sense that social complaint can achieve real change.

II

The Testament of Cresseid

In the *Testament*, Henryson uses complaint to develop Cresseid's own voice, and through her creates a model of complaint as a means by which self-knowledge can be achieved. Cresseid delivers three separate complaints (at ll. 126-40, 407-69, and 542-74 respectively), and the *Testament* contains the highest concentration of complaints in any of Henryson's works. Through the complaints the reader can observe both Cresseid's changing conception of herself and the way in which the narrator's influence decreases as Cresseid's voice increases in strength and prominence throughout the narrative. Henryson contrasts Cresseid's development of self-knowledge with the lack of self-knowledge demonstrated by his male characters, both in the *Testament* and across his other texts, creating and then exploiting a gendered model of voice which is consciously Heroidean in its use of literariness, misreading, and the physical act of writing. Through his ventriloquisation of Cresseid's voice, Henryson challenges the misreading of her character by the male figures

in the narrative (both the narrator and Troilus), and juxtaposes their lack of self-knowledge against her eventual attainment of it.

Cresseid has her origins in the *Iliad*, in the characters of Chryseis and Briseis.⁴² The earliest medieval versions of her story are those contained in Benoît de Saint-Maure's *Roman de Troie* (c. 1165) and Boccaccio's *Il Filostrato* (c. 1335-40), and it is likely that Benoît and Boccaccio had both Chryseis and Briseis in mind when creating their Briseida.⁴³ However, Henryson's Cresseid stands at one remove from both the classical and earlier medieval versions of her tale: Henryson's primary source was undoubtedly Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*. Henryson is deliberately open about the relationship between the *Testament* and *Troilus*: early in the narrative, the narrator retires to his chamber and 'tuik ane quair.../Writtin be worthie Chaucer glorious / Of fair Cresseid and worthie Troilus' (40-2). The *Testament* assumes a high level of familiarity with *Troilus* on the part of the reader, noting that the exact details of the plot 'me neidis nocht reheirs' (57). Rather than dwelling on the details of Chaucer's narrative, Henryson's narrator immediately introduces the idea of a questioning and critical response. The narrator describes how 'To brek my sleip ane vther quair I tuik' (61), a book which purports to record 'the fatall destenie' of Cresseid after Chaucer's text ends. It is not known for certain whether any such 'vther quair' ever existed; no text has ever been securely identified with it, although attempts have been made.⁴⁴ It seems likely that the 'vther quair' is a deliberate fiction; an invocation of a conventional modesty topos by which the narrator can choose to deny responsibility for his text by claiming that 'I wait nocht gif this narratioun / Be authoreist, or fen3eit of the new / Be sum poeit' (65-7). However, Henryson is explicitly referring to his own source technique: he is invoking *Troilus* as his, and the audience's, primary point of reference, whilst alluding to the multiple versions of Cresseid's story which form the background to

⁴² For a comprehensive study of Cresseid's literary background, see Mapstone (2000), pp. 131-47.

⁴³ Ibid., p. 134.

⁴⁴ See Kindrick (1998), 190-220.

both his and Chaucer's work.⁴⁵ Henryson also found much to respond to in Chaucer's other complaints, most notably the *Legend of Good Women* and *Anelida and Arcite*, both of which provide Henryson with thematic and structural material which is crucial to Cresseid's developing voice. Henryson's use of the *Legend of Good Women* makes it likely that he encountered Chaucer's works primarily in a manuscript anthology – one not unlike, perhaps, Oxford Bodleian Library MS Arch. Selden. B. 24 – because there is no evidence that the *Legend of Good Women* was ever printed before William Thynne's 1532 edition of Chaucer's works.⁴⁶

In establishing a context for Cresseid's complaints, Henryson introduces the idea that amorousness is associated with danger and represents a challenge to authority. Towards the end of the *Testament* Troilus, returning home after a notable victory against the Greeks, stops to give alms to the lepers, but does not initially recognise Cresseid. It is only when she looks directly at him that he recalls 'The sweit visage and amorous blenking / Of fair Cresseid' (503-4). This description is typical of the way in which the narrator describes Cresseid: it is one of six separate moments at which he refers to her as 'fair Cresseid',⁴⁷ and it is clearly intended to reflect the way in which the narrator of *Troilus and Criseyde* refers to his heroine. However, these terms become part of Henryson's consistent amatory lexis. This description of Cresseid at lines 503-4 is deliberately reminiscent of the narrator's earlier description of the goddess Venus:

Vnder smyling scho was dissimulait,
 Prouocatiue with blenkis amorous,
 And suddanely changit and alterait,
 Angrie as ony serpent vennemous;
 (225-8).

⁴⁵ It has also been suggested that Henryson may have been invoking a more contemporary example: the scandalous fall of Eleanor Cobham, second wife of Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, although due to a lack of material evidence, the argument is largely speculative. See Fumo (2006), 447-77.

⁴⁶ William Thynne's print is discussed in detail, along with the textual history of the *Testament of Cresseid*, in chapter 5, pp. 247-54.

⁴⁷ The others are at lines: 41; 63; 325; 520; and 615.

Venus's 'blenkis amorous' are inextricably linked to her 'variant' nature and to the danger that the vindictive side of her character can pose. Henryson is here developing a distinctive amatory vocabulary in which the presence of desire is consistently linked to the absence of reason and judgement.

This association between amorousness and danger is present in the *Testament* from the outset. The narrator, mediator between reader and action, is present as subject to the same malign forces as the characters within the narrative. The narrator characterises himself as a lover, albeit a hoary and aged one,⁴⁸ and he notes his particular devotion to Venus:

For I traistit that Venus, luifis quene,
To quhome sum tyme I hecht obedience
My faidit hart of lufe scho wald mak grene.
And therupon with humbill reuerence
I thocht to pray hir hie magnificence.

(22-6).⁴⁹

These lines suggest that he still identifies himself as a lover, and that he might still be subject to amorous passions. A certain degree of distance is implied, however: the narrator notes, somewhat wistfully, that 'Thocht lufe be hait, 3it in ane man of age / It kendillis nocht sa sone as in 3outheid' (30).⁵⁰ The narrator's position is ambiguous here; he does not actually pray to Venus, preferring to retire inside 'for greit cald' (27), but the fact that he was once Venus's devoted servant, and is still able to perceive that 'lufe be hait', is cause for concern. Henryson creates a narrator whose judgement is clouded by his amatory

⁴⁸ In characterising himself as an aged lover, Henryson's narrator here recalls the position of the narrator in the prologue to *Lancelot of the Laik* and also the narrator of Clanvowe's *Boke of Cupide* (see chapter 3, p. 154). The narrator is actually differentiating himself from the figure with whom he is most often compared: the narrator of *Troilus and Criseyde*, who describes himself as 'I that god of Loues seruantes serue' (*Troilus and Criseyde*, I. 15. Quotation from Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Arch. Selden. B. 24, f. 1^r). The *Troilus*-narrator has no personal devotion to either Venus or Cupid, and likens himself to 'A blynd man' (II. 21; f. 15^v) in matters of love. Chaucer's narrator has received extensive critical attention: on his understanding of erotic love, see: Helterman (1974), 14-31; Bestul (1980), 366-78; and Waswo (1983).

⁴⁹ On the wider significance of the imagery of blooming used by the narrator in this stanza, see Gray (1979), pp. 169, 183; Riddy (1997), pp. 229-48; Mathews (2002), pp. 40-66; and Dunnigan (2004), 107-23.

⁵⁰ A similar image is used in *Orpheus and Eurydice*, line 187: 'The lowe of lufe couth kendill and encres'.

preoccupations, implying from the outset that his narrator is unreliable, bound up in the amatory mindset which is presented as so dangerous throughout the text. The narrator does not recognise the danger associated with Venus and the amatory: despite having read of Cresseid's misfortunes, he does not take note of the fact that Venus is 'in oppositioun / Of God Phebus' (13-14), an ominous astrological conjunction which suggests significant malevolence.⁵¹

The narrator's questionable judgement creates an obvious difficulty for the reader as, in the early part of the narrative, he completely controls reader response to Cresseid. Prior to her first complaint, her voice is absent from the text, and she is represented solely through narratorial comment. The narrator refers briefly to the events of Book V of *Troilus and Criseyde*, noting that Diomeid 'Ressaut had that lady bricht of hew' (44). The Older Scots verb 'resav' has the same meaning as the modern 'receive', and thus carries the sense of being given (passively) rather than taking (actively).⁵² The use of this verb by the narrator suggests that he views Cresseid as being fully responsible for her actions in betraying Troilus. However, just a few lines later the narrator implies the exact opposite, when he addresses Cresseid rhetorically, asking 'how was thow fortunait / To change in filth all thy feminitie?' (79-80); the use of the verb 'fortunait' here indicating that Cresseid is a victim of malign forces beyond her own control.⁵³ This apparently sympathetic view of Cresseid's predicament is signalled in the preceding stanza:

Quhen Diomeid had all his appetyte,
And mair, fulfillit of this fair ladie,
Vpon ane vther he set his haill delyte.
And send to hir ane lybell of repudie,
And hir excludit fra his companie.

(71-5).

⁵¹ Gray (1979), p. 166; Scheps (1980), 80-7 (84); and Fox ed. (1981), p. 341, note to lines 11-14. The most recent reading of this astrological description is by Murray (2012b), pp. 256, 261, who relates it to the planetary court which appears later in the poem, within the context of the importance of dream and vision in the *Testament*.

⁵² *DOST*: '1. Resav', *v*.'

⁵³ *DOST*: '1. Fortunat, *a*,' sense *a*, 'destined by fortune'.

The word 'appetyte' is indicative of distaste for Diomeid's actions, and of his implicit culpability, as it is associated with a lack of reason and control across Henryson's works. The phrase 'lybell of repudie' is also revealing. Meaning 'bill of divorce',⁵⁴ it derives from Matthew 5.31: 'dictum est autem quicumque dimiserit uxorem suam det illi libellum repudii' ['And it hath been said, Whoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a bill of divorce']. The verse that immediately follows reads: 'ego autem dico vobis quia omnis qui dimiserit uxorem suam excepta fornicationis causa facit eam moechari et qui dimissam duxerit adulterat' ['But I say to you, that whosoever shall put away his wife, excepting the cause of fornication, maketh her to commit adultery: and he that shall marry her that is put away, committeth adultery']. There is no suggestion that Cresseid has betrayed Diomeid in any way: thus, according to the Biblical text to which the narrator alludes at line 74, by serving Cresseid with a 'lybell of repudie', Diomeid makes Cresseid a fornicator even before she goes 'into the court, commoun' (77).

The narrator maintains his apparently protective attitude when he declares that 'I sall excuse als far furth as I may / Thy womanheid...' (87-8). However, this benign stance, and the sympathetic response to Cresseid which it encourages in the reader, is undermined in the next part of the text, when the narrator calls into question his own presentation of himself. Cresseid collapses after delivering her initial complaint, and whilst unconscious she sees a vision of the seven planetary gods assembling, with Cupid presiding as king, in order to pass judgement on her for her blasphemy. The description of the gods is lengthy and detailed, impressing their irresistible power upon the reader, and foregrounding their malicious caprice.⁵⁵ The sixth of the seven gods to appear is Mercury:

With buik in hand than come Mercurius,
Richt eloquent and full of rethorie,
With polite termis and delicious,

⁵⁴ Fox ed. (1981), p. 345, note to line 74.

⁵⁵ See Spearing (1962), 208-25 (217).

With pen and ink to report all reddie...
 Lyke to ane poeit of the auld fassoun.
 (239-45).

In addition to his obviously scholarly appearance, Mercury is described as bearing ‘...mony hailsum sweit confection / Doctour in phisick, cled in ane skarlot gown’ (249-50). The parallel between Mercury and the narrator is obvious. The narrator, as well as being a bookish figure, states at the beginning of the *Testament* that ‘To help be phisike quhair that nature faillit / I am expert’ (34-5). This portrait of Mercury is ironically malevolent – it is closely related to both the description of the Doctor of Physic in the General Prologue to Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales* and to Henryson’s own satirical poem on the subject, ‘Sum Practysis of Medecyne’.⁵⁶ It is notable that the narrator, who has elsewhere in the text been so defensive of Cresseid, should be allied with a satirically presented and thus implicitly deceitful character. The parallel between the figures of Mercury and the narrator thus strengthens the impression that the narrator is unreliable: his reading of Cresseid, and indeed of himself, is inherently flawed.

It is in this context of dangerous amatory passions and a flawed male reader that Henryson develops Cresseid’s own voice. Cresseid’s first complaint exposes her lack of understanding at the outset of the *Testament*: after her rejection by Diomeid and descent into prostitution, Cresseid returns to the protection of her father’s house. Calchas is described as a priest of Cupid and Venus, a role which Henryson seems to have invented for him, which strengthens Cresseid’s association with amatory concerns,⁵⁷ and illustrates the fact that she is still constrained by her amorous mindset. Whilst living with Calchas, she goes to his temple regularly, ‘her prayeris for to say’ (111). On a feast day, Cresseid retreats into a private study with the specific intention to ‘weip hir wofull desteny’ (121). In this complaint she reveals herself to be governed by amatory values and expectations,

⁵⁶ Compare Benson ed. (1987), ‘General Prologue’, 411-44 and Fox ed. (1981), pp. 179-82. For a detailed analysis of ‘Sum Practysis of Medecyne’, see Fox (1972), 453-60.

⁵⁷ Also noted in Mapstone (2009), p. 253.

accusing Venus and Cupid of breaking the promise that she would be ‘the flour of luif in Troy’ (127). Her vocabulary throughout the complaint shows that she is completely blinkered by this amatory mode of seeing – she laments that ‘The seid of lufe was sawin in my face / And ay grew grene.../Bot now, allace, that seid with froist is slane’ (137-9). This phrasing is paralleled in the description of Venus slightly later in the text, where Venus’s changeability is characterised by the swift alterations in her countenance; she is ‘Now grene as leif, now widdirit and ago’ (238). This similarity between the way Cresseid characterises herself at this point and the way the narrator chooses to describe Venus illustrates how Cresseid is subject to her limited, amatory perspective, and this complaint makes it clear that this flawed world view and lack of self-knowledge have rendered her helpless – Cresseid asks ‘Quha sall me gyde? Quha sall me now conuoy / Sen I fra Diomeid and nobill Troylus, / Am clene excludit...’ (131-3). Cresseid’s reliance on amatory relationships at this point in the text has left her ‘all forlane’ (140), in a hopeless position of stasis. Cresseid’s position here is that of the classic ‘female’ complainer, exemplified in Ovid’s *Heroides*, and also in the *Lay of Sorrow*.⁵⁸

In many ways this first complaint delivers a conventionally static account of Cresseid’s despair, and it also acts as a catalyst for narrative movement.⁵⁹ The narrator explicitly connects Cresseid’s complaint to the dream which follows it, noting that ‘Quhen this was said, doun in ane extasie, / Rauischit in spreit, intill ane dreame scho fell’ (141-2).⁶⁰ The centrality of this dream episode has been widely acknowledged,⁶¹ but it is also important to note that this seminal episode is occasioned by a complaint – it is Cresseid’s denunciation of Cupid which prompts the descent of the planetary court. During this

⁵⁸ Stasis can also be a feature of male-voiced complaint, but it tends to suggest a deliberate feminisation of the male speaker. See my discussion of the knight’s complaint in *The Maying and Disport of Chaucer* (chapter 2, pp. 85-7).

⁵⁹ This recalls the intercalated complaints discussed in chapter 3; complaint as a galvanising force within narrative appears to be a distinctive feature of fifteenth-century Scottish narrative poetry.

⁶⁰ These lines explicitly recall the behaviour of the widow in ‘The Cock and the Fox’ (488-91).

⁶¹ The standard studies of Henryson’s *Testament* as part of the wider tradition of medieval dream narratives are Hanna (1974), pp. 288-97 and Spearing (1976). For more recent discussion, see Lynch (2010), 177-97 and Murray (2012b), pp. 251-75.

vision, the amatory deities are themselves identified as complainers: the fifth god to appear is Venus, and the narrator states that her purpose there was ‘Hir sonnis querrell for to defend, and mak / her awin complaint’ (219-20). Despite the significance of Venus within the *Testament*, as discussed above, her ‘awin complaint’ never materialises: Venus does not speak during this vision, or at any other point in the narrative. The narrator’s description of her as a complainer is significant though, as it allies her with the figure of Venus in the *Kingis Quair*: during the *Quair*-narrator’s heavenly vision, Venus herself delivers a complaint to him in which she laments the poor service and ingratitude of mankind.⁶² Such a denunciation does occur within Cresseid’s vision, but it is delivered by Cupid: in lines 274-94, Cupid lays the facts of Cresseid’s alleged blasphemy⁶³ before the other gods, in order to procure their judgement and sentence.⁶⁴ Cupid presents himself and his mother as defendants against unjust accusations, and within this context the allusion to Venus’s ‘awin complaint’ suggests a legal bill of complaint.⁶⁵

When Cresseid awakes and discovers her leprosy, she flees her father’s house to take up residence in a leper hospital, and it is this move into the enclosed isolation of the leper hospital which prompts her longest and most formally sophisticated complaint. Enclosed interior spaces facilitate Cresseid’s self-expression through complaint; her first was delivered in ‘ane secreit orature’ (120), and this second complaint is made ‘In ane dark corner of the hous allone’ (405). This complaint marks a critical turning-point in her development of her own textual voice, as well as marking the beginning of her increased self-knowledge. This is the only point at which Henryson deviates from the rhyme-royal form in which the rest of the text is written. Cresseid delivers her complaint in nine-line

⁶² This complaint occurs at ll. 799-861, and is discussed in chapter 2.

⁶³ The question of Cresseid as a blasphemer is a vexed one: she is described as a blasphemer in McNamara (1973), 99-107 (103); Craun (1985), 25-41 (30); Boffey (1992), 41-56 (54); and Mathews (2002). However, these readings are challenged in Murray (2012b), p. 260.

⁶⁴ In many ways, these lines recall Hoccleve’s *Letter of Cupid* in their focus on the god’s power to punish his transgressive servants.

⁶⁵ The legal references in this part of the poem are discussed in detail in Mathews (2002), pp. 49-52.

stanzas, rhymed *aabaabbab* (the *Anelida*-stanza); as discussed in chapter 2, this stanza form appears to have been invented by Chaucer specifically for the purpose of complaint.

Henryson's choice of this form for Cresseid's complaint is striking; it is a stanza form that is inextricably linked to amatory complaint. Cresseid's complaint is not actually amatory in terms of its subject-matter; it is an *ubi sunt* complaint, focusing on the material goods and physical attributes that she has lost. However, her description of her loss in this complaint is very different from the angry terms in which she expresses it in her first complaint.

Cresseid has here become resigned to her fate, accepting that 'na man can amend' (455) her situation. Her perspective has also broadened: instead of the relentless self-focus of her first complaint, Cresseid relates her situation to the wider world, a sign that she is no longer viewing her predicament in individual terms and instead is recognising herself as an example of a wider social problem. She exclaims: 'O ladyis fair of Troy and Grece...in 3our mynd ane mirroure mak of me' (452-7), offering herself as both *speculum* and *exemplum*. She has ceased to conceive of herself solely as a tragic individual – her own story is now important because it can teach other women that 'Nocht is 3our fairnes bot ane faiding flour' (461). She has not attained complete self-knowledge however; at the end of the formal complaint she is still 'chydand with hir dreerie destenye' (470). Henryson's use of the nine-line stanza links Cresseid's voice to an avowedly amatory standpoint, but it is clear that a shift has occurred.

Cresseid's development of self-knowledge is fully realised in her third and final complaint; this complaint is occasioned by the abortive recognition scene which occurs at lines 495-525. This failed identification prompts Cresseid's sudden access of self-knowledge and, ironically, it is recognition (something which she has consistently avoided throughout the narrative) which proves the catalyst for her final step towards self-

knowledge.⁶⁶ This final complaint is characterised by the refrain ‘fals Cresseid and trew knicht Troylus’ (546; 553; 560), and it is this contrast between fickleness and constancy which underpins the entire complaint. Cresseid refers to herself as ‘fickill’ (550; 552), ‘friulous’ (552), ‘Brukill’ (569), and ‘vnconstant’ (571), and juxtaposes her ‘wantones’ (549) and ‘lustis lecherous’ against Troilus’s continence and restraint. Cresseid has come to the realisation that a mind and body governed by amorousness represents danger, acknowledging the very problem implied by Henryson’s amatory lexis. This complaint has an empowering effect on Cresseid. The narrator records that ‘Quhen this was said, with paper scho sat down, / And on this maner maid hir testament’ (575). Thus, between her complaint and her testament, a significant proportion of this latter section of the text is in Cresseid’s own voice. Her testament is both calmly reasoned and impeccably practical; she bequeaths her money to the other lepers ‘to burie me in graue’ (581), and makes provision for the ruby ring which Troilus gave to her to be returned to him. Her statement that ‘Heir I beteiche my corps and carioun / With wormis and with taidis to be rent’ (577-8) indicates that she is no longer bound by the constraints of her physical appetites.

The written nature of her testament stands in stark contrast to the emotional orality of her earlier complaints, and it is notable that her mode of self-expression changes so dramatically at the point at which she finally achieves virtuous self-knowledge. In writing her testament Cresseid reveals that, as well as liberating herself from her own physical appetites, she has also been able to move beyond the frame provided for her by the male narrator, and this association between the physical act of writing and increased female agency is an idea which Henryson encountered in Chaucer.⁶⁷ The self-textualisation Cresseid achieves by writing her final testament is immediately undermined by Troilus,

⁶⁶ Cresseid is determined that people should not recognise her and therefore apprehend her fall: the narrator notes that she ‘Into the kirk wald not hir self present, / For giuing of the pepill ony deming / Of hir expuls fra Diomeid the king’ (117-19).

⁶⁷ Chaucer’s female-voiced complaints contain a plethora of references to the act of writing. See, for example, *Anelida and Arcite*, l. 209 and the *Legend of Good Women*, l. 2357.

who provides both her tomb and its ‘superscriptioun’ (604).⁶⁸ This epitaph is the final comment on Cresseid herself that occurs within the narrative and it reads:

‘Lo, fair ladyis, Cresseid of Troy the toun,
Sumtyme countit the flour of womanheid,
Vnder this stane, lait lipper, lysis deid.’

(607-9).

However, this epitaph serves to expose Troylus’s lack of knowledge, and thus enhances the dramatic effect of Cresseid’s own text. In referring to Cresseid as ‘the flour of womanheid’, Troylus is recalling Cresseid’s own words in her first complaint at line 128; his perspective is the same as that of Cresseid in the early part of the narrative, yet, unlike Cresseid, Troylus has not moved forward. His description of her as ‘lipper’ reinforces this impression, as it indicates an ongoing preoccupation with her physical body. This epitaph can also be interpreted as a kind of complaint; in the chronicles and romances of fifteenth-century Scotland, the epitaph is closely linked to the *memento mori* lament, and these epitaphs can either be powerfully laudatory or a means of condemning a flawed character.⁶⁹ Although these *memento mori* laments are primarily composed to commemorate the death of royal figures, it is possible that Henryson had this tradition in mind when producing Cresseid’s epitaph.

Epitaphs are also a significant feature of Ovid’s *Heroides*, although the epitaphs included in Ovid’s text are invariably composed by the female complainers themselves, either for their own tombstones in advance of their death, or for their faithless lovers.⁷⁰ Henryson’s decision to allow Troylus to compose this epitaph removes agency from Cresseid, and undermines the act of writing her testament. However, this epitaph may also relate specifically to Trojan history, as the epitaph is a device used by Guido delle Colonne

⁶⁸ McKim (1994), 43.

⁶⁹ See chapter 3, pp. 160-75.

⁷⁰ The importance of epitaphs within the *Heroides* is discussed in chapter 1, pp. 26-8.

in his *Historia Destructionis Troiae*.⁷¹ Guido's *Historia*, completed (c. 1260-80), is a Latin prose paraphrase of Benoit de Sainte-Maure's *Roman de Troie*, composed in French approximately 100 years previously. Both texts follow the history of Troy as recorded in Dares and Dictys. Chaucer knew both the *Roman* and the *Historia*,⁷² and it is quite possible that Henryson also knew the *Historia* in its own right, and not merely through a Chaucerian filter.⁷³ Throughout the *Historia* there is a strong focus on the material details of the burial of the dead; Book 22, for example, contains an exhaustive description of the building of Hector's tomb and the embalming of his body. Thorough analysis of the architecture of tombs is usual for the *Historia* – so much so that the narrator offers a justification when omitting it, as at the death of Paris in Book 27:

Quid ultra Paratur Paridi in templo Iunonis preciosa nimium sepultura, cuius forma et serie in narrandi modo postpositis .⁷⁴

[The exceedingly rich tomb of Paris was prepared in the temple of Juno, and its form and construction have only been set aside as a means of getting on with the narrative].⁷⁵

At the end of Book 35, however, the conclusion of the *Historia* is made up of two epitaphs: one for Hector and one for Achilles. These are composed in verse, which sets them apart from the rest of the narrative, and it is unlikely that they are Guido's own work – they almost certainly originate from the manuscript of Dares used by him.⁷⁶ Both epitaphs are full of conventional praise, and indeed they are quite similar, the only major difference between them being that the epitaph for Hector is composed in the third person, whereas that for Achilles is expressed in his own voice. Hector is described as 'Defensor patrie,

⁷¹ I am grateful to Dr Sally Mapstone for drawing this to my attention.

⁷² See Meek ed. (1974), p. xi.

⁷³ Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland Inc. 25.5 is a print of Guido's *Historia* (Strasbourg: G. Husner, 1494) which was probably owned by the Campbells of Glenorchy. See Wingfield (2010), p. 104, and Wingfield (2011a), pp. 161-74 (pp. 170-1). The Scottish *Troy Book* is a translation of Guido, and there is also evidence of the Scottish circulation of Lydgate's *Troy Book*. For recent discussion of both of these texts, see Verweij (2008), pp. 87-9; Sweet (2009); Wingfield (2010), esp. pp. 263-85; and Verweij (2012), 11-30.

⁷⁴ Griffin ed. (1936). All quotations from the *Historia Destructionis Troiae* are from this edition.

⁷⁵ Meek ed. (1974). All translations from the *Historia* are from this edition.

⁷⁶ See Meek ed. (1974), p. 305, note to ll. 186-204.

iuuenum fortissimus' [‘the defender of his country, bravest of youths’],⁷⁷ and Achilles’s epitaph declares ‘Pellides ego sum, Thetidis notissima proles / Cui uirtus clarum nomen habere dedit’ [‘I am the very renowned offspring of Peleus and Thetis, whose courage has allowed him to have a famous name’].⁷⁸ These epitaphs, like those included in fifteenth-century chronicles and romances, are primarily a vehicle for the praise of epic heroes. In referencing this tradition Henryson is undermining it – not only has an epitaph been given to Cresseid, a figure apparently unworthy in every respect, but the epitaph itself is being used to highlight Troylus’s lack of understanding.

The narrator’s position seems most closely allied with that of Troylus at this point; in the final couplet, he describes her as ‘fair Cresseid’, showing through his language that, like Troylus, he continues to be limited by amatory concerns. The final line, ‘Sen scho is deid I speik of hir no moir’ (616), echoes Troylus’s words upon hearing of Cresseid’s death: ‘I can no moir’ (601). So although both Troylus and the narrator attempt to overwrite Cresseid’s testament with words of their own, Cresseid has attained a level of self-knowledge not matched by either of her male ‘readers’ within the text, and this in turn is reflected in the breakdown of male language at the end of the text.

III

Orpheus and Eurydice

In *Orpheus and Eurydice*, Henryson reworks one of the best known classical myths of the medieval period. Henryson knew, and made use of, multiple versions of the legend, but he makes significant alterations to his source material, and introduces complaint as a means by which power structures can be explored within the poem. *Orpheus and Eurydice* contains two inset complaints, the first at ll. 134-83 and the second at ll. 401-12, and both are

⁷⁷ Griffin ed. (1936), p. 275 and Meek ed. (1974), p. 264.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

delivered by Orpheus himself. These two stylised complaints emphasise Orpheus's status as an *individual* yet, within these complaints, ideas are considered which foreground his position as a king. The complaints reveal Orpheus's lack of self-knowledge and his inability to govern himself effectively, and they gesture towards the social implications of individual failings.

The Orpheus myth was known to medieval readers primarily through its inclusion in three Latin texts: Virgil's *Georgics*, Book IV. 450-528 (c. 37-29 BC); Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Book X. 1-11 and XI. 1-84 (c. AD 8); and Boethius's *De Consolatione Philosophiae*, Book III, metrum xii.⁷⁹ All three are known to have circulated in medieval and early modern Scotland and,⁸⁰ in addition, vernacular renderings of the tale exist which precede Henryson in both Middle English and Older Scots. The earlier of the two is the Middle English *Sir Orfeo*, a verse romance dating from the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century, and which appears to have enjoyed unusually wide circulation.⁸¹ The second is a Scottish version of the legend, usually referred to as *King Orphius*.⁸² *King Orphius* survives, incomplete, in a single manuscript, and it cannot be dated more precisely than to say that it was composed at some time after *Sir Orfeo* and before *Orpheus and Eurydice*.⁸³ The evidence that the author of *King Orphius* was familiar with *Sir Orfeo*, or a version of it, is very strong,⁸⁴

⁷⁹ See Gros Louis (1966), 643-55 (643-4); Friedman (1970); Caldwell (1990), pp. 145-52; and D. Strauss (2001), 1-12.

⁸⁰ See Durkan and Ross, eds (1961), pp. 34, 76, 84, 96, 153, 66.

⁸¹ *Sir Orfeo* exists in three manuscript copies. Two of these manuscripts, London British Library MS Harley 3810 and Oxford Bodleian Library MS Ashmole 61, date from the fifteenth century whilst the third, Edinburgh National Library of Scotland Advocates MS 19.2.1 (the Auchinleck Manuscript), dates from c. 1330, which gives the poem its latest possible composition date. The fact that there is more than one extant copy makes *Sir Orfeo* relatively unusual amongst Middle English verse romances of this period and suggests that it had a comparatively wide circulation. See Sands ed. (1991), pp. 185-7.

⁸² NIMEV 3136.55.

⁸³ *King Orphius* survives in Edinburgh, National Records of Scotland, MS RH 13/35, and in the recently-discovered fragments of a nineteenth-century transcription by David Laing of an additional manuscript (now lost). For a physical description of MS RH 13.35 see Wingfield (2010), pp. 172-8; on the Laing transcriptions see Purdie ed. (2013), pp. 45-9. For the text of the poem, see Purdie ed. (2013). On a reference to *King Orphius* in Robert Wedderburn's *Complaynt of Scotland*, see chapter 1, p. 18.

⁸⁴ For a full list and discussion of correspondences between *King Orphius* and *Sir Orfeo*, see: Stewart ed. (1973); Wright (1980), 9-11; Lyle (2009), 51-68; and Purdie ed. (2013), pp. 23-9.

although none of the three surviving copies of *Sir Orfeo* is of certain Scottish provenance,⁸⁵ so there is no material evidence to indicate in what form the tale might have been circulating in medieval Scotland. *Sir Orfeo* and *King Orphius* differ significantly from the classical versions of the legend and Henryson incorporates some of these differences into *Orpheus and Eurydice*, revealing him to have been conversant with the vernacular as well as the Latin tradition. Henryson probably knew both *Sir Orfeo* and *King Orphius*, as well as the Latin texts. One specific echo strongly suggests Henryson's knowledge of *King Orphius*: both *King Orphius* and *Orpheus and Eurydice* contain a reporting scene, in which Orpheus is informed of his queen's fate, whereas in *Sir Orfeo*, the protagonist witnesses it for himself. Equally, Henryson's preference for 'Eurydice' rather than 'Issabell' as the name of Orpheus's wife could indicate knowledge of the Middle English text. It could also, however, be another marker of Henryson's familiarity with the Latin versions of the legend, in all of which Orpheus's wife is called Eurydice. The elements from both Orpheus traditions which Henryson chooses to interweave are illuminating in terms of his use of complaint.

The two earliest extant versions of the Orpheus legend are those contained in Virgil and Ovid, and they are very different from each other. In the *Georgics*, Virgil includes a brief complaint, but it is left purely to Eurydice: 'illa, quis et me, inquit, miseram et te perdidit, Orpheu, quis tantus furor?' [She cried: "What madness, Orpheus, what dreadful madness has brought disaster alike upon you and me, poor soul?"]⁸⁶ Whilst there are no complaints included in the story of Orpheus as told by Ovid, he alludes to the idea of formal complaint, and this allusion posits complaint as a distinctively female posture: 'iamque iterum moriens non est de coniuge quicquam / questa suo (quid enim nisi se

⁸⁵ The Auchinleck Manuscript was almost certainly produced in London; MSS Harley 3810 and Ashmole 61 were both also thought to originate from southern England (see Sands ed. [1991], p. 185). However, some limited evidence has now been uncovered of connections between MS Ashmole 61 and northern England or southern Scotland. See Wingfield (2010), pp. 192-3.

⁸⁶ *Georgics* IV, ll. 494-5. Quotation and translation from Fairclough and Goold eds (1999), pp. 254-5.

quereretur amatam?') [‘And now, dying a second time, she made no complaint against her husband; for of what could she complain save that she was beloved?'].⁸⁷ Here, Ovid identifies complaint as something appropriate only for a woman who has been abandoned by a cruel or negligent lover, a view which is fully consonant with his treatment of the form in the *Heroides*.⁸⁸ This exclusively feminine version of complaint offered in both the *Metamorphoses* and the *Georgics* differs very strikingly from Henryson’s use of complaint in *Orpheus and Eurydice*, and there is very little specific correspondence between the events as described in these two early classical versions of the tale. Whilst Henryson certainly knew of them, he was not using them as a basis for his own text and, in terms of complaint, he was consciously choosing to do something very different.

Henryson makes much more use of Boethius than he does of either of the classical versions of the legend; once Henryson’s Orpheus has descended into Hades, his version of events closely follows Boethius, although Henryson’s version is greatly expanded.⁸⁹ However, Henryson is not only engaging with the text of *De Consolatione* itself, but with the tradition of scholastic commentary which had grown up around it during the medieval period: as noted in chapter 1, Henryson adds a *moralitas* to *Orpheus and Eurydice* which is derived from Nicholas Trevet’s commentary on the *Consolation* (c. 1300). *Moralitates* were a conventional feature of didactic literature and by including one in *Orpheus and Eurydice* Henryson is merging both moral didacticism and learned scholastic commentary with the tropes of popular romance.⁹⁰ Critical reception of the *moralitas* has been ambivalent: it has been argued that the *moralitas* is so different from the rest of the poem in many respects that it cannot actually have been composed by Henryson, but must have been appended to

⁸⁷ *Metamorphoses* X, ll. 60-1. Quotation and translation from Miller and Goold eds (1984), pp. 68-9.

⁸⁸ See chapter 1, pp. 15-32.

⁸⁹ Gros Louis (1966), 649. See also Fox ed. (1981), pp. cv-cvii; Petrina (2008), 198-217; and Dunnigan (2013), pp. 59-74 (60).

⁹⁰ Gray (2008), pp. 492-3. On moralisation in *Orpheus and Eurydice* see Marlin (2000), 137-53; D. Strauss (2001); Johnson (2002), 412-19; Rutledge (2002), 396-411; and Martin (2008a), pp. 79-102.

Orpheus and Eurydice at a later date.⁹¹ However, some readings have sought to assert the value of the *moralitas* within *Orpheus and Eurydice*,⁹² and I agree with this assessment, because to deny that the *moralitas* was ever intended to be part of *Orpheus* is to deny the complex interaction between the two parts of the text. There are also correspondences between the *moralitas* and *Orpheus* itself, as well as other works by Henryson, which indicate that the *moralitas* is authorial. Lines 425-7, which refer to Orpheus as the offspring of Phoebus and Calliope, explicitly recall lines 43-5, where Orpheus's genealogy is initially explained; as will be discussed below, this interest in genealogy is Henryson's own invention, and does not derive from any of the text's possible sources. In addition, the final stanza of the *moralitas* is a plea to God to protect humankind 'sen oure affection / Is alway prompt and redy to fall down' (628-9). These lines recall the *moralitas* to 'The Sheep and the Dog' in which, during his direct address to God, the sheep refers to a large proportion of the population as 'blindit with affectioun' (*Fables*, 1305). There is thus strong internal evidence for regarding the *moralitas* as authorial.⁹³

There is, however, a striking formal disjunction between the tale proper and the *moralitas*: in the *moralitas*, Henryson switches from rhyme royal stanzas to decasyllabic couplets. The clearly delineated bipartite structure of *Orpheus and Eurydice* creates a reading experience very similar to that offered in the *Fables*: an interpretive space is created in which the reader, under the narrator's guidance, must bridge the gap between intimate engagement with the characters and the moral judgement which is demanded. This gap is particularly problematic in *Orpheus and Eurydice*,⁹⁴ and the formal difference between the two parts of the text serves to render it more pronounced. In the *moralitas*, Henryson

⁹¹ This argument is made in D. Strauss (2001).

⁹² See, for example, Newlyn (1981), pp. 251-8; McGinley (2004), pp. 74-85; and Mapstone (2009), p. 251.

⁹³ There is also strong material evidence. The *moralitas* to *Orpheus and Eurydice* is included in the Chepman and Myllar print of the text, produced c. 1508. If we accept that *Orpheus* was probably composed in the early 1490s, Strauss's argument becomes immediately less plausible: a *moralitas* written by someone else would have needed to become attached to the text, and accepted as an integral part of it, in fewer than twenty years.

⁹⁴ Noted in Mapstone (2009), p. 251.

retains Trevet's assessment of Arystus as 'noucht but gude vertewe' (436), a view which appears to run directly counter to that implied in the narrative. This disjunction is crucial to the relationship between tale and narrative, however: the fraught relationship between the two serves to expose binaries as reductive. *Orpheus and Eurydice* ultimately expounds the disparity between the flawed self-perception of the protagonist and the high level of reasoned self-governance required of him by the narratorial voice in the *moralitas*. As this discussion will demonstrate, complaint is essential to the reader's developing understanding of Orpheus's interior life yet, despite the partial progression towards self-knowledge which Orpheus's complaints demonstrate, the *moralitas* reveals a set of demands which Orpheus has failed to live up to and complaint, which does not feature in the *moralitas* at all, remains associated with a limited perspective.

The moral demands which the narrative will ultimately place upon Orpheus are implicit from the outset, because Henryson invokes a particular aspect of Orpheus's identity which would have had particular resonance for his fifteenth-century Scottish readers: Henryson identifies Orpheus as a king. None of the three Latin versions refer to Orpheus as a king, with the result that such an identification is also relatively uncommon in medieval versions of the legend. However, Henryson describes 'ilk lord and worthy king' (24) and 'this prince, schir Orpheus' (63). The characterisation of Orpheus as a king clearly derives from vernacular versions of the legend: *Sir Orfeo* opens with the refreshingly unambiguous 'Orfeo was a king';⁹⁵ along with many other aspects of the narrative, the anonymous Middle English author seems to have derived the idea of Orpheus as royal from the Celtic tradition – specifically, the Breton *lai*.⁹⁶ *King Orphius* also maintains this

⁹⁵ *Sir Orfeo*, line 1. Quotation from Sands ed. (1991).

⁹⁶ Severs (1961), pp. 187-207; Sands ed. (1991), pp. 185-6; and Martin (2008a), p. 83. For analyses of the development of the medieval Orpheus myth which consider the importance of the Breton *lai*, see Gros Louis (1966); Segal (1989); and Detienne (2003). For discussion of this point which specifically includes both *Sir Orfeo* and *Orpheus and Eurydice*, see Vicari (1982), pp. 63-83.

royal identity, and it is this vernacular tradition which is being recalled in *Orpheus and Eurydice*.

Orpheus and Eurydice begins with a detailed account of Orpheus's genealogy,⁹⁷ and the narrator uses the poem's opening stanza to justify the inclusion of this material:

The nobilnes and grete magnificence
Off prince or lord, quha list to magnify,
His grete ancester and linyall descense
Suld first extoll, and his genology,
So that his hert he mycht enclyne thare by
The more to vertu and to worthynes,
Herand reherse his eldirs gentilnes.
(1-7).

The syntax in this stanza is complicated, but it seems that the 'hert' referred to in line 5 is that of the 'prince or lord' (2); the narrator is therefore asserting that a knowledge of his bloodline, and of the notable deeds of his ancestors, will prove instructive to the monarch himself. This is an idea which Henryson almost certainly derived from contemporary Scottish chronicles and romances, which commonly have an advisory aspect, and from some of the dedicated *speculum principis* literature of fifteenth-century Scotland.⁹⁸ What is important here is that, from the opening stanza, the text foregrounds Orpheus's identity as a monarch, and a paradigm of kingship is established in which the increase of virtue through wise instruction is of the utmost importance. The textual evidence supports the notion that Orpheus's kingship was of particular importance to early Scottish readers. The poem's earliest surviving witness, the 1508 print by Chepman and Myllar, bears the following rubric: 'Heire begynnys the traitie of Orpheus kyng and how he yeid to hewyn and to hel to seik his quene'.⁹⁹ The rubrication in another of the poem's witnesses also

⁹⁷ The importance of this genealogy is also discussed in Mills (1977), pp. 52-60.

⁹⁸ The most comprehensive study of advisory and *speculum principis* literature in Scotland in this period remains Mapstone (1986).

⁹⁹ Quotation from Mapstone ed. (2008a), p. 49. This print of *Orpheus and Eurydice* is discussed in chapter 5, pp. 240-1.

alludes to Orpheus's kingship: Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland MS 16500 (the Asloan Manuscript) has 'Heir followis þe tale of orpheus and Erudices his quene'.¹⁰⁰

Henryson's interest in Orpheus as a monarch is almost certainly connected to fifteenth-century Scottish chronicle writings. As noted in chapter 3, the two major Latin chronicles of the fifteenth century were Bower's *Scotichronicon* and the *Liber Pluscardensis*, and both of these texts associate the figure of Orpheus with exemplary kingship.¹⁰¹ Book XVI, chapter 28 of the *Scotichronicon* is the first chapter of Bower's lament for the death of James I,¹⁰² and it bears the title 'De descripcione et virtutibus eius' (VII: Book xvi, ca. 28; p. 302); ['A description of the king and his good qualities'] (VIII: p. 303). Bower makes the following observation about James I:

Natura creatrix, quedam vis et potencia divinitus humano generi insita, ultra humanam quoddammodo estimacionem ipsum vivaciter decoravit presertim in tactu cithare, tamquam alterum Orpheum principem et prelatum omnium cithararedorum citharizantium in citharis suis delectabiliter et dulciter illis predotavit. In hoc patuit ipsum naturalem fore Scotum...

(VII: Book xvi, ca. 28; p. 304, 35-40).

Mother Nature (who is a kind of force and power grafted on to human kind by divine agency) gave him distinction of a lively kind beyond all human capacity for judgment, especially in handling the lyre, as if she had pre-eminently endowed with those gifts another Orpheus, the first and foremost of all lyrists who play sweetly on their lyres. In this, he clearly displayed the innate talent of the Scot...

(VIII: p. 305, 43-9).

The *Liber Pluscardensis* also invokes the image of the king as a skilled harpist. The metaphor ultimately derives from *De Regimine Principum*, and two manuscript copies of the *Liber*, Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Fairfax 8 (1489) and Glasgow, Mitchell Library MS 7396 (c. 1500) also contain copies of *De Regimine Principum*, which follow the text of the *Liber*. In

¹⁰⁰ F. 247^r. Quotation from Craigie ed. (1923-5), vol. 1, p. 155. On the importance of the Asloan Manuscript, see chapter 5, pp. 241-7. The only other surviving witness is National Library of Scotland MS Adv. 1. 1. 6 (the Bannatyne Manuscript), which does not give the poem a title.

¹⁰¹ Both the *Scotichronicon* and the *Liber Pluscardensis* have strong connections to Fife. The *Scotichronicon*'s author, Walter Bower, was abbot of Inchcolm (see Dilworth [1995]; Watt [1992], 286-301; and Watt [1997], 44-53), whilst the *Liber Pluscardensis* originates from Henryson's immediate locality – it was produced as a commission for the abbot of Dunfermline. See Mapstone (1999a), pp. 31-55 (34, note 23).

¹⁰² This lament is discussed in chapter 3, pp. 165-6.

both manuscripts, the division between the two texts is marked by a small sketch of a harp.¹⁰³ Orpheus was commonly depicted as a figure of eloquence in the medieval period and, despite his paganism, he was often associated with the two most important examples of Biblical eloquence, King David and Christ.¹⁰⁴ It is this reputation for eloquence on which Bower draws in his portrait of James I and, in turn, it is these specifically Scottish associations between the figure of Orpheus and the idea of exemplary kingship which Henryson evokes in the opening stanza of *Orpheus and Eurydice*.¹⁰⁵ By characterising Orpheus as a king, and detailing his genealogy in a manner reminiscent of contemporary chronicle writing, Henryson is establishing the moral imperatives of kingship as a point of reference from the start – ‘The nobilnes and grete magnificence’ referred to in line 1 provide a subtle indicator of the moral code of kingship against which the *moralitas* will ultimately invite the reader to judge Orpheus.¹⁰⁶ As noted in the introduction to this chapter,¹⁰⁷ according to fifteenth-century Scottish political thought, self-knowledge was an essential kingly attribute, and it is this which makes an understanding of Henryson’s identification of Orpheus as a king so crucial to any examination of the role of complaint in *Orpheus and Eurydice*. Self-knowledge, and through that the effective governance of self and society, is the ultimate goal presented by the *moralitas*, and Henryson’s use of complaint explores Orpheus’s ultimate failure to achieve either. The complaint form allows the poet to vocalise Orpheus’s search for self-knowledge, a crucial point in a text where the ideas of eloquence and self-knowledge are inextricably bound together in a discourse on moral governance.

¹⁰³ Also noted in Martin (2008a), pp. 86-7. For detailed discussion of the significance of these sketches, see Mapstone (1986), pp. 26-30.

¹⁰⁴ Gros Louis (1966), 644 and Martin (2008a), p. 81.

¹⁰⁵ Henryson may have been specifically considering James I’s reputation for literary and verbal eloquence as the apparent author of the *Kingis Quair*, as Orpheus’s journey through the spheres later in the poem is directly reminiscent of a similar journey undertaken by the narrator of the *Quair*. On the influence of the *Kingis Quair* on Orpheus’s ascent, see MacQueen (1976), 69-89; MacQueen (1988), pp. 53-72 (68); Roberts (1991), pp. 103-21 (110); Martin (2008a), p. 94, note 67; and Murray (2012b), p. 278.

¹⁰⁶ Compare ‘The Lion and the Mouse’, l. 1436.

¹⁰⁷ See p. 183.

The first complaint in *Orpheus and Eurydice* occurs at lines 134-83, and a clear separation is achieved between this complaint and the wider narrative. After Eurydice's maid has explained that Proserpine has carried his wife into hell, Orpheus chooses to isolate himself physically, retreating into a nearby wood. Although it is technically outdoors, this wood functions as an interior space within the text, enclosing Orpheus and creating a sense of intimacy and privacy. This claustrophobic interiority recalls Cresseid's complaints, and by choosing a woodland setting, Henryson is self-consciously referencing the conventional tropes of amatory complaint.¹⁰⁸ This dual sense of claustrophobia and conventionality is compounded by a dramatic change in the verse form at this point. Excluding the *moralitas*, *Orpheus and Eurydice* is composed in rhyme royal, apart from this first formal complaint. For Orpheus's complaint Henryson switches to a complex ten-line stanza form rhymed *aabaabbcbc*. This stanza form has no precedent;¹⁰⁹ Henryson appears to have devised it as a variation on the nine-line *Anelida*-stanza used by Chaucer, with which Henryson also experiments.

This change to a rhyme scheme that was probably inspired by the amatory complaint tradition, and the sense of enclosure created in the text, feminises Orpheus at this point. It also enhances the sense of his isolation and self-absorption: the structure of the complaint suggests the static hopelessness commonly associated with amatory complaint. The final word in each stanza is 'Erudices', creating an intense circularity as Orpheus consistently returns to the object of his loss. This enclosed stasis casts Orpheus in a traditionally feminine complaining role at this point: he is separated from his lover, 'immobilised, frustrated of action and movement, finding relief only in...lamentation'.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁸ On the use of woodland settings as an amatory convention, see Kessel Brown (1990), 228-47 and Saunders (1993).

¹⁰⁹ See Fox ed. (1981), p. 397, note to ll. 134-83. This stanza form is used once after Henryson; Douglas uses it for a complaint against Fortune in *The Palice of Honour*, ll. 163-92. See Bawcutt ed. (2003), pp. 20-21.

¹¹⁰ J. Mann (1991), p. 168. See also McKim (1994), 42.

This is also reminiscent of Boethius's description of Orpheus's grief in *De Consolatione*

Philosophiae:

Quod luctus dabat impotens,
Quod luctum geminans amor,
Deflet Taenara commovens
Et dulci veniam prece
Umbrarum dominos rogat.

[All that his unquelled grief bestowed
And love, that doubles grief,
Make his laments; he moves Taenarian hearts,
And with sweet prayer
Asks pardon of the lords of Hades' shades.]

(III., m. 12, 24-8).¹¹¹

However, the position of Orpheus's complaint within the wider narrative context of *Orpheus and Eurydice* counteracts this apparent stasis and renders the overall effect much more dynamic than that found in Boethius. Henryson's Orpheus delivers his complaint immediately after Eurydice's kidnap, and his complaint is immediately followed by positive action. The narrator states that 'Quhen endit was the sangis lamentable' (184), Orpheus sets out 'To seke his wyf' (187). In *De Consolatione Philosophiae*, Orpheus does not lament his woe until after he has made his journey into hell, and in *Sir Orfeo*, the narrator records that upon the death of his wife Orfeo '...made swiche diol and swiche mon' (174), but this is followed by a long period in which Orfeo lives alone in the wilderness, having abandoned his kingdom to the governance of his barons. Thus, in a change to both the classical and vernacular sources for his tale, Henryson turns Orpheus's initial lament into a catalyst for narrative progress and movement.

Henryson also emphasises Orpheus's role as a monarch by giving this complaint a distinctly regal aspect. Orpheus uses the *ubi sunt* formula to express the intensity of his grief, declaring that 'My rob ryall and all my riche array / Changit sall be in rude russat of gray' (157). The transitory nature of wealth and earthly power is a distinctive feature of

¹¹¹ Stewart *et al* eds (1973), pp. 308-9.

laments by royal figures in both Scottish and English literature of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and Orpheus's words here are strikingly similar to those of James I and William Wallace. However, Orpheus's complaining posture also bears a strong resemblance to Henryson's other complaining king: the Lion in 'The Lion and the Mouse'. Orpheus is described as 'Wryngand his handis, walkand to and fro' (131), whilst before his own formal complaint, the Lion is 'Welterand about.../Quhyle to, quhyle fra...' (*Fables*, 1524-5). The parallel between the two figures had clearly suggested itself to Henryson: in lines 120-1, the narrator describes Orpheus as 'This noble king, inflammit all in ire, / And rampand as ane lyoun ravenous'. The intense physical vigour of both suggests an element of genuine danger in kingly emotions; a lack of control which precedes self-expression through complaint.

This complaint, this expression of regal rage, marks a significant watershed in the way Orpheus's identity is characterised within the poem. As discussed, the early part of the poem places great emphasis on Orpheus's identity as a king: when referring to Orpheus, the narrator alternates between the honorific epithets 'king', 'lord', and 'schir'. However, the last reference of this nature occurs at line 182, with the words 'Thus king Orpheus with his harp allone / Sore wepit for his wyf Erudices'. This also marks the end of Orpheus's formal complaint. After this point, the narrator consistently refers to him as simply 'Orpheus'. Martin argues that the central conflict in the poem arises out of Orpheus's dual identity as both a king and a lover, and the difficulty which Orpheus has in reconciling kingly reason with a lover's passion.¹¹² The central thrust of Martin's argument is that '...the great disruption caused by amorousness in the kingly self' means that the two identities are unable to coexist comfortably within the text and, as a result, the narrative foregrounds Orpheus's identity as a lover in the second part of the text.¹¹³ This is an accurate observation: Orpheus is presented throughout the narrative as a subject of love's

¹¹² See Martin (2008a), pp. 79, 89, 94.

¹¹³ Ibid., p. 91.

passions in a world in which to be amorous is to expose oneself to danger. Eurydice approaches Orpheus ‘With wordis sweit and blenkis amorous’ (81) in order to propose marriage. However, Eurydice’s appeal to the amorous side of man’s nature leads to the crisis in the narrative – Arystyus, watching her walk with her maid, is ‘Prikket with lust’ (101) and attempts to ravish her, and in her haste to escape, Eurydice ‘trampit on a serpent wennomus’ (105). Here again, amorous blinking – a feature of female attractiveness – is directly linked to ‘mortall poisoun’ (107). Arystyus is cast in the role of predator, and Eurydice, ‘this lady solitar / ... with schankis quhytar than the snawe’ (99-100), his innocent victim. Henryson here figures the link between seductive blinking and sexual danger in exactly the same terms as he does in the *Testament of Cresseid*, in which Venus is simultaneously ‘Prouocatiue with blenkis amorous’ (*Testament*, 226) and ‘Angrie as ony serpent vennemous’ (*Testament*, 228).¹¹⁴

The dangers of amorousness are then developed further as Henryson moves from the overtly aggressive and thoughtless lust of Arystyus, and depicts the married love between Orpheus and Eurydice as equally, if not more, dangerous. It is the excess of love which Orpheus feels for Eurydice that eventually leads him to lose her:

Thus Orpheus, wyth inwart lufe replete,
So blyndit was in grete affection,
Pensif apon his wyf and lady suete,
Remembrit noucht his hard condicion.

(386-90).

Here, a lack of judgement caused by an excess of amorous feeling is extended beyond the transgressive physical desires of Arystyus and also pervades the legitimate, sanctioned relationship that exists between Orpheus and Eurydice. The ultimate, and most important,

¹¹⁴ Seductive blinking is of course found elsewhere in fifteenth-century Scottish literature: in *O/A*, Emenydus describes the ladies’ ‘sueit blenking’ (*O/A*, III: p. 280, 6055). However, Emenydus’s description is complimentary, and not associated with any difficulties for Alexander or his men. The association between blinking and danger appears to be Henryson’s own. The Henrysonian association is later used in David Lyndsay’s *Dreme* (c. 1526) when, during his celestial journey, the dream-narrator states of Venus that ‘Thay peirsit myne hart, hir blenkis amorous’ (*The Dreme*, 407), and this is taken as a sign that ‘scho is chengeabyll’ (408). Quotations and line numbers from Lyndsay’s *Dreme* are from Hadley Williams ed. (2000).

point of crisis in the text is caused by the fact that Orpheus is so ‘blyndit...in grete affection’ (387) that, as the *moralitas* describes it, he fails to keep ‘...the part intellectiue / Of mannys saule and vnder-standing, free / and separate fra sensualitee’ (428-30).¹¹⁵ Orpheus fails to perceive this danger, and this is illustrated most strikingly partway through his celestial journey, when after speaking with Saturn, Jupiter, and Phoebus, he approaches Venus:

Quhen he hir saw, he knelit and said thus:
 ‘Wate ye noucht wele I am your avin trewe knyght?
 In lufe nane lelare than sir Orpheus,
 And of ye of lufe goddesse, and most of mycht:
 Off my lady help me to get a sicht!’
 (205-9).

In this supplication to the goddess of love, Orpheus presents himself as her vassal using the conventional lexis of *fin amor*. By prostrating himself before Venus in this manner, Orpheus is indicating that, despite the space for reflection afforded by his complaint, ‘His hart was sa apon his lusty quene’ and he is still bound by amatory conventions of speech, thought, and behaviour. The utterly fruitless nature of Orpheus’s devotion to Venus is indicated by her callous response to his petition: “‘For suth,” quod scho, “ye mon seke nethir mare”” (210).

After leaving Venus, Orpheus gains a unique musical education (217-39), which appears to have enlightened him to a certain degree.¹¹⁶ However, his second complaint illustrates his ultimate failure to attain the crucial *self-knowledge*. After losing Eurydice for the second time, Orpheus falls into a ‘suoun and extasy’ (399), and delivers a brief complaint against love itself. As noted above, his failure to control his amorous feelings with the reasonable side of his nature resulted in the death of his wife, but Orpheus does not acknowledge this fact, instead choosing to rage against what he perceives as the

¹¹⁵ The idea of being ‘blyndit’ with affection is crucial in Henryson’s work: it is also used in ‘The Sheep and the Dog’ (1305) and ‘The Preaching of the Swallow’ (1906). See Mapstone (2009), p. 251.

¹¹⁶ Martin notes that this acquaintance with the music of the spheres goes some way towards renewing Orpheus’s powers of self-control and judgement (Martin [2008a], p. 94).

unfairness of love, declaring ‘Hard is thy law’ (404). He tries to persuade himself that he has learned something from his experience, but it is not the lesson towards which the narrator has been subtly guiding the reader and which the *moralitas* will shortly expound. Orpheus states that he has learned the truth of the proverb ‘Quhare lufe gois, on forse turnis the ee’ (410), but by acknowledging this statement he is making a declaration of his own helplessness in the face of his passions, and his inability to govern himself wisely when under attack by the arbitrary forces of love. The lesson Orpheus claims to have learned at the end of the poem is diametrically opposed to the narrator’s injunction at the end of the *moralitas*:

Now pray we God, sen oure affection
Is always prompt and redy to fall down,
That he wald vndirput his haly hand
Of manetenance, and geve vs grace to stand...
(627-31).

Thus, in *Orpheus and Eurydice*, Henryson presents an ideal of governance which relies on self-control and self-knowledge, and uses complaint to illustrate Orpheus’s inability to achieve either. Henryson presents these virtues as essential to effective kingship and the complaints within the text reveal Orpheus’s failure as both an individual and a king.

Conclusion

Henryson’s work represents, in some ways, a culmination of the development of fifteenth-century Scottish complaint. It incorporates the three paradigmatic thematic strands: Heroidean complaint; Boethian complaint; and social complaint, and Henryson achieves a seamless and sophisticated integration of complaint and narrative. This derives ultimately from the prosimetric complaints of Boethius and Alan of Lille, and builds on the examples of the Scottish romances discussed in chapter 3. The importance of complaint within

Henryson's *oeuvre* illustrates the pervasive influence of the form on fifteenth-century Scottish literature; the fact that none of the short poems attributed to Henryson make use of complaint demonstrates the marked preference for the integration of complaint and narrative which had developed by the end of the fifteenth century. However, Henryson moves away from the optimistic sense of narrative movement created by some of the complaints from the early and mid-fifteenth century: whilst complaint remains a catalyst for narrative movement in Henryson's work, the sense of optimism found in the *Kingis Quair*, *OA*, *Lancelot of the Laik*, and *The Wallace* is absent. The failure of any of Henryson's complainers to develop self-knowledge renders them, ultimately, static figures. Their helplessness is equal to that of the complainers of *The Maying and Disport of Chaucer*, the *Lay of Sorrow*, and the *Lufaris Complaynt*.

Henryson's poetry survives predominantly in witnesses which date from the sixteenth-century.¹¹⁷ Whilst this can undoubtedly cause editorial difficulties, the fact that his poetry survives in a number of sixteenth-century witnesses attests to its continuing popularity, and its importance for Scottish literary culture, in the following century. In the following, final, chapter I examine, in turn, the sixteenth-century witnesses of Henryson's poetry, and those of all of the other Scottish complaints discussed in this thesis. I use this material evidence to explore the immediate afterlife of fifteenth-century Scottish complaint.

¹¹⁷ Edinburgh University Library MS 205 (the Makculloch MS) contains the Prologue to the *Morall Fabillis*, and 'The Cock and the Jasp'. This manuscript is conventionally dated s. xv. 4/4; it is unclear whether its Henryson material dates from the very end of the fifteenth or the beginning of the sixteenth century. All other witnesses, including every extant copy of Henryson's complaints, can be securely dated to the sixteenth century.

Chapter 5

The Sixteenth-Century Witnesses

One of the particularities of late-medieval Scottish literature is that the majority of texts are preserved in witnesses which were produced significantly later than their original composition dates. There are texts, such as Henryson's *Testament of Cresseid*, which we know to have been composed in the fifteenth century which survive only in sixteenth-century prints and manuscripts; equally, the major sixteenth-century Scottish manuscript miscellanies contain a wealth of diverse fifteenth-century material. This final chapter concentrates on the treatment of fifteenth-century complaints in their sixteenth-century witnesses. This study is important for two reasons: firstly, as I have indicated, some of the most influential and widely-circulated complaints survive only in sixteenth-century witnesses, so to ignore their textual life post-1500 is to elide the only material evidence of their early circulation and transmission; secondly, and of equal interest, is the opportunity provided by these sixteenth-century witnesses to consider some aspects of the reception history of fifteenth-century complaints.

I begin with a study of the witnesses of two of the romance texts discussed in chapter 3 of this thesis: *Lancelot of the Laik* and *The Wallace*. *OA* and *BKA* do not form a part of this discussion; as noted in chapter 3,¹ *OA* is uniquely preserved in a single print, produced in Edinburgh by Alexander Arbuthnet (c. 1580). This print is currently in the private collection of the Earl of Dalhousie and I have been unable to consult it; I am therefore unable to add to the excellent analyses which are already available, and have excluded it from further consideration here.² *BKA* survives in two manuscripts: London,

¹ See p. 140.

² Wingfield (2010) provides a detailed physical description of the print (pp. 45-60) and an account of Arbuthnet's career (pp. 41-5). The textual history of *OA* is also discussed in Wingfield (2011b), 210-16.

British Library MS Add. 40732 (c. 1530), and Edinburgh, National Records of Scotland MS GD 112/ 71/9 (c. 1575-1600). Both were owned by Duncan Campbell, 7th laird of Glenorchy;³ it has been suggested that latter is almost certainly a copy of the former,⁴ but the most recent work to compare the two manuscripts suggests that they descend from the same textual tradition but neither is a copy of the other, and they did not share an exemplar.⁵ As with *OA*, these manuscripts have received extensive recent critical attention;⁶ and neither manuscript indicates any pronounced interest in complaint.

In the first section of the chapter I consider the witnesses of *Lancelot* and *The Wallace*; I will discuss each witness relatively briefly, focusing only their presentation of complaint. This approach is different from that which I take later in the chapter, where I will structure my analysis around individual witnesses. This difference in structure arises partly from the fact that the romance manuscripts under discussion in this first section have, as noted, received substantial critical attention; it also reflects the structural differences of the witnesses themselves. The manuscripts and prints discussed later in the chapter contain a large number of shorter texts, and therefore a wider variety of complaint material. Varying my approach in this manner allows me to demonstrate the different textual treatment accorded to the complaints inserted within longer narratives, as opposed to their freestanding counterparts. There is also a perceptible shift in the treatment of the complaints in narratives as the sixteenth century progresses.

After this analysis of the material presentation of complaint in *Lancelot* and *The Wallace*, I discuss four witnesses in turn, in order of their dates of production: the Chepman and Myllar prints (c. 1507-10); Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland MS 16500 (the Asloan Manuscript, c. 1515-30); William Thynne's 1532 printed edition of the

³ Wingfield (2010), p. 83.

⁴ See Cartwright ed. (1986-90), vol. II, p. xiii.

⁵ Wingfield (2010), pp. 99-102.

⁶ Ibid., pp. 61-116.

works of Chaucer; and National Library of Scotland MS Adv. 1. 1. 6 (the Bannatyne Manuscript, c. 1568).⁷ Each of these witnesses is of particular significance for the survival of fifteenth-century Scottish complaints and, whilst any conclusions drawn from such a small sample must inevitably be provisional, these witnesses nonetheless provide us with some important information about the sixteenth-century afterlife of fifteenth-century complaints. These four witnesses are linked by their preservation of several texts which, as earlier chapters have shown, were of pivotal importance to the development of the Scottish complaint tradition: Henryson's *Orpheus and Eurydice*, *Morall Fabillis*, and *Testament of Cresseid* each appear in two of these witnesses. Lydgate's *Complaint of the Black Knight*, an English text of unparalleled significance to the development of fifteenth-century Scottish complaint, appears in all four witnesses.⁸

This research presented in this chapter reflects a balance between manuscripts and printed books. Scholars have long recognised that the relationship between manuscripts and printed books does not follow a simple linear trajectory by which the former are replaced by the latter,⁹ and the relationship between manuscripts and prints in sixteenth-century Scotland is particularly interesting. As Denton Fox has noted, 'MSS seem frequently to be copied from prints, and so to be further from what the author actually wrote. MSS seem to survive, where whole editions of printed books vanish completely. And MSS seem to be preferred, by at least some readers, over printed books.'¹⁰ The evidence presented in this chapter bears out Fox's assertion.

⁷ The dates ascribed to each witness will be discussed in more detail in the relevant sections of the chapter.

⁸ See chapter 2, pp. 70-89. See also Sweet (2009).

⁹ See, for example: Bühler (1960), pp. 34-9; Blake (1989), pp. 403-32 (426-9); and Bawcutt (2005), pp. 189-210 (201).

¹⁰ Fox (1977), pp. 156-71 (157).

I

The Presentation of Complaint in *Lancelot of the Laik* and *The Wallace*

Lancelot of the Laik is preserved in a single manuscript, Cambridge University Library MS Kk. 1. 5. The manuscript consists of nine parts; these were probably originally copied separately, and it is likely that a notary public, James Logan, was responsible for binding them into a single volume,¹¹ but the nine parts now once again exist separately. Parts iii and iv were copied by the same scribe, and parts vi and vii also share a (different) scribe; this does suggest that they were ‘probably companions at an early stage’.¹² The scribe of part vi and vii signs himself ‘V de F’, but he has yet to be convincingly identified.¹³ *Lancelot of the Laik* is found in part vii of the manuscript, which was probably produced c. 1484-90,¹⁴ and its scribe links it to the preceding part, which was almost certainly produced around the same time.¹⁵

Part vi of MS Kk. 1. 5 forms a small anthology with what has recently been termed a ‘Boethian tenor’.¹⁶ The thematic connections between the material in part vi of the manuscript are well-attested, and link *Lancelot* to the tradition of ethical and advisory writing in sixteenth-century Scotland.¹⁷ The view that *Lancelot* is connected to the advisory and ethical tradition through its placement in the manuscript will be accepted here; my purpose is not to recapitulate this evidence, but to link it to the presentation of complaint within the text. Book I of *Lancelot of the Laik* contains a formal, stylised prison complaint at

¹¹ Wingfield (2010), p. 170.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ It has been suggested that ‘V de F’ was the second scribe in Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Arch. Selden B. 24, but this has subsequently been refuted. See chapter 2, p. 63; see also Boffey and Edwards, eds (1997), pp. 9-11 and Wingfield (2010), pp. 137-8.

¹⁴ See Lyall (1984a) and Mapstone (1986), pp. 144-54. The most recent discussion of the dating of this MS is in Wingfield (2010), pp. 136-9 and pp. 142-3.

¹⁵ The two parts of the manuscript are also copied on the same paper. See Lyall (1984a).

¹⁶ Murray (2012b), p. 243.

¹⁷ These connections were first made in Mapstone (1986), pp. 149-54, and taken up by subsequent critics of the manuscript. See Archibald (2005), pp. 71-82 (80-2); Wingfield (2010), pp. 131-70; and Murray (2012b), pp. 243-51.

ll. 699-718, which I analyse in detail in chapter 3, and the manuscript's *mise en page* draws particular attention to it. This complaint occurs on f. 9^v of part vii, and opens with a rubricated initial. This in itself is not unusual for this part of the manuscript,¹⁸ but the complaint is also displayed stanzaically. Each stanza is separated by a black and red horizontal line, adorned with some decorative miniature cross-strokes. This complaint is composed in 5-line stanzas rhymed *aabba*, and is the only point in the text at which there is a deviation from the usual decasyllabic couplets. This manner of decoration in the manuscript creates a visual change, and underscores the complaint's separateness from the rest of the text. It also accords it a certain status, and demonstrates the importance of complaint: in a manuscript and a text in which advisory and ethical matters are particularly emphasised, an explicitly amatory complaint is also treated as an important feature.

A similar means of displaying stanzaic complaint occurs in Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland MS Adv. 19. 2. 2, the sole surviving manuscript witness of *The Wallace*.¹⁹ The manuscript includes a colophon declaring that the text was copied '...per me Ihoannem Ramsay anno domini m^o cccc^o octuagesimo octauo...',²⁰ which places the manuscript's production about a decade after the composition of the poem. The manuscript also contains a text of John Barbour's *Bruce* (c. 1375), copied in the same hand, which although it now precedes *The Wallace* in the codex, was actually copied the following year, in 1489.²¹ This apparent incongruity results from the fact that the two texts almost certainly existed separately from each other, and were bound into a single volume at a later date.²² The two texts have also been separately foliated and this foliation has been

¹⁸ This leaf alone contains two other rubricated initials, at lines 675 and 687 respectively. The decorative scheme of MS Kk. 1. 5 is discussed in detail in Wingfield (2010), pp. 138-43.

¹⁹ These complaints are discussed in relation to each other in chapter 3, pp. 151-9. Thematic and structural links between *Lancelot* and *The Wallace* are made in Mapstone (2001c), pp. 129-44 (137).

²⁰ Skeat ed. (1894), vol. III, p. lxxii.

²¹ Ibid.

²² For a full technical description of the manuscript, see Cunningham (1973a), 247-52.

described as ‘probably contemporary’.²³ It is unclear exactly when the two texts were bound together; the fact that the early manuscript witnesses of both poems have been physically joined in this manner does reflect the close relationship between the two texts and their long association with each other in both the scholarly and popular imagination.²⁴

Another reason for binding the two texts together may have been the fact that they were both copied by a single scribe, the ‘Iohannem Ramsay’ of the aforementioned colophon. Little is known about John Ramsay; he seems to have been a notary and clerk in the parish of Auchtermoonzie in Fife, and it has been suggested that he was a Carthusian from the Perth Charterhouse, although this is not certain.²⁵ His copy of *The Wallace* was probably produced as a commission, although it is unclear for whom the work was undertaken.²⁶ The manuscript carries the names of five owners, each inscription involving the name Burnett, but no convincing proof has yet been unearthed to enable us to identify either the commissioner of the poem itself or of Ramsay’s copy.²⁷

As in *Lancelot of the Laik*, the inclusion of a prison complaint in *The Wallace* occasions a shift from decasyllabic couplets to a stanzaic verse form – in this case, 9-line stanzas rhymed *aabaabbab* (Book II, ll. 171-359) – and, as in MS Kk. 1. 5, this metrical shift is accompanied by a presentational shift. The metrical shift occurs on f. 7^v, and the text is copied stanzaically from this point, until the text resumes its customary decasyllabic couplets. The stanzas are not indicated by line breaks, but at the beginning of each a space has been left for the insertion of a rubricated initial. This rubrication was never completed,

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Barbour’s *Bruce* can be found in one other manuscript: St. John’s College Cambridge MS G. 23, completed in 1487. It has been suggested that this manuscript was copied by the same scribe as MS Adv. 19. 2. 2, as it bears the signature ‘I de R capellanus’ (see Skeat ed. [1894], p. lxxviii). This is not accepted in McDiarmid (1968-9); see vol. I, p. ix.

²⁵ Cunningham (1973a), 247 and Caughey (2010), p. 19.

²⁶ McDiarmid ed. (1968-9), vol. I, p. ix n. 1. *The Bruce* was, according to its colophon, copied for Simon Lochmalony, vicar of Auchtermoonzie.

²⁷ There is a possible historical link between William Wallace himself and a man named Burnett, but this may be a matter of coincidence, as the descendants of that Burnett have yet to be connected with the poem in any way. See J.F. Miller (1915), 1-25 (8).

but guide-letters are still clearly visible in each space. There is an exception: two stanzas (ll. 252-69) do not have these spaces and guide-letters. There seems to be no particular reason for this, and it may well be the result of error. The spaces left for the rubricated initials are similar in size to those left for the rubricated initials at the beginning of the majority of the individual books which make up *The Wallace*; as with *Lancelot*, this (intended) rubrication suggests recognition of the particular importance of stanzaic complaint within the narrative. It also suggests that both John Ramsay and 'V de F' had an understanding of how to present stanzaic poetry, presumably gleaned from exposure to other vernacular literary manuscripts.

The Wallace was also printed by Chepman and Myllar. All that survives of this edition is a group of eighteen non-consecutive leaves,²⁸ and these leaves are the only surviving material evidence of *The Wallace*'s circulation between 1488 and 1570.²⁹ Although I discuss the Chepman and Myllar prints in some detail in the following section of the chapter, it makes sense to deal with their copy of *The Wallace* here, as the fact that it is a folio edition (rather than quarto), sets it apart from the other prints under discussion, as does the fact that the surviving fragments are not bound with the other Chepman and Myllar prints. Laing noted, and all subsequent studies of these fragments have concurred, that '...the work, if not actually printed by Walter Chepman, was at least executed with his types, which have no resemblance with those of any of his successors in this country.'³⁰ No colophon, printer's device or other identifying mark survives on any of these leaves but the typographical evidence is sufficient to suggest that the edition was the work of Chepman and Myllar's press at some time c. 1509-10, although this lack of identifying features also means that it is not currently possible to establish whether they were working

²⁸ Now Cambridge University Library Syn. 3. 50. 3 and Glasgow, Mitchell Library 341201.

²⁹ Two printed editions of *The Wallace* survive from the late sixteenth century: one by Robert Lekpreuik, apparently for Henry Charteris (1570; *STC* 13149); and one by Charteris himself (1594; *STC* 13150).

³⁰ Laing ed. (1827), p. 25.

together at this point or whether *The Wallace* was undertaken by one of them alone.³¹ *The Wallace* appears to have been printed around the same time as the *Aberdeen Breviary*, another work of considerable magnitude issued from their press, although the *Breviary* was produced in octavo. These fragments can be linked to Chepman and Myllar's *Aberdeen Breviary* by the fact that the black-letter type used for the Latin headings on the *Wallace* fragments matches that used on the title-page of the *Breviary*.³² The surviving fragments indicate that Chepman and Myllar's *Wallace* was produced in folio form, in quires of eight leaves, and the complete copy would have consisted therefore of approximately 290 leaves.³³

It is clear that innumerable fifteenth- and sixteenth-century copies of *The Wallace*, both manuscripts and prints, have been lost when one considers the paucity of early copies of 'the [secular] book most frequently found in Scottish households'.³⁴ However, these lacunae in the textual history of the poem are rendered all the more tantalising by the significant differences between the extant manuscript and these early printed versions. The most substantial difference is one of narrative division: the manuscript divides the text into eleven separate books,³⁵ but all printed editions of the text present a division into twelve books (a model retained by all modern editors of the poem). There are also two points in the text at which the printed editions contain sections of text which do not appear in the manuscript. At the beginning of Book VI, which tells of Wallace's marriage and the happiness he enjoyed with his wife in Lanark before her murder, the later prints (those produced after 1570) contain an extra stanza inserted directly after line 72, pertaining to

³¹ Mapstone (2008b), p. 8.

³² Aldis (1913), 85-90 (89).

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ J.F. Miller (1915), 1.

³⁵ This division into eleven books is almost certainly the result of error; what is unclear is whether or not the error originates with Ramsay, or with his exemplar.

Wallace's daughter's second marriage, which is not included in the manuscript.³⁶ McDiarmid is dismissive of this stanza,³⁷ but there is no evidence to suggest that the inserted stanza was a later addition; it may have been omitted from the manuscript in error. Although the manuscript is now the earliest extant witness, and therefore often assumed to be the most authoritative, Ramsay may not have had a good copy-text from which to work. There is another omission from Book XI in the manuscript, and the missing text at this point is included not just in Lekpreuik's 1570 print but also on one of the Chepman and Myllar leaves. Lines 797-808 of Book XI are missing from the manuscript, but one of the Chepman and Myllar fragments contains Book XI, ll. 799-884, as does the Lekpreuik print and all subsequent copies.³⁸ This indicates definitively that not only were there variant versions of *The Wallace* circulating in Scotland at the end of the fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth century, but also that Chepman and Myllar's text was derived from a version unrelated to the manuscript copy. Frustratingly, none of the surviving fragments of the Chepman and Myllar *Wallace* contain any of the text's intercalated complaints, so it is impossible to know whether these complaints were accorded any special treatment such as rubrication or a change in layout.

II

The Chepman and Myllar Prints

To refer to 'the Chepman and Myllar prints' as a single entity is accepted critical practice, but it is somewhat anachronistic. The term is traditionally used to refer to the eleven separate tracts now in the possession of the National Library of Scotland, bound together

³⁶ See Craigie ed. (1938), f. 52^v.

³⁷ McDiarmid ed. (1968-9), vol. I, p. xi.

³⁸ See Aldis (1913), 88, and Craigie ed. (1938), f. 155.

and preserved as a single volume since 1788, if not before.³⁹ Andrew Myllar and Walter Chepman were granted a royal privilege by James IV in 1507 to establish Scotland's first printing press in Edinburgh as a joint venture;⁴⁰ all but one of the texts now referred to under the umbrella term 'Chepman and Myllar prints' can be associated with either Chepman or Myllar,⁴¹ and nine of these are thought to have been produced during the period of their professional collaboration. A single leaf survives of a Scots translation of the *Ars Minor* of Aelius Donatus;⁴² this translation is most probably the work of John Vaus, the celebrated Scottish grammarian, and was almost certainly printed by Andrew Myllar c. 1507, either in Rouen or in Scotland.⁴³ One of the booklets, containing three poems by William Dunbar and one anonymous work, seems to have been produced by Andrew Myllar alone, prior to the production of the other texts.⁴⁴ It is thought that all of these texts date from the years 1507-08.⁴⁵ A single leaf of Richard Holland's *Buke of the Howlat* also survives, not bound with the other Chepman and Myllar prints, which is thought to have originated from Chepman and Myllar's press in the same period;⁴⁶ two further, and much more ambitious works, survive from their press which can be dated to the period c. 1509-10: the *Aberdeen Breviary*, and the aforementioned fragments of Hary's *Wallace*.⁴⁷

The Chepman and Myllar prints are of course remarkable for the simple fact that they are the relics of Scotland's first printing press; it has also been noted that they are of

³⁹ See: van Buuren (2001), pp. 24-39 (p. 24); Mapstone (2008b), pp. 1-10 (1).

⁴⁰ Mapstone (2008b), p. 3.

⁴¹ One of the items, *A Gest of Robyn Hode* (STC 13689.5), is not associated with either Chepman or Myllar. It appears to have been printed c. 1500 in Antwerp for the Scottish market; it is traditionally included in discussions of the Chepman and Myllar prints because of its long association with the other texts produced by them. See Mapstone (2008b), p. 1.

⁴² STC 24623.3; now in Aberdeen University Library (A³ Vau r 1).

⁴³ It is unclear whether Myllar set the work in Rouen before his return to Scotland; this Donatus certainly appears to have had Scottish circulation. See Mapstone (2008b) and Mapstone (2010), pp. 30-47 (39-40). On Vaus, see also Murray (2011b), pp. 120-3.

⁴⁴ Booklet X; STC 7350. See Mapstone (2008b), p. 2.

⁴⁵ The booklets are conventionally numbered according to the order in which they appear in the NLS volume, but the evidence suggests that this does not reflect their probable order of production. For a full account of the dates, and probable order of publication of the Chepman and Myllar prints, see Beattie (1974), pp. 107-20; van Buuren (2001), pp. 24-5; and Mapstone (2008b), pp. 4-5.

⁴⁶ Mapstone (2008b), p. 5.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 8.

particular importance because of the ‘wide range of voices they release into print’.⁴⁸ This section of the chapter examines one particular aspect of voice: the complaining voice, which has a striking presence within the surviving Chepman and Myllar prints. Indeed, *The Maying and Disport of Chaucer*, an English text which had a profound influence on the development of the complaint form in fifteenth-century Scotland, was considered important enough, and popular enough, to be issued from Scotland’s first press, with a significant amount of care and attention to detail. In fact, this paradigmatic complaint has the distinction of being the first dated print produced in Scotland.

It is helpful to begin with Booklet X, which seems to be a very early production by Myllar.⁴⁹ This booklet contains the following texts: *The Tretis of the Tua Mariit Wemen and the Wedo*; ‘I that in heill wes’; *My gudame wes a gay wif*; and ‘I maister Andro Kennedy’. This booklet is of particular interest because it contains the first complaint printed by Chepman and Myllar – Dunbar’s ‘I that in heill wes’. Poetry by Dunbar forms a significant part of Chepman and Myllar’s surviving output: six out of the twenty items preserved in the NLS volume are now recognised as his work (although ‘I maister Andro Kennedy’ is not attributed to him).⁵⁰ The proportionally large number of works by Dunbar printed by Chepman and Myllar is perhaps due to two factors: their press was probably, first and foremost, a commercial enterprise and their combined experience of the book trade, alongside their selection of texts such as *The Wallace*, would suggest that they were able to make publication decisions based on the popularity of texts.⁵¹ Perhaps Dunbar had achieved a level of renown by this stage which rendered the printing of his poetry a

⁴⁸ Mapstone (2008b), p. 1.

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 2.

⁵⁰ However, this text is included in the Bannatyne Manuscript (ff. 154^r-55^v), where it bears the following attribution: ‘Heir endis the tesment of mr andro kennedy / Maid be dumbar quhen he wes lyk to dy’. See Tod Ritchie ed. (1928-34), vol. IV, p. 66. The wording of this explicit suggests that it may derive from a printer’s colophon.

⁵¹ Mapstone (2008b), pp. 1-2.

profitable venture.⁵² Another possibility is that Chepman and Myllar, or possibly Chepman alone, were personally acquainted with Dunbar;⁵³ if this was indeed the case, Chepman and Myllar would have had easy access to copy-texts, as well as a personal interest in publishing them.

This hypothesis gains credence if one accepts that the three poems contained in Booklet X ‘are almost like a miniature sampler of Dunbar’s poetic styles and voices’.⁵⁴ Mapstone extends this idea to the three other poems by Dunbar which are included as part of the Chepman and Myllar prints, arguing that the selection of Dunbar’s poetry printed by Chepman and Myllar ‘exhibit[s] the scope of the various voices adopted by Dunbar in his poetry’.⁵⁵ This is certainly a convincing argument, but there is one notable omission from this range of Dunbarian voices: that of the petitionary complainer. Dunbar’s poetry is notoriously resistant to generic classification, yet his petitions are generally acknowledged to form a discrete group within the corpus.⁵⁶ The Chepman and Myllar prints, despite being the earliest surviving witnesses to any of Dunbar’s work and despite the fact that they contain such a diverse and representative sample of his writing, do not contain any of the petitions. The petitionary poems exist in three manuscripts – the Bannatyne, the Maitland Folio,⁵⁷ and the Reidpeth Manuscript,⁵⁸ and Mapstone notes that Dunbar’s poems appear to have gone ‘from print to script’.⁵⁹ She argues that ‘the later MSS copies

⁵² Mapstone suggests that Chepman and Myllar had a definite ‘eye for the market’ (Mapstone [2008b], p. 6).

⁵³ The evidence for this is laid out in Mapstone (2001b), pp. 1-23 (10-11).

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 11.

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 12.

⁵⁶ Priscilla Bawcutt notes that at least three previous editors have ordered the poems according to thematic characteristics, and they have all included petitionary sections under various titles. Whilst Bawcutt acknowledges the potential problems caused by attempts to impose rigid generic classifications on these texts, and thus justifies her own alphabetical ordering system, she does recognise that the strength of the stylistic and thematic relationships between some of the texts is so strong that she has made certain exceptions, including the consecutive placing of three petitionary poems, B44, B45 and B46, ‘sometimes called the “Discretioun poems”’. Thus even an editor who specifically states her intention to relegate interpretive judgements to the textual notes accepts Dunbar’s petitionary corpus as a discrete group. See Bawcutt ed. (1998), vol. 1, pp. 20-1.

⁵⁷ Cambridge, Pepys Library, Magdalene College, MS 2553.

⁵⁸ Cambridge University Library, MS Ll. v. 10.

⁵⁹ Mapstone (2001b), p. 2.

were made from prints not identical with but resembling or descending from the Chepman and Myllar productions'.⁶⁰ However, these have been lost, and it is impossible to say which, if any, of the petitions they contained. There is some limited evidence that the petitions remained in circulation between c. 1510 and c. 1568: there are two anonymous complaints included in the Bannatyne Manuscript, 'Iesu chryst that deit on tre' and 'Now is our king in tendir age', which are reminiscent of Dunbar's petitionary phrasing.⁶¹ No print of any of the petitions survives from this period, and it is possible that none existed; there may well have been less impetus to print the petitionary poems, as they are very dependent on the context of the court environment.

'I that in heill wes' is the only surviving example of a complaint by Dunbar to be printed by Chepman and Myllar. It demonstrates a nuanced understanding of multiple conventions of fifteenth-century complaint, most notably the *ubi sunt* and *memento mori* models: the complainer is reflecting both on the fact that 'This fals world is but transitory',⁶² as well as commemorating the deaths of other poets. The poem also reveals Dunbar's knowledge of, and reverence for, several notable Scottish and English authors of complaint. The choice to print 'I that in heill wes' perhaps represents an appeal to both the popular and the familiar; that a sixteenth-century text which interacts so explicitly with the conceits of fifteenth-century complaint should be amongst the first items printed in Scotland indicates a certain continuity of taste – a continued interest in, and market for, fifteenth-century complaints, as well as demonstrating the importance of fifteenth-century complaints for later writers.

Complaint has a continued presence in the Chepman and Myllar corpus. Booklet VIII, believed to be the second item produced collaboratively by both Chepman and

⁶⁰ Mapstone (2001b), p. 2.

⁶¹ Hadley Williams (2001), pp. 85-107 (87).

⁶² Bawcutt ed. (1998), B21, line 6. All quotations from the works of Dunbar are from this edition.

Myllar and almost certainly printed before 4 April 1508,⁶³ contains Henryson's *Orpheus and Eurydice*, a fact which is highly suggestive of the popularity and broad dissemination of this key fifteenth-century Scottish complaint.⁶⁴ A certain number of textual errors, and stylistic infelicities such as running stanzas across pages, support the view that this is an early production by Chepman and Myllar; the evidence also suggests that the compositors had a copy-text of relatively good quality from which to work.⁶⁵ Unfortunately, leaves 3 and 4 of this booklet have been lost, meaning that there is a lacuna in the text – lines 59-175 are missing. Thus the majority of Orpheus's major inset complaint, which occurs at ll. 134-83, is not present. However, Orpheus's second, shorter complaint (ll. 401-12) is present in the Chepman and Myllar copy, as are the final seven lines of his first complaint. On this basis, it appears that the complaints were not given any rubrication or any other special treatment to set them apart from the rest of the text.

Initially, then, it would appear that Chepman and Myllar did not have any particular interest in the complaints included within *Orpheus and Eurydice*; however, its wider production context offers convincing evidence to the contrary. Chepman and Myllar, and/or their compositors, appear to have used three basic production models when setting out their booklets. Two of the tracts, Booklet VII and Booklet X, contain several shorter works, whilst four of them contain single works, long enough to fill a booklet in its entirety. Booklets II, III, VI, and VIII follow a different model, however:⁶⁶ each contains one long work, followed by a significantly shorter piece. In each case, the shorter text has been included as a 'filler' item where the main text does not quite fill the booklet. It is certain that these shorter texts were included as fillers because, in all cases, the colophon

⁶³ van Buuren (2001), p. 25.

⁶⁴ On the importance of *Orpheus and Eurydice* as a complaint text, see chapter 4, pp. 210-24.

⁶⁵ Mapstone (2008c), pp. 149-65 (149).

⁶⁶ Booklet II contains *Golagros and Gawane*, and the filler 'Thingis in kynde desiris thingis lyke'. Booklet III contains *Sir Eglamour of Artois*, with the filler item 'In all our gardyn growis thare na flouris'; Booklet VI *The Maying and Disport of Chaucer*, with 'Qwhen be dyvyne deliberatioun'.

marking the end of the major work does not appear until the very end of the booklet, after the filler item. This is a definite ‘presentational ploy’ designed to create the illusion that the major works precisely filled their booklets.⁶⁷

This is true of Booklet VIII, which contains *Orpheus and Eurydice* and uses *The Want of Wise Men* as its filler; *The Want of Wise Men* follows on directly from Henryson’s *moralitas*, with Myllar’s printing device not appearing until the final leaf. Of course, Chepman and Myllar’s selection of filler items must have been dictated partly by practical exigencies: the fillers needed to fit into a very precise, predetermined amount of space within the booklet. Within these constraints, however, a certain amount of consideration is perceptible in their choice. *The Want of Wise Men* has traditionally been attributed to Henryson, largely on the basis of its use as the filler for *Orpheus and Eurydice*; however, this attribution has now been rejected,⁶⁸ and the text is now considered to be the work of an anonymous author.⁶⁹ *The Want of Wise Men* is, in many ways, a conventional ‘complaint of the times’, taking its conventional editorial title from its refrain, lamenting a lack of just governance in the world. Whilst contingency undoubtedly plays a major part in *The Want of Wise Men*’s use as a filler piece here, it is striking that a lament for the state of a poorly-governed realm should have been chosen to accompany *Orpheus and Eurydice*, a text preoccupied with the notion of reasoned self-governance as a part of effective kingship. There is evidence for a considered choice of filler material in another of the booklets; the booklet containing *The Maying and Disport of Chaucer* is filled with the Marian lyric ‘Qwhen be dyvyne deliberatioun’. As I discuss in chapter 2, there is a persistent thematic association between the *Maying* and Marian poetry in all three of its pre-1540 Scottish witnesses.⁷⁰ This suggests that, in their choice of filler material, Chepman and Myllar took wider thematic issues into account. If,

⁶⁷ Edwards (2008), pp. 134-6 (134).

⁶⁸ See Fox ed. (1981), pp. cxvi-cxvii.

⁶⁹ van Buuren (2001), p. 24, and Mapstone (2008d), pp. 166-8 (166).

⁷⁰ Chapter 2, pp. 76-80.

as seems probable, ‘Qwhen be dyvyne deliberatioun’ was chosen to fill Booklet VI on the basis of its appropriateness as a companion-piece for the *Maying*, and not just on account of its length, the same could well be true of the relationship between *Orpheus and Eurydice* and *The Want of Wise Men*.

III

The Asloan Manuscript

Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland MS 16500 is now commonly referred to as the Asloan manuscript after its principal scribe, the Edinburgh notary John Asloan.⁷¹ It is not known when Asloan became a notary public and none of his protocol books survive, but he appears to have been active as a notary in an around Edinburgh from c. 1494-1532.⁷² As well as legal documents, Asloan’s hand is found in three other manuscripts of literary interest: London, British Library MS Harley 4700, which contains a copy of the *Regiam Majestatem*; National Library of Scotland Advocates Manuscript 19. 2. 3, which is a copy of Andrew of Wyntoun’s *Original Chronicle of Scotland*, and Bodleian Library MS Douce 148, which contains the Scottish Troy Book fragments.⁷³ However, NLS MS 16500 is by far the most substantial example of Asloan’s literary copying, and it is conventionally dated to the latter part of his career, somewhere between 1513 and 1530, probably the 1520s.⁷⁴ It is likely that Asloan was the manuscript’s compiler as well as its scribe. Asloan did undertake

⁷¹ The identification of Asloan as the scribe is first made in van Buuren-Veenenbos (1966), 365-72. Asloan copies everything in the manuscript apart from ff. 137-50. These leaves contain a copy of *The Spektakle of Lufe*, and the text is signed ‘Explicit the spektakle of luf per. M G. Myll’. It is thought that Myll was a clerk employed by Asloan. See Mapstone (2005c), pp. 175-88 (176). In addition, f. 53 (a single leaf from *The Buke of the Chess*) is copied in a later hand, ‘presumably because an original leaf was lost’ (van Buuren [1996], pp. 15-51 [17]).

⁷² Asloan first appears on the record in 1494/5, and the last known reference to him is as a witness to a deed dated 11 December 1532. See van Buuren ed. (1982), pp. 21-5 and van Buuren (1996), p. 15.

⁷³ See van Buuren ed. (1982), pp. 26-30.

⁷⁴ Cunningham (1994; pp. 107-35) states that ‘the commonly accepted date of 1515-25 cannot be far from the truth’ (133). See also Mapstone (2005c), p. 176.

literary copying for various patrons, most notably Sir Thomas Ewen, chaplain of St Giles in Edinburgh,⁷⁵ but there is no evidence that MS 16500 was a commission.⁷⁶

The manuscript consists of 304 paper leaves;⁷⁷ however it is clear that, despite its substantial size, the manuscript as we now have it is incomplete. The manuscript contains two contents lists; the second of these is in Asloan's hand.⁷⁸ From this list we can see that twenty-seven items have been lost from the middle part of the manuscript, and a further eight from the end.⁷⁹ The extent of these losses is frustrating:⁸⁰ some of the items listed are known to us, such as 'Item þe testament of Cresseid' and the 'goldin targe'; others, such as 'Item master Robert hendersonnis Dreme On fut by forth', remain a mystery, although exciting identifications continue to be made.⁸¹ Whilst it is impossible to speculate which, if any, of the texts now missing from the Asloan manuscript contained elements of complaint, the survival of the contents list, along with Asloan's copy of *The Maying and Disport of Chaucer*, does give us afford further valuable insight into the Scottish transmission and reception of this paradigmatic complaint.

Certain aspects of Asloan's presentation of the *Maying* shed specific light on the contexts in which it was being read in sixteenth-century Scotland. The two other Scottish witnesses in which the *Maying* appears as a complete text are of course the Chepman and Myllar prints and Bodleian Library MS Arch. Selden. B. 24; leaving the Chepman and Myllar prints aside for a moment, I wish to compare the situation of the *Maying* in Arch. Selden. and the Asloan MS. As I discuss in chapter 2, Arch. Selden. B. 24 is unified by the

⁷⁵ van Buuren (1996), p. 16.

⁷⁶ Cunningham (1994), p. 133 and Mapstone (2005c), p. 176.

⁷⁷ The most detailed description of the manuscript is that in van Buuren ed. (1982), pp. 5-20. For a more recent, and very detailed, discussion of the manuscripts paper stocks, see Cunningham (1994).

⁷⁸ The first is in the hand of Alexander Boswell, one of the manuscript's early owners. See van Buuren (1996), p. 18.

⁷⁹ The list is printed in full in Craigie ed. (1923-5), vol. I, pp. xiii-xv. All quotations from the Asloan Manuscript are from this edition and are identified by volume, page, and line number.

⁸⁰ Discussed in Lyall (1989a), pp. 32-47 (40-1).

⁸¹ Dr Sally Mapstone has recently suggested that 'Item þe buke of þe otter and þe ele' was probably a version of an *exemplum* circulating in Geoffrey de la Tour Landry's *Libre du Chevalier de la Tour* (c. 1375). See Mapstone (2008e), p. 10. My thanks to Dr Mapstone for sharing this unpublished paper.

fact that all of the items it contains engage at some level with the idea of the amatory and complaint is very much the dominant form. In that sense, the inclusion of the *Maying* within Arch. Selden. is highly appropriate – the *Maying* precisely fits the thematic profile of the manuscript. Several of the other texts included in Arch. Selden. are found with the *Maying* in its English witnesses, so Arch. Selden. is also precisely the kind of witness in which the *Maying* is usually found. The presence of Marian material within Arch. Selden. thus appears to be, at first glance, something of a curious and anomalous intrusion. In contrast, if we look back at the Asloan contents list, it is the *Maying* which sticks out as anomalous. The Asloan manuscript contains no other Chaucerian amatory items of this type, and the contents list gives no indication that any such material was ever intended to be included in the manuscript. Thus, unlike in Selden where we apparently have Marian poetry included because of its connection to the *Maying*, here the arrangement of texts suggests that what we have is the *Maying* included because of its connection to Marian poetry.

The extent to which the Asloan Manuscript follows a recognisable organisational scheme is a matter for debate, but there are undoubtedly several noticeable runs of related material;⁸² not least the manuscript's clear demarcation of prose and verse items.⁸³ On balance it seems most likely, as Mapstone has commented, that the Asloan Manuscript was compiled on principles which strike a balance between 'the calculated and the contingent'.⁸⁴ The Asloan Manuscript's contents list provides a means by which we can clearly see groupings of related material, and allows a useful overview of the structure of the manuscript as a whole; this contents list suggests that either Asloan (or his patron, if one

⁸² Cunningham (1994), p. 129 and Mapstone (2005c), p. 176.

⁸³ The manuscript consists entirely of prose items up to f. 166; from f. 167, verse is dominant. See Mapstone (2005c), p. 176.

⁸⁴ Mapstone (2005c), p. 177.

existed) was not interested in the Chaucerian amatory as we understand it.⁸⁵ He is, however, clearly interested in the *Maying*, and in terms of compilation is treating it as a devotional piece. The *Maying* is placed within a section of devotional poems, grouped as follows:

- Item þe buke of þe contemplatioun of synnaris;
- Item ane ballat of þe passioun;
- Item ane ballat of our lady;
- Item þe maying & disport of chaucere;
- Item ane ballat of our lady;
- Item ane ballat of our lady;
- Item ane ballat of our lady.⁸⁶

It would of course be possible to suggest that the placing of the *Maying* within the Asloan manuscript is a random anomaly, but the wider context of the Scottish connection between the *Maying* and Marian material makes this scenario seem less likely. The connection between the two clearly appealed to the text's Scottish readership or it would not have been preserved, and it is possible that, by the time the Asloan Manuscript was being compiled, this Marian reading context had become so dominant that it has in fact changed the poem's identity in Scotland, and that the text had gone from being viewed as an amatory text to being viewed as a devotional piece.

A further peculiarity of the manuscript's construction supports this hypothesis. The Asloan Manuscript originally consisted of several independent fascicles which Asloan bound together at a later date.⁸⁷ At some point, one of these piles of loose leaves clearly became disrupted – what should have been folio 299 was bound in the wrong place, and

⁸⁵ This also suggests that Asloan did not encounter the *Maying* in a witness with a similar thematic profile to Arch. Selden. B. 24.

⁸⁶ Craigie ed. (1923-5), vol. I, p. xv.

⁸⁷ Cunningham (1994), p. 129.

ended up as folio 243. This means that lines 337 to 392 of the *Maying* occur on their own, separated from the rest of the text. Asloan, compiling his contents list in haste, apparently did not notice this error; rather than reordering the leaves, he lists this displaced section of the *Maying* separately in the contents list. He designates it as 'Item ane ballat of lufe'; this is at odds with his apparent desire to treat the *Maying* as a Marian piece. This indicates that there was, for Asloan, nothing immediately apparent in the content of the *Maying* which led him to place it alongside Marian ballads;⁸⁸ when reading it out of context, he seems to have regarded it as an amatory poem. This in turn suggests that Asloan knew the *Maying* in a witness which preserved its Marian connection. It has long been firmly established that Asloan copied the *Maying* from neither Arch. Selden. nor the Chepman and Myllar print, but that he 'was copying from prints closely related to, but not identical with, the surviving Chepman and Myllar prints'.⁸⁹ Therefore, this lost Scottish print of the *Maying* is likely to have been another text which included it alongside Marian poetry; possibly one or more of the four Marian ballads which surround the *Maying* in the Asloan manuscript, although it is of course impossible to be certain on this point.

That the missing witness of the *Maying*, from which Asloan copied the text, was a print is firmly suggested by the structure of the manuscript at this point. As noted above, the Asloan Manuscript is made up of fascicles which were originally independent.⁹⁰ *The Maying and Disport of Chaucer* marks the beginning of a new fascicle (gathering xxi);⁹¹ this suggests that the two items preceding it ('ane ballat of þe passioun' and 'ane ballat of our lady') functioned as filler items for the fascicle which contained, primarily, *The Contemplacion of Synnaris*, and that the Marian ballads which follow the *Maying* in turn function as fillers.

⁸⁸ There were two further Marian ballads copied into the Asloan Manuscript outside this run of material. They were once in the part of the manuscript now lost to us; Asloan's contents list describes them as 'Item a ballad of our lady of pete' and 'Item a ballad of our lady' (Craigie ed.[1925], vol. I, p. xiv, items xxxv and xxxviii respectively). The contents list indicates that these ballads formed part of another run of devotional/ethical material, although we cannot know the precise content of these items.

⁸⁹ Fox (1977), p. 158.

⁹⁰ The collation of the manuscript is outlined in Cunningham (1994), pp. 121-9.

⁹¹ Ibid., p. 129.

This practice of using short, filler items recalls the Chepman and Myllar prints (as discussed above);⁹² one or more of the Marian ballads which follows the *Maying* probably appeared alongside it in an early printed copy. As none of them is ‘Qwhen be dyvyne deliberatioun’, this adds further weight to the assumption that it was *not* the Chepman and Myllar print that Asloan was copying or, if it was a Chepman and Myllar production, not the edition of which a copy survives. *The Maying and Disport of Chaucer* is found amongst a run of items in the Asloan Manuscript which we know to have been printed: it is found in close proximity to ‘þe buke of of þir orpheus & erudices’; ‘þe buke of þe contemplatioun of synnaris’; and ‘The buke of þir gologruß and þir gawane’.⁹³ It has been suggested that Asloan’s designation ‘buke of’ could indicate works copied from print;⁹⁴ there is support for this view in the fact that Asloan’s titling is remarkably consistent. To give another example, ‘tractait’ is the least common designation used by Asloan – it occurs only four times. It is also associated exclusively with the religious texts found at the very beginning of the manuscript; this suggests that, for Asloan, ‘tractait’ carried the very specific meaning of ‘didactic prose’. Asloan’s titling also suggests that, where he was aware of an ‘official’ title for a work, he used it.⁹⁵ The positioning of the *Maying* within the Asloan manuscript thus suggests that he had access to a printed copy; one similar to, and probably roughly contemporary with, the surviving Chepman and Myllar print. The fact that the preceding

⁹² Pp. 234–41.

⁹³ *Orpheus and Eurydice* and *Gologros and Gawane* were printed by Chepman and Myllar; *The Contemplacion of Synnaris* was printed in London in 1499 by Wynkyn de Worde. It should be noted that the Asloan copy of *Orpheus and Eurydice* does not indicate any particular interest in the complaints.

⁹⁴ Suggested in Mapstone (2008e). Mapstone notes that there is a possible distinction between the designations ‘buke of’ (printed works) and ‘buke callit’ (probably not accessed in print by Asloan), although these distinctions are not necessarily rigid. It has also been suggested that Asloan’s designation ‘buke’ could simply be a reference to the length of the texts: see MacDonald (2003), pp. 57–86 (72).

⁹⁵ The *Maying* begins on f. 293^r, and there is no characteristic break between the title and the first line of the text. The text begins on the first line of the writing area, and the title has been inserted above it, giving it a somewhat cramped and squashed appearance which is at odds with the consistent spacing found elsewhere in the manuscript. This might suggest either that Asloan initially copied the text from a witness which did not include the title, but that he later came into contact with another copy from which he supplied it. This theory posits the existence of the only Scottish witness not to include the title *The Maying and Disport of Chaucer*; more likely, therefore, is the theory that Asloan initially forgot to copy the title and corrected himself later. Either way, this indicates that Asloan placed a certain level of importance on a work’s title.

fascicle also contains Marian material indicates that this is a deliberate juxtaposition of two ‘devotional’ booklets. The continued association between the *Maying* and Marian material seems to have led to its definition and identification as an ethical piece by some readers, apparently irrespective of its content.

IV

William Thynne’s 1532 Edition of Chaucer

The Workes of Geffray Chaucer newly printed / with dyuers works whiche were neuer in print before: As in the table more plainly dothe appere. Cum priuilegio

In London in 1532 William Thynne, chief clerk of the kitchen in the household of Henry VIII, produced a printed edition of Chaucer’s works under the above title.⁹⁶ Thynne produced his edition in collaboration with Sir Brian Tuke, officer of the king’s household, and the London printer Thomas Godfray, and in the preface to the edition, apparently composed by Tuke,⁹⁷ Thynne is described as one who has dedicated himself to ‘the beautifying and bettryng of thenglysh tonge’.⁹⁸ Thynne’s edition thus appears to be the most English of books, produced by men at the heart of Henry VIII’s court who proudly proclaim their national identity, and it perhaps appears somewhat incongruous within a study of the Scottish transmission and reception of predominantly Scottish texts. This is not the case, however: the importance and influence of Thynne’s edition over generations of readers of Chaucer is beyond doubt,⁹⁹ yet it also occupies a uniquely important position within Older Scots textual history. As I discuss in the final section of the chapter, a

⁹⁶ *STC* 5068.

⁹⁷ Blodgett (1984), pp. 35-52 (35, note 1).

⁹⁸ F. 1^v. All quotations from Thynne’s edition are from my own transcriptions.

⁹⁹ Thynne’s edition can be regarded as exceptionally influential because of the large number of later editions which descend from it. Thynne himself reissued the edition twice, once in 1542 and once in the period 1545-50, and printers Stowe and Speght produced three editions based on Thynne’s work 1561, 1598, and 1602 respectively. Indeed, Thynne’s edition influenced all editions of Chaucer’s work until W.W. Skeat’s in 1826. See Simpson (2003), pp. 251-69.

descendant of this edition was used as a copy-text for parts of the Bannatyne Manuscript.¹⁰⁰ Thynne's 1532 print is also the earliest witness in which Henryson's *Testament of Cresseid* survives as a complete text.¹⁰¹ Thynne's inclusion of Henryson's *Testament* within his edition propelled it onto a wider stage and resulted in it becoming 'the most influential of all Scottish poems';¹⁰² this section of the chapter considers how Thynne came to print it.

The edition is a large folio volume containing sixty-one individual pieces;¹⁰³ its print run is likely to have been just a few hundred (certainly not more than 500), but the size and scope of the volume means it represented a considerable investment.¹⁰⁴ What is not clear is why Thynne made this investment of time, money, and other resources. He spent his entire career as a bureaucrat in Henry VIII's household, and appears to have come to prominence after Wolsey's reorganisation of the royal household,¹⁰⁵ first entering the records in 1524 as second clerk of the kitchen, becoming chief clerk of the kitchen in 1526, and clerk controller of the king's household in 1536. In 1540 he became Master of the Household, a position he held until his death in 1546.¹⁰⁶ From 1529, in addition to these appointments, Thynne also held an Exchequer position collecting customs duties. We can

¹⁰⁰ See p. 257.

¹⁰¹ Two further prints preserve the *Testament* in full: the first by Henry Charteris in Edinburgh in 1593 (*STC* 13165); the second by Anderson in Edinburgh in 1663. Denton Fox has identified the latter as so corrupt that it has no textual authority. See Fox ed. (1981), p. xciv. Two manuscript witnesses survive which pre-date Thynne's edition, but each preserves only a fragment of the text. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland MS Adv. 72. 1. 37 (the Book of the Dean of Lismore), produced in Scotland between 1512 and 1529, preserves one stanza, ll. 561-7. Edinburgh University Library MS Dc. 1. 43 (the Ruthven Manuscript) is a copy of Gavin Douglas's *Eneados* produced c. 1520-30 which contains the first three stanzas (ll. 1-21), although they are almost certainly a later addition, copied into the manuscript at some time between 1560 and 1581. See Fox ed. (1968), pp. 8-9. The same stanza preserved in the Book of the Dean of Lismore was also preserved in a manuscript copy of the Chronicle of Fortingall, probably dated c. 1579. On this witness, see Mapstone (1985), 307-10.

¹⁰² Henryson's *Testament* is described thus by Priscilla Bawcutt, who states that the *Testament* 'profoundly modified the Chaucerian image of Criseyde, and contributed largely to the widespread Elizabethan conception of her as a "lazar kite"'. Bawcutt (1998), pp. 59-76 (69).

¹⁰³ This figure treats the thirty-one 'Caunterbury tales' as separate items, but the *Legend of Good Women* as a single text.

¹⁰⁴ Donaghey (1997), pp. 150-64 (156).

¹⁰⁵ See Elton (1953), pp. 10-36.

¹⁰⁶ Blodgett (1984), p. 37.

deduce that Thynne's position in the royal household was one of particular favour as he was amongst those chosen to wait on Anne Boleyn at her coronation dinner in 1533.¹⁰⁷

From these dates we can see that Thynne produced his edition of Chaucer's works around the middle of his career and, it would appear, just before his particular rise in favour. It is thus tempting to argue that the edition was produced on Henry VIII's instructions, or that its production was an attempt to curry favour with the king. The situation is complicated by the fact that Thynne's edition also appeared at a time of extremely vexed political sensitivities in England, on the eve of Henry VIII's break with Rome. Certainly, traces of the problematic religious and political situation in England are perceptible in Thynne's preface: the work is dedicated to 'your maiestie royall' (f. 1^v), Henry VIII, and the preface is peppered with phrases presumably designed to appeal to Henry at this juncture. Henry is described as 'moost absolute in wysedome and all kyndes of doctryne' (f. 2^v), in contrast to the 'malycious and peruers myndes' of 'straungers' (f. 2^v). The preface also makes reference to Henry VIII's supposed descent from the Emperor Constantine. The figure of Constantine was central to contemporary debates about the nature of the Henrician Supremacy,¹⁰⁸ and it has been suggested, on the basis of this evidence, that the production of Thynne's edition may have been both an attempt to secure his own advancement and part of a wider scheme of nationalistic propaganda aimed at encouraging the English people to accept the Royal Supremacy.¹⁰⁹ There is some support for this view in the fact that Thynne chose to produce his edition with Thomas Godfray, a printer noted for the distinctively reformist slant of his work.¹¹⁰ However, this line of argument has its problems: as noted earlier, Thynne's edition was a relatively large and high-quality book with a small print run, neither of which is particularly conducive to

¹⁰⁷ Blodgett (1984), p. 37.

¹⁰⁸ Walker (2005), pp. 33-5.

¹⁰⁹ Donaghey (1997), p. 155 and Walker (2005), p. 33.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

the publication of propaganda. Slightly more plausible, perhaps, is the idea that the edition was intended to please Henry VIII, but the fact remains that there is no evidence to suggest that Henry VIII commissioned Thynne's edition or rewarded its production. The dedication to Henry VIII in the preface may have been a conventional compliment, and none of the grants made to Thynne make any reference to his work as an editor or producer of books.

There is no official record to indicate that Thynne had any particular literary interests, but our most important (yet undoubtedly problematic) source of information about Thynne's life repeatedly stresses his serious, scholarly approach to the production of his edition. William Thynne's son Francis produced his *Animadversions* (20 December 1599), which contains a detailed account of his father's life and career at court.¹¹¹ Francis Thynne's account is full of factual inaccuracies and contradictions,¹¹² but it does offer an interesting account of Thynne's method as a compiler and editor, some of which can be corroborated with material evidence. The preface to the edition refers to the act of 'collacion of the one with the other' (f. 1^v) and describes the edition as a '...restauracion and bringynge agayne to lyght the said works after the trewe copies and *exemplaries* aforesaid' (f. 2^v). This diligent attitude to textual scholarship is corroborated by Francis Thynne, who states that by 'conferringe manye of the other written copies to-gether, he deliuered his edition, fullye corrected';¹¹³ Francis Thynne also claims to have inherited twenty-five Chaucer manuscripts on his father's death.¹¹⁴

Whether or not Francis Thynne's figures can be relied upon, it is certain that Thynne did indeed make use of several manuscripts when preparing his edition. Two manuscripts can be definitively associated with Thynne: Glasgow University Library

¹¹¹ See Furnivall ed. (1875). All quotations from the *Animadversions* are from this edition.

¹¹² For more detail on this point, see Blodgett (1984), p. 38.

¹¹³ Furnivall ed. (1875), p. 6.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., pp. 11-12.

Hunterian MS V. 3. 7 and Marquess of Bath Longleat MS 258.¹¹⁵ Aside from that, it is clear that Thynne must have used manuscripts because his edition includes several texts never previously printed. The most important of these is the *Legend of Good Women*; despite surviving in twelve manuscript copies,¹¹⁶ it is not printed by Caxton, de Worde, or Pynson.¹¹⁷ It has been argued that Caxton's omission of the *Legend of Good Women* was a deliberate decision, as he also omits the *Book of the Duchess* and *Anelida and Arcite*, when he would almost certainly have had access to these texts in the manuscripts he used.¹¹⁸ This process of deliberate selection appears to also be true of William Thynne; no one manuscript exists which contains all of the works printed by Thynne, which both supports his claim that he had access to multiple copies, and suggests that the preparation of his edition involved careful consideration and a conscious search for copy texts.¹¹⁹

One of the most persistent problems arising from work on Thynne's edition is the fact that it contains fourteen items which are not now considered to be Chaucer's work. In order of their appearance in Thynne, these are: *The Testament of Cresseid*; 'Mother of Norture'; *The Floure of Curtesy*; *La Belle Dame Sans Mecry*; 'The Assembly of Ladies'; *The Complaint of the Black Knight*; 'A Praise of Women'; *The Testament of Love*; 'The Lamentation of Mary Magdalen'; *The Remedy of Love*; *Letter of Cupid*; 'Balade in Commemoration of Our Lady'; 'A Balade of Good Counsail'; and *The Cuckoo and the Nightingale*. It is unclear whether Thynne and Tuke believed these items to be Chaucer's works: the preface never explicitly states that Chaucer is the author of every item, and the title of the edition is ambiguous. 'The Workes of Geffray Chaucer... with diuers works whiche were neuer in print before' could mean that Thynne and Tuke printed texts which they knew were not

¹¹⁵ Blodgett (1984), p. 39.

¹¹⁶ For a full list, see chapter 2, Appendix I, pp. 130-6 (134).

¹¹⁷ Yeager (1984), 135-64 (162).

¹¹⁸ Ibid., p. 140. Yeager's argument is based on the idea that Caxton viewed Chaucer as a morally instructive author.

¹¹⁹ Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Fairfax 16 has the greatest number of texts in common with Thynne's edition.

Chaucer's works, but that they felt were connected with the Chaucerian pieces in some way and that their inclusion was thus intended to augment and enhance the edition.¹²⁰ There is support for this view in the fact that Thynne is the first to print the *Legend of Good Women*, and Yeager identifies ten of Thynne's fourteen pieces of Chaucerian apocrypha which use the *Legend* as one of their sources.¹²¹

It is very likely that Henryson's *Testament* was included because of its relationship to other texts in the edition, and not because Thynne and Tuke believed Chaucer to have been the author. Indeed, the *Testament* contains various self-conscious references to Chaucer which make it unlikely that any reader of the text could have believed it to be Chaucer's work. The narrator describes himself reading *Troilus and Criseyde* in the following terms: 'I tuik ane quair... Writtin be worthie Chaucer glorious / Of fair Cresseid and worthie Troylus' (*Testament*, 40-2), and refers to 'the samin buik' by 'worthie Chauceir' just a few lines later. He then asks his famous rhetorical question: 'Quha wait gif all that Chauceir wrait was trew?' (64). The *Testament* itself thus deliberately calls attention to its relationship to *Troilus and Criseyde*, whilst differentiating itself from that text, and from Chaucer's work. The decision to insert the *Testament* into Thynne's edition was made at a very late stage in production; Thynne's *Testament* does not contain any foliation. Foliation ceases on the penultimate leaf of *Troilus and Criseyde*, and resumes uninterrupted on the first leaf of the *Legend of Good Women*. This suggests that Thynne was still searching for relevant copy-texts even as the book went to press;¹²² however, it also indicates that the *Testament* was felt to belong between these two texts rather than anywhere else in the edition. This provides clear material evidence that sixteenth-century readers of Henryson's *Testament*

¹²⁰ This view has gained particular currency in recent years: see Donaghey (1997), pp. 153-4 and Walker (2005), p. 81.

¹²¹ These are: 'Mother of Nurture'; *The Testament of Love*; 'Balade of Good Counsail'; 'A Praise of Women'; 'The Lamentation of Mary Magdalen'; 'The Assembly of Ladies'; *The Flour of Courtesy*; *The Remedy of Love*; *The Letter of Cupid*; *The Cuckoo and the Nightingale*. See Yeager (1984), 160 and, for a full account of the correspondences between these texts and the *Legend*, see 161, note 4.

¹²² Donaghey (1997), p. 164.

recognised its relationship not only to *Troilus and Criseyde* but to the Ovidian female-voiced complaints of the *Legend of Good Women*.

There remains the question of how Thynne gained access to Henryson's poem; primarily, whether he encountered it in a Scottish witness, or whether it had reached England before the production of Thynne's edition. We know that Thynne was occasionally required to travel in the course of his government duties,¹²³ and Francis Thynne assures us that his father had 'commissiōne to serche all the libraries of Englande for Chaucers Workes',¹²⁴ but there is no record of his ever having visited Scotland. In whichever witness Thynne encountered the *Testament*, it was almost certainly in England by the time he read it, and it also seems that he had access to only one copy. The textual evidence bears out these hypotheses: Cresseid's complaint at ll. 407-69 is not presented correctly. Instead of seven 9-line stanzas rhymed *aabaabbab*, Thynne produces seven stanzas rhymed as follows: *aabaabbab*, *aabaabbab*, *aabaabba*, *abbab*, *abbaab*, *ababbab*, *aabaabba*. These errors do not derive from a misunderstanding of the rhyme scheme, as this 9-line stanza is used in *Anelida and Arcite*, which Thynne includes, and which is preserved in his edition without any errors of rhyme. The disruption clearly results from anglicisation, because twice the correct line occurs but the word order has been altered in order to create a rhyme. However, eleven lines in total are missing from Cresseid's complaint in Thynne's edition (lines 433-7; 444; 446-7; 452; 457; and 469); given the care he takes to present an accurate text elsewhere, it is unlikely he would have omitted these lines had they been available to him. Thus, it seems that Thynne did not encounter the *Testament* in a Scottish witness, but that a poorly anglicised version was already circulating in England to which Thynne had access. There is no evidence that the *Testament of Cresseid* was printed in England before Thynne's edition; the most likely hypothesis is that Thynne's copy text was

¹²³ For example, Thynne travelled to Boulogne on government business in 1532. See Blodgett (1984), p. 37.

¹²⁴ Furnivall ed. (1875), p. 6.

an anglicised manuscript version of the poem, and this may, in turn, have been a copy of an early Scottish print.¹²⁵

V

The Bannatyne Manuscript

Now 3e haif here this ilk buik sa provydit
That in fyve partis It is dewly devydit
(George Bannatyne, ‘The Wryttar to the reidaris’).¹²⁶

The above lines are taken from ‘The Wryttar to the reidaris’, the 18-line poetic preface with which the Bannatyne Manuscript opens. They call our attention to the manuscript’s structure: its division of material into five clearly-marked parts is highly distinctive and this, combined with its sheer size and the wealth of material it preserves,¹²⁷ has led to the Bannatyne Manuscript dominating discussions of sixteenth-century Scottish book history.¹²⁸ However, as Mapstone has noted, ‘there are still some basic things to be found out about the MS’s content and its compilation’;¹²⁹ I seek to address just one small part of the unexplored aspects of the Bannatyne Manuscript. It has been suggested that the Bannatyne Manuscript is not just representative of its immediate historical and cultural contexts, but that it ‘is also registering continuities of taste which spread beyond that

¹²⁵ No Scottish printed copies of the *Testament* survive from this early period, but the evidence from the surviving wills and inventories of a group of Edinburgh printers indicate that it was being printed in significant numbers by the late sixteenth century. It is certainly not improbable to suggest that Chepman and Myllar may have printed it. See: Fox (1977), pp. 164-5; Fox ed. (1981), pp. xcix-c; and Mapstone (2001b), p. 3. It is clear that the text had reached England before 1532; if it were circulating in print in Scotland, rather than solely in manuscript copies, it is much easier to imagine how this might have happened.

¹²⁶ Tod Ritchie ed. (1928-34), vol. II, p. 1, ll. 10-11. All quotations from the Bannatyne Manuscript are from this edition. References will be given parenthetically within the text, citing volume, page, and line number respectively.

¹²⁷ The amount and diversity of the materials contained within the Bannatyne Manuscript have led to it being described as ‘the most important literary document of early Scottish literature’. See van Heijnsbergen (1994), pp. 183-225 (183). See also Ramson (1977), pp. 172-83 (173).

¹²⁸ Recent attempt to redress this balance by considering the Bannatyne Manuscript alongside several other late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century manuscripts are Bawcutt (2005), pp. 189-210, and Bawcutt (2008), 95-133.

¹²⁹ Mapstone (2005c), p. 179.

generation into the next century'.¹³⁰ In this section of the chapter I will build upon this idea by looking backwards as well as forwards: through its presentation of complaint, the Bannatyne Manuscript allows us to observe several important continuities in literary taste in Scotland from the fifteenth century through to the end of the sixteenth; it also illustrates several significant changes in the perception of complaint, and perhaps also in the manner in which complaints were circulating.

In its present condition the Bannatyne Manuscript consists of 375 folios, which were bound as two volumes after extensive conservation work undertaken during the nineteenth century.¹³¹ So-called after its principal scribe and compiler, George Bannatyne (1545-1607), the Bannatyne Manuscript consists of two main parts, one significantly larger than the other. Due to the considerable amount of material duplicated across the two parts, are traditionally referred to as the 'Draft MS' and 'Main MS'.¹³² The Draft MS contains 53 items, the Main MS 410: my primary focus is on the Main MS.¹³³ The manuscript is conventionally dated c. 1568, but this remains a vexed question: as has been noted, the manuscript bears three different sets of foliation, which indicates that it was compiled in several stages over an extended period of time, and that changes to the scope of the volume and ordering of the volume were made more than once during this period.¹³⁴ It has been suggested it was begun around 1565, to coincide with the courtship and marriage between Mary, Queen of Scots and Henry Stewart, Lord Darnley, and that 1568 represents a *terminus* for the manuscript.¹³⁵ However, 1568 cannot be regarded as an absolute completion date: Bannatyne continued to add material to both the Main and Draft

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ MacDonald (1992), pp. 101-10 (102).

¹³² See Fox and Ringler eds (1980). The title 'Draft MS' is somewhat misleading as it was not used as a copy-text for the Main MS (Fox [1977], p. 160).

¹³³ In this chapter, the term 'Bannatyne Manuscript' is used to refer to the Main MS. Where the Draft MS is referred to, this will be clearly specified.

¹³⁴ Fox and Ringler eds (1980), pp. ix-xiv.

¹³⁵ MacDonald (1992), pp. 108-9. The connection between the commencement of the manuscript's production and the relationship between Mary and Darnley is disputed in Dunnigan (2002), pp. 48-9, but Dunnigan upholds MacDonald's contention that the manuscript was probably completed in 1568.

MSS until the date of his death in 1607, even if the bulk of the texts they contain had been copied by 1568.¹³⁶

One of the strongest motivations for claiming 1568 as the manuscript's completion date is the belief that it was originally intended to be printed.¹³⁷ This argument is largely based on the fact that George Bannatyne was in his early twenties in the late 1560s,¹³⁸ and it would be difficult to postulate possible motivations for Bannatyne's Herculean labour, if some kind of commercial link with the book trade is discounted.¹³⁹ Bannatyne was a member of a large mercantile family in Edinburgh, with an illustrious range of connections in the city, including several to printers, which adds circumstantial weight to this line of argument.¹⁴⁰ The apparent editorial rigour of the MS has also been used as evidence that it was originally intended for the press:¹⁴¹ as noted above, the manuscript is divided into five sections, along ostensibly thematic lines. These are, according to Bannatyne's designations: 'ballatis of theologie'; 'verry singular ballatis full of wisdom and moralitie'; 'ballettis mirry'; 'ballattis of love'; and 'the fabillis of Esop with diuerß vpir fabillis and poetical workis'. However, the suggestion that the Bannatyne Manuscript was copied in order to be printed is ultimately unconvincing. The manuscript's size would have meant that producing a printed edition would have required a considerable investment of labour and capital; it would also have resulted in an expensive book. It seems likely that if, as MacDonald suggests, George Bannatyne did have 'an eye for the market',¹⁴² he would have been

¹³⁶ Mapstone (2005b), p. 178; also Mapstone (2007c), 131-55 (144).

¹³⁷ This argument is put forward in Tod Ritchie ed. (1928-34), vol. I, p. xxxviii. It is given more detailed support in MacDonald (1986) and MacDonald (1992), and also accepted in van Heijnsbergen (1994) and Dunnigan (2002).

¹³⁸ Mapstone (2005c), p. 179.

¹³⁹ MacDonald describes the idea that Bannatyne could have produced his manuscript for any reason other than as a commercial venture as 'scarcely credible'. See MacDonald (1992), p. 109.

¹⁴⁰ For a full study of Bannatyne's family and connections, see van Heijnsbergen (1994); on Bannatyne's connections with Edinburgh printers, see van Heijnsbergen (1994), p. 188.

¹⁴¹ Dunnigan (2002), p. 50.

¹⁴² MacDonald (1992), p. 109.

unlikely to invest in such a preposterously complicated undertaking.¹⁴³ Moreover, none of Bannatyne's later commercial enterprises or other activities suggest that he had any interest in printing or commercial book-production; the fact that he continues to add material to his manuscript, and that it passed through his family after his death, suggests that he did have an interest both in literature and in the idea of a 'family book'.¹⁴⁴ The final piece of evidence which suggests that Bannatyne did not ever intend to produce a printed copy of his manuscript is that, like John Asloan, Bannatyne makes use of printed books as exemplars. Again, if he intended to print his manuscript, it is unlikely that he would have spent time recopying texts already in print; in my view, it is more probable to imagine that he would have assembled his exemplars, both print and manuscript, in the order in which he wished them to be printed, and sent that group of materials to the press.

Bannatyne made extensive use of one particular printed book: Thynne's edition of Chaucer. In a detailed comparison between Bannatyne's texts and the three editions of Thynne's Chaucer printed between 1532 and 1550, Denton Fox concludes that Bannatyne probably had access to the latest of the three editions, printed c. 1545.¹⁴⁵ The influence of Thynne's edition is clearly perceptible: the Bannatyne Manuscript contains nine texts attributed to Chaucer. They are:

1. 'Quhylome in grece that nobill regioun'; (ff. 45^v-6^v; II: pp. 113-15);
2. 'The song of troyelus' (f. 230; III: pp. 304-5);
3. 'Gif all the erth war perchmene scribable' (f. 258^v; IV: p. 23);¹⁴⁶
4. 'This work quha sall sie or reid' (f. 258^v-9^v; IV: pp. 24-6);¹⁴⁷

¹⁴³ See Denton Fox's explanation of the cost-driven printing and publication practices of sixteenth-century Edinburgh in Fox (1977), p. 165. See also A.J. Mann (2008), pp. 419-40.

¹⁴⁴ On the Bannatyne family's continued use of the manuscript after the death of George Bannatyne, see Bawcutt (2005), p. 207.

¹⁴⁵ See Fox (1977), pp. 159-60. Fox acknowledges that there is a high number of substantive differences between the 1545 Thynne print and the Bannatyne MS; however, statistical analysis indicates that this does not differ greatly from Bannatyne's usual rate of error and that it remains probable that Bannatyne was copying directly from Thynne.

¹⁴⁶ This is a single stanza (ll. 239-45) from *The Remedy of Love*.

¹⁴⁷ This is another extract from *The Remedy of Love*: stanzas 20-9, stanza 38, and stanza 35 respectively.

5. 'Devyce / proves/ and eik humilitie' (f. 262^v; IV: pp. 34-5);
6. 'O wicket wemen wilfull and variable' (f. 262^v; IV: pp. 35-6);
7. 'ffollowis the letter of cupid' (ff. 269^r-74^v; IV: pp. 49-64);
8. 'All tho þat list of wemen evill to speik' (ff. 275^r-6^v; IV: pp. 64-70);¹⁴⁸
9. 'Quhat meneth this Quhat is this windir vre' (ff. 281^r-3^r; IV: pp. 82-7).¹⁴⁹

Seven of these items appear in Thynne's Chaucer; item 5 occurs only in Scottish witnesses, and item 6 is unique to the Bannatyne Manuscript. Apart from the apparent influence of Thynne's edition over Bannatyne's Chaucer attributions (only one text of the nine – 'The song of troyelus' – is actually Chaucer's), the most striking feature of this list is its use of excerpts.¹⁵⁰ Bannatyne was clearly highly selective in his choice of texts, copying only those sections which, for whatever reason, particularly appealed to him.

All but one of the texts attributed to Chaucer by Bannatyne are found in the fourth section of the manuscript, 'ballattis of luvē'. This part of the manuscript is the only one of the five to be further subdivided; Bannatyne gives it the following rubrication:

Heir followis ballattis of luvē
 Devydit in four pairtis The first
 Ar songis of luvē The second ar
 Contempnis of luvē And evill wemen
 The third ar contempnis of evill
 fals vicius men And the fourt
 Ar ballattis detesting of luvē
 And lichery¹⁵¹

It is in this part of the manuscript in which the complaining voice is most prominent; there is a run of short amatory complaints amongst 'the songis of luvē', and Hoccleve's *Letter of*

¹⁴⁸ This text is included in Thynne's edition under the title 'The Praise of Women'.

¹⁴⁹ This is an extract from Lydgate's *Complaint of the Black Knight (The Maying and Disport of Chaucer)*, which is discussed in more detail below.

¹⁵⁰ This selective tendency in the Bannatyne Manuscript, particularly in relation to texts attributed to Chaucer, is noted in Ives and Parkinson (1999), pp. 186-202 (197). Priscilla Bawcutt has also recently discussed nine items, previously thought to be unique to the Bannatyne Manuscript, which are in fact excerpts from longer works (from *The Contemplacioun of Synnaris*, Lydgate's *Fall of Princes*, and William Alexander's *Darius*). See Bawcutt (2008), 95-133 (96; 101-4).

¹⁵¹ F. 211^r; see Tod Ritchie ed. (1928-34), vol. III, p. 240.

Cupid and Lydgate's *Complaint of the Black Knight* appear in the third section. It seems that Bannatyne's conception of the complaining voice was predominantly amatory, and there is an interesting intersection between the structure of the 'ballattis of luvē' and the way in which complaint is presented. The four subdivisions within this section of the manuscript suggest a progression: the manuscript moves from 'songis of luvē' to the 'detesting of luvē and lichery' via the equally 'evill' deeds of both women and men. Thus we have a movement from descriptions of the state of love to its outright rejection.

This sense of structural movement is compounded by the final item copied into the section. The final text 'detesting of luvē and lichery' is Alexander Scott's '3e blyndit luvaris luke': this poem ends on f. 290^v, and is followed by 'heir endis the haill four pairtis offis of this ballat buke anno 1568' (IV: p. 107). Whilst this marks the end of the fourth subsection, it is not the true end of the 'ballattis of luvē'; Bannatyne copies one more text before he states 'Heir endis the ballattis of luvē' on f. 298^r (IV: p. 116). The text with which Bannatyne concludes the section is the Prologue to Book IV of Gavin Douglas's *Eneados*. Written as a preface to the story of Dido, Douglas's prologue warns the reader how 'blind luvē Inordinat desire / Degraidis honour...' (IV: p. 116, 250-1). Douglas's prologue functions as a *moralitas* at this point in the manuscript: having used a large number of short texts, including multiple complaints, to illustrate a progression through different facets of love, Bannatyne here uses this prologue (which explicitly addresses the tension between sacred and profane love, between the amatory and the ethical), to conclude the section and present a kind of final judgement. Bannatyne gives this text its correct attribution, noting that it is Douglas's fourth prologue; in acknowledging that this text is an extract from a longer work, Bannatyne differs from his practice elsewhere in this section. Despite his extensive use of extracts in the 'ballattis of luvē', he does not acknowledge them as such – they are stripped of their narrative context and used instead as individual pieces within the

overarching narrative of this part of the manuscript. Douglas's prologue functions as the *moralitas* to Bannatyne's amatory fable.

Bannatyne's treatment of Lydgate's *Complaint of the Black Knight* is particularly notable here in the context of his manipulation of the relationship between complaint and narrative. Bannatyne includes twenty-one stanzas from the knight's complaint; these are not always consecutive, and they also show evidence of rewriting. Bannatyne includes ll. 402-34, and ll. 463-9 – twenty stanzas copied very closely from Thynne's print. However, in all complete versions of the poem, these groups of lines are separated by four stanzas (ll. 435-62). Bannatyne completely omits two stanzas (ll. 435-48), and then amalgamates lines from the following two stanzas (ll. 449-62) to create his own stanza, which he places between line 434 and 463. This stanza reads as follows:

O god of luve with thy blind variance
 yment with chenge and grit vnstabilneß
 Now vp now down so rynnyng is thy chance
 That the to trust may be no sickerneß
 I knaw the nothing bot for dubilneß
 And quho þat is an archeir and is blend
 Markith no thing bot schutith by wend

(IV: p. 87, 134-40).

In order to illustrate Bannatyne's process of rewriting, the relevant stanzas of Lydgate's *Complaint* are included below, with the parts used by Bannatyne indicated in bold type:

And wilfully hath my dethe [y]sworne,
 Al gilt[e]les and wote no cause why,
 Safe for the trouthe that I have had aforne
 To her alone to serue feythfully.
O God of Love! vnto the I crie,
 And to **thy blende** double deyte
 Of this grete wrong I compleyn[e] me,

And vnto thy stormy wilful **variance**,
I-meynt with change and gret vnstabl[en]esse,
Now vp, now down, so rennyng is thy chaunce,
That the to trust may be no sikernes;

**I wite hit no-thinge but thi doublenesse.
And who that is an archer, and ys blynde,
Marketh nothing, but sheteth by wenyng;**

(ll. 449-62).¹⁵²

Bannatyne's selective rewriting serves a very clear purpose here. His extract is taken from the knight's complaint, but it is just an extract – completely divorced from the wider narrative context of the poem. In omitting ll. 435-48, and by editing ll. 449-62 as above, Bannatyne effectively removes all references that are specifically applicable to the knight's situation. The lines which refer to his impending death, and to his lady's betrayal, are excised from Bannatyne's text. Bannatyne thus completes the process of decontextualisation; he takes part of a complaint which belongs within a wider narrative, and presents it as a frameless lament. He is manipulating the two main types of fifteenth-century complaint in order to suit the material context of his manuscript.

Another striking point about Bannatyne's treatment of Lydgate's *Complaint* is that it apparently owes nothing to the earlier Scottish transmission history of this text. Bannatyne's text derives from Thynne, not any of the earlier Scottish versions, and there is no sign of the text's Scottish title or any relationship with Marian verse. The distinctive, and remarkably consistent, Scottish context for this poem that can be seen in Arch. Selden. B. 24, the Chepman and Myllar prints, and the Asloan Manuscript, appears to have had no influence on Bannatyne's presentation of the text. This indicates very clearly that there were two distinct textual traditions of Lydgate's *Complaint* circulating, and being read and copied, in sixteenth-century Scotland. Whether Bannatyne was aware of any other versions of this text is impossible to say.

¹⁵² Quotations and line numbers from Lydgate's *Complaint* are here taken from MacCracken ed. (1934).

Conclusion

Fifteenth-century Scottish literature demonstrates an ongoing desire to integrate complaint and narrative; the Bannatyne Manuscript rejects this, displaying a marked preference for self-contained lyrics, and removing complaints from their wider narrative contexts in order to transform them into self-contained texts. A study of the Bannatyne Manuscript reveals a striking movement away from complaint as part of narrative in the sixteenth-century, and a resurgence of interest in the isolated complaint. However, the Chepman and Myllar prints and the Asloan Manuscript display no such tendency. Indeed, there is a world of difference between Bannatyne and these two earlier Scottish witnesses. This may be partly accounted for by the very different production contexts of these Scottish witnesses: the Chepman and Myllar prints were produced as part of a commercial venture, and John Asloan was a professional scribe working with commercially-produced copy-texts. Bannatyne's manuscript was a much more personal undertaking, and it is likely that Bannatyne's response to complaint is somewhat idiosyncratic, representing his own taste – yet it is not unreasonable to assume that, to a certain extent, George Bannatyne was 'a collector who shared the taste of his time'.¹⁵³ The Bannatyne Manuscript also reveals the kinds of texts which were easily available in Edinburgh in the 1560s and, in his use of Thynne's 1532 edition of Chaucer, Bannatyne appears to privilege the English Chaucerian tradition over the distinctive Scottish responses that are well-attested. The Bannatyne Manuscript also reveals a reader responding creatively to fifteenth-century complaints and integrating them with very contemporary sixteenth-century texts; fifteenth-century complaints clearly continued to form a significant and exciting part of the literary landscape of Scotland well into the sixteenth century.

¹⁵³ Bawcutt (2008), p. 96.

The fact that Bannatyne produced his manuscript in the second half of the sixteenth century may also account for some of the differences in its treatment of complaint from the Asloan Manuscript and the Chepman and Myllar prints. As this chapter has shown, although Bannatyne creates a loose sense of progression in the 'ballattis of luv' section, his presentation of complaint demonstrates a striking desire to suppress narrative, a desire which has no precedent in the earlier Scottish witnesses, or in Thynne's 1532 Chaucer. In this sense, Bannatyne's presentation of complaint reflects a change in literary taste, a vogue for shorter lyric poetry (particularly amatory poetry) which developed in Scotland during the sixteenth century.

Conclusion

This thesis opens with the identification of the earliest example of a vernacular complaint produced in Scotland, Barbour's lament for the death of Robert Bruce, and analyses the secular complaints composed in Scotland during the fifteenth century, culminating with a discussion of their presentation in sixteenth-century manuscripts and prints. It thus seems fitting to close this study with analysis of another royal *memento mori* lament: David Lyndsay's *Deploration of the Deith of Quene Magdalene* was first printed in Scotland in 1568, the same year in which the Bannatyne Manuscript, the final witness discussed in this thesis, was apparently in production.¹ A close reading of Lyndsay's *Deploration* reveals it to be heavily indebted to the conventions of fifteenth-century complaint analysed in this thesis, and demonstrates that the emergent complaint tradition identified here exerted a significant influence over later writers. However, the production and publication contexts of the *Deploration* set it apart from its fifteenth-century predecessors, and from the complaints contained in manuscripts such as Asloan and Bannatyne. Whilst displaying significant formal and thematic continuities with fifteenth-century complaints, Lyndsay's works demonstrate that, by the sixteenth-century, complaint had become part of an explicitly courtly literary *milieu*.

'Court literature' is a vexed term in relation to Scotland.² Mapstone identifies Dunbar and Lyndsay as writers for whom the royal court is both location and subject of much of their writing,³ but also acknowledges that it is not really until the reign of James

¹ The *Deploration* was printed in Edinburgh in 1568 by John Scot, acting on behalf of Henry Charteris (*STC* 15658). Two French prints survive which predate this Scottish edition, both produced by Jean Petit in 1558, one in quarto (*STC* 15673) and one in octavo (*STC* 15674). The text was printed twice more in Scotland in the sixteenth century: once more by John Scot for Henry Charteris in 1571 (*STC* 15659); and then by Bassandyne in 1574 (*STC* 15673).

² The seminal study is Mapstone (1991), 410-26; see also Lyall (1976), 5-29 and Mapstone (2007a), pp. 273-85.

³ Mapstone (1991), 410; 422.

VI that we are able to identify ‘a thriving body of writers about a Scottish monarch’.⁴ Yet, however small the corpus of what might accurately be deemed ‘court literature’ in sixteenth-century Scotland, Lyndsay’s works can bear the label.⁵ Lyndsay first appears on record at the court of James IV; and from 1512 he was intimately involved in the upbringing of Prince James (later James V).⁶ Lyndsay’s two earliest surviving poetic works emphasise his central role in James V’s childhood: *The Dreme* (c. 1526) contains an introductory ‘Epistil’ in which Lyndsay reminds James that ‘I bure the in myne arme / Full tenderlie’ (8-9); and *The Complaynt of Schir David Lindesay* (c. 1530) notes that Lyndsay had served James since ‘The day of thy natyvitie’ (16).⁷ James V clearly held Lyndsay in a certain degree of affection, since although Lyndsay was released from court service in 1524, James reinstated him when he assumed majority rule in 1528.⁸ Lyndsay then fulfilled a high-profile, and predominantly ceremonial, role at court until the late 1550s.⁹

Lyndsay’s major royal appointment was as ‘Lyon King of Arms’, or senior herald at the Scottish court, and it is within the context of these heraldic and ceremonial duties that we should read the *Deplorationun*. The *Deplorationun* was composed to commemorate the death of Madeleine de Valois, eldest daughter of François I of France and first wife of James V of Scotland. James and Madeleine were married in Paris on 1 January 1537; the couple returned to Scotland in May that year, but Madeleine died shortly afterwards, on 7 July.¹⁰ Lyndsay had been involved in the diplomatic negotiations for the marriage,¹¹ which

⁴ Mapstone (1991), 422.

⁵ Hasler notes that Lyndsay’s work, alongside that of William Dunbar and Gavin Douglas, was part of ‘a sudden and even vertiginous centralizing’ of ‘the wider compass’ of localised literary patronage in Scotland. See Hasler (2011), p. 12.

⁶ Hadley Williams (2006), pp. 179-91 (179-80). More detailed study of Lyndsay’s biography, and his political and poetic career, can be found in Hamer ed. (1931-6), vol. 4, pp. 245-77, and in Edington (1995).

⁷ Quotations from Lyndsay’s poetry are from Hadley Williams ed. (2000), and identified by line number. On the date of *The Dreme*, see this edition, p. 207; on the date of the *Complaynt*, see p. 229.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. viii.

⁹ Hadley Williams (2006), p. 180.

¹⁰ McGladdery (2002), pp. 83-90 (86) and Marshall (2003), pp. 100-10 (106-7).

¹¹ See Hadley Williams (2000), pp. 125-40.

were somewhat protracted.¹² Lyndsay was then responsible for devising the pageants that would welcome Madeleine in her formal entry into the city of Edinburgh; when she died before this could take place, the task of organising her funeral also fell to Lyndsay.¹³

Hadley Williams has described the *Deploration* as ‘a stylized expression of national mourning’, and links it to the formal public pageantry that surrounded her brief queenship and her death.¹⁴

The *Deploration* is an elaborate and highly stylised lament, consisting of twenty-nine rhyme royal stanzas. Lyndsay’s use of rhyme royal is of course a nod to the aureate diction of Chaucer, the *Kingis Quair*, and the *Palice of Honour*; the metrical regularity and formality of the text fits in with its status as an apparently ‘public’ text. It is appropriate to describe the *Deploration* as ‘public’, not only because of its possible ceremonial context, but because of its lack of concern with private sentiment. The *Deploration* does not address James V directly at any point, unlike many of Lyndsay’s other works, and it is voiced by an unnamed narrator, apparently on behalf of Scotland itself; primarily addressed to ‘cruell Deith!’ (1), the poem also focuses very firmly on the political and dynastic consequences of Madeleine’s death, rather than on her personal qualities or on the private grief of individuals.

The first two stanzas emphasise Madeleine’s role as a means by which Scotland and France forged a diplomatic connection: in the final line of the first stanza, the narrator describes her as ‘The flour of France and confort of Scotland’ (7), and then, in the final line of the second, ‘...*our* quene, the flour of France’ (14; my italics). The mirroring of these images across the two stanzas underscores not just her importance to both countries, but

¹² James V had originally intended to marry Marie de Bourbon but, after taking the unorthodox decision to travel to France to meet her, was unwilling to proceed with the match (McGladdery [2002], p. 86 and Marshall [2003], pp. 101-2). On James’s trip to France as an indication of his confident kingship, see Mason (2008), pp. 255-78 (255).

¹³ Gray (1998), pp. 10-37 (23-4).

¹⁴ Hadley Williams (2006), p. 181.

the significance of the alliance between the two countries. This is a recurrent theme throughout the text: not only does the narrator refer explicitly to the ‘...Ancient Alliance / Maid betwix Scotland and the realme of France’ (84), but he also repeatedly laments the fact that the marriage between James and Madeleine was too short to have produced an heir. The narrator berates death in the following terms:

Gredie gorman! Quhy did thow nocht asswage
Thy furious rage contrair that lustie quene
Tyll we sum fruct had of hir bodie sene?
(26-8).

Thus, Madeleine’s death is figured as a dynastic tragedy rather than a personal one. This, in turn, fits with the vivid descriptions of the ceremony attached to the marriage: Lyndsay recalls how James V was received into Paris ‘throw arkis triumphall’ (73), and describes the wedding in terms of the ‘riche abilyementis / Of silk and gold, with stonis precious!’ (86-7).¹⁵ The *Deploration* is thus a public complaint in every sense; voiced on behalf of the nation, and preoccupied with national consequences of Madeleine’s death. The poem’s closing wish that Madeleine’s death will not prevent France and Scotland continuing to exist ‘in peice and amite’ (203) encapsulates its status as a ‘state poem of mourning’.¹⁶

Reading the *Deploration* as a state poem sets it apart from the *memento mori* complaints of the fifteenth century. The lament for Bruce included by Barbour, discussed in the Introduction, is an expression of the personal grief of his men; they speak of the consequences for both Scotland and for themselves, but in a private context.¹⁷ Wyntoun’s lament for Alexander III is presented as a song from the popular imagination; there is no indication that it ever derived from an ‘official’ source.¹⁸ Equally, none of the laments for the dead discussed in chapter 3 are associated with an official ceremonial context; they are

¹⁵ The *Deploration* as a source for information on both French and Scottish court ceremonial in this period is discussed in Gray (1998), pp. 23-4 and Hadley Williams (2001b), pp. 333-46.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 340.

¹⁷ See Introduction, pp. 1-2.

¹⁸ Introduction, p. 1, note 4.

all, of course, composed outwith the royal court, but even within the texts themselves they are presented as personal expressions of grief. Even the highly politicised laments included in Bower's *Scotichronicon* reflect the agenda of the text without making any claim to speak on behalf of the nation.¹⁹ The closest analogue to Lyndsay's *Deplorationoun* in this respect is the lament for Princess Margaret of Scotland found in the *Liber Pluscardensis*;²⁰ both the Dauphin Louis and James II of Scotland have been claimed as the text's author, but there is no evidence that this was the case. Nor is there any evidence that the poem was actually inscribed on Margaret's tombstone. Therefore, Lyndsay's *Deplorationoun* stands alone amongst Scottish laments for the dead in its association with the court and in its official, apparently ceremonial status.

Complaint has a striking presence within Lyndsay's *oeuvre*. *The Dreame* (c. 1526), contains two very brief intercalated complaints uttered by the tormented souls in hell,²¹ and a further 'complaint of the times' voiced by 'Jhone the Comoun Weill' (939-95); his second surviving work bears the title *The Complaynt of Schir David Lindesay* (c. 1530). Lyndsay also makes satiric use of the form in *The Testament and Complaynt of our Soverane Lordis Papyngo* (1530), and in *The Complaynt and Publict Confessioun of the Kingis Auld Hound callit Bagsche* (c. 1536).²² All of these texts are included in the 1568 Charteris print alongside the *Deplorationoun*; this edition of Lyndsay's 'Warkis' thus has something of the aspect of a complaint anthology. Lyndsay's extensive use of complaint indicates that, by the second quarter of the sixteenth century, the form had attained a certain literary and cultural *cachet*; especially its use in the *Deplorationoun*, a new kind of 'public' text.

Lyndsay uses the complaint form to frame an approach to the king; the *Complaynt* opens with the following request:

¹⁹ Chapter 3, pp. 163-6.

²⁰ See my discussion on pp. 166-9.

²¹ Ll. 232-8 and 288-301 respectively; see Hadley Williams ed. (2000). Quotations from Lyndsay's works are from this edition unless otherwise stated.

²² This text is printed in Hamer ed. (1931-6).

Schir, I beseik thyne excellence,
 Heir my complaynt with pacience.
 My dolent hart dois me constrane
 Of my infortune to complane,

(1-4).

The tone is one of easy intimacy, which reflects another facet of complaint that developed strongly in the early sixteenth century: the petitionary complaint. The Scottish court petition is primarily associated with William Dunbar;²³ Lyndsay's 'Schir, I beseik thyne excellence' is reminiscent of Dunbar's address in B67, for example. Lyndsay also follows Dunbar in using simple rhyming couplets – Dunbar's preferred petitionary form appears to be either couplets or an *aabab* scheme.²⁴ The *Complaynt* is somewhat unusual in this respect, however; Lyndsay habitually makes use of rhyme schemes traditionally associated with amatory poetry in his complaints. For example, in *The Dreme*, Lyndsay uses rhyme royal, apart from the 'Exhortatioun', where he switches to the nine-line *Anelida*-stanza form, which Dunbar also employs in *The Goldyn Targe*. Lyndsay again combines these two different stanza forms in *The Testament of the Papyngo*, but he reverses them, using the nine-line complaint stanza for the Prologue, and then switching to rhyme royal for the rest of the poem, including the lengthy intercalated lament of the Papyngo herself. An exhaustive study of complaint in Lyndsay's work is not possible here, but what we can see from this brief examination is that the status of complaint in sixteenth-century Scotland was changing; it had become a truly courtly form. Not exclusively courtly, of course; the evidence of the Chepman and Myllar prints, the Asloan Manuscript, and the Bannatyne Manuscript, as discussed in chapter 5, shows that complaint also attracted a mercantile urban readership throughout the sixteenth century. What we have is an increasing diversification of the readership.

²³ See chapter 5, pp. 237-8. For a reading of Dunbar's petitions, see Hasler (2011), pp. 63-86.

²⁴ For a fuller account of Dunbarian echoes in Lyndsay, see Hadley Williams (2001a), pp. 85-107.

Lyndsay's *Deploration* thus exemplifies a process of both continuity and change; its roots are in the longstanding tradition of *memento mori* laments in Scottish literature; it also represents a shift in the impetus behind literary production in Scotland post-1500.

However, the *Deploration* is not only responsive to the tradition of laments for the dead.

In chapter 1, I established that Ovid's *Heroides*, Boethius's *Consolation of Philosophy*, and Alan of Lille's *De Planctu Naturae* function as paradigmatic influences on the Scottish complaint tradition and that they provide poetic models for the Scottish authors of complaint. I would now like to turn briefly to the ways in which Lyndsay's *Deploration* demonstrates their continued importance to the Scottish complaint tradition.

As noted above, the *Deploration* is addressed primarily to Death, although a variety of epithets are used, including 'traytour' (92) and 'Theif' (99). However, lines 29 to 77 are constructed from a series of apostrophic addresses to other figures. The fifth stanza (ll. 29-35) is addressed to 'dame Nature'; in a manner which recalls Natura's explicit discussion of her own limitations in *De Planctu Naturae*, the narrator demands to know why she did not use her powers against death. The narrator then moves on to address 'Venus, with thy blynd sone, Cupido' (36), and characterises James and Madeleine as 'leill luffaris' (39) in Venus's court. The narrator also draws in references to specifically Heroidean amatory mythology, characterising James V as Leander (43) and Madeleine as Penelope (50). The Ovidian amatory then gives way to the Boethian, with a rebuke of 'dame Fortune' (56) and her 'slyding gifts' (59); what we have here is a complaint that is almost choked with references to the formal and thematic conventions of the fifteenth-century. Despite the new, courtly context for complaint, Lyndsay's work is still ultimately dependent on his fifteenth-century predecessors; he is here demonstrating a conscious recognition of the thematic demands of complaint and implicitly acknowledging its status as an established tradition.

It is the status of complaint as a *tradition* in late medieval Scottish literature which this thesis has sought to establish. In chapter 1, I argue for the existence of paradigmatic complaints which inform and enrich the Scottish tradition; as Lyndsay's work shows, these paradigms were still important to sixteenth-century literature. Aside from traceable paradigms, however, an identifiable tradition also needs to distinguish itself in some way both from what precedes and what surrounds it. These distinguishing features of fifteenth-century Scottish complaint are the subject of chapters 2, 3, and 4. In chapter 2, I argue that the presentation of amatory complaint in Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Arch. Selden. B. 24 foregrounds a uniquely Scottish preoccupation with the relationship between the amatory and the ethical. Ultimately, chapter 2 demonstrates that two different kinds of intertextuality are operating within the manuscript: the first is the relatively straightforward kind of intertextual relationship, based on reference and allusion. The *Lay of Sorrow* and the *Lufaris Complaynt*, for example, demonstrate a clear awareness of *The Maying and Disport of Chaucer* and the *Complaint of Mars* and the *Complaint of Venus*, in the same way that the *Kingis Quair* and the *Maying* are responsive to *Troilus and Criseyde*. These are of course just brief examples; as I illustrate in the chapter, the web of allusions and intertextual references in Arch. Selden. B. 24 is extremely complex, and accounts in a large part for the manuscript's particular collocation of materials. However, there is a second type of intertextuality at work in the manuscript: described by Theresa Tinkle as 'material intertextuality', the chapter argues that relationships between texts are *created* by their positioning in the manuscript, irrespective of whether any deliberate allusion, or other type of explicit reference, exists.²⁵ Thus, chapter 2 argues that the deliberate placing of *The Maying and Disport of Chaucer* with Marian material in this manuscript (and *The Maying's* other Scottish witnesses) engenders a relationship between the two which ultimately influenced the way

²⁵ Tinkle (2003), pp. 157-74. Tinkle argues that 'material intertextuality' is perceptible in Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Fairfax 16, suggesting that the materials in the manuscript are all connected by their shared interest in 'the social and literary conventions associated with Cupid' (pp. 158-9).

the *Maying* was read and interpreted in Scotland. This material intertextuality is also reflected in the relationship between complaint and narrative in the manuscript. The ordering of material in Arch. Selden. B. 24 creates a division, with longer narrative pieces occupying the earlier parts of the manuscript, and self-contained complaints increasingly dominating the codex.

As I show in chapter 3, the romances of fifteenth-century Scotland demonstrate a determined desire to integrate complaint and narrative. This integration is complex: complaint is often differentiated from the rest of the narrative, metrically and visually, by the use of an alternative stanza form, thus creating a space that is, in many ways, separate. However, the separateness of these complaints is ultimately overridden by the central structural role which they play in their respective narratives. Complaints are essential to the drive for narrative action in *OA*, *Lancelot of the Laik*, *The Wallace*, and *BKA*; their very separateness creates a reflective space within the narrative, and a repeated feature of these reflective spaces is the opportunity they create for the protagonists to attain self-knowledge. Self-knowledge is also a particularly important element of Robert Henryson's use of complaint; as I argue in chapter 4, Henryson's complaints form part of a set of wider discourses on governance. Henryson makes use of the complaint of the times, Heroidean amatory complaint, and Boethian complaint across the *Morall Fabillis*, *Testament of Cresseid*, and *Orpheus and Eurydice*; however, his use of these different types of complaint, in all of these different texts, is unified by his interest in self-knowledge. Henryson characterises self-knowledge as an essential facet of effective governance, whether of the self or of others, and complaint is presented as the primary means by which self-knowledge can be achieved, although its success is ultimately presented as limited.

The spread of material covered in this thesis demonstrates a developing preference for the integration of complaint and narrative in the fifteenth century, from the ultimate

dominance of self-contained lyric complaint in Selden to the complex interweaving of the forms in Henryson. However, the situation is not that straightforward: I discuss Arch. Selden. B. 24 first, because many of the texts it contains were originally composed significantly earlier than the other material under discussion in this thesis. The *Kingis Quair*, with its date of c. 1424, is the earliest item of known Scottish provenance discussed in detail in this thesis, and the English texts discussed in chapter 2 belong to the period c. 1390-1430. Yet, as I argue in chapter 2, the compilation of Arch. Selden. B. 24 almost certainly significantly post-dates the composition of much of its contents. To argue, therefore, that Scottish literary taste moves from Selden to Henryson is a fallacy; Henryson's major works were almost certainly in large part complete *before* the majority of the texts in Arch. Selden. B. 24 were copied. I would thus like to propose that the preference for the integration of complaint and narrative is a fifteenth-century phenomenon in Scotland, perceptible in the romances and in the work of Henryson, and exemplified in the English items copied into the early part of Arch. Selden. B. 24. However, the evidence of the sixteenth-century witnesses, as discussed in chapter 5, and the work of Dunbar and Lyndsay to which I briefly refer in this conclusion, demonstrates that there was a resurgence of interest in the self-contained lyric in sixteenth-century Scotland. The preference for self-contained complaint which asserts itself in Arch. Selden. B. 24 after the *Kingis Quair* may thus have an additional facet: as well as challenging and qualifying the optimistic account of amatory experience presented in the *Quair*, this developing preference for self-contained complaint may be indicative of the emergent literary tastes of the sixteenth century; this could support the theory that the production of Arch. Selden. B. 24 continued well beyond 1500, as I suggest in chapter 2.

It is not possible for me to explore the position of complaint in sixteenth-century Scotland in any more detail here, but it is clear that there was significant continuity across

the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. This study examines only a small part of a vast body of literature and could be extended and developed in several directions: an exploration of the devotional complaints of the fifteenth century would provide useful additional context and material for comparison, and the relationship between fifteenth- and sixteenth-century complaints, only gestured towards in this thesis, would offer rich material for additional research. The codicological aspects of the study could be extended by considering a wider range of manuscripts and printed editions produced after 1568; the treatment of complaint in the Maitland Folio and Quarto manuscripts, the great family books of late sixteenth-century Scotland, might be usefully compared with that found in Selden, Asloan, and Bannatyne. This thesis could never have hoped to provide an exhaustive account of the position of complaint in medieval and early modern Scottish literary culture; what it has established, however, is that complaint has a key position in this culture.

Abbreviations

Add.	Additional
Adv.	Advocates'
ASLS	The Association for Scottish Literary Studies
DOST	<i>Dictionary of the Older Scottish Tongue</i> (available online: www.dsl.ac.uk)
EETS	Early English Text Society
ES	Extra Series
IMEV	Brown, C. and Robbins, R.H. (1943), <i>The Index of Middle English Verse</i> , New York
Inc.	Incunable
MED	<i>Middle English Dictionary</i> (available online: http://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/med/)
NIMEV	Boffey, J. and Edwards, A.S.G. (2005), <i>A New Index of Middle English Verse</i> , London
ODNB	Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (available online: www.oxforddnb.com)
OS	Original Series
SCROLL	The Scottish Cultural Review of Language and Literature
Ser.	Series
SIMEV	Robbins, R.H. and Cutler, J.L (1965), <i>Supplement to the Index of Middle English Verse</i> , Lexington, KY
SLJ	<i>Scottish Literary Journal</i>
SND	<i>Scottish National Dictionary</i> (available online: www.dsl.ac.uk)
SSL	<i>Studies in Scottish Literature</i>
STC	Jackson, W.A., Ferguson, F.S., and Pantzer, K.F. eds (1976-91), <i>A Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland, and Ireland 1475-1640</i> , 3 vols, London
STS	Scottish Text Society

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