

Samuel Daniel's The Complaint of Rosamond and the arrival of Tasso's Armida in England

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The fame of Torquato Tasso's long-awaited epic poem *Gerusalemme liberata*, finally printed in a complete if unauthorized and unrevised edition in Parma in 1581, spread to England almost immediately. By 1584 a Latin translation, by Scipione Gentili, of the opening two cantos and part of the fourth canto had been printed in London by John Wolfe, with dedications to the queen and Sir Philip Sidney respectively, and the poem and its imprisoned author had become the toast of literary circles at court, as revealed in a letter home by the immigrant language teacher and editor of many of Wolfe's Italian publications, Iacopo Castelvetro:¹

Nè mi resta altro caldamente pregarla di favorirmi di scrivermi, se il povero Tasso vada tuttavia componendo cosa alcuna, o no: che Vostra Signoria sappia, che un illustre cavaliere me l'ha domandato, dicendo che Sua Maestà gli ha imposto d'informasene; e componendo egli cosa che vaglia, mi farebbe un segnalatissimo favore a mandarmene un esempio, onde ne la prego quanto più posso e so, assicurandola che questa reina non stima meno avventuroso il Serenissimo nostra Duca per aver cotesto gran poeta cantate le sue loda, che si facesse Alessandro Achille, per avere egli avuto il grande Omero; e mi dicono che ella ne sappia di già molte stanze a mente.

[There only remains for me to ask you warmly to do me the favour of letting me know whether poor Tasso is nevertheless continuing to compose anything, or not: you should know that an illustrious knight has asked me about it, saying that her Majesty ordered him to find out; if he is producing anything worthwhile, you would be doing me a most conspicuous service by sending me an example of it, so I beseech you to my utmost, assuring you that the queen does not regard His

I would like to thank the Leverhulme Trust for their generous support during the research and writing of this essay.

¹ The earliest contemporary reference in print to the possible connection between Tasso's supposed madness and his love for Leonora d'Este, the sister of Duke Alfonso II, as the motive for his seven-year confinement in Ferrara appeared in England in the early 1590s, in a bilingual French language-learning manual:

Torquato Tasso, a fine scholer truly, who is yet liuing, the last Italian Poet who is of any great fame in our age, but worthie of the first honour; [. . .] This Youth fell mad for the loue of an Italian lasse descended of a great house, when I was in Italie.

John Eliot, *Ortho-epia Gallica. Eliots Fruits for the French* (London, 1593), 30.

Highness our Duke any less fortunate to have his praises sung by this great poet than was Alexander the Great to have had the great Homer to praise him; and I'm told that she has already learnt many stanzas off by heart.]²

It would be fascinating to know exactly which parts of the epic were being memorized by Queen Elizabeth in the mid-1580s, particularly as the literary reception of the poem in England shortly thereafter was to follow the pattern already emerging in Italy and France, in focusing primarily on the romantic and pastoral episodes rather than the principal Crusade narrative itself. The episode that was to become the most celebrated and widely imitated in a range of art forms throughout Europe for at least the next two hundred and fifty years, the amorous interlude of the Christian hero Rinaldo and the pagan enchantress Armida in Cantos XIV to XVI, had already started to attract significant literary interest in England within a decade of the poem's publication. This interest both anticipated and mirrored French literary responses to the poem, best exemplified in Pierre Joulet's prose *refacimento* of the episode in *Les Amours d'Armide* (1596), which had run through ten editions by 1614 and also survives in an early seventeenth-century manuscript translation into English by the poet and noted translator of Italian and Italianate materials Robert Tofte.

The earliest and still most widely recognized example of sustained imitative engagement with Tasso's episode in England can be found in Book II of *The Faerie Queene*, printed in 1590, as Mario Praz confirmed more than fifty years ago in an essay on 'Tasso in England':

It is only, however, through Spenser's imitations in *The Faerie Queene* that Tasso really penetrated into English literature, with an accent which was to be found typical of him also in the following centuries, the accent of voluptuous enchantment and elegiac peace, a languorous and suave perfection.³

Although it is undeniable that Spenser, like so many readers after him, was drawn initially to the episode best exemplifying the attractive languor and 'voluptuous enchantment' of Tasso's epic verse at its most mellifluous, it is difficult to sustain the argument that this accent is reproduced or indeed even aimed at in the English poet's measured reworking of the Rinaldo and Armida sequence at key junctures in Book II of his own epic poem. Perhaps the most immediately striking aspect of Spenser's attention to Tasso's extended

² The letter, addressed to Lodovico Tassoni, the Duke of Ferrara's secretary in Modena, is printed in Angelo Solerti, *Vita di Torquato Tasso* (Turin and Rome, 1895), II, 204–5. All translations from Italian are mine, unless otherwise stated.

³ Mario Praz, *The Flaming Heart: Essays on Crashaw, Machiavelli and Other Studies of the Relations between Italian and English Literature from Chaucer to T. S. Eliot* (New York: Doubleday Anchor, 1958), 309. For Spenser's borrowings from and adaptation of Tasso's episode, see also: C. S. Lewis, *The Allegory of Love* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1936), 324–40; Judith A. Kates, *Tasso and Milton: the Problem of Christian Epic* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1983), 136–44 and 165–70; Alistair Fox, *The English Renaissance: Identity and Representation in Elizabethan England* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997), 162–74.

episode focusing on their love is his almost total disregard of Rinaldo and Armida themselves. Many elements of Armida's enchanted garden in Cantos XV and XVI can be readily detected in Acrasia's Bower of Bliss,⁴ but Tasso's beautiful enchantress is herself barely recognizable in the transformation into Spenser's more sinister soul-sucking witch. The sympathy that Tasso generates, at least partially, for Armida by granting her a Dido-like grandeur in her lament as an abandoned lover in Canto XVI is completely absent in Spenser's conception of Acrasia. While Tasso's most celebrated episode marked its advent into English literature in the Bower of Bliss, it is necessary to look elsewhere, in both Tasso's poem and English poetry of the early 1590s, to detect the almost simultaneous and yet more obscure arrival of the figure of Armida herself, in the perhaps unanticipated form of the ghost of a long-dead and ambiguously sympathetic royal mistress.

Samuel Daniel's *The Complaint of Rosamond* was first printed early in 1592 in a debut volume of poetry that frequently advertises the poet's detailed knowledge of Tasso's lyric and epic verse. An exploration of the means of Daniel's acquisition of this knowledge helps to provide a specific insight into his discovery of the irresistible charms of Tasso's Armida. Daniel's keen and lifelong engagement with Tasso's poetry seems to have begun in earnest during his lengthy sojourn in Italy (from March 1590 to November 1591) with his patron Sir Edward Dymoke.⁵ Many of the Italian sonnets, by Tasso and other less celebrated sixteenth-century sonneteers, which Daniel chose to imitate in his *Delia* sequence, also printed in the 1592 volume, appear to have been first encountered in Italy in miscellaneous verse anthologies rather than editions of the works of particular poets.⁶ One such anthology, with which Daniel was certainly familiar, a Genoese collection edited by Cristoforo Zabata in 1579, was especially notable, as it printed as a coda to the second volume the earliest extract from Tasso's highly anticipated epic poem.⁷ This extract contained all of Canto IV as it was to be printed (with a few additions and revisions) in the first complete editions of *Gerusalemme liberata* only a couple of years later. Canto IV opens dramatically with the arrival of 'il gran nemico de l'umane genti' ('the great enemy of mankind') [IV. i. 3] in the poem and Tasso's account of Satan's council in hell, a scene rendered so vividly that its impact on Milton's poetic imagination in the middle of the seventeenth century is readily discernible.⁸ The canto is equally striking, however, for the

⁴ See especially Robert M. Durling, 'The Bower of Bliss and Armida's Palace', *Comparative Literature* 6 (1954), 335–47.

⁵ See Mark Eccles, 'Samuel Daniel in France and Italy', *Studies in Philology* 34 (1937), 148–67; 165.

⁶ See Jason Lawrence, 'Who the Devil taught thee so much Italian?': *Italian Language Learning and Literary Imitation in Early Modern England* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005), 74–5.

⁷ Cristoforo Zabata (ed.), *Della Scelta di Rime, Di Diversi Eccellenti autori* (Genoa, 1579), II, 361–91. Daniel imitates parts of two of the twenty-one sonnets, madrigals, and canzone by Tasso in the collection, printed from pages 276 to 301, in Sonnets XII and XLVII of the first edition of *Delia*.

⁸ See Edward Weismiller, 'Materials Dark and Crude: a Partial Genealogy for Milton's Satan', *Huntington Library Quarterly* 31 (1967), 75–92.

first appearance of another key character in Tasso's epic, the beautiful enchantress Armida. She is sent in response to diabolical urgings by her magician uncle to cause dissension in the Christian ranks by any means possible: specifically both 'ogn'arte feminil ch'amore alletti' ('every feminine art that entices love') [IV. xxv. 2] and a rhetorical appeal for male pathos in a long feigned tale, which lasts for more than a quarter of the entire canto (some twenty-five out of ninety cantos, as printed in 1579). There is strong evidence in *The Complaint of Rosamond* to suggest that Daniel's poetic response to Tasso's Armida was prompted by this initial exposure to her in the canto printed in isolation in Zabata's collection, although it becomes clear from his first volume as a whole that the English poet had soon familiarized himself with Armida's wider role in the Italian poem, particularly her amorous interlude with Rinaldo.

It is the combination of affective female persuasion and the 'sweet silent rethorique' [121] of feminine beauty, the two most striking aspects of Armida's first appearance in the poem, that leads Daniel to make the unexpected association between his spectral Rosamond and Tasso's enchantress. Daniel's poem opens, in keeping with the English female complaint tradition acknowledged in the early reference to Churchyard's 'Shores wife' [25],⁹ with the appearance of Rosamond's spirit, from a conspicuously Classical underworld, where Charon the ferryman has denied her passage to the Elysian fields, 'and sayes [her] soule can neuer passe that Riuer,/ Till Louers sighes on earth shall it deliuer' [13–14]. This need for human pity motivates Rosamond's decision to seek out the English poet, and the first eight stanzas of the poem constitute her initial (and successful) attempt at rhetorical persuasion, as her 'myserable ghost':

Comes to sollicit thee, since others faile,
To take this taske, and in thy wofull Song,
To forme my case, and register my wrong. [33–35]¹⁰

The plea for help might be made in specifically legal language, as Heather Dubrow has noted,¹¹ but it is the emotional affect of the appeal itself rather than the justice of her case that persuades Daniel's poet, who is 'mou'd with a tender care/ And pittie' [57–58] by it, to retell Rosamond's story in her own

⁹ Thomas Churchyard's account in rhyme royal verse of 'Howe Shores wife, Edwarde the fowerths concubine, was by kinge Richarde despoyled of all her goodes, and forced to do open penance' was first printed in the second part of *The Mirror for Magistrates* in 1563. A revised and expanded version of the poem was printed in 1593 (after the first appearance in print of Daniel's volume) in *Churchyard's Challenge*, with a new comparison to the beauty of 'Rosamond the faire' in Jane Shore's narration of her story.

¹⁰ Arthur C. Sprague (ed.), *Samuel Daniel: Poems and a Defence of Ryme* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1950), 40.

¹¹ Heather Dubrow, ' "Lending Soft Audience to my Sweet Design": Shifting Roles and Shifting Readings of Shakespeare's "A Lover's Complaint" ', *Shakespeare Survey* 58 (2005), 23–33; 24–6. See also John Kerrigan (ed.), *Motives of Woe: Shakespeare and Female Complaint* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 28.

words, and thus defend her disgraced reputation. Armida's prolonged appeal for help from Goffredo and the Christian forces in Tasso's poem is similarly predicated on this combination of a desire for legal justice and retribution (albeit in relation to a completely false story in her case) and a keen awareness of the emotional impact that the relating of the tale itself might have on its intended male audience. After listening to her story Goffredo does indeed feel pity for her apparent plight ('in lui pietoso affetto/ si desta, che non dorme in nobil petto' [IV. lxxv. 7–8]),¹² but still refuses her request for military support, as it would prove a distraction from his divinely inspired mission to recapture Jerusalem. The majority of the Christian army, however, is much more deeply affected by both the tale and its teller, to the extent that, in the 1579 version, Goffredo eventually overturns his initial decision, with devastating consequences for the subsequent progress of the Crusade:

Questo finto dolor da molti elice
 lagrime vere, e i cor piú duri spetra.
 Ciascun con lei s'affligge, e fra sé dice:
 'Se mercé de Goffredo or non impetra,
 ben fu rabbiosa tigre a lui nutrice.' [IV. lxxvii. 1–5]

[This show of grief lured many a genuine tear,/ melting the sternest-hearted of the men./ Everyone quietly said, grieving with her,/ 'If even now she gains no mercy, then/ a savage tiger gave our captain suck.']¹³

This shared emphasis on the persuasive power of female rhetoric on a male audience in the two poems might as yet seem too imprecise an indicator of any direct connection to Tasso's introduction of Armida in Canto IV, but Daniel's depiction of Rosamond's physical beauty and her awareness of its power in the story she goes on to relate makes explicit his indebtedness. The impact of Rosamond's arrival at the court of Henry II is conveyed in an image taken directly from Tasso's description of the first sighting of Armida in the Christian camp:

Looke howe a Comet at the first appearing,
 Drawes all mens eyes with wonder to behold it: [. . .]
 So did the blasing of my blush appeere,
 T' amaze the world, that holds such sights so deere. [113–19]

Dopo non molti dí vien la donzella
 dove spiegate i Franchi avean le tende.

¹² 'In him the emotion of pity awakens, which never sleeps in a noble breast.' Lanfranco Caretti (ed.), *Torquato Tasso: Gerusalemme liberata* (Turin: Einaudi, 1971), 119.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 122. Translation by Antony M. Esolen (ed.), *Torquato Tasso: Jerusalem Delivered* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), 87.

A l'apparir de la beltà novella
 nasce un bisbiglio e' l guardo ognun v'intende
 sí come là dove cometa o stella,
 non piú vista di giorno, in ciel resplende. [IV. xxviii. 1–6]¹⁴

[Only a few days later the girl arrives where the French army has pitched its tents. At the appearance of this new beauty a murmur arises, and everyone's gaze is averted towards her, as it is towards a comet or a star, which, never before seen by day, shines in the sky.]

Daniel's first borrowing from Tasso in *Rosamond* was recognized almost immediately by at least one contemporary English poet: Francis Davison's copy of *Il Goffredo, ovvero Gierusalemme liberata* (1593), which later entered the collection of William Drummond, contains three separate marginal annotations, possibly made during or soon after a trip to Italy between 1595 and 1597, comparing Italian passages in Canto IV to 'Daniels Rosamonde', the first of which appears alongside stanza xxviii.¹⁵

However, Davison himself failed to notice that in the following stanza Daniel turned again to Tasso, as Rosamond describes the overwhelming power of her 'beauty Syren' [120]. Daniel's stanza is an amalgamation and development of ideas in two consecutive stanzas from later in Canto IV, in which Tasso demonstrates 'ogn' arte' that Armida employs to entrap as many Christian lovers as possible in her web of deceit [IV. lxxxvii. 1–2], once Goffredo has reluctantly agreed to lend her military support. These 'arti' are described as being more powerful than the enchantments of both Circe and Medea, and Armida is said to have the 'voce di sirena' ('voice of the siren') in her ability to lull the alert senses of those who hear her speak [IV. lxxxvi. 4–8]; both elements are condensed into Daniel's opening line:

Ah beauty Syren, fayre enchanting good,
 Sweet silent rethorique of perswading eyes:
 Dombe eloquence, whose power doth moue the blood,
 More then the words, or wisdome of the wise: [120–24]¹⁶

The principal emphasis in Daniel's stanza, however, is not on the female voice itself, but rather on how the affective power of Rosamond's *silent* visual beauty

¹⁴ Sprague, *Samuel Daniel: Poems*, 42; Caretti, *Gerusalemme*, 108.

¹⁵ See Richard Hatchwell, 'A Francis Davison/ William Drummond conundrum', *The Bodleian Library Record* 15 (1996), 364–7. Edward Fairfax also seems to have been aware of Daniel's borrowing, as in his complete translation of Tasso's poem *Godfrey of Bulloigne*, printed in 1600, he too concentrates on the amazement inspired by the comet alone in rendering the Italian simile in IV, xxviii.

¹⁶ Sprague, *Samuel Daniel: Poems*, 42–3.

works as a similar but more strikingly potent form of rhetorical persuasion. The apparent incongruity in this extravagant self-description was emphasized and parodied mercilessly a few years later in Fastidious Brisk's absurd appropriation of the lines in the printed text of Ben Jonson's *Every Man Out of his Humour* (1600):

I will bring you, to morrow by this time, into the presence of the most diuine & acute lady in court: you shall see sweet silent rhetorique, and dumbe eloquence speaking in her eye; but when shee speaks herself, such an anatomie of wit, so sinewis'd and arteriz'd, that 'tis the goodliest modell of pleasure that euer was, to behold. [III. iii. 22–27]¹⁷

In his characteristic point scoring at the expense of Daniel's verse,¹⁸ however, Jonson, like Davison, failed to detect that the two oxymora which the English poet uses to convey this paradox in lines two and three of his stanza are, in fact, developed and, in the second example, translated directly from two analogous lines of Italian poetry describing the effect of Armida's beauty: 'e ciò che lingua esprimer ben non pote,/ muta eloquenza ne' suoi gesti espresse' ('and what her tongue could not express, her gestures expressed with mute eloquence') [IV. lxxxv. 5–6].¹⁹

The irresistible power of the female narrator's 'perswading eyes' in Daniel's poem is emphasized again shortly after in terms borrowed directly from Tasso's Italian. On this occasion it is the great martial king, Henry II, Rosamond's future paramour, who is 'vanquisht by a glaunce' from her eyes, which 'hotter warres within his bosome breeds' [164–5]. The king's military triumphs in France are contrasted with his current defencelessness in the face of Rosamond's beauty:

No armour might yet bee founde that coulde defend,
Transpercaring rayes of Christall-pointed eyes: [169–70]²⁰

Daniel's image, and in particular its second line, appears to be a curious reworking of another simile in Tasso describing the effects of Armida's beauty, which is in itself indebted to a passage in Dante's *Paradiso*:

Come per acqua o per cristallo intero
trapassa il raggio, e no'l divide or parte,

¹⁷ C. H. Herford and Percy Simpson (eds.), *Ben Jonson*, III (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1927), 499–500.

¹⁸ For other examples of Jonson's parodic appropriations of Daniel's verse and attacks on his literary sources, see Lawrence, 'Who the Devil', 99–100 and 110.

¹⁹ Caretti, *Gerusalemme*, 124.

²⁰ Sprague, *Samuel Daniel: Poems*, 44.

per entro il chiuso manto osa il pensiero
 sí penatrar ne la vietata parte. [IV. xxxii. 1–4]²¹

[As, when through water or a whole crystal a ray of light passes and neither divides nor parts, so thought dares to penetrate beyond the closed mantle to the forbidden parts.]

The conjunction of ‘transparecing rayes’ and ‘christall’ in Daniel’s line clearly echoes Tasso, confirming that on occasion Daniel’s choice of specific words and images in *The Complaint of Rosamond* was triggered directly by the Italian’s vocabulary, and suggesting either that Daniel had an exceptional facility for recalling Italian poetry, or, more probably, that he had ready access to Tasso’s canto during the process of composition. In their respective contexts, the two apparently disparate images in fact describe a very similar effect, although in Tasso’s original it is the ‘amoroso pensier’ (‘amorous thought’) [IV. xxxi. 6] of the male observer’s gaze that penetrates beyond Armida’s clothing to the ‘occulti secreti’ (‘hidden secrets’) [IV. xxxi. 8] of her carefully concealed bosom, whereas in Daniel it is the rays from the female narrator’s crystal eyes that are able to pierce even the strongest defences of the king.

What these borrowings from Tasso’s Canto IV in relation to Rosamond’s physical beauty demonstrate is a significant connection in Daniel’s mind between the pagan enchantress Armida and his conception of the figure of the apparently wronged English royal mistress. Perhaps the most troubling aspect of this initial association is the extent to which the two women come to understand the control over male passions that their outstanding physical beauty affords them:

What might I then not doe whose powre was such?
 What cannot women doe that know theyr powre?
 What women knows it not I feare too much,
 How blisse or bale lyes in theyr laugh or lower? [127–30]

Queste fur l’arti onde mill’alme e mille
 predea furtivamente ella poteo,
 anzi pur furon l’arme onde rapille
 ed a forza d’Amor serve le feo.
 Qual meraviglia or fia s’il fero Achille

²¹ Caretti, *Gerusalemme*, 109.

Per entro sè l’eterna margarita
 ne ricevette, com’acqua recepe
 raggio di luce permanendo unita. [II, 34–36]

[The eternal pearl received us into itself, as water receives a ray of light and remains unbroken.]

John D. Sinclair (ed. and trans.), *The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri: III. Paradiso* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961), 34–5.

d'Amor fu preda, ed Ercole e Teseo,
 s'ancor chi per Gies' la spade cinge
 l'empio ne' lacci suoi talora stringe? [IV. xcvi. 1–8]

[These were the arts whereby she could surprise/ their spirits by the thousand, stealthily,/ or rather the arms that took them prisoner /and forced them into loving slavery./ But if fierce Achilles, Theseus, Hercules/ fell prey to love, what wonder should there be/ if those who sheathe the sword of Jesus find/ themselves caught in the impious Cupid's bind?]²²

The list of Classical figures distracted from their duty by love and feminine wiles serves as an important precedent for and warning about the predicaments that many of Tasso's Christian military heroes will encounter in *Gerusalemme liberata*. Hercules is alluded to again later in the poem, at the beginning of Canto XVI, as Carlo and Ubaldo approach Armida's palace in their attempt to rescue Rinaldo from his equivalent amorous bondage. The story of Hercules's enslavement at the hands of Iole (Tasso's substitution for Ovid's Omphale), in which the effeminized hero is seen weaving whilst she tries on his weapons, is told ekphrastically in the silverwork on the main entrance to the labyrinth surrounding Armida's garden. The stanza on Hercules (XVI. iii) is immediately followed by a lengthier description of Antony's flight in Cleopatra's wake from the naval battle of Actium (XVI. iv–vii), the other scene carved in silver on the gate. Both stories offer a clear analogy for Rinaldo's situation with Armida in the poem, but Carlo and Ubaldo are struck merely by the quality of the workmanship, which renders the figures so skilfully that they seem only to lack the power of speech, rather than any parallel with their fellow Christian knight:

Fermàr ne le figure il guardo intento,
 ché vinta la materia è dal lavoro:
 manca il parlar, di vivo altro non chiedi;
 né manca questo ancor, s' a gli occhi credi. [XVI. ii. 5–8]

[The knights cast/ a steady gaze on the lifelike figures there,/ for the material was far surpassed/ by art: speech was the only thing they lacked,/ nor even speech, if eyes could judge of fact.]²³

The English poem similarly uses ekphrasis to provide a double Ovidian precedent for Rosamond's situation after she has finally agreed to accede to Henry II's advances, and it is the detail of art competing with nature in relation to both Tasso's gate (and indeed his ensuing description of Armida's

²² Sprague, *Samuel Daniel: Poems*, 43; Caretti, *Gerusalemme*, 127–8; translation Esolen, *Jerusalem*, 91.

²³ Caretti, *Gerusalemme*, 473; translation Esolen, *Jerusalem*, 300.

garden more broadly) and Rosamond's casket, which seems to confirm for the first time that, like Spenser before him, Daniel was fully aware of the enchantress's wider role in the rest of the poem, particularly the celebrated amorous interlude with Rinaldo in Cantos XV and XVI. On the eve of Rosamond's first sexual liaison with the king, as she awaits him at the 'solitarie Grange' [366] far from court, Henry sends her a precious gift, one of the many 'orators of loue:/ Which (ah too well men know) doe women moue' [370–71], the exquisite workmanship of which immediately seizes her full attention:

He greets me with a Casket richly wrought
So rare, that arte did seeme to striue with nature,
T'expresse the cunning work-mans curious thought;
The mistery whereof I prying sought. [373–6]²⁴

The 'richly wrought' lid of Daniel's casket, unlike the 'litel cofre' in his chronicle sources,²⁵ details at some length the story of Amymone's futile resistance to Neptune's unwanted advances (lines 379–99), and the engravings on the casket itself also relate, more briefly, Io's transformation into a heifer at the hands of Jupiter (lines 400–06), with both tales of a mortal woman overwhelmed by a lustful deity providing a clear parallel to Rosamond's situation with the Jove-like king, a warning about a fate that she is fully able to comprehend, if unable eventually to avoid:

These presidents presented to my view,
Wherein the presage of my fall was showne:
Might haue fore-warn'd me well what would ensue,
And others harmes haue made me shunne mine owne;
But fate is not preuented though fore-knowne. [407–11]²⁶

Although the instructive element of the stories may ultimately prove ineffective in averting Rosamond's fall, their affective power is still much in evidence, particularly in the account of Amymone's apparent rape, which leaves Rosamond feeling 'something moued' [400].²⁷ The detail that touches her

²⁴ Sprague, *Samuel Daniel: Poems*, 51. The theme of (concealed) art striving to outdo nature (and thereby misleading the observer) is central to Spenser's reworking of Armida's garden in the Bower of Bliss, described in both Cantos V and XII of Book II of *The Faerie Queene*, something which Daniel appears to have detected himself, as his phrasing here echoes closely one of Spenser's many variations on Tasso's original theme:

And ouer him, art stryuing to compayre,
With nature, did an Arber greene disprede [II, xii, 29, 1–2]

A. C. Hamilton (ed.), *Spenser: The Faerie Queene* (Harlow: Longman, 2001), 200.

²⁵ See Ira Clark, 'Samuel Daniel's *Complaint of Rosamond*', *Renaissance Quarterly* 23 (1970), 152–162: 153.

²⁶ Sprague, *Samuel Daniel: Poems*, 52.

²⁷ Many commentators on the poem have drawn attention to Daniel's apparent reinterpretation of the myth on the casket lid to emphasize Amymone's resistance rather than eventual accession to Neptune's physical

most is the unexpected correlation between Danaus's daughter's despair and her powerful physical beauty:

There might I see described how she lay,
 At those proude feete, not satisfied with prayer:
 Wailing her heaue hap, cursing the day,
 In act so pittious to expresse dispaire:
 And by how much more greeu'd, so much more fayre;
 Her teares vpon her cheekes poore carefull gerle,
 Did seeme against the sunne cristal and perle.

Whose pure cleere streames, which loe so faire appears,
 Wrought hotter flames, O myracle of loue,
 That kindles fire in water, heate in teares,
 And makes neglected beautie mightier proue:
 Teaching afflicted eyes affects to moue;
 To shew that nothing ill becomes the fayre,
 But crueltie, that yeeldes vnto no prayer. [386–99]²⁸

The characteristically Petrarchan conjunction of fire and water in relation to the incendiary effect of Amymone's crystal and pearl tears on Neptune is actually another condensed translation from Tasso's Canto IV, as Francis Davison detected in his marginal annotations alongside stanzas lxxiv and lxxvi,²⁹ where the Italian poet describes in identical terms the miraculous impact on the Christian army of Armida's crocodile tears after Goffredo's initial rejection of her plea for help:

Il pianto si spargea senza ritegno,
 com'ira suol produrlo a' dolor mista,
 e le nascenti lagrime a vederle
 erano a i rai del sol cristallo e perle. [. . .]

Ma il chiaro umor, che di sí spesse stille
 le belle gote e 'l seno adorno rende,
 opra effetto di foco, il qual in mille
 petti serpe celato e vi s'apprende.
 O miracol d'Amor, che le faville
 tragge del pianto, e i cor ne l'acqua accende!
 [IV. lxxiv. 5–8, and IV. lxxvi. 1–6]

assault: see Clark, 'Daniel's *Complaint*', 155–6, and Kelly A. Quinn, 'Ecphrasis and Reading Practices in Elizabethan Narrative Verse', *Studies in English Literature* 44 (2004), 19–35: 20–21.

²⁸ Sprague, *Samuel Daniel: Poems*, 51–2.

²⁹ Hatchwell, 'Davison/ Drummond conundrum', 364–7.

[[She] took/ no hold upon her tears, but freely wept/ and with a kind of angry sorrow shook./ Her tears glistened like pearl as they were born/ or perfect crystals in the brilliant morn. [. . .] But that adornment to her lovely cheek/ and breast, the glistening of her gathered tears,/ works like a warmth of secret mystique-/ a thousand hearts are kindled with desires./ O miracle of love! O flame unique,/ distilled from tears, sprinkling the heart with fires!]³⁰

Again Daniel has associated the depiction of overwhelming female beauty in his poem with Tasso's initial presentation of Armida in Canto IV, although on this occasion it is transferred to the figure of Amymone rather than to Rosamond herself. While there is no suggestion that the tears in the engraving are either feigned or intended deliberately to inflame male hearts, as they are in the original, there is certainly something unsettling in Rosamond's interpretation of the image, which seems to emphasize how afflicted, 'neglected beautie' can unwittingly heighten further aroused male passions ('affects'). Indeed, the concluding couplet of the Amymone story, as both Kerrigan and Go suggest,³¹ can be read as Rosamond's acknowledgement that a beautiful woman's decision *not* to succumb to sustained male amorous advances is a form of demeaning cruelty. In an important recent rereading of this most widely analysed section of Daniel's poem Kenji Go argues that the expression 'heate in teares' refers specifically to Amymone's own 'arising amorous passion' even as she seems to resist Neptune,³² giving a very different emphasis to the 'presidents' that Rosamond might take from the story. The direct allusion to Tasso's image of the incendiary impact of Armida's false tears on the Christian forces in Daniel's description, of which Go is seemingly unaware, makes this particular aspect of his reading less tenable, however, although the association between Tasso's beautiful enchantress and the apparent victim of a divine rape in Rosamond's interpretation of the story should be equally disconcerting to the reader.

Daniel's other major addition to the chronicle accounts of the Rosamond story is his invention of the role of the 'seeming Matrone' [216], well versed in 'the smoothest speech,/ That Court and age could cunningly devise' [218–19], who attempts to convince Rosamond that it is in her best interests to submit to the king's advances. Even before relating this lengthy speech of rhetorical persuasion (lines 225–301), however, Rosamond's retrospective account has revealed that it was an 'ambush to intrap [her] youth' [213] set by the king, creating a tension between the ostensible female empathy conveyed in the older woman's words of advice and their intended outcome. The situation mirrors exactly a scene in another celebrated Italian work with which

³⁰ Caretti, *Gerusalemme*, 121–2; translation Esolen, *Jerusalem*, 86–7.

³¹ Kerrigan, *Motives of Woe*, 178, and Kenji Go, 'Samuel Daniel's *The Complaint of Rosamond* an emblematic reconsideration of *A Lover's Complaint*', *Studies in Philology* 104 (2007), 82–122: 94–6.

³² Go, 'Daniel's *The Complaint of Rosamond*', 94.

Daniel was certainly familiar by the early 1590s, Battista Guarini's *Il pastor fido* (1590),³³ in which the older and more worldly-wise nymph Corisca tries to persuade the heroine Amarilli that she should break off her engagement to Silvio in order to pursue her recently confessed love for the hero Mirtillo, with whom Corisca is also secretly in love. Some of the matron's advice to Rosamond deliberately echoes Corisca's argument to convince Amarilli in the central act of Guarini's play:

The subtle Citty-women better learned,
Esteeme them chast ynough that best seeme so:
Who though they sport, it shall not be discerned,
Their face bewraies not what their bodies doe. [274–77]

ch'altro alfin l'onestate
non è che un'arte di parere onesta.
Creda ognun a suo modo: io così credo. [III. v. 619–21]

[This honesty is but an art to seeme so,/ Let others as they list beleue, Ile think so still].³⁴

Perhaps unsurprisingly, Daniel once again turns to Tasso as a further model for a speech of rhetorical persuasion with a concealed purpose, although on this occasion it is not Armida herself who is the direct source. Instead Daniel alludes closely to the song of the false siren in Canto XIV (stanzas lxii to lxiv), created by Armida to lull Rinaldo to sleep on the mysterious island in the river Oronte, so that the enchantress can take her revenge on the knight for his release of her Christian prisoners:

Besides, the law of nature doth excuse them,
To whom thy youth may haue a iust appeale:
Esteeme not fame more then thou doost thy weale,
Fame, whereof the world seemes to make such choyce:
Is but an Eccho, and an idle voyce. [255–59]

Nome, e senza soggetto idoli sono
ciò che pregio e valore il mondo appella.
La fama che invaghisce a un dolce suono
voi superbi mortali, e par sí bella,

³³ Daniel's prefatory sonnet to the 1602 English translation of *Il pastor fido* reveals how the poet had visited Guarini with his patron Sir Edward Dymoke during their stay in Italy in 1590–91. *Il pastor fido* is also one of the principal sources for Daniel's first experiment in Italianate pastoral tragicomedy, *The Queenes Arcadia*, performed at Oxford in 1605 and printed the following year.

³⁴ Sprague, *Samuel Daniel: Poems*, 48; Luigi Fassò (ed.), *Battista Guarini: Il pastor fido* (Turin: Einaudi, 1976), 103; *Il Pastor Fido: or the faithfull Shepheard. Translated out of Italian into English* (London, 1602), sig. H4r.

è un' ecco, un sogno, anzi del sogno un' ombra,
 ch'ad ogni vento si dilegua e sgombra. [XIV. lxiii. 3–8]

[What men call praise and valour – a mere name,/ an idol only, no reality!/
 That fame which so attracts your pride, O men,/ which sounds and seems so
 sweet, what can it be/ but an echo, a dream, or even a dream's shade -/ with
 every wind it must dissolve and fade.]³⁵

Like Tasso's siren, Daniel's matron emphasizes the youth of her intended victim as the principal motive for seizing the day and following 'the law of nature' ('Solo chi segue ciò che piace è saggio/ e in sua stagion de gli anni il frutto coglie' [XIV. lxii. 5–6]) over the illusory codes of man,³⁶ although the change of gender in the address to Rosamond (Tasso's siren song is directed specifically at 'giovenetti') creates a level of (false) complicity that is absent from the original. The matron can thus contrast her own unfulfilled age ('But were I to beginne my youth againe,/ I would redeeme the time I spent in vayne' [251–2]) with Rosamond's untapped potential as a means of emphasizing her argument: 'Fye fondling fye, thou wilt repent too late/ The error of thy youth' [236–7].

The apparent familiarity of the siren's *carpe diem* song in Tasso is doubly reinforced by its reoccurrence in a slightly modified key later in the poem (as the celebrated *canto della rosa*, sung by the parrot in Armida's garden [XVI. xiv–xv]), and its intertextual allusions to Tasso's contemporaneous chorus, 'O bella età de l'oro', from his pastoral play *Aminta*, first performed at Ferrara in July 1573, which also yearns for a time when nature's law ('*S'ei piace, ei lice*' [681]) predominated, and where tyrant honour, rather than fame, is described as 'quel vano/ nome senza soggetto,/ quell'idolo d'errori, idol d'inganno' [669–71].³⁷ Daniel seems to have picked up on the similarities between the siren's song and the *Aminta* chorus, which he went on to translate very skilfully a decade or so later,³⁸ even as he was composing *The Complaint of Rosamond* in the early 1590s: the exploitation of the potential double sense in English of the Italian 'idolo' as both 'idol' and 'idle' in the 'idle voyce' of Fame in the early poem reappears in his later translation, as a deliberate pun in place of Tasso's verbal repetition at exactly this point: 'That Idle name of winde:/ That Idoll of deceit, that empty sound' [15–16].³⁹ The linguistic and thematic similarities between the false siren's song and the Golden Age chorus

³⁵ Sprague, *Samuel Daniel: Poems*, 47; Caretti, *Gerusalemme*, 441; translation Esolen, *Jerusalem*, 282.

³⁶ 'He alone is wise who pursues that which brings him pleasure, and harvests the fruit of his years when in season.'

³⁷ 'If it gives pleasure, it is lawful'; 'that vain name without an object, that idol of errors, idol of deceit.' C. E. J. Griffiths (ed.), *Torquato Tasso: Aminta, Favola boschereccia* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1972), 42.

³⁸ Daniel's translation, entitled *A Pastorall*, was first printed at the end of the folio collection, *The Works of Samuel Daniel Newly Augmented* (1601), where it is placed immediately after the revised *Delia* sonnet sequence.

³⁹ Samuel Daniel, *The Works of Samuel Daniel* (London, 1601), *To Delia*, 29.

may also have inspired Daniel to attempt an equivalent act of poetic auto-allusion within the matron's speech. *The Complaint of Rosamond* makes reference on three occasions to the sonnet cycle with which it was originally printed in the narrator's allusions to the poet's love for Delia (at lines 43–5, 525, and 732–3 respectively), and Daniel seems to be consciously echoing images from his own *carpe diem* sequence in *Delia* (Sonnets 29 to 34 in the first edition of 1592) as part of the matron's (largely successful) strategy of persuasion. The forewarning against the decrepitude of old age in the matron's own countenance ('Reade in my face the ruines of my youth,/ The wrack of yeeres vpon my aged brow' [246–7]) recalls the opening quatrains of Sonnets 30 ('I once may see when yeeres shall wrecke my wronge') and 33 ('When men shall find thy flowre, thy glory passe,/ And thou with carefull brow sitting alone'), both imitations of sonnets by Tasso first printed in the *Rime degli academici eterei* in 1567,⁴⁰ and the comparison between the transience of female beauty and the rapidly withering flower vividly echoes Sonnets 31 and 32, the first of which ('Looke *Delia* how wee steeme the halfe-blowne Rose') is itself a condensed translation of Tasso's *canto della rosa*, permitting Daniel to allude subtly to both his own contemporary adaptation and the Italian original simultaneously:

Thou must not thinke thy flower can alwayes flourish,
And that thy beautie will be still admired:
But that those rayes which all these flames doe nourish,
Canceld with Time, will haue their date expyred,
And men will scorne what now is so desired:
Our frailtyes doome is written in the flowers,
Which flourish now and fade ere many howers. [239–45]⁴¹

The reworking of Tasso's rose song, first heard in the garden in Canto XVI, into a *carpe diem* warning to Delia in the sonnet sequence reconfirms Daniel's knowledge of the pagan enchantress's role in *Gerusalemme liberata* beyond her introduction in Canto IV, and thus further complicates his poetic association of Rosamond with Armida. While there might be some disturbing implications in the exact correlation of Rosamond's (and indeed Amygone's) beauty with that of Armida in the early parts of the respective poems, the allusions to Tasso's poem in relation to the matron's speech appear rather to create a degree of sympathy for Rosamond's plight, as on this occasion she can be more readily regarded as a victim, of both false female persuasion and male cunning. The final and most extensive single borrowing from Tasso in *The Complaint of Rosamond*, the only one which occurs *after* the lovers' sexual consummation, however, makes the strongest direct connection between the

⁴⁰ For a detailed consideration of the genesis of Daniel's *carpe diem* sequence, and his imitations from Tasso in particular, see Lawrence, 'Who the Devil?', 75–84.

⁴¹ Sprague, *Samuel Daniel: Poems*, 46–7.

two female figures, placing the English mistress at the very heart of Armida's garden, where the effeminized Rinaldo is kept in his amorous bondage. Despite her initial self-loathing immediately after becoming the king's lover, 'vse of sinne' [455] soon emboldens Rosamond, increasing the king's jealousy to the extent that he decides to have a secret 'Pallace' constructed for their furtive liaisons:

A stately Pallace he foorthwith did buylde,
Whose intricate innumerable wayes,
With such confused errors so beguil'd
Th'vnguided entrers with vncertaine strayes,
And doubtfull turnings kept them in delays,
With bootlesse labor leading them about,
Able to finde no way, nor in, nor out.

Within the closed bosome of which frame,
That seru'd a Center to that goodly round:
Were lodgings, with a garden to the same,
With sweetest flowers that eu'r adorn'd the ground,
And all the pleasures that delight hath found,
T'entertaine the sence of wanton eyes,
Fuell of loue, from whence lusts flames arise. [463–76]⁴²

If the winding path leading to this confined garden immediately brings to mind the Ovidian tale of Dedalus's labyrinth at the palace of Cnossos, an association confirmed in both Rosamond's self-description as 'the Minotaure of shame kept for disgrace' [478], and the thread by which the king finds his way there,⁴³ the entire description in fact owes its provenance to the opening stanza of Canto XVI of Tasso's poem, when Carlo and Ubaldo finally reach Armida's secret bower. Daniel reverses the two quatrains of the original stanza and omits any suggestion of demonic activity in his version, but otherwise he produces an accurate and highly effective translation of the Italian in lines 464 to 473:

Tondo è il ricco edificio, e nel piú chiuso
grembo di lui, ch'è quasi centro al giro,
un giardin v'ha ch'adorno è sovra l'uso
di quanti piú famosi unqua fioriro.
D'intorno inosservabile e confuso
ordin di loggie i demon fabri ordiro,

⁴² *Ibid.*, 54.

⁴³ Fairfax again seems to have been aware of Daniel's earlier rendering of this stanza, as he too suggests, unlike the Italian original, that the demons' 'labyrinth' is 'like Dedal's prison' [XVI. i. 7–8] in his complete translation of Tasso's poem.

e tra le oblique vie di quell fallace
 ravolgimento impenetrabil giace. [XVI. i. 1–8]

[The lavish outer wall was circular,/ and in the inmost centre of the round,/ in its close bosom, grew a garden, far/ lovelier than the loveliest renowned;/ within was order in confusion, for/ demons had built up galleries all around,/ with slant and veering paths crossed every way;/ impenetrable to where the garden lay.]⁴⁴

The final three lines of Daniel's second stanza are not taken directly from the Italian, but they do provide a revealing paraphrase of what the English poet regards as the dangerously alluring impact that Armida's enchanted garden has on the Christian knights (and indeed future generations of Tasso's readers), particularly the initial emphasis on sight ('the sence of wanton eyes'), and the equation of a pleasure and delight in nature with inflamed passions. Although in this instance it is the king who is responsible for the construction of the palace rather than Tasso's demons, Daniel's close translation from the Italian makes it difficult to disassociate completely Rosamond's role in the amorous bower from that of the more active Armida in her garden, which by extension seems to align King Henry with the passive figure of Rinaldo, the great military hero whose seduction by the pagan enchantress has left him inert and enfeebled. However, Daniel's final emphasis on the secret garden as a site of lust alone, like Spenser's *Bower of Bliss*, also marks a significant difference in relation to the central couple in the English poem. The reciprocated love between Armida and Rinaldo in her garden, however unlikely in its origin and indolent in its persecution, is never denied in Tasso's poem, whereas the equivalent relationship between Rosamond and Henry in Daniel's poem, in spite of the king's growing affection and intense grief at his mistress's untimely death, is never allowed to become mutual:

When loe I ioyde my Louer not my Loue,
 And felt the hand of lust most vndesired:
 Enforc'd th'vnprooued bitter sweete to proue,
 Which yeeldes no mutuall pleasure when tis hired.
 Loue's not constrain'd, not yet of due required,
 Iudge they who are vnfortunately wed,
 What tis to come vnto a lothed bed. [435–41]⁴⁵

Rosamond's appeal for empathetic judgment from a readership of women here,⁴⁶ immediately after her first reluctant sexual encounter with the king, is

⁴⁴ Caretti, *Gerusalemme*, 473; translation Esolen, *Jerusalem*, 300.

⁴⁵ Sprague, *Samuel Daniel: Poems*, 53.

⁴⁶ On the importance of female sympathy in the complaint tradition, see Kerrigan, *Motives of Woe*, 30.

almost simultaneous with an acknowledgement of the depth of her own sin ('Now opened were mine eyes to looke therein,/ For first we taste the fruite, then see our sin' [447–8]). The apparent incongruity in these two positions, however, is entirely characteristic of *The Complaint of Rosamond*, in which the first-person narrative veers between attempting to elicit sympathy, from both male and female readers, by emphasizing Rosamond's role as impotent victim and detailing a clear-sighted recognition of her faults and complicity in the adulterous affair. Daniel's extensive and considered imitations from Cantos IV, XIV, and XVI of Tasso's *Gerusalemme liberata*, some of which were detected immediately by contemporaries such as Francis Davison and Edward Fairfax but all of which have been either missed or ignored by modern readers, add another dimension of interpretative ambiguity to the poem. How would these early readers of the poem have responded to the clear likenesses between Rosamond and the pagan enchantress? While all of Daniel's allusions to Tasso connect the narrator of his poem to the attractive but dangerous figure of Armida, with whom she shares the art of rhetorical persuasion, both oral and silent, and a physical beauty that grants immense power over male passions, it becomes clear ultimately, as this essay has sought to demonstrate, that the English poet is not making a straightforward equation between his royal mistress and the feigning seductress in the Italian poem. The occasionally uncomfortable association of the two figures, however, certainly marks the earliest sustained engagement in English poetry with one of Tasso's most enduringly alluring creations.

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Abstract

JASON LAWRENCE, *Samuel Daniel's The Complaint of Rosamond and the arrival of Tasso's Armida in England*

This essay argues that the earliest English work to offer a sustained poetic engagement with the figure of Armida, the celebrated pagan enchantress from Tasso's *Gerusalemme liberata* (1581), is Daniel's *The Complaint of Rosamond* (1592). Unlike Spenser in *The Faerie Queene* (1590), who pays little attention to the enchantress herself even as he imitates Tasso directly in his construction of the Bower of Bliss, Daniel's portrayal of his long-dead royal mistress is repeatedly, if unexpectedly, associated with Armida's beauty. The essay considers how Daniel might have first encountered Tasso's character in Italy, and goes on to demonstrate how frequently he translated from Tasso in describing the analogous impact of Rosamond's beauty at the court of Henry II. A few of Daniel's direct imitations from the Italian were detected by his contemporary Francis Davison, but many others were missed, and they have all been entirely ignored in modern criticism. This essay then seeks to demonstrate their centrality to Daniel's conception of his spectral narrator, concluding that his translation and creative adaptation of material related to Armida from Tasso's poem adds a significant level of interpretative ambiguity to the figure of Rosamond.

Keywords: Samuel Daniel; Rosamond; Tasso