Sir Walter Ralegh's Verse Conversations

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(ABSTRACT)

Sir Walter Ralegh's poems, as they circulated in manuscripts, are influenced by Ralegh's position at court, his social situation, the patronage system, and the political scene. The paper specifically examines poems that answered other poems or elicited answers. Even though many scholars believe that often verses were copied groups according to theme, careful consideration shows that verses that have been traditionally seen as related by theme have a stronger connection. The context of the poem can reveal a great deal about the intention of the author and the situation about which the author wrote. For example, Ralegh's "Even such as tyme," a verse written before he was sentenced the death is often surrounded by letters to others about his political situation, creating an important context for the poem. By reading the verse and examining the other verses and letters that surround those verses in manuscript collections, we begin to understand the daily life of the courtier and role of poetry in court.

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Sir Walter Ralegh's Verse Conversations

A miniature portrait by Nicholas Hilliard in 1585 seems to portray the ideal perception of Sir Walter Ralegh. Ralegh is pictured with an ornate lace collar, a stylishly clipped beard and handsome mustache. He wears a superfluous headpiece, and even sports a fashionable earring. It is tempting to believe that Ralegh's life was as fashionable and carefree as this early portrait indicates, and further consideration of the events of Ralegh's life in 1585 supports this construction of the dashing, young courtier. At this time Ralegh was an aspiring courtier who strove to make a positive impression on his queen, Elizabeth I. An engraving by C.H. Jeetus prefaces Edward Edward's biography of Ralegh and attempts to capture the adventuring spirit of the brave explorer who was loyal to his queen. Ralegh stands beside a desk with his sword at his side. On the desk beside him are a globe, map and compass. This portrait presents Ralegh as the noble conqueror of the world, whose important work was exploration on the queen's behalf. This engraving also supports the perception of Ralegh as an independent man who needed no one's assistance when conquering a new land or creating poetry, if he had the support and approval of Queen Elizabeth I. Yet, neither of these portraits adequately frames Ralegh's life because they are too simple. In reality, his life was complicated by his social situation, the patronage system and the political scene. These factors not only influenced the artists' renderings of Ralegh, but also influence our perceptions of his verse.

The Poetry Contest: Sir Walter Ralegh, Christopher Marlowe and John Donne

Traditional and New Historicists have remarked on the fact that social connections among courtiers seem to have had an influence on Renaissance verse. Even though many scholars believe that verses were copied by individuals or groups according to theme, careful consideration of one particular exchange among Sir Walter Ralegh, Christopher Marlowe and John Donne indicates that these verses have a stronger connection. These poems suggest that Ralegh did not write verse in isolation, but instead, that he was influenced and inspired to write by the verse of his fellow courtiers. Marlowe's poem, commonly titled "The Passionate Shepherd to his Love," or "The Milke Maids Songe" which begins "Come liue with mee and bee my loue" created the topical arena for Ralegh's "Nimphs Reply to the Shepherd"/ "Milk Maids Mothers Answer" beginning "If all the world and loue were young." Versions of these two verses were printed together in England's Helcion between 1618 and 1629 (Boas 221). Finally, Donne's "The Bait," beginning "Come liue with mee and bee my loue," echoes Marlowe's first line, but in some manuscripts differs greatly in the second line. This set of verses illustrates the way that poets reacted to, rewrote and responded to each others' poetry and represents a light-hearted exchange which then travelled in manuscripts as a set comprised of two or three verses.

Marlowe's poem in the Folger MS Za 28 reads

Come liue wth mee, and be my Loue,
And we will all the pleasures prove
That calling, Groue; or hils, for fields,
Or woods and shepir mountains yeeldes.

When we will sit up on the rocks,
And see the shepherds feed our flocks,
By shallow Rivers, so whose falls
Melodioy binds sing madrigals.

And I will make thee beds of Roses,
And thee in a thousand fragrant posies,
A cap of flowers & a Kirtle
Imbroidered all wth hause of mirtle,

A Gowne made of the finest wool
W^{ch} frome o^{r} pretty Lambes we pull,
Slippers hind choicly for thos cold
Wch buckles of the purest Gold.

A Gold of straw and euie buds,
Wth Coral clapses, and Amber studs
And if these pleasures may thee moue
Come liue wth me, and be my loue.

The shepherds Swains that dance and sin
For thy delights each may morning:
If these delights thy mide may moue
The liue wth me, and be my loue.

Here the shepherd attempts to seduce a nymph by promising many gifts and pleasing experiences. In order to entice the nymph, he promises enjoyable afternoons overlooking the fields and sheep, and he presents a romantic picture of lovers who "sit upon the rocks" (5) and delight in each others' company. The speaker

[1]All references to manuscripts are adopted from Peter Beal's Guide to English Literary Manuscripts. I have adopted his categorization and naming of manuscripts throughout my transcriptions. A transcription of this poem in several manuscripts can be found in the appendix.

also promises commodities in his gifts of clothes, slippers, shoes and jewels. All of these delights seem tempting in Marlowe's isolated print renditions; however, as Ralegh replies in the Folger MS Ze 28, we are forced to re-evaluate Marlowe's offer:

If all the world and loue were young,
And truth in every Shepherds tongue
Then pretty pleasures might me moue,
To liue wth thee, & be thy loue.

But time driues flocks from field to fold
When rivers rage, and rocks grow cold,
And Philomel becometh dumb,
The rest complains of cares to come

The flowers doe fade and wanton field;
To wayward winter rickoning yeilds.
A honey tongue, a heart of gall,
Is Vanitys springe, but sorrows fall.

Thy gowns thy shooes, thy beds of roses,
Thy cap thy Kirtle, and thy Posies
Soone breake, Soon wither, soone forgotten
In folly ripe, in reason rotten.

Thy Gift of straw and Ivir buds,
Thy Coral clasps & Amber studs,
All these in me noe means can moue
To come to thee and be thy loue.

But could youth last; and loue stil breed,
How joye noe daies, nor age no need;
Then those delights my mind might moue
To liue wth thee, & be thy Loue.

In addition to the physical juxtaposition of the reply in the Folger MS Ze 28 and many manuscripts, several key elements connect these two poems. Ralegh's verse answers Marlowe's request: "Come liue with mee and bee my loue/And we wil all the pleasures proue" (3-4) in the last lines of his first stanza, answering the following request: "Then pretty pleasures might mee moue/To liue with mee and be thy loue"

(3-4). Ralegh's answer suggests that the pleasures that Marlowe uses to entice his nymph will fade when time passes, and only if they were everlasting could the nymph be persuaded to join him. Ralegh echoes these lines again in the last lines of the final two stanzas which are almost the same: "All these in me noe means can moue/To come to thee and be thy loue" (19-20), and the final stanza reads "Then those delights my mind might moue/To liue wth thee, & be thy Loue" (23-24). This reply, echoing Marlowe's request as well as his opening line, reminds the reader that this is an answer to another poem--indicating that Ralegh knew Marlowe's poem.

For Ralegh the themes of the "Nimph's Reply to the Shepherd"-- perhaps more cleverly titled the "Milke Maids Mothers Answer"-- are familiar Renaissance tropes.[2] He laments the passage of time and its ill effects on beauty, a lament is a clever response to the seductive claims of Marlowe's poem. In the second stanza that parallels Marlowe's second stanza, Ralegh asserts that the passage of time brings a change of seasons less romantic than the ones Marlowe describes: "But time driues flocks from field to fold/When rivers rage, and rocks grow cold" (5-6). In the fourth stanza, the reply also contests the value of the gifts in Marlowe's third and fourth stanza by showing how time transforms those gifts as well: "Thy gowns thy shooes, thy beds of roses,/Thy cap thy Kirtle, and thy Posies/Soone breake, Soon wither, soone forgotten" (13-15). Ralegh mentions the rest of Marlowe's images in the fifth

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[2]Folger MS Ze 28 has "The Milke Maids Song," "The Milke Maids Mothers Answer" and the poem commonly known as "The Bait" which is divided from the answer by a long line. These three poems are all copied one after the other, providing an excellent example of how these verses travelled together.

stanza, where he denies the value of the "Thy Gift of straw and Ivir buds,/Thy Coral clasps & Amber studs," (17-18). Ralegh not only echoes Marlowe's lines, but he also uses the images and specific examples from Marlowe's poem cleverly to denounce the shepherd.

Ralegh further scorns the shepherd for an offering-- the verse-- that is "In follie ripe, in reason rotten" (16). This line suggests the basis for the entire poem. He takes all of Marlowe's images and shows how none are as valuable as the shepherd claims. Ralegh's poem also highlights one of the ways that a poet might respond to another. While it is true that a poet might choose to write topically, the poet might examine a poem for a way to improve the logic or make the image more appropriate to his situation. When Ralegh concludes his poem, he acknowledges Marlowe's verse once more, for "could youth last, and loue still breed/Had ioyes no date, nor age no neede" (21-22), then <u>those delights</u> might move him, at least to rewrite the image or the poem better than the poet before him.

John Donne's poem, commonly titled "The Bait," which is also found in the Folger MS Ze 28, manages Marlowe's poem very differently than Ralegh does.

Come liue wth me, and be my loue,
And we will some new pleasures prooue,
Of Gold in Lands & Christall brooke,
Wth silken lines and siluer hookes

Those will the River whispering run,
Warm'd by they eyes more then the Sun;
And then the inamel'd fish wil stay,
Begging when selues they may betray.

When thou will swim in that first bath,
Each fish, will euery charmest hath

Most amorously to thee will Swim,
Gladder to catch thee, then thou him.

If thou to be so seen, beest Loath
By sun or no one, thou darkness both;
And, if mine eyes haue leaue to see,
I need not their lighs, hauing thee.

Let others triila with Angling Reedes
And cut their legs wth shols and weeds,
Or have ache rougly poor fish bisot
Wth strangling snares, or winding not,

Let coarse bold hands, from slimy noyes
The better fish in banks outwrigt,
Let curious Traitors sleaue silke flies
To wies poor wandring fishes eyes

For thee thou greed eye no suche evil,
for though thy silke and thine own basil
Thos fish that is not catch'd them by
Is wiser far, alas than I.

Also beginning his poem with the echo line "Come liue with mee and bee my loue" (1), Donne, rather than responding to the requests of the shepherd, takes some of the same pastoral images and creates a different scenario. He creates a more complicated poem. Donne does not try to hide the manipulative nature of the shepherd or milk maid. He takes the image of the conniving shepherd and applies it to the milk maid as well. The new pleasures that Donne promises are fraught "wth silken lines and silver hookes" (4), indicating a game of mutual manipulation. The final stanza asserts that the milk maid is also trying to seduce the shepherd; Donne, however, creates a shepherd who acknowledges that his milk maid will not be wooed with empty promises, and he also characterizes the milk maid differently: "For thy selfe are thine own bait" (26). In contrast to Ralegh's cataloguing of Marlowe's images, Donne does not use any of Marlowe's examples. Instead, he attempts to

write a poem that is both more persuasive to the milk maid and more complimentary to her than Marlowe's attempt. Donne's reply seems to challenge Marlowe in a different way than Ralegh's did. Rather than attacking the false promises of Marlowe's shepherd in the voice of the milk maid, Donne creates a wiser, more persuasive shepherd. This poem seems to create an intertextual conversation about the romance between the shepherd and milk maid.

The image of Ralegh as the poet who created wonderful verse while sailing to the New World or who had a Tower garret and time is challenged by the context in which poets responded to the same set of images or to the same poem in different ways. While Marlowe's poem seems only a pastoral poem about love, the two other poems by Ralegh and Donne contextualized and transformed the pastoral tradition and our notions about Renaissance poetic activity. Ralegh's speaker takes on the voice of the nymph, or her mother, and cleverly rebukes the shepherd for his promises. Donne seems to challenge Marlowe's images in a completely different way, by describing the scene between the shepherd and the nymph in which the nymph is the bait to the shepherd, rather the object of the alluring promises of the shepherd. With this familiar set of poems, we can begin to understand how courtiers created verse among themselves.

Sir Walter Ralegh and Queen Elizabeth I: The Queen's 'dear minion'

While writing verses seem to be an intellectual pastime for courtiers, in Elizabeth's court, the stakes were high. The relationship between Sir Walter Ralegh and Queen Elizabeth I had all the dynamics of a relationship between the queen and one of her courtiers during this time. Ralegh was influenced by his role in the court. Another early portrait of Ralegh titled "Sir Walter Ralegh-- the Queen's 'dear minion'" minion" portrays him as the dashing young courtier who is under Elizabeth's rule. As in the Hilliard miniature, Ralegh wears a similar lace collar and hair adornments. This title implies that Ralegh's relationship to Elizabeth was a subordinate, yet mutually beneficial, one. In order to understand the complex relationship between these two people as well as the relevance of some verses that they exchanged, I will consider the context of the court, patronage, the events of the biography of Ralegh, and the verses Ralegh and Elizabeth exchanged as well as verses that Ralegh wrote to honor Elizabeth.

Their relationship may have begun as early as 1578, when Ralegh commanded a ship on loan from the Queen to explore North America. Ralegh's expedition was

led by his half-brother, Sir John Gilbert; it is not known whether Ralegh actually met the queen at this time. Having promoted himself during the Irish campaign of 1582, Ralegh by 1584, had established himself with the queen: she granted him a lease of Durham house and a license to explore the West. In 1585, she knighted Ralegh and appointed him governor of Virginia. The list of other offices and land grants to Ralegh from Queen Elizabeth I is long, including the leases of Sherborne and Lismore Castle, and an appointment to the position of Vice Admiral of the Navy.[3]

Ralegh was not the only courtier to enjoy such favors. Elizabeth supported her courtiers with money, job opportunities, and political contacts in exchange for military service and loyalty at court:

> By the expert sharing of those gifts of office, prestige, or wealth at its command, the government could secure the continuing goodwill of the politically pre-eminent classes. (MacCaffrey 97)

Elizabeth granted Ralegh a license to explore the New World, an opportunity for him to gain money and build his reputation. In exchange, Ralegh became the loyal subject who would honor and serve the court. Elizabeth rewarded her courtiers for their service and loyalty to her with grants, gifts, offices and titles. Seven offices were available through the church, court, central administration, military and naval service as well as the land administration. (MacCaffrey 106)

The queen could award a variety of prizes and favors under this system of

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[3]Edwards, Edward.

patronage. Prizes included cash, titles, and honors, lands, leases, grants, licenses, monopolies, pensions, educational and ecclesiastical positions, seats in Parliament and places in the employ of nobility, government officials, and the monarch. (Marotti 209) Court positions included knights or servants. The central administration included secretaries, seals, treasury customs officials, etc. Judiciary appointments were only available to lawyers; they included judges, officials, and Queen's sergeants. Land administration included "bailiffs, stewards, constables, keepers of the houses, parks, or game foresters" (MacCaffrey 108). Other forms of royal favor included a lease of royal land in which the holder might collect a fine for its use, a pension or annuity, patent, a cash gift, a monopoly on a service like the writing of grants or writs, and export license, monopoly or farms of royal customs.

Aspiring courtiers hoped to please Elizabeth to attain one of these many opportunities to make money and earn a prominent position at court; Ralegh was no exception.

Elizabeth was not the only patron in her court; the established members of court and noblemen served as patrons to aspiring courtiers. A patron might sponsor a rising courtier by asking him to serve him in a military or civil capacity in exchange for a chance to build his reputation through service or gain attention through personal contact, or perhaps even gain the attention of the queen by writing flattering verses that caught her attention. Verses alone did not make a man's reputation. Understanding the system of patronage helps to understand the role of verse in court: courtiers maintained their reputation by their service, not their verses. Ralegh's

verses nonetheless reflected his individual political and personal situation. Tennenhouse describes verse in Ralegh's particular case as a "political service and economic punishment-- not poetic fictions that enabled him to recover his place in court" (235). Even though J.W. Saunders states that a person who was not a courtier might advance his career through the publication of poetry, publication might acquire him a patron who would then ask him to serve in a military or civil capacity that could bring fame and wealth. (159) Clearly these systems of patronage are all intertwined and difficult to separate from one another: "Literary patronage was really inseparable from the systems of social and political patronage" (Marotti 207).

Ralegh enjoyed the favor and company of Elizabeth I throughout his career at court, and their verses reflect this relationship. Even after Ralegh's scandalous marriage to one of Queen Elizabeth I's ladies in waiting, Elizabeth Throckmorton, for which he was imprisoned in 1592, he continued to serve the queen in many capacities until her death in 1603.[4] After this imprisonment, Robert Devereux, the second Earl of Essex began to play the role of Elizabeth's favorite, but Ralegh still had considerable power and influence in the queen's court. At times the queen became angry and disenchanted with Ralegh; however, she never ended the friendship, and the political and personal connection between Ralegh and Elizabeth

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[4]Edwards notes that after 1592, Ralegh was awarded several missions, including campaigns in Cadiz in 1596 and an assignment in Ostend in 1600. Elizabeth still awarded Ralegh with grants and leases as well, showing that their relationship did not end after his marriage. Even though Essex began to enjoy the Queen's favor, Ralegh was still an influential member at court.

lasted until her death in 1603.

The verses that Ralegh wrote to Elizabeth seem to reflect both his position as her courtier under the patronage system and her position as patron under this system as well as their personal relationship. Further, Ralegh employs rhetorical strategies in his verses that reveal the gender-specific roles that he and Elizabeth adopt in the verses.

Several poems commonly attributed to Ralegh are addressed to his queen in extant manuscript versions. "Fortune hath taken away my love," "Nature hath washed her handes in milke" "Our passions are like floods and streames" are but three of these. The poems give clues about the relationship between the queen and her courtier, showing the nature of their relationship. The two flatter each other, challenge each other, play on their relative positions of power, and engage in an intellectual game, not unlike that played by Marlowe, Ralegh and Donne.

One example that indicates this game of exchange between Ralegh and Elizabeth I is Ralegh's "Fortune hath taken away my love" and Elizabeth I's "Ah silly pugge wert thou so sore afraid." Ralegh's poem from Phillips MS 3602 reads:

> Fortune hathe taken away my love
> my lyues ioy and my soules heauen aboue
> fortune hathe taken thee away my princes
> my worles ioy, and my true fantasies mistris
>
> fortune hathe taken thee away from mee;
> fortune hathe taken all; by taking thee:
> deade to all ioyes: I only lyue to woe:
> so ys fortune becomme my fantasies foe
>
> In vayne my Eyes, in vayne yee wast yo teares;
> In vayne my sightes, the smoke of my dispayres;

In vayne youe searche the Earthe and heauen aboue;
In vayne youe searche, for fortune keepes my loue.

Then will I leaue my loue in fortunes hand;
Then will I leaue my loue in woldiges bande;
and only loue the sorrowes due to mee;
sorrwoe, hence forthe, that shall my Princes bee.

And only ioye that fortune Conquers kinges;
fortune, that rules the Earthe and earthly thinges,
hathe taken my loue, inspighte of vertues mighte:
so blinde a goddes did neuer vertue righte

Wth wisdome's eyes, had but blinde fortune seene;
then had my loue for euer beene:
but loue farewell: thoughe fortune conquer thee;
no fortune base, nor frayle shall alter mee.[5]

Stephen May dates this poem in 1587 in the context of the rivalry between Ralegh and Robert Devereaux, Second Earl of Essex. (31) Ralegh assumes the role of the broken-hearted lover who blames fortune for his failure. Ralegh's lament of his lost love is meant to be flattering to his queen. He describes her as his "lyues ioy" (2), "worles ioy" and "true fantasies mistres" (4). In the second stanza these former pleasures have changed; now Ralegh lives "to woe" (7) and Fortune is his "fantasies foe" (8). In the third stanza Ralegh laments his own vanity because he says that "fortune keepes my loue" (12). Ralegh resolves to give up his hope for Elizabeth's love and accept the "sorrowes due" him (15). The intention of all of these stanzas seems to be flattering as Ralegh plays the role of the scorned lover who has lost his love, not by his own fault, but by the will of a personified fortune.

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[5]The above transcription is Margaret Downs-Gamble's. All references to this poem are from this transcription.

In the last two stanzas Ralegh tries to comfort himself by portraying Elizabeth as the victim conquered by love, and he even says that he is stronger than fortune, implying that he is also stronger than Elizabeth when he asserts that "no fortune base, nor frayle shall alter mee" (24). Ralegh refers to fortune as a "blinde...goddes" (20) throughout these last two stanzas, a goddess who has overpowered Elizabeth I and unjustly separated Ralegh from his love.

L.G. Black first established that Elizabeth's poem answers Ralegh's verse. Black found the poem in the Petyt Collection at Inner Temple Library. Black's transcription from the Petyt collection at Inner Temple Library reads:

> Ah silly pugge wert thou so sore afraid,
> mourne not (my Wat) nor be thou so dismaid,
> it passeth fickle fortunes powere and skill,
> to force my harte to thinke thee any ill.
> No fortune base thou saiest shall alter thee,
> and may so blinde a Witche so conquere me?
> no no my pugg, thoughe fortune were not blinde,
> assure thy selfe she could not rule my mynde.
> fortune I knowe sometimes doth conquere kinges
> and rules & raignes on earth & earthly thinges
> But neuer thinke fortune can beare the sway,
> if vertue watche & will her not obay
> ne chose I thee by fickle fortunes rede,
> ne she shall force me after with suche spede
> But if to try this mistres lost with thee,
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>
> Pull vp thy harte suppresse they brakishe teares,
> torment thee not, but put away thy feares;
> Dead to all ioyes & livinge vnto woe,
> Slaine quite by her that nere gaue wiseman blowe
> Revive againe & live without all drede,
> the lesse afraid the better thou shall spede./

Elizabeth and other members of the nobility exercised political advancement based on the loyalty of the patron, and her response in this poem seems to reflect this position. Ralegh invites the queen to defend her position or mourn his loss.

Ralegh's image of the weak-minded lover offended Elizabeth and inspires her to reply to Ralegh. The lines indicate that Elizabeth does not assume the role of the ideal love who is silent and helpless in her situation. Elizabeth's answer does not gently encourage this love, or even assume the role of the ideal woman, but instead, claims an accountability and position of power that ultimately makes Ralegh seem silly. Ralegh's poem laments the loss of his love because of fortune, but Elizabeth counters his protests by reminding him that she cannot be controlled by anyone, including fortune. She boldly asks Ralegh if he dares to suggest that he is more powerful than fortune and assures him that she would not allow "so blinde a Witche to conquere" her (6). Instead, she assures him that fortune "could not rule my mynde" (8). Elizabeth I clearly does not accept Ralegh's assessment of her as the weak woman who is overcome by fortune's powers.

Instead of acknowledging his pain or mildly returning his love, the Queen responds boldly, comforting Ralegh in a condescending way and telling him not to be troubled. She refers to him as a "silly pugge" and assures him that fortune could not force her to "thinke thee any ill" (4). She ends her poem with a recommendation for Ralegh to "Pulle vp thy harte suppresse thy brakishe teares,/torment thee not, but put away thy feares;" (15-16). She also advises him that his fear will only hinder him, so he should forget his fear and dread. These lines show the confidence that Elizabeth has about her position of power, asserting that she can advise Ralegh and is in control of Ralegh's well-being.

Although Ralegh's verse is not found with this poem in any known manuscripts, Black notes that Puttenham described Elizabeth's poem as one "which our soueraigne Lady wrate in defiance of fortune." Therefore, even though no direct manuscript evidence links these poems because they have not travelled together in any surviving manuscript, other accounts and the content of the poems themselves suggest that these poems are remnants an actual interaction between Ralegh and his queen. Also, a version of these poems was published together in the seventeenth century, suggesting that they might have travelled together in manuscripts at one time.[6]

Evidence in the poems themselves, as in the Ralegh, Marlowe and Donne triad, suggests that the two are related. Elizabeth's verse seems addressed to Ralegh because in the second line she tells him to "mourne not (my Wat)" (2). Wat was Elizabeth's nickname for Ralegh and the name by which he called his son. She also echoes the last line in Ralegh's poem in her fifth line "No fortune base thou saiest shall alter thee."[7] These details, as well as the content of the answering poem, show that the verses are related.

One substantial variation of the word "cupid" complicates our view of the nature of the relationship between Elizabeth and Ralegh. In many manuscripts, lines 19 and

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[6]Black uses this as evidence for his argument to connect the verse to Elizabeth I.

[7]Margaret Downs-Gambles notes the echo lines as basis for a connection of these poems.

20 read as follows:

[Fortune] hathe taken my loue, in spighte of vertues mighte:

so blind a goddes did neuer vertue right

In the Petyt manuscript, the word "vertue" is "cupid".[8] The two versions have interesting implications. Cupid stems from the Latin word cupitas which means desire. However, the etymology of the word "virtue" also reflects this gendered game that Elizabeth and Ralegh play. "Virtue" is derived from the Latin "vir" which is the Latin word for man. By using this word, Elizabeth attacks Ralegh's manliness and cites it as the reason why he cannot overcome Fortune. In the Petyt manuscript Elizabeth refers to virtue, not cupid, saying in lines 11 and 12 that virtue will always overcome Fortune, and that she will not be manipulated by Fortune, and further that Ralegh must not have enough virtue or manliness to overcome it himself. The word virtue makes the poet seem righteous, his love noble, while the word cupid or desire makes his love seem more lustful. These words allude to different kinds of relationships. Was their love a romantic fiction or a more intimate affair? Both virtue and desire are described as powerful and just, a combination nevertheless conquered by Fortune.

Another poem associated with Ralegh and Queen Elizabeth I is "Our passions are most like to floods and streames" from Folger Va 103 Part 1:

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[8]Black's transcription from the Marsh text from the Petyt collection of "Fortune hath taken away my love" includes the word cupid. This text was found on the back of the leaflet with "Ah silly pugge wert thou sore afraid," while Margaret Downs-Gamble's transcription includes the word vertue.

S^{r} Wa: Ral: To the Sole Governess of His Affections.

Passions are likned best to flouds and streames,
The shallow murmure but the deepe are dumbe;
so when affections yeild discourse it Seemes
The bottome is but shallow from whence they come:
They that are rich in wordes must needes discouer
That they are poore in that w^{ch} makes a Louer.

Wrong not sweete Empresse of my hearte,
The meritt of trew Passions
With thinking that hee feeles no Smart,
That sues for no compassion:

Since if my plaints Serue not to proue,
The conquest of yo^{r} ~~baty~~ byaty;
It comes not from defect of Loue,
But from Excesse of duty.--
For seeing that I sue to serues
A Sainet of such perfection;
As all desire, but no one deserue
A place in her affection:

I rather chuse to Wante reeleife,
Then venture the revealing;
Where Glory recomends the greife,
Dispaire distrusts the healing.

Thus those desires that aime to high,
For any Mortall Lover:
When reason can not make them dy;
Discretion doth them cover.

Yet when discretion doth beareave
The plaintes that they should utter;
Then thy discretion may perceive,
That silence is a Suitor.

Silence in love bewraies more woe,
Then Wordes thought neare So Witty
A beggar tha's dumbe you know,
Deserveth double pittye.

Then wrong no more a dearest Hearte,
The meritt of true Passion;
Hee Smarteth most that hides his Smarte:
And sues for no compassions.

"Our passions are most like floods and streames" in four out of twenty-one manuscripts listed by Peter Beal (404-406) is headed "Sir Walter Ralegh to his queene" or some variation of a heading that specifically mentions the queen. Agnes Latham notes that the poem appears in manuscripts with Ralegh's name at least nine times, but other names occur as well-- including Lord Walden and John Ayton (116). This variation might suggest that Ralegh and others wrote verses related to each other and travelled together. Possibly, the poem is the product of a combination of two poems by different authors. A common practice among sixteenth and seventeenth century university students was the assignment or choice to rewrite an existing classical narrative, sometimes using more clever examples and/or adapting the story to fit a modern scenario. Even though Latham is seeking a correct version of the poem, she observes that " [w]herever the complete poem, that is the version with an introductory six-line stanza, appears, it is accompanied by Ralegh's name" (116),indicating that he probably wrote at least this section of the poem, and perhaps that he initiated the connection. It is difficult, however, to absolutely determine who began this conversation, if conversation it is. Perhaps Ralegh began the verse conversation with the six-line stanza and someone else answered it, indicating the reason it occurs without the stanza. Or, perhaps Ralegh added the additional stanzas and his name circulates with the "complete" set.

The variation of the poem as a six-line stanza alone, or the longer poem which uses it as an introduction, and the change in the way that the poem is constructed,

indicate that the poem may actually be two verses that, because they travelled together, were eventually conflated. The earliest date for an extant manuscript is between the 1620s and 1630s, and Bodelian manuscripts Malone 19 and Rawlinson 116 only include the six-line stanza and do not mention Ralegh's name. (Beal 404) Although, in later versions when the six-line appears with the second part, his name accompanies it. In addition, other scholars have made connections between these lines and other poems by Ralegh. For example, Latham notes that these verses deal with a common theme in Ralegh's works: that of secret love. (117) Additionally, Stephen May asserts that the six-line stanza is Ralegh's, and that it responds to two six-line stanzas by Edward Dyer; May attributes the eight-line stanzas to Thomas Ayton. (66)[9]

The structure of the two parts of the poem are different, and the content of the rest of the poem expands on the themes in the first section, suggesting that the two parts are distinct. The six-line stanza rhymes ababcc. The rest of the poem is made up of stanzas with eight lines following an ababcdcd rhyme. Latham describes these two versions of the poem as complete and "incomplete;" however, they might better be described as two poems that have been combined, or an earlier and later revision of the poem. Like the Marlowe, Ralegh and Donne poems, this poem has also been revised in the context of a conversation.

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[9]May gives this information as an aside and he does not give any examples of the other verses, nor does he give any references to manuscripts in which these verse might be found.

This set may well describe the way that courtiers interacted with Elizabeth during her reign. Four extant copies of the poem mention the queen in their headings. As at least three poets add their impressions, the verses become more specific and relevant to court life. Stephen May notes that the six-line stanza, which for the sake of argument I'll call Ralegh's, builds on the first line in the second stanza of Dyer's verse: "Where waters smoothest run, deep are the fords" (66). Then Thomas Henege picks up the image of the silent lover in his verses "Wronge not deare empressse of my heart" and extends the metaphor.

Ralegh's six-line stanza is shorter than the one preceding it, enacting the point of his verse: that the silent suitor, or at least the briefest, might be the one who has the most love for his queen. The first stanza argues that passion cannot be measured with words because like floods and streams, the "bottom is but shallow whence they come" (4). The final couplet concludes that the lover who can talk about passion may not be able to live up to his boasting: "They that are Rich in Words must needes discouer/That they are Poore in that which makes a Louer" (5-6).[10] Ralegh answers Dyer by usurping his image, developing it, but doing so in a single stanza, thereby, making himself the suitor who is not rich in words, but who is a better lover. If Ralegh is trying to prove that he is a worthy companion to Elizabeth, he presents himself as someone who has a deep passion that cannot be expressed in words.

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[10]The following lines are taken from my transcription of the Aberdeen University Library MS 29 p171.

The third part of the conversation supports Ralegh's suggestion with specific examples; however, further elaboration seems to disprove the passion of the poet. Nevertheless, these stanzas extend the image of the silent lover to an image of the lover as one obligated to his mistress in some way. For example, the poet explains that the silent suitor is often overlooked. He assures the queen that when she thinks that the suitor is quiet because "hee feeles noe smart" (9), it is not true. He also alludes to the patronage system by warning her that outspoken passion in the form of wooing words "comes not from excesse of loue,/But from excesse of duty" in (13-14). Since the courtiers were motivated to impress the queen to receive gifts, positions and other favors, some of their efforts must have seemed at least insincere. The poet rejects these insincere actions and only wants to obtain "A place in her affection" (18). He ends the poem with another plea to the queen to recognize his loyalty and realize that he sincerely loves her even though he does not profess it:

> Then wrong no more a dearest Hearte,
> The meritt of true Passion;
> Hee Smarteth most that hides his Smarte:
> And sues for no compassions. (35-38)

When the critic considers the verses as a collaborative poem that responds and adds to the image of the courtiers who strive to impress the queen and gain her favor, the meaning is changed, and we begin to understand the feelings of courtiers who operate under this patronage system.

Because these poems are answered by other courtiers, perhaps they were not

intended for Elizabeth's response. Or, perhaps Elizabeth was meant to respond to all of the poems as a group, a kind of response to the observations of her courtiers. The context of the court and its associations is an important one to consider because it dictated who wrote and how s/he wrote poetry.

There seem to be two important contexts for "Our Passions are likened to floods and streames": some versions invoke the image of Ralegh as the queen's favorite, and other versions reflect the form of invention of poetry which privileges some poets who write about their queen. Ralegh's strategy in this poem, like that in "Fortune hathe taken away my loue," is also one of flattery and wit. The first stanza argues that passion cannot be measured with words because like floods and streams, the "bottom is but shallow whence they come" (4).

In the shorter poems that have established connections between the courtier and his queen, Ralegh adopted the traditional role of courtly lover seeking his ideal love. Clearly, Ralegh hoped to gain Elizabeth's favor rhetorically in order to receive the real benefits of office, fame, honor, and gifts. In the rhetorical situation, Elizabeth is in the position to bestow more than the gifts of an idealized love: favor, attention and affection. She has real gifts of power, position and money to bestow, making her responses confident, insightful, witty and powerful.

Although other poems by Ralegh employ supplication to a woman and deploy the trope of the heart-broken lover, not every love poem is contextualized according to Ralegh's relationship with the Queen. The connection between Ralegh and

Elizabeth in the "Ocean to Cynthia" poems has been accepted and investigated by critics; others, specifically, "Farewell false loue" and "Calling to minde" have been investigated in a similar way. (May 32) None of the extant copies mentions her in their headings.[11] It seems that even the manuscript circles did not impose this context on these two poems, even though their content seems to be similar to "Fortune hath taken away my loue" and "Nature hathe washt her handes in milke." It seems clear that courtier poets did use actual male-female, or courtier-queen, negotiation as readily as they employed shepherds and nymphs to discuss gendered power politics during Elizabeth's reign. Thus, our picture of the dashing young courtier who relies on his looks and grace to gain the queen's favor is not as simple as it seems.

[11]Peter Beal lists 9 copies of "Farewell false loue" and 18 copies of "Callinge to minde." Although these headings include references to his mistress or lover, none mentions his queen.

"The Lie": Poetics of the Accused

The portrait of Ralegh becomes more complex as his political dealings become more entangled and complicated. Ralegh was imprisoned in the Tower of London after he married one of Queen Elizabeth's ladies-in-waiting Elizabeth Throckmorton, a wedding about which the court gossiped.[12] Although Ralegh continued to serve Elizabeth in many capacities, the tone of the relationship between Ralegh and Elizabeth changed from flirtation and intellectual sparring to a satirical distance. (Edwards 135) Most scholars agree that "The Lie" first circulated about 1595 during the years that Ralegh lost his position as the most prominent courtier in Elizabeth's court. Although he retained his houses and patents and continued to act as an influential member of Elizabeth's court, he was no longer the queen's favorite. (May 61)

As intriguing as this poem is in relation to Sir Walter Ralegh's scandalous life, scholars disagree about its authorship. Pierre Le Franc resists including this poem in Ralegh's canon because he is suspicious of the many responses that the poem solicited. Le Franc develops a complex theory to explain these responses, claiming that the Puritans, with whom Ralegh's rival Robert Devereux, Second Earl of Essex, is associated, created the poem and circulated it under Ralegh's name in order to sabotage his career at court. Le Franc states that his theory explains the reason why

[12]Their son Wat was born shortly after they married.

this poem is so frequently transcribed. In order to make others believe that the poem was Ralegh's when it was not, the conspiring Puritans had to copy and circulate the poem widely. (Le Franc 87-88) Perhaps, however, the wide circulation of "The Lie" is a testament to Ralegh's, or at least the verse's, popularity and the success with which he invited others to respond to his poem. Certainly, Ralegh satirically shapes images of many institutions and people in his poem, images that invite defense or further comment.

Other scholars are skeptical of Le Franc's theories about the authorship of this poem. For example, Greenblatt defends the authorship of "The Lie" by rebuking Le Franc's claim that Essex's followers, or a group of Puritans, created the poem and circulated it as Ralegh's.[13] Greenblatt supports his claims by citing other verses that falsely attributed to Ralegh that differed greatly in content, verses hoping to paint Ralegh as confessing to "heinous crimes against Essex, King James, and the Christian religion or expressions of blatantly Machiavellian doctrines." Greenblatt also diverts Le Franc's claims by citing evidence that dates the poem earlier than the Essex scandal; he claims that "The Lie" was associated with Ralegh as early as 1599, which indicates that the claims that the poem was falsely attributed to Ralegh during his lifetime are untrue (172). Steven May also asserts that the theory of false authorship that Le Franc develops is unlikely because the practical implementation of

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[13]Edwards notes that in 1591 Ralegh may have been working in harmony with the Puritans, not because he supported their cause, but because he did not approve of persecution of any group for religious reasons. Essex was more closely associated with the Puritans because Leicester, his predecessor, supported their cause (132).

the plot is too complex; May explains that it would have been too much trouble for Essex's followers (61). Even if the poem was circulated in order to smear Ralegh's name and reputation, the plan itself indicates that such circulation was common practice. The context of this poem in many different manuscripts indicates the popularity of Ralegh and further complicates the role of poetry at court. While this poem reflects Ralegh's personal situation, it also reflects further political and personal implications in the various contexts of the manuscripts.

Ralegh's poem is clearly satirical and bitter, inviting response and addition by people who agreed with him as well as those who disagreed with him. Greenblatt notes that one stanza refers to Potentates and cites it as an example of Ralegh's use of irony, pointing out that "to heighten the exposure of those who fancy themselves masters of the earth: by the third repetition within the tight stanza, the word like the mortals it designates, seems impossibly pompous." (175) From this reading, it seems that during this stage Ralegh felt dominated by others, dominated both by courtiers who were more powerful and influential than he and by the ruler herself.

From the Dalhousie manuscript transcript by Ernest Sullivan, we can observe the series of political institutions with which Ralegh sparred:

Goe soule the bodies guest
vpon a thankelesse arrant,
Feare not to touch the best
the truth shall be thy warrant
Goe since I needs must die,
and giue the world the lie.

Say to the Court it glowes
and shines like rotten wood,
Say to the Church it showes
whats good, and doth no good
If Church and Court reply,
then giue them both the lie.

Tell Potentates they liue
acting by others action,
Not loued vnlesse they giue,
not strong but by affection.
If Potentates reply,
giue Potentates the lie.

Tell men of high condition,
that manage the estate,
Their purpose is ambition,
their practise onely hate:
And if they once reply,
then giue them all the lie.

Tell them that braue it most,
they beg for more by spending
Who in their greatest cost
seek nothing but commending.
And if they make replie,
then giue them all the lie.

Tell zeale it wants deuotion
tell loue it is but lust
Tell time it meets but motion
tell flesh it is but dust
And wish them not replie
for thou must giue the lie.

Tell age it daily wasteth,
tell honour how it alters.
Tell beauty how she blasteth
tell favour how it falters
And as they shall reply,
giue euery one the lie.

Tell wit how much it wrangles
in tickle points of nycenesse,
Tell wisedome she entangles
her selfe in ouer wisenesse.
And when they doe reply
straight giue them both the lie.

Tell Phisicke of her boldnesse,
tell skill it is preuention:
Tell charity of coldnes,
tell law it is contention,
And as they doe reply
so giue them all the lie.

Tell fortune of her blindnesse,
tell nature of decay,
Tell friendship of vnkindnesse,
tell iustice of delay,
And if they will reply,
then giue them all the lie.

Tell Arts the haue no soundnesse,
but vary by esteeming,
Tell schooles they want profoundnes
and stand too much on seeming.
If Artes and schooles reply,
giue arts and schooles the lie.

Tell faith its fled the Citie,
tell how the country erreth,
Tell manhood shakes off pittie,
tell vertue least preferreth
And if they doe reply,
spare not to giue the lie.

So when thou hast as I,
commanded thee, done blabbing,
although to giue the lie,
deserues no lesse than stabbing,
Stab at thee he that will,
no stab thy soule can kill.

In "The Lie" Ralegh uses images of the Court, the Church, Potentates (meaning powerful rulers or cities)[14], wit, wisdome, zeale, love, time, flesh, ages, hounor, beauty, favor, Phiske, skill, charity , fortune, nature, friendship, justice, arts, schools and faith and gives them all the lie. Ralegh's attitude seems to be that others will

[14]The powerful ruler could refer to the queen or other more influential members of court or the city of London.

think falsehoods about him. Certainly, Ralegh's life at court was fraught by many rumors. Edwards describes Ralegh's most noted scandal involving charges of treason during Queen Elizabeth's reign, as the false charges of treason brought against Ralegh in 1601 for involvement in the Essex rebellion. Greenblatt believes that this poem circulated and was associated with Ralegh as early as 1599, suggesting that the poem refers to another scandal. If these verses refer to a scandal earlier than 1599 when Ralegh and Essex were competing for the queen's attention, Ralegh could be protesting rumors of his secret marriage to Elizabeth Throckmorton in 1592. As with many other poems, it is difficult to pinpoint one specific event or set of events as the source for poetic inspiration. Charges and rumors about Ralegh ranged from imprisonment for fighting to pirating Spanish ships, so it is difficult to determine which particular charge of misconduct he answers in this verse.

The poem itself is sometimes transcribed with additional verses. The game of constructing a four line verse that pessimistically refigures accepted institutions through a (steele) glass, darkly, is tempting to emulate. Agnes Latham cites two stanzas found in different manuscripts[15] that add to what is believed to be Ralegh's text of the poem, possibly added by people who were either sympathetic to Ralegh's specific situation or to his pessimistic outlook on life. The first stanza focuses on the dangers of borrowing money and the extravagance of court and ends with a variation

[15]Latham notes the Chetham MS, MS Add 5832, MS Rawlinson Poet 172, MS Harley 2296, White-Harvard MS, and the MS Harley 2296 for these additional verses.

of Ralegh's refrain: "then giue them all the lie:"

Tell London of her stewes
And cityzens of Vsury
And though it be no newes
Tell courtezans of Lechery
And if they do replye
They best deserue the lye

The second stanza focuses on a common theme, cuckolds:

Lett Cuckouldes be rembred
I will not die theire detter
Theire heades are strongelie armed
To beare the brunte the better
If they themselves denighe
Their wifes doe knowe the lie

These verses are not likely Ralegh's, but instead are additions to his verse, because they do not attack the institutions and specific places of influence in his life and they are not consistently reproduced in extant copies. Warning about the moral and practical difficulties of borrowing money or about the foolishness of husbands does not follow the theme of the other stanzas which focus on the injustices of court life and the usually positive characteristics like faith and beauty that are instead presented in a pessimistic way.

Scholars cite three separate poems that seem to answer "The Lie." Latham transcribes MS Chetham 8012 p107 beginning "Go Eccho of the minde," one of two poems that Steven May associates with Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex (May 61). "Go Eccho of the minde" rebukes Ralegh for his pessimism and harsh critiques of life:

Go, Ecco of the minde,
a careles troth protest;
make answere that rude Rawly
no stomack can digest.

for why? the lies discent
is over base to tell;
to vs it came from Italy,
to them it came from hell.

What reason proues, confesse,
What slander saith, denye;
Let no vntrth with triumph passe,
but never giue the lye.

confesse, in glittering court
all ar not goulde that shine;
yet say one pearle, and much fine gould,
growes in that Princes minde.

confesse, that many leaues
do overgrowe the gounde;
yet say with in the fielde of God
good corne is to be founde.

confesse, som iudge vniust
the widowes right delay;
yet say there ar some Samuels
that never say her nay

admitte some man of state
do pitch his toughtes to hie;
is that a rule for all the rest,
their loyall hartes to trie?

your wittes ar in the waine,
your autumne in the bud;
you argue from particulars,
your reason is not good.

and still that men may see
lesse reason to commend you.
I marvaile most, amongst the rest,
how schooles and artes offende you.

but whie pursue I thus
the witlesse wordes of winde?
the more the crab doth seeke to creepe,
the more she is behinde.

in church and common wealth,
in court and country both,
what! nothing good, but all to bad
that every man doth loath?

The further that you raunge,
your errour is the wider;
the bee sometimes doth hony suck,
but sure you ar a spider.

and so my counsaile is,
for that you want a name,
to seeke some corner in the darke,
to hide your selfe from shame.

there wrapp the sely flye
With in your spitefull webbe;
both church and court may want you well,
they ar not at such ebbe.

as quarrels once begun
ar not so quickly ended,
so many faultes may soone be founde,
But not so soone amended.

and when you come againe,
to giue the world the lye,
I pray you tell them how to liue,
and teach them how to dye.[16]

Le Franc also refers to an answer to "The Lie" that has similar characteristics to "Go, ecco of the minde."[17] The Ashmole manuscript verse begins, like Chetham 8012, with a variation on the first line of Ralegh's poem, "Goe soule the bodies guest/vpon a thankelesse arrant" (1-2) with the commission "Go, Ecco of the minde/a careles troth protest" (1-2). The first stanza also mentions Ralegh and refutes his claims that lying is an appropriate response to rumors: "make answere that rude Rawly/no stomack can digest" (3-4). The Tanner manuscript verse also uses variations of Ralegh's name

[16]The transcription is Agnes Latham's p.135-136.

[17]Le Franc transcribes part of the poem from Tanner 306 f 188 a-b; however, he does not include the full text of the poem.

several times, including "Rawhead" and "rawelye."[18] Like the exchanges between Ralegh and Marlowe and Ralegh and Elizabeth, "The Lie" and its additions seem to have created a context for answer.

In addition to the mention of Ralegh's name, the answering poems take images from Ralegh's poem and specifically respond to those images. The Ashmole version of "Courts scorne, states disgracinge"[19] criticizes Ralegh's verse:

Courts scorne, states disgracinge
Potentates scoffe, Goverments defacinge
Princes toutch, churches vnhallowing
Artes Iniury, virtues debacing
Ages monster, Honnors wasting
Bewties blemish, Favors blastinge
Witts excrement, wisedoms vomit
Phisickes scorne, Lawes Comet
Fortunes child, valors defiler
Iustice revenger, Frendships beguilder
such is the songe, such is the Author
worthy to be rewarded with a halter.

The author draws specific examples from the poem: the court in line 1, Potentates in line 2, the church in line 3, art and virtue in line 4, age and honor in line 5, favor in line 6 fortune in line 9 and others; and he uses these examples in his own verse. The specific examples of "Potentates scoffe" (2) and "Phisickes scorne" (8) in combination with the other similar images in the poem indicate that it is a response to "The Lie."

Like "Go, ecco of the minde" the response is not a positive one. Both poems

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[18]This second variation of Ralegh's name is particularly clever, emphasizing the "lye" that refers to Ralegh's lie in the poem.

[19]All references to this poem are taken from Latham's transcription p. 137.

end with spiteful remarks about Ralegh. The author lists all of the complaints that the first poem addresses and ends with a couplet that expresses his dissatisfaction and rejection of Ralegh's lament: "such is the songe, such is the Author/worthy to be rewarded with a halter" (11-12). Possibly, the poet is not in favor of Ralegh's view and calls for someone to stop him from making such statements. "Go, ecco the minde" ends with " I pray you tell them how to liue,/and teach them how to dye" (63-64). The Ashmole version of "Courts scorne, states disgracinge" includes two examples from Ralegh's poem and expresses surprise about Ralegh's criticism of "how schooles and artes offende" him (36).

To further complicate the responses to the poem, in "Go echo of the mind" the poet reminds Ralegh of the rules of the rhetorical game that these courtiers play. Just as Ralegh accused Marlowe of creating verse in "follie ripe" and "reason rotten," so the poet of "Go Ecco of the minde," possibly Essex, criticizes Ralegh because his "reason is not good" (32), challenging the structure and function of the argument in Ralegh's verse. He is also skeptical of the degree of Ralegh's pessimism. Ralegh has created a view of the world that is unbelievable, and the poet is surprised about the wide scope of Ralegh's poem: "what! nothing good, but all to bad/that every man doth loath?" (43-44). Further, "Go, ecco of the minde" criticizes Ralegh's ambitious undertaking to make so many institutions seem tainted, for "The further that you raunge,/your errour is the wider" (45-46).

In addition to these three poems, two versions of the poem that begins "Courts

scorne, states disgracinge" are found in manuscripts. One of the poems is a revision of the other in which the author simply changes his alliance with Ralegh. Both poems include the long list of images from "The Lie" already mentioned. In the "Courts comender, states maintayner," the examples and final couplet support Ralegh:

Courts Comender, states maintayner,
Potentates defender, governments Joyner
Princes prayser, churches Preacher
Arts rayser, virtues teacher
Ages rewarder, Honors strengthner
Beautys guardner, favours lengthener
Wits admmirer, wisedomes scholler
Physickes desirer, Lawes follower
Fortunes blamer, natures observer
Iustice proclaimer, Frindships preserver,
such is the Author, such is the songe
Retourninge the halter, Contemning the
wrong.

While, in "Courts scorne, states disgracinge," Ralegh is called "Friendshipps beguiler" (10) in "Courts Comender, states maintayner" Ralegh is "Friendships preserver" (10). Line 11 in both poems is almost the same, with only the inverted phrases: "such is the songe, such is the author" and "such is the Author, such is the songe." Thus, as we might expect, the last line in "Courts scorne, states disgracinge" criticizes Ralegh: "Worthy to be rewarded with a halter," suggesting that someone should curb the expression of his opinions, while the last line in "Courts Comender, states maintayner" supports Ralegh's criticism as a productive way to change the state of affairs: "Retourninge the halter, Condemning the wrong" (11). One can imagine how a courtier might have chosen between the two poems; depending on his association and sympathy for or against Ralegh, s/he would choose to copy or create the version

that reflected his or her opinion.

"The Lie" is an interesting example of verse written to criticize political institutions. Through its examination in several different manuscript contexts we can begin to understand the positions that prompted responses *to* as well as the occasions that prompted creation *of* such verse. Although Le Franc has found the responses to this poem troublesome, they suggest that Ralegh's situation was complex and that the circulation of these manuscripts reflected that complexity. With the single example of "The Lie" one can see how a more serious game played out with Ralegh's contemporaries.

Even Such as Time: The Rhetoric of Dangerous Politics

> Why will you cook me to establish the laws? Skilled in embalming you will cook the laws, but having seemed to establish, you will not [really] Cook.[20]

The above comment accompanied Ralegh's "Euen suche is tyme" in the Folger MS Va 103 part 1 in Latin[21] and frames Ralegh's desperate situation near the end of his life and serves as an appropriate caption to the final portrait of Ralegh: from the court favorite to England's scapegoat. This transformation began the long spiral to his execution in 1618, a transformation that many people of England regretted. Ralegh was trapped in political games from which he could not escape. When Elizabeth's reign came to an end in 1603, Ralegh's political situation changed drastically. The scandals that Ralegh previously had encountered because of fist-fighting and his affair with Elizabeth Throckmorton seem petty in comparison to the charges of treason that Ralegh faced during James' reign. James first imprisoned Ralegh the same year that James assumed the throne, and during that year James first sentenced Ralegh to be hanged, rescinding his order at the last moment. As

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[20] Translated by Bart Lewis and Dr. Andrew Becker

[21] Manuscript Folger MS 103 part 1 reads:
Conde Iura Coques quid me? Condire
peritus Iura Coques, sed no
condere visa Coyes

1608, James began to take away some of the favors that Ralegh enjoyed during Elizabeth's reign.

In 1617, James released Ralegh, from the Tower giving him what appeared to be one last chance to redeem himself by acquiring the hidden treasures of El Dorado, the city of gold. Ralegh gathered ships and donations for his journey, on which his son Wat accompanied him. The travelling was difficult, and the exploring was worse. The expedition encountered poor weather and disease. In addition to these unfortunate circumstances, Ralegh's son Wat died on this last expedition. The promise of freedom was short lived; once news reached England that Ralegh's expedition had failed, James signed the order for Ralegh's execution. Ralegh's glamorous life of fortune and misfortune ended with his beheading on October 23, 1618.

Perhaps one of the most powerful recontexualizations of Ralegh's poetry was made by his own hand in the midst of this political situation. This legendary poem "Even Such is Tyme" was revised from one of Ralegh's earlier poems during the last hours of his life and was then recontextualized in many extant manuscripts.[22] One variation of the poem which suggests that the verses were actually a recopying of ones that Ralegh had already circulated can be found in the Folger Va 103 Part 1. This manuscript is different from most of the others because it collects several of Ralegh's poems together. Although the scribe might have recognized that "Even

[22]Peter Beal lists 90 extant copies of this poem (402).

such is tyme" which often circulated among letters, was part of "Nature that washt her hands in milke," the marginal note and final couplet make the verse particularly provocative:

Nature that washt her hands in milke,
And had ye^{tt} forgott to dry them;
In Steade of Earth tooke Snow and milke
At Lous request to try them:
Wether she a mistresse could compose,
To please Loves fancy out of those.

At Loves entreaty such a one
Hath Nature made, but wth her beutye
Shee hath framd a Heart of Stone:
So that love by his ill destiny,
Must dy for that w^{ch} Nature gave Him
Because her darling willl save Him.

Her Eies Hee would should bee of Light,
A viollett breath, Her lipps of jelly,
Her haire not blacke nore over bright,
And of the softest down her bellye:
As for her inside hee would have itt,
Compos'd of Wantonnes and Witt.

But Time that Nature doth dispise,
And rudly gives Her loue the bye;
Makes hope a foole, and sorrow wise,
His hands do neither wash nor dry.
But being make a steele and rust,
Turnes Snow and milke to dust.

The light, the belly, sweete lipps, and breath,
Hee dimmes, discouers, and destroyes;
With these Hee feedes, but fills not death,
Wch somtimes where the foode of joyes:
Yea Time doth dull each lovely Witt,
And dries all Wantonnesse With itt.

O cruell Time that takes on trust.
Our youth , and joyes, and all Wee haue;
And paies us but wth age Earth and dust:
Which in the darke and silent grave,
When wee haue Wandred all our Wayes,

Shutts upp the story of our dayes.[23]

The content of the earlier poem focuses on love and the pleasant characteristics of a mistress: her eyes, breath, lips, hair and belly. Even though Nature fashioned this beautiful woman, she has "a heart of stone" (15). Time is Nature's enemy and changes beauty with age, turning "snow and silke and milke to dust" (24).

Unlike the earlier "Nature" poem, the context of "Even such is tyme" reflects the political context surrounding Ralegh's death. When the stanza from Folger MS Ja 2f 87 is considered in the context of the last words of a man awaiting his death, the lines are especially powerful:

Euen such is tyme which takes in trust
Our strength and life and all we haue,
And payes vs butt with age and dust:
Who in the darke and silent graue
When we haue wandred all our wayes
Shutts up the storye of our dayes.
And from which earth and graue and dust
The Lord shall rayse me up I trust.

This cynical poem laments that passage of time does not leave him enough life, rather than the earlier version in which time was a negative force, taking away beauty and other characteristics associated with love.

"Even Such as Tyme" is unique because, while other verses are often found in manuscripts nestled between other poems, this one most frequently is found with letters written just before Ralegh's execution. Perhaps it is not surprising that the highly political nature of its content and Ralegh's situation dictated the context of the

[23]The above transcription is from the Folger MS Va 103 part 1.

poem. Many versions of the poem exist, several headed "Verses found in Sr Walter Rawleighs Bible in ye Gatehowse," and some add the relative time period "the night before he dyed " (Beal 382) or "These words written the nighte before go Scaffold" in Folger MS Vb 303 p229.[24] These headings often position the author as Ralegh and the specific crisis that prompted the verses. Including the letters to, from and about Ralegh during this time, the narrative of the political situation is complete.

This cynical poem laments the passage of time that takes "Our youthe and loyes and all we haue/And pays vs but with age and dust" (35-36). In the context of a poem that bemoans the passing of time and lost youth, this line is poignant. But in the context of Ralegh's imprisonment, the lost youth and joy of a man who had spent most of the last fifteen years of his life in the Tower of London, the lines become more than a predictable complaint of the onset of old age. Further, a variation in the second line in some manuscripts seems to describe Ralegh's situation at the time before his execution even more appropriately. Rather than losing youth and joy, he laments losing "strength and life and all we haue" (2). Ralegh's return from his failed expedition in which he had battled disease, inclement weather and the death of his son, only to face James' order of death was tragic. Ralegh's last opportunity to be free of the treason charge was gone. For him, the passing of time and this failed chance to regain his reputation had taken his strength and life.

At times terminal concepts are added to Ralegh's verse. One final couplet

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[24]Latham notes that the verse is almost always ascribed to Ralegh except in one manuscript--MS Sloane 1842. p153

adds "And from which earth and graue and dust/The Lord shall rayse me up I trust" (7-8), reflecting religious opinion. This addition adds a note of hopefulness to the otherwise hopeless stanza. The hope, however, is not typical of Ralegh's other poetry. The final line suggests that the redemption will not come from any of James' decisions, but instead, the Lord will be the only one to save him. Another addition seems to refer specifically to Ralegh's situation: "Cowards fear to die, but Courage stoute,/Rather than live in Snuffe will be put out." [25] These lines suggest that Ralegh did not fear death, but that his courage could not keep him from it. The final line might refer specifically to James' role in the situation as well. These additions reflect the seriousness of the situation before his execution.

Other scholars have speculated that the meaning of the final stanza in the context of Ralegh's death shifts to sadness and a lament for the loss of time. Latham notes that considering this poem as a revision of the other makes it easier to understand:

> But the knowledge that he was recasting old work makes the date, if anything more probable, for it becomes less of a psychological curiosity, and it is characteristic of his somber temper that even his love songs could at will supply an epitaph. (155)

The two versions are identical except for the few changes that Latham notes: "If it is true that Ralegh wrote these lines in his Bible in 1618, the first three words and a

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[25]From the Folger MS Ja2 f87.

concluding couplet are all that had not been written before in a lighter mood" (31). While this line blames time for destroying his livelihood, the later revision seems to reflect a tone of acceptance. The change to "Euen such is tyme (1) makes the passage of time less spiteful and more of an inevitable occurrence. This change in attitude indicates Ralegh's hopeless attitude and desolate circumstances and shows how a previous poem could be reconsidered by the author.

Like the complex political situation in Ralegh's life which sealed his fate, this poem is tied to the events surrounding its creation. Headings in extant manuscripts not only date when the poem was copied and circulated, but also document the political situation because the surrounding material in the manuscripts highlights the political nature of Ralegh's situation. Most of the copies of "Even such as tyme" are surrounded by letters, impassioned pleas and farewells from Ralegh to his wife and to other courtiers, and/or letters from other political figures to Ralegh. Holdings in the Folger Shakespeare Library alone include letters to Lady Ralegh, King James, Robert Carr, Ralph Winwood, and Lord Davens.[26] Like the conversations that surrounded other poems in verse, this verse was surrounded by political letters to members of court, an attempt to prove his innocence and save his life. These additional comments that the scribe makes serve as an assessment of Ralegh's predicament and a commentary on the verses themselves. By adding the notes that these were

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[26]I have examined the following holdings in the Folger Library, all of which include this stanza in the midst of letters, rather than poetry:
Ja 2 f87, Vb303 p. 229, Vb234, Gb9.

Ralegh's last thoughts, the owner of the common-place book makes the situation seems even more pitiful. But the letters themselves also function as a frame in which to consider the poems. For example, one verse follows a copy of a letter to Ralegh's wife, wishing her his last goodbye. His letter is signed "Yours that was, but now not mine owne WR."[27] The context of these headings and the letters that surround the verses generate sympathy for Ralegh's unfair execution; even those who might have been envious of Ralegh's success during Elizabeth's reign would not wish him his unjust end.

This final poem shows how the significance of the verse changes depending on the surrounding material, the author's personal situation, and the extent to which the author has rewritten the material. We see Ralegh revising his own perception of life. Our final image of Ralegh is not, therefore, one or even several of the extant portraits; rather it is a collage of texts and contexts-- some that he carefully inscribed, others that were inscribed for him.

[27]Folger MS Ja2 f87

Appendix:
Poems and Transcriptions

Folger MS Ze 28

The Milke Maids Song

Come liue wth mee, and be my Loue,
And we will all the pleasures prove
That calling, Groue; or hils, for feilds,
Or woods and shepir mountains yeeldes.

When we will sit up on the rocks,
Ans see the shepherds feed our flocks,
By shallow Rivers, so whose falls
Medodioy binds sing madrigals.

And I will make thee beds of Roses,
And thee in a thousand fragrans posies,
A cap of flowers & a Kirtle
Imbroidered all wth hause of mirtle,

A Gowne made of the finest wool
W^{ch} frome o^{r} pretty Lambes we pull,
Slippers hind choicly for thos cold
Wch buckles of the purest Gold.

A Gold of straw and euie buds,
Wth Coral clapses, and Amber studs
And if these pleasures may thee moue
Come liue wth me, and be my loue.

The shepherds Swains that dance and sing
For thy delights each may morning:
If these delights thy mide may moue
The liue wth me, and be my loue.

The milke maids mothers answer.

If all the world and loue were young,
And truth in eveuy Shepherds tongue
Then pretty pleasures might me moue,
To liue wth thee, & be thy loue.

But time driues flocks from field to fold
When rivers rage, and rocks grow cold,
And Philomel becometh dumb,
The rest complains of cares to come

The flowers doe fade and wanton field;
To wayward winter rickoning yeilds.
A honey tongue, a heart of gall,
Is Vanitys springe, but sorrows fall.

Thy gowns they shooes, thy beds of roses,
Thy cap thy Kirtle, and thy Posies
Soone breake, Soon wither, soone forgotten
In folly ripe, in reason rotten.

Thy Gift of straw and Ivir buds,
Thy Coral clasps & Amber studs,
All these in me noe means can moue
To come to thee and be thy loue.

But could youth last; and loue stil breed,
How joye noe daies, nor age no need;
Then those delights my mind might moue
To liue wth thee, & be thy Loue.

Come liue wth me, and be my loue,
And we will some new pleasures prooue,
Of Gold in Lands & Christall brooke,
Wth silken lines and siluer hookes

Those will the River whispering run,
Warm'd by they eyes more then the Sun;
And then the inamel'd fish wil stay,
Begging when selues they may betray.

When thou will swim in that first bath,
Each fish, will euery charmest hath
Most amorously to thee will Swim,
Gladder to catch thee, then thou him.

If thou to be so seen, beest Loath
By sun or moone, thou darkness both;
And, if mine eyes haue leaue to see,
I need not their lighs, hauing thee.

Let others trilla with Angling Reedes
And cut their legs wth shols and weeds,
Or have ache rougly poor fish bisot
Wth strangling snare, or winding not,

Let coarse bold hands, from slimy noyes
The better fish in banks outwrigt,
Let curious Traitors steale silke flies
To wies poor wandring fishes eyes

For thee thou greed eye no such evil,
for though thy silke and thine own basil
Thos fish that is not catch'd then by
Is wiser far, alas than I.

The following transcription is Margaret Downs-Gamble's from Phillips MS 3602:

Fortune hathe taken away my loue
my lyues ioy and my soules heauen aboue
fortune hathe taken thee away my princes
my worles ioy, and my true fantasies mistris

fortune hathe taken thee away from mee;
fortune hathe taken all; by taking thee:
deade to all ioyes: I ony lyue to woe
so ys fortune becomme my fantasies foe

In vayne my Eyes, in vayne yee wast yo teares;
In vayne my sightes, the smoke of my dispayres;
In vayne youe searche the Earthe and heauen aboue;
In vayne youe search, for forutne keepes my loue.

Then will I leaue my loue inforutnes hand;
Then will I leaue my loue in woldiges bande;
and only loue the sorrowes due to mee;
sorrwoe, hence forthe, that shall my Princes bee.

And only ioye that fortune Conquers kinges;
fortune, that rules the Earthe and earthely thinges,
hathe taken my loue, inspighte of vertues mighte:
so blinde a goddes did neuer vertue righte

Wth wisdome's eyes, had but blinde fortune seene;
then had my loue for euer beene:
but loue farewell: thoughe fortune conquer thee;
no fortune base, nor frayle shall alter mee.

This transcription of Queen Elizabeth I's poem is L.G. Black's.

Ah silly pugge wert thou so sore afraid,
mourne not (my Wat) nor be thou so dismaid,
it passeth fickle fortunes powere and skill,
to force my harte to thinke thee any ill.
No fortune base thou saiest shall alter thee,
and may so blinde a Witche so conquere me?
no no my pugg, thoughe fortune were not blinde,
assure thy selfe she could not rule my mynde.
fortune I knowe sometimes doth conquere kinges
and rules & raignes on earth and earthly thinges
But neuer thinke fortune can beare the sway,
if vertue watche & will her not obay
ne chose I thee by fickle fortunes rede,
ne she shall force me after with suche spede
But if to try this mistres lost with thee,

Pull vp thy harte suppresse thy bakishe teares,
torment thee not, but put away thy feares;
Dead to all ioyes & livinge vnto woe,
Slaine quite by her that nere gaue wiseman blowe
Revive againe & liue without all drede,
the lesse afraid the better thou shall spede./

Aberdeen University Library MS 29 p171*

WR to his Mistres

Passions are likened best to floods and streames
The shallow murmur but y^r^ deepe are dumbe
So when affections youthe discourge itt seemes
The bottom is but shallow whence they come,
They that are rich in words must must needes discouer,
That they are poore in that w^ch^ makes a louer,
Wrong not sweet Empresse of my heart
The merritt of true passion,
With thinking that hee feeles noe smart,
That sues for noe compassion.
Since if my playnts seeme not to proue,
The conquest of her beauty,
It comes not from excesse of loue,
But from excesse of duty
For knowing y^t^ Loue to serue
A Saynt of such perfection
As all desire, but more deserue
A place in her affection
I rather chuse to want releife
Then center the reuealing
Where glory recommends y^r^ greife,
Dispayer distrusts y^r^ healing
Thus those desyres y^t^ ayme so high,
As any mortall louer,
When reason cannot make them dye
Discretion doth them couer
Yett when discretion doeth becom use
the playnesse thoe they shoule utter
The they discretion maye perceiue,
That silence is a Sutor
Silence in loue beutrayes more wore,
Then words though were So witty,
A beggar that in dumbe you know
May challenge double pitty.
Then wrong dearest heart,
My true, though secret passion,
Hee smarteth most that hides his smart
And sues for noe compassion.

*As listed in Peter Beal's Guide to English Literary Manuscripts

Folger Va 103 Part 1 *

S[r] Wa: Ral: To the Sole Governess of His Affections.

Passions are likned best to flouds and streames,
The shallow murmure but the deepe are dumbe;
so when affections yeild discourse it Seemes
The bottome is but shallow from whence they come:
They that are rich in wordes must needes discouer
That they are poore in that w[ch] makes a Louer.

Wrong not sweete Empresse of my hearte,
The meritt of trew Passions
With thinking that hee feeles no Smart,
That sues for no compassion:

Since if my plaints Serue not to proue,
The conquest of yo[r] ~~baty~~ byaty;
It comes not from defect of Loue,
But from Excesse of duty.--
For seeing that I sue to to serues
A Sainet of such perfection;
As all desire, but no one deserue
A place in her affection:

I rather chuse to Wante reeleife,
Then venture the revealing;
Where Glory recomends the greife,
Dispaire distrusts the healing.

Thus those desires that aime to high,
For any Mortall Lover:
When reason can not make them dy;
Discretion doth them cover.

Yet when discretion doth beareave
The plaintes that they should utter;
Then thy discretion may perceive,
That silence is a Suitor.

Silence in love bewraies more woe,
Then Wordes thought neare So Witty
A beggar tha's dumbe you know,
Deserveth double pittye.

Then wrong no more a dearest Hearte,
The meritt of true Passion;
Hee Smarteth most that hides his Smarte:
And sues for no compassions.

*As listed in Peter Beal's Guide to English Literary Manuscripts

Folger Va 89 p. 10*

farewell false loue from oracle of God
a mortall foe an enemye to reste
An enviyous boye from whome all cares aryse
A bastarde borne a beaste with rage possest
A waye of terror or temple full treason
In all efforts, contrarie vnto reason
A poysoned Serpent covered all with flowers
mother of Sighes a murthouer of repose
A sea of sorrows from whence are drawne suche showers
as moysture lende to every greife that growes
a scoule of guile a nett off deepe deceite
a gilded hooke of holdes a poysoined bate

A fortresse foyld, whiche reason did defend
a Syren Songe a feuer of the mynde
a maze wherin affection fynded no one
a raginge cloude y^{t} runnes before the winde
a Substance like the shadowe of the Sunne
a goale of griefe for which the wisest runne.

A quenchlesse fire a nurse of tremblinge feare
fire a place y^{t} offende to perill and mishappe
A true retreyte of Sorrowe and dispayre
An Idle boy, that sleepes in pleasures lapp
A deepe mistrust of y^{t} which certeyne Seemes
a hope of that which reason doubtfull deemes

Sithe from thy traynes my younger youthe betrayed
and for my faythe ingratitude I fynde
and sythe repentaunce hathe my wronges bewrayed
whose corse forth a repugnant vnto kinde
false love desire and bewtye frayle adewe
dead is the roote from whence fire fancy grewe

Folger Va 103 Part I f.29

A Lover to his Mistresse

Calling to minde myne eies wente long about
To cause my hearte for to forsake my breast;
All in a cage I fought to pluck them out
By whose advise I liud in Such unrest:
What could they say againe to wine my grace.
For sooth that ioy had beene my mistresse fare
Another time my heart I calld to minde,
Thinking that hee this woe on mee had brought;
Because that hee to Lose his Forte had resigned
What would hee say when I would him haue shame
That hee was here, kind had forgone my claime.

The Lie Agnes Latham's transcription from Davison A Poetical Rhapsodie 1611

Goe soule the bodies guest
vpon a thankelesse arrant,
Feare not to touch the best
the truth shall be thy warrant
Goe since I needs must die,
and giue the world the lie.

Say to the Court it glowes
and shines like rotten wood,
Say to the Church it showes
whats good, and doth no good
If Church and Court reply,
then giue them both the lie.

Tell Potentates they liue
acting by others action,
Not loued vnlesse they giue,
not strong but by affection.
If Potentates reply,
giue Potentates the lie.

Tell men of high condition,
that manage the estate,
Their purpose is ambition,
their practise onely hate:
And if they once reply,
then giue them all the lie.

Tell them that braue it most,
they beg for more by spending
Who in their greatest cost
seek nothing but commending.
And if they make replie,
then giue them all the lie.

Tell zeale it wants deuotion
tell loue it is but lust
Tell time it meets but motion
tell flesh it is but dust
And wish them not replie
for thou must giue the lie.

Tell age it daily wasteth,
tell honour how it alters.
Tell beauty how she blasteth
tell favour how it falters
And as they shall reply,
giue euery one the lie.

Tell wit how much it wrangles
in tickle points of nycenesse,
Tell wisedome she entangles
her selfe in ouer wisenesse.
And when they doe reply
straight giue them both the lie.

Tell Phisicke of her boldnesse,
tell skill it is preuention:
Tell charity of coldnes,
tell law it is contention,
And as they doe reply
so giue them all the lie.

Tell fortune of her blindnesse,
tell nature of decay,
Tell friendship of vnkindnesse,
tell iustice of delay,
And if they will reply,
then giue them all the lie.

Tell Arts the haue no soundnesse,
but vary by esteeming,
Tell schooles they want profoundnes
and stand too much on seeming.
If Artes and schooles reply,
giue arts and schooles the lie.

Tell faith its fled the Citie,
tell how the country erreth,
Tell manhood shakes off pittie,
tell vertue least preferreth
And if they doe reply,
spare not to giue the lie.

So when thou hast as I,
commanded thee, done blabbing,
although to giue the lie,
deserues no lesse than stabbing,
Stab at thee he that will,
no stab thy soule can kill.

Latham notes the addition of another verse in MS Chetham:

Tell London of her stewes
And cityzens of Vsury
And though it be no newes
Tell courtezans of Lechery
And if they to replye
They best deserue the lye.

According to Latham's transcription, MS Harley 2296 adds the following verse:

Lett Cuckouldes be rembred
I will not die theire detter
Theire heades are strongelie armed
To beare the brunte the better
If they themselves denighe
Theire wifes doe knowe they lie.

Latham also lists several answers to the lie. The following transcription is Latham's from MS Chetham 8012 p 107:

Go, Ecco of the minde,
a careles troth protest;
make answere that rude Rawly
no stomack can digest.

for why? the lies discent
is over base to tell;
to vs it came from Italy,
to them it came from hell.

What reason proues, confesse,
What slander saith, denye;
Let no vntrth with triumph passe,
but never giue the lye.

confesse, in glittering court
all ar not goulde that shine;
yet say one pearle, and much fine gould,
growes in that Princes minde.

confesse, that many leaues
do overgrowe the grounde;
yet say with in the fielde of God
good corne is to be founde.

confesse, som iudge vniust
the widowes right delay;
yet say there ar some Samuels
that never say her nay

admitte some man of state
do pitch his toughtes to hie;
is that a rule for all the rest,
their loyall hartes to trie?

your wittes ar in the waine,
your autumne in the bud;
you argue from particulars,
your reason is not good.

and still that men may see
lesse reason to commend you.
I marvaile most, amongst the rest,
how schooles and artes offende you.

but whie pursue I thus
the witlesse wordes of winde?
the more the crab doth seeke to creepe,
the more she is behinde.

in church and common wealth,
in court and country both,
what! nothing good, but all to bad
that every many doth loath?

The further that you raunge,
your errour is the wider;
the bee sometimes doth hony suck,
but sure you ar a spider.

and so my counsaile is,
for that you want a name,
to seeke some corner in the darke,
to hide your selfe from shame.

there wrapp the sely flye
With in your spitefull webbe;
both church and court may want you well,
they ar not at such ebbe.

as quarrels once begun
ar not so quickly ended,
so many faultes may soone be founde,
But not so soone amended.

and when you come againe,
to giue the world the lye,
I pray you tell them how to liue,
and teach them how to dye.

The next answer is from MS Ashmole 781 p 164.

The answre to the Lye:
Courts scorne, states disgracinge
Potentates scoffe, Goverments defacinge
Princes toutch, churches vnhallowing
Artes Iniury, virtues debacing
Ages monster, Honnors wasting
Bewties blemish, Favors blastinge
Witts excrement, wisedoms vomit
Phisickes scorne, Lawes Comet
Fortunes child, valors defiler
Iustice revenger, Frendships beguiler
such is the songe, such is the Author
worthy to be rewarded with a halter.

Latham's last answer is also from MS Ashmole 781 p 164:

Erroris Responsio

Courts Comender, states maintayner,
Potentates defender, governments Joyner
Princes prayser, churches Preacher
Arts rayser, virtues teacher
Ages rewarder, Honors strengthner
Beautys guardner, favours lengthener
Wits admmirer, wisedomes scholler
Physickes desirer, Lawes follower
Fortunes blamer, natures observer
Iustice proclaimer, Frindships preserver,
such is the Author, such is the songe
Retourninge the halter, Contemning the
wrong.

Steven May also adds another poem to this group of responses and attributes it Robert Devereux, Earl of Oxford:

Courte's skorne, state's disgracnge,
Potentate's scoff, govermente's defacing,
Prince's touch, churche's unhallowinge,
Artes' injury, vertue's debacinge,
Ages monster, honor's wastinge,
Beutye's blemmish, favourt's blasting,
Witte's excrement, wisdome's vommett,
Physicke's scoomme, lawe's commett,
Fortune's child, nature's defiler,
Justice revenger, freind shippe's beguiler;
Such is th song, such is the author,
Worthy to be rewarded with a halter.

Folger Va 103 Part 1

SWR On his Mistresse Serena.

Nature that washt her hands in milke,
And had ye^{tt} forgott to dry them;
In Steade of Earth tooke Snow and milke
At Lous request to try them:
Wether she a mistresse could compose,
To please Loves fancy out of those.

At Loves entreaty such a one
Hat Nature made, but wth her butye
Shee hath framd a Heart of Stone:
So that love by his ill destiny,
Must dy for that w^{ch} Nature gave Him
Because her darling will save Him.

Her Eies Hee would should bee of Light,
A viollett breath, Her lipps of jelly,
Her haire not blacke nore over bright,
And of the softest down her bellye:
As for her inside hee would have itt,
Compos'd of Wantonnes and Witt.

But Time that Nature doth dispise,
And rudly gives Her loue the bye;
Makes hope a foole, and sorrow wise,
His hands do neither wash nor dry.
But being make a steele and rust,
Turnes Snow and milde to dust.
The light, the belly, sweete lipps, and breath,
Hee dimmes, discouers, and destroyes;
With these Hee feedes, but fills not death,
Wch somtimes where the foode of joyes:
Yea Time doth dull each lovely Witt,
And dries all Wantonnesse With itt.
O cruell Time that takes on trust.
Our youth , and joyes, and all Wee haue;
And paies us but wth age Earth and dust:
Which in the darke and silent grave,
When wee haue Wandred all our Wayes,
Shutts upp the story of our dayes.

But from this Grave and Earth, and dust,
The Lord will raise mee upp of trust.

The following note is in the margin in the same hand:
This last staiffe was said to bee made by S^{r} Walter Raleigh a little before his death wth the additio of those two last verses.

Folger Va 103 Part I

S[r] W.R. to his Mistresse

Thou sentest to mee a hear was crown'd
I tooke itt to bee thine;
But when I saw itt had wound
I knew that heart was mine.
A bounty of a strange conceit
To send my owne to mee,
And send itt in a remorse estate,
Then itt was sent to thee.
The heart I sent was free from staine,
Itt was entire and sound,
But thou returndst itt back againe,
Sick of a deadly wound.
O heauens how wouldst thou use a heart,
That shoud rebellious bee;
Since thou got so unkind do that
W[ch] so much honoured thee.

Folger Va 103 Part 1*

Love
Sr W. Ra: To his Love When hee had obtained Her

Now Serena; bee not coy;
Since wee frely may enjoy
Sweete embraces: such delights,
As will shorten tedious nightes.
Thinke that beauty will not stay
With you allwaies but away,
And that tyrannizing face
That now holdes such perfect grace,
Will both chaing'd and ruinted bee;
So fraile is all thinges as Wee see
So subject unto conquering Time
Then gather Flowers in theire prime,
Let them not fall and perish so,
Nature, her bountee did bestow
On us that Wee might bee them; so And
Tis coldnesse not to understand
What shee and Youth and Forme perswade
With Oppertunety, that's made
As We could wish itt. Lett's then meete
Often With amourous lippes, and greet
Each other till our Wantonne Kisses
In number passe the dayes II lifes
Consum'd in frauaise and the starrs
That looke upon our peacfull Warrs
With envious lustere. If this store
Will not suffice, Wee'le number our
The same againe, but ill wee finde,
No number left to call to minde
And shew our plenty They are poore
That can count all they haue and more.

As listed in Peter Beal's Guide to English Literary Manuscripts

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