

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

"THAT DISORDERLY ORDER":

E. K.'S VOICE IN *THE SHEPHEARDES CALENDER*

BY

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ABSTRACT

When *The Shepheardes Calender* was published in the latter part of the sixteenth century, it provided its readers with a literary game of allusion and allegory. Its composite structure was a weaving of conventions into a unique and complex tapestry. The modern critical quest for unity has succeeded in dismissing the significance of the *Calender's* compositional complexity in favour of finding its thematic and structural core. The result has been a fragmentation of the unity of the original text; the poetic centre has been privileged over the "apparatus" made up by woodcuts, verbal emblems, and extended commentary by the semi-anonymous E. K.

This thesis is primarily concerned with the figure of E. K. and his role as an integral part of the intended textual structure. Chapter One reacquaints the reader with the original presentation of the *Calender*. Chapter Two examines the general critical treatment of E. K. in the last century. Chapters Three and Four initiate the re-instatement of E. K.'s commentary into critical investigation of the textual unit that constitutes *The Shepheardes Calender*. The conclusion admits that this thesis only comprises the beginning of a study that asks the reader to reconsider that the poetic composition of *The Shepheardes Calender* is not only the central poem but all the devices and voices of the original text.

The Shepheardes Calender is not simply a poem but a composite text. The composition, as a unit, is poetic. And E. K., so long ostracized from the centre because of modern notions of an editor's status, is an integral part of the text. He insists that order is not what the reader expects it to be.

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In memory of my father

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Chapter One: Recovering the Text

On December 5, 1579, the well-known radical printer, Hugh Singleton, entered *The Shepheardes Calender* in the Stationers' Register (Heninger viii-ix). Edmund Spenser's name did not appear in the volume. Nor did it appear in any of the subsequent printings by John Harrison who accepted the contract for the *Calender* in October 1580 (Heninger ix). The *Calender*, which Ruth Samson Luborsky claims looked like no other "single" book of its time ("Allusive" 29), thus made its initial appearance assigned only to a propagandist and an author who chose the pseudonym, Immeritô. Although Immeritô was soon known to be Edmund Spenser, the text continued to be issued anonymously. The integrity of the text, except for decorative additions to the title page, was maintained with each printing until the Bathurst Latin translation (1653) which not only included Spenser's name but excluded the glosses and the arguments provided by the unidentified E. K. (Johnson 9). The value of the original construction, the textual unit that Spenser intended, was destroyed. The poetic centre became the sole repository of the author's, of Edmund Spenser's, meaning. Immeritô, meaning "the undeserving one," became Edmund Spenser, "Prince of English Poets" (Johnson 9). The marginal text ascribed to E. K. was reduced to the new editor's "Glossarie; Or, An Alphabetical Index of unusual words explained" (Johnson 9). E. K.'s presence in the text was

obviously no longer considered relevant to the value of the poetic discourse.

Modern editors, too, have taken liberties with the textual unity of *The Shepheardes Calender*, thus altering the reader's perspective on the text Edmund Spenser so clearly wished to be considered as a unit. Frank Kermode, for example, in *English Pastoral Poetry*, chooses three eclogues, "August," "October," and "November," without editorial justification, to illustrate Spenser's contribution to the pastoral tradition. *The Norton Anthology of English Literature Vol. 1* uses only "October" to represent the *Calender* and incorporates "the glosses into the footnotes, abridging only some of E. K.'s longer exegeses, anecdotes, and tags from classical and contemporary authors" (495 n1). The reader of such texts must recreate the remainder of the *Calender* based on a trust in the ability and competency of the editor to recognize fragments which accurately represent the whole. Implicit in such alterations to the original unity and presentation of the text is the assumption that meaning exists solely within the poetic discourse and that each unit of the poem is merely a reaffirmation of a single and dominant meaning. The construction of the volume as a unit with each part bearing a particular relation to the whole is subordinated in importance to the recognizable centre of the text, the metered discourse. S. K. Heninger's comments on the original presentation of the *Calender* reflect the modern notion of textual hierarchy when he

writes: "When Spenser's twelve eclogues appeared, they were adorned with a wide variety of ancillary paraphernalia" (xii). The idea that the woodcuts and E. K.'s commentary are merely adornments implies that they are negligible in the search for meaning. That Spenser desired no alterations to the *Calender* even after his publication of *The Faerie Queene*, however, clearly indicates that the "editorial apparatus" (Miller, "Authorship" 219) or "apparatus criticus" (Sambrook 35) are part of the intended unit of meaning. The presentation of the *Calender* as a unit contains its own meaning. To select from the unit only the poem proper is to destroy the possibility of interpreting or gaining access to the totality of meaning. Luborsky, in "The Allusive Presentation of *The Shepheardes Calender*," explains why the text must be read in consideration of all its original parts:

Every presentation, of course, has a meaning, but if the format is appropriate to the kind of book and in the fashion of the time, the effect is conventional: the meaning is that the presentation is not to be remarked. (31)

The *Calender*, as Luborsky points out, was a unique composite of many models and conventions; its presentation was new to the reader and therefore contained meaning beyond that conveyed by the central verbal construct. The Renaissance reader would recognize that the combination of various conventions, the allusive quality of the parts of the text,

and the relationship of the parts to the whole created meaning as significant as that contained within the poetic centre which on the whole is more conventional than the complete text.

This chapter will be devoted to a consideration of each element of the composite text in order to show that criticism which ignores the significance of the ostensibly non-poetic devices of the text ultimately succeeds only in discovering local meanings or single threads of meaning. If today's reader is to regain some sense of the impact the *Calender* had on the sixteenth-century reader, he must be willing to read the whole text, not simply the poetic discourse. The totality of meaning, that unit within which local meanings exist, is represented by the construct Spenser intended his audience to read. The reader who seeks out only the satirical meaning of the poem, who finds value only in those parts of the text that reflect Spenser's religious affiliations, or who dredges up only the political allegory of the poetic centre is not necessarily reading the text incorrectly. Nor is he reading the text from as complete a perspective as he could when he fails to consider the textual unity of the *Calender*.

Although several editions of the *Calender* are available to today's reader, a discussion of Spenser's original textual intentions necessitates the use of the original 1579 quarto edition. Only six original copies have been recorded (Heninger xiv); the following examination will, therefore,

rely on a facsimile production, edited and introduced by S. K. Heninger, Jr.

The original edition of *The Shepheardes Calender* features a title page, two envoys, an Epistle, a General Argument to the book, and twelve eclogues corresponding to the twelve months of the year. Each eclogue in turn comprises a woodcut, an argument, an eclogue proper (or main poem), a verbal emblem, and an extended gloss. The December eclogue differs from the rest in that Colin's emblem is missing, yet glossed by E. K., and another emblem, "Merce non mercede," follows the final envoy and appears to close both the eclogue and the entire text (Kennedy 95). As each poetic unit is enclosed within or surrounded by devices, so too is the larger construct of the calendar framework. The physical makeup of the text appears to be a metaphor designed to inform the reader that the text is very much concerned with its own textuality; as the microcosm of the individual eclogue is contained within the macrocosm of the complete text, the textual unit--that is, *The Shepheardes Calender*--is contained within the macrocosm of its own literary history. While the *Calender* can be, and usually is, taken as a single text containing its own universe of meanings, it must also be seen as the product of other texts. Each element of the text becomes significant, then, in terms of containing or defining and expanding the value of the complete text. An examination of the textual elements could justifiably begin with the poem proper and

work outward to incorporate the "ancillary paraphernalia" but as any text is initially read in a linear fashion, the discussion of individual parts will proceed in the same manner, beginning with the title page of Hugh Singleton's 1579 edition.

The title page of *The Shepheardes Calender* appears reasonably innocuous to the modern reader. It displays the extended title of the volume: *The Shepheardes Calender Conteyning twelue Aeglogues proportionable to the twelue monethes*. The idea of proportion within the construct relating to the proportion on a grander scale of nature and the seasons instantly signals the reader to a text that is at once contained within a framework and yet more than that which the framework suggests. "Proportionable" indicates a relationship but not necessarily one where the elements to be compared are equal. The title is the first indication of the microcosm/macrocosm quality of the text.

A brief dedication to the "noble and virtuous" Sir Philip Sidney follows the title, and a decorative printer's device separates the dedication from Hugh Singleton's name, the address of his printing house, and the date of publication. The information on the title page does not include the name of the author. The title page, while appearing simple to the modern reader, meant more to its contemporary readers.

The title page was an announcement. It prepared the reader for a text pertaining to contemporary affairs and.

alluding to established texts of the day. Sidney's name would alert the reader to the fact that the author was seeking patronage from a highly esteemed member of the upper class, and Singleton's name would point to the text's probable political and religious affiliations. The title itself would associate the book with a "long-familiar perennial almanack, *The Kalender of Sheepehards*, . . . one of the most readily available books in Elizabethan England" (Heninger v). Spenser, through the verbal information of the title page, told his readers that the book was both old and new.

The title page, however, had a silent, visual statement to make to its audience through its physical difference from other books of the time. The page is borderless, the decorative device relatively unimposing.

Every other element is unremarkable: the three fonts, triadic arrangement, printer's ornament and device are all characteristic of many English books of the time and typical of Singleton's house style. But his practice did include the use of borders as well as larger ornaments. Had either of these been employed the first edition would seem unexceptional, as the title pages of subsequent editions do, where the sparseness of the title page is "corrected." (Luborsky, "Allusive" 33)

The Renaissance audience would have expected a more decorative announcement of the text and would have looked for meaning in the spareness of the title page.

The significance of the underdecorated title page is threefold. First, the borderless page was unconventional, even for Singleton, indicating that the printer probably received specific instructions to omit the usual ornate border. Spenser's involvement in the matter cannot be proven but, in light of the nature of the composition as a whole, it cannot be discounted.

The second point that arises from the plainness of the title page tells the reader something about the author of the text. The bareness, the lack of ornate devices, suggests rusticity and humility. The author could speak with authority about the pastoral world and its simplicity because he too was a simple and humble man. As Luborsky points out, "Most English books of any pretension at the time announced themselves by a filled and imposing title page" ("Allusive" 33). Through the simplicity of presentation, Spenser told his reader that he had before him a work that would speak of matters which concerned the common man, a work that had no need of pretension and flourish.

The third significant aspect of the borderless title page is the allusion to particular French writers. Luborsky explains:

The nearest pertinent resemblance I have been able to find to the spare title page of the *Calender* is the example of title pages in certain editions of Marot and Ronsard. ("Allusive" 33)

That Spenser was familiar with Clément Marot's work in particular is evidenced by E. K.'s reference to Marot in the Epistle and in the gloss to "January," and by Spenser's use of Marot's motto, "La mort ny mord," as Colin's emblem in "November" (Luborsky, "Allusive" 33). But the question arises, why would Spenser allude to French writers at precisely the time the English public was reacting passionately against Queen Elizabeth's proposed marriage to the French Catholic Duc Alençon?

Three possible answers come to mind. First, the reference to notable poets of any nationality implies a sense of brotherhood that raises the poet above the concerns of nationalism. Poets form a nation of their own bound not by man-made laws but by the love of the spirit of man. Second, the allusion to Marot suggests something about the nature of Spenser's own ideas and ambitions. Clément Marot's patron was the King of France, François I (Luborsky, "Allusive" 56), but the King's patronage had not come easily. Throughout his life, Marot argued for the intellectual freedom of the poet. Annabel Patterson, in *Censorship and Interpretation*, discusses the battle between Renaissance writers and the official censors, claiming for Marot a position at the front of the movement:

In an exile's edition of his *Adolescence Clémentine*, his enormously successful collection of poems published in 1532, he inserted a new poem to Francis I which is both an appeal for clemency, an ideal to which his name symbiotically connected him, and a statement of his poetics. And central to these poetics, forged out of recent experience, are two conjoined ideas: the right of poets to immunity from censorship, and the right of the reader to freedom of interpretation. (4)

That Marot was so vocal about the need for poets to have a privileged status in society must have influenced Spenser. Both the open references and the furtive allusions to Marot illustrate Spenser's concern for the status of the poet in English society.

Two other French writers influenced Spenser. Luborsky points out that the spare title page was found also in certain editions of Ronsard. She suggests, moreover, that the *Calender's* first envoy is an allusion to Du Bellay's dedicatory verse which began "A son livre." Alfred W. Satterthwaite claims Spenser's admiration of Ronsard and Du Bellay was an admiration of their philosophical ideas regarding the poet and language:

Critical theory of poetry, and the classic concept of the poet as seer, as vates, came from Italy, and from Rome and Greece as well as from France. But [the] magnificent burst of vernacular melody

that issued from the Pléiade was perhaps more inspiring than anything else to the young Elizabethans. (252)

Du Bellay's poetry was "personal and interior"; Ronsard's was the poetry of love for mankind (Satterthwaite 247-49). Spenser, inspired by both writers, found "an equilibrium between the external and the inward that neither Ronsard nor Du Bellay could achieve" (Satterthwaite 251). The dignity and humanism of the French writers had a profound influence on Spenser's thought and on his desire to do for English poetry what these writers had done not only for French literature, but also for the status of poetry.

The title page, although visually simple, performs a significant function with respect to the text as a whole. It suggests, on the one hand, that the interior of the text is simple and rustic, bound to homespun English ideas and language. On the other hand, it creates an exterior textuality through its allusion to certain French texts that the competent Renaissance reader would understand. The title page is duplicitous, at once simple and sophisticated, simultaneously pointing inward and outward.

On the verso of the title page, the first envoy, "To His Booke," appears. It functions in several ways through both content and placement. It is a comment on English censorship, a plea for the freedom of the text. It binds the Calender to the English tradition at the same time as it alludes to the French tradition. And, it is one of only two

cases where an authorial voice emerges, yet still, as Miller puts it, under the guise of "conspicuous anonymity" ("Spenser's Vocation" 197).

The envoy, as an English convention, usually came at or near the end of a text. It was the author's way of both releasing the book to its readership and acknowledging the traditions from which the text had grown. By placing an envoy at the beginning of the text where the dedication, according to Luborsky, was usually expected in English texts ("Allusive" 33), Spenser again asked his readers to look closely for meaning. Discussing Spenser's opening envoy, Miller proposes:

[Spenser] has already begun modifying the convention when he salutes his book on the first page, changing his envoy from a concluding device into a framing one. ("Authorship" 224)

The modification was not, however, simply to disrupt convention. Nor was the envoy simply a salute to Spenser's book. The modification pointed simultaneously to the nature of the poem's content and to the traditions upon which Spenser drew. He saluted not only his book but Chaucer, Marot, and Du Bellay. The first, and most obvious, feature the Renaissance reader would notice would be the displacement, but then he would look for the reasons behind this displacement, for its meaning.

The sixteenth-century reader, as Luborsky suggests, would expect the dedication to follow the title page and,

finding instead an envoy, would probably read the poem as performing the function of both ("Allusive" 38). By examining the envoy further, the reader would note, however, that what appeared to be a modification of convention also became allusion and announcement.

The competent reader, Miller points out, would recognize the allusion to Chaucer's envoy which comes at the end of *Troilus and Criseyde*:

Go, litel bok, go, litel myn tragedye,
 Ther God thi makere yet, er that he dye,
 So sende myght to make in som comedye!
 But litel book, no makyng thow n'envie,
 But subgit to alle poseye;
 And kis the steppes, where as thow seest pace
 Virgile, Ovide, Omer, Lucan, and Stace.

And for ther is so gret diversite
 In Englissh and in writyng of oure tonge,
 So prey I God that non myswrite the,
 Ne the mysmetre for defaute of tonge.
 And red wherso thow be, or elles songe,
 That thow be understonde, God I biseche!
 But yet to purpose of my rather speche.

(Book V 1786-1799)

The giving up of the poem to make its own way, the humility of the author, and the idea that the poem will have an

elevated existence and be subject to envy are all evident in Spenser's envoy as well.

Spenser's envoy is signed Immeritô. The pseudonym names the anonymous author and describes the tradition from which he draws. The relationship between humility and anonymity binds the *Calender* to its literary heritage. As Miller explains in "Authorship, Anonymity, and The *Shepheardes Calender*," Spenser used the sixteenth-century concept of authorship to full advantage by producing an anonymous text:

We give a great deal of importance to the concept [authorship] when dealing with literary texts, especially modern ones, but in cultural situations where literature bears a simpler and more affirmative relation to accepted values in a community, such texts often remain anonymous Medieval literature in the vernacular was largely homiletic and educational, a pastoral labour much like any other that might be undertaken in the service of the Church for the benefit of a local community. (220)

By presenting his text anonymously, using only Immeritô to stress the idea of humility, Spenser announced the public value of his text and its connection with the medieval tradition.

The anonymity of the text also suggests that Spenser was aware that the critical nature of his work could be

considered offensive by some of his readers. But the envoy, in acknowledging jeopardy, in effect gives the impression that Spenser did not fear retribution. He ends the envoy:

And when thou are past ieopardee,
Come tell me, what was sayd of mee:
And I will send more after thee.

Spenser gives up his text, but the bond is not totally severed. The book will return, and if the reception is favourable, more poetry will follow. The "poem as orphan," Miller asserts, "gives a literal sense to the rhetorical convention that has the poem responsible for making its own way in the world" (224). But the orphaning process is paradoxical. By emphasizing his own status as the unknown parent, Spenser cements the bond between text and author.

Beyond the allusion to Chaucer and the medieval tradition of anonymity, the envoy also alludes to French conventions. According to Luborsky:

The argument that Marot, in particular, may be one of the primary models for the title page in the *Calender* takes on force when that title page is looked at as a unit with the poem printed on its verso, "To His Booke." ("Allusive" 33)

Marot, also disrupting the French reader's expectation of the acknowledgement to the printer on the verso, gave privilege to his envoy, "L'auteur à son livre," which is followed by the author's motto "La Mort ny Mord" ("Allusive" 33). Luborsky points out that "Du Bellay's work also was

printed with the author's address on the verso of the title page ("Allusive" 38). Spenser's allusion to the French poets, and his obvious tribute to Chaucer, bind the Calender to a local and Continental textual history. The content of the poem with its shadows and talk of jeopardy gives the poem local meaning. The envoy, like the title page, is constructed and displaced to present meaning beyond its content. By playing with conventions, Spenser alerts the reader to the fact that form contains meanings that cannot be discounted in this text.

The envoy appears where the English reader would expect a dedication. By sending his book "To him that is the president / Of noblesse and of cheualree," Spenser again plays with convention. The envoy functions as both the author's address to his work and as a dedication, and its displacement forces the reader to re-evaluate the Epistle which follows. The Epistle also performs two functions; it is an epistle to the reader and, in this sense, is placed where the reader would expect it, but it is also a dedicatory epistle to Gabriel Harvey and so takes on an added function:

It is in the position of the conventional explicatory letter to the reader and takes on the tasks of such a letter: praise of the author and his work. It also serves as a critical and editorial preface. But it is something else, too, something I have found no precedent for. It seems

to be a letter asking Harvey to be the joint patron with Sidney of the entire work. (Luborsky, "Allusive" 40)

By dedicating the *Calender* to two well-known figures, Spenser succeeded in informing the reader that the text was worthy of the attention of men of honour and men of letters. But, as Luborsky has pointed out, there is no precedent for dedicating a work to two significant people. If Spenser was indeed shifting the authorial responsibility for the text and at the same time trying to draw attention to his book, the dual dedication makes more sense. By dedicating the text to Sidney and emphasizing that dedication by means of the envoy (although the envoy does not refer specifically to Sidney), and by dedicating the work to Harvey by means of a semi-anonymous author, E. K., Spenser diffused the authorial voice and consequently surrendered part of the responsibility for the text. E. K. also assumes responsibility for the gloss at the end of each eclogue and for the General Argument, and a discussion of these elements of the text will follow a brief examination of the woodcuts, the eclogue proper, the verbal emblem, and the final envoy.

The woodcuts, one accompanying each eclogue, are discussed in detail by Luborsky in her article, "The Illustrations to *The Shepheardes Calender*" and form far too vast a topic to deal with here. Her analysis does bring to light two important features, however, and these are relevant to the present discussion.

First, Luborsky's findings show that Spenser was alluding to various illustrated texts with which his readers would have been familiar: the emblem book (Spenser had already been directly involved with a translation of *A Theatre for Worldlings*), the illustrated classic, the fable book (popular in schools at the time), illustrated editions of Barclay and Googe (also written in the eclogue form), and of course the calendar almanac ("Allusive" 42). As with the envoy, Spenser drew on the rustic and the classic, the English and the Continental, and created his own illustrations, although perhaps not by his own hand, for his "new" book.

The second significant aspect of the illustrations arises out of the previous point. Luborsky's analysis supports the idea that the woodcuts were prescribed for the text but the fact remains that the name of the artist is unavailable. In effect, the illustrations provide the little volume with yet another veiling. By their presence a collaborative work is implied, but the anonymity puts an end to any attempt to prove that the work was or was not done by Spenser. Were any reader to find a seditious element to the illustrations, he would not be able to rest responsibility upon any individual.

The next element of the text is the eclogue proper. The eclogues of Barnabe Googe (pub. 1563) and Alexander Barclay (pub. 1570) were Spenser's English models, and those of Virgil, of course, constituted his primary classical

model. However, the eclogue of Spenser's *Calender* was accompanied by two elements besides the gloss: the argument and the verbal emblem. An argument placed at the head of an eclogue, Luborsky claims, is found in some Continental translations of Virgil, in Turberville's translation of Mantuan, in fable books, and at the beginning of a "discrete unit" in many prose genres, although the argument is not labeled so in the last two examples ("Allusive" 43-44). The emblem or motto is also an unusual device to be found with the eclogue. It comes "at the end of the text instead of preceding the picture as it does in the emblem book" (Luborsky, "Allusive" 51). The sources for the emblems, as Luborsky points out, are classical texts, Marot, and epigram and proverb collections; but a few are from actual emblem books ("Allusive" 51). With the use of the argument and the rearrangement of the verbal emblem, Spenser created a unit that was at once new and yet familiar. The eclogue forms the illusion of the centre and the central allusion to the Virgilian eclogue, but the argument and the emblem are examples of the skill and innovation of a poet who was also saluting the English tradition.

The closing envoy, or epilogue, is in a textual position that the English reader would expect. If, however, the opening poem is also an envoy, then the final envoy invites comparison with it. The final envoy, Miller proposes, is the final word on the autonomy of the text:

It invokes the text as an imagined presence, and in doing so realizes its own assertion: it summons into the mind an ideal moment in which the speaker, the reader, and posterity join in admiration of the poem they have all just finished. ("Authorship" 226)

In contrast with the opening envoy, the epilogue is a "disarming assertion of greatness" ("Authorship" 227). Chaucerian humility is not to be found in this poem. It has the finality and determination of tone which contrasts directly with the cautious and quiet tone of Immeritô's address. Compare:

And if that Enuie barke at thee,
As sure it will, for succoure flee
Vnder the shadow of his wing.

with the following passage from the final envoy:

Loe I haue made a Calender for euery yeare,
That steele in strength, and time in durance shall
outweare:

. . . .

Goe lyttle Calender, thou hast a free passeporte. Immeritô, himself, is no longer: the final poem needs no signature, for it is the announcement of the authorial figure who created Immeritô. It is the voice of the author, the new poet, not an author who speaks through anonymity as a common voice, but the author of *The Shepheardes Calender* who, by creating a calendar for all time, a monument, has

defined himself, identified himself, through the creative act.

The final envoy and the final emblem, which Judith M. Kennedy believes to speak for the main themes of the *Calender* (96), suggest closure for the text. But if the text can be closed, the reader must ask why the text is attended by so much editorial material. If the book has a free passport in the world, surely this implies that the reader, too, has a certain freedom of interpretation. The presence of an editor or glossator--the Renaissance critic--suggests, however, that the reader may require assistance in gaining access to the poetic core of the text.

The Epistle to Harvey, the General Argument, the glosses, and usually the individual arguments, although this is only speculative, are attributed to the unidentified figure of E. K. Like the woodcuts, E. K.'s contribution is most often considered to be ancillary to the text. The material is drawn upon in order to support theories regarding the unity of the centre. Little consideration is given, however, to the fact that, even beyond what E. K. has to say, the presence of the material in the original text had meaning for the reader. The General Argument, for instance, was, according to Luborsky's textual study, "probably patterned after the 'General Somme' appearing in many contemporary Vergils" ("Allusive" 41), and the reader would take the allusion to Virgil as part of the meaning. He prepared himself for a text that acknowledged its debt to

the classical tradition. The reader would also accept that the annotator, whether real or fictional, spoke with a different voice than the author but maintained a position within the intended structure that could not be ignored.

The glosses, unlike the Argument, would have appeared unusual to the contemporary reader. Luborsky explains that the gloss would attract attention "not because it exists, but because of where it exists. It is subsequent to the text, and one would have expected it to be marginal" ("Allusive" 44). She cites only four examples of appended glosses that she was able to locate: "The first two are Vergils; the third, Ronsard; the last, the emblem book" (50). The subsequent gloss, then, alluded to the classical, the Continental, and illustrative traditions. But the gloss was also a modification of convention. Many texts were published with extended commentary (Heninger xii-xiii) and the marginal gloss was also common (Luborsky, "Allusive" 44), but E. K.'s glosses were in the position of an extended commentary with the fragmented appearance of footnotes. The combination was unique and again Spenser played with convention. A. C. Hamilton proposes that the glosses provided the text with a "burden of scholarship" which gave it the look of an instant classic (136). The implication of Hamilton's statement is that the glosses perform a predominantly visual function. On the one hand, they do serve to give the text a distinctive appearance but, like

every other aspect of the text, they contribute to the meaning of the text as a whole.

The Shepheardes Calender is a complex textual unit, rich in its language and its intricately woven themes. Generically, it is pastoral, satire, fable, and, one could argue, narrative. It is also an extremely complicated text in terms of its construction, each part linking the text with other texts, other cultures, and each part belonging within the text. Modern criticism has failed, generally, to acknowledge that the physical composition of the text, its presentation, has meaning. Critics seek unity within the poetic centre and subordinate the apparatus that surrounds or contains the centre. The marginal material in some cases seems to be treated like the tattered dust jacket of a treasured text; it remains with the text to protect the unity of the special object but serves no aesthetic purpose in its own right. The attempt to regain the textual integrity of the *Calender*, however, is beginning. Ruth Samson Luborsky's study of the physical presentation of the text and her detailed analysis of the woodcuts have provided an invaluable foundation from which to begin piecing together a complete aesthetic object from what almost appears to be the disorder or eclecticism of the text.

This thesis is also concerned with the composite structure of *The Shepheardes Calender*, with re-evaluating the integrity of the complete text. The remainder of this study will focus on the marginal text supplied by E. K. in

order to establish that his presence in the text is truly part of the aesthetic unit and to show that he can no more be ignored than can Colin Clout or Immeritô. Before proceeding to the beginnings of an investigation of how E. K. can function within the text if he is considered integral to the text, an overview must be made of the various ways in which E. K. has been critically ostracized from the poetic centre. That E. K. has been marginalized in the search for unity has ultimately created a disorder that destroys the unified complexity of the intended composition.

Chapter Two: E. K. and The Critics

Once a text is credited with high authority it is studied intensely; once it is so studied it acquires mystery or secrecy. The tradition undergoes many transformations, but is continuous; revivals of learning did not destroy but fostered secrecy, and the Renaissance cult of esoteric wisdom survived the new literalism of Reform. The belief that a text might be an open proclamation, available to all, coexisted comfortably with the belief that it was a repository of secrets.

(Kermode 144)

The Shepheardes Calender is such a text as Frank Kermode describes in *The Genesis of Secrecy*. In each of its "available" readings secrets exist, to which a wealth of critical material provides testament. According to Kermode, the intensive study of a text serves, ironically, to generate more secrets, more mystery. For example, the critical attention alone paid to the nature of Spenser's political and religious beliefs stands to exemplify the ambiguities and indeterminacies inherent in the text. But Kermode speaks of a text that is "credited with high authority," a text that "acquires mystery or secrecy." *The Shepheardes Calender*, in this respect, is an anomaly. The moment it was published it had both: high authority through allusion and through the text's own installation in the

literary canon, and mystery and secrecy through allegory, anonymity, and the commentary provided by E. K. Textual authority, that is, the right of the text to claim value for itself, and secrecy, that is, the indeterminate plurality of meanings Kermode calls "the unfollowable world" (145), were imposed by the text before any reading became necessary.

The figure of E. K. is central to the issues of authority and secrecy. He is simultaneously the first critic to credit the text with canonical authority and the mediator between the anonymous author and the secrets of the text. However, because E. K. himself is a mystery, his role or position in the text has become problematical for the critic. The following examination of the various ways critics have treated the figure of E. K. makes no pretension to remove the mystery that accompanies E. K. Rather, it is an argument against removing the mystery and an argument in favour of claiming E. K.'s partial anonymity as an integral part of the text. By allowing the enigma of his identity to exist, the text can claim for him the role of a narrator to whom the author has given the insights, the shortcomings, the strengths, and the weaknesses that constitute any fictional narrator with only partial authority over the text.

There are three basic ways in which critics have handled E. K.'s presence in the *Calender*. They have accepted him at face-value, that is, simply as the first of many critics and editors of the text. They have attempted

to determine his real identity on the assumption that this may provide clues to the meaning of the poem proper. And they have used his work selectively, almost randomly, to support various hypotheses regarding the eclogues. In each case, what becomes evident is that E. K. is considered outside the poetic core of the text. His voice is not a textual voice but part of the apparatus.

Those critics who accept E. K. for what he appears to be--a glossator--make two assumptions. First, they impose upon him the twentieth-century concept of an annotator whose function it is to clarify, explain, and maintain an impersonal, objective voice while doing so. Second, they assume the text can be separated from the gloss without any adverse effects. However, on this point they fail to take into account that E. K.'s glosses and commentary continued to be printed throughout Spenser's lifetime without changes; no changes were made, in fact, until 1653, long after Spenser's death. Almost eighty years of printing had elapsed and the text had remained uncorrected and unaltered. It follows that Spenser was satisfied with the function the gloss was performing, with the fact that E. K. still had no real identity, and with the fact that the text did not require ascription to an author. The mystery, or mystique, of the text was allowed to develop naturally, to remain part of the reading.

Alice E. Lasater, in "The Chaucerian Narrator in Spenser's *Shepherd's Calendar*," provides a prime example of

the way E. K.'s role in the text has been ignored. Lasater attempts "to examine Spenser's use of the narrator in *The Shepheardes Calender* and to relate Spenser's narrator in some detail to Chaucer's narrator" (189). Her first step is to establish Spenser's use of "a direct and a hidden narrator" (190). The direct narrator, she claims, is Immerit^o, who "appears only in the first and last eclogues and in the two envoys," and the hidden narrator is the voice that emerges whenever "Spenser speaks through his various characters" (191). Spenser, then, claims total authority through both the direct and hidden narrators. No responsibility for even partial authority is given to E. K.

Lasater also claims three purposes for the hidden narrator--"moral, personal, and humorous" (191): the moral, so Spenser could criticize with impunity; the personal, so the author could praise himself through others; and the humorous, so the reader would recall the ribald humor of Chaucer without Spenser's needing to disrupt the tone of his own work dramatically. At no point in her discussion of the function of either the direct or hidden narrator does Lasater mention E. K.'s comments on the church, or his praise of the author, or the subtle humor evident in many of his explanations. It is clear, however, that Lasater has read E. K.'s work and takes it at face-value when she parenthetically refers to Colin as "Spenser's representative" (193). Other than the fact that Colin, too, is a poet, there is no indication that he is Spenser except

that E. K. states that it is so in the Epistle and in the glosses to "January" and "September." Lasater's refusal to refer to E. K. openly, therefore, can be interpreted as her assumption that E. K. is no more than an editor, perhaps privy to some meanings, but nevertheless outside and apart from the author's literary work.

Although it is almost impossible to discuss *The Shepheardes Calender* without some mention of E. K., either implicitly or explicitly, E. K.'s position in the text often suffers because of critical focus on the genre of the text. The study of pastoral, the usual form of which is the eclogue, is essentially undermined by the unusual appearance of the scholarly and pseudo-classical gloss. Therefore, critics like David R. Shore, Nancy Jo Hoffman, and D. M. Rosenberg, whose work concentrates on Spenser's use of the pastoral, downplay the significance of E. K.'s material because it is both technically and formally outside the genre they are investigating. They accept that E. K. is simply an editor or critic whose work can be replaced by newer, more accurate criticism. Shore, for example, in a discussion of the "July" eclogue, writes "when Hallett Smith follows and expands upon E. K. he is in agreement with most modern criticism of the eclogue" (37). Later, Shore claims: "As the Epilogue's reference to pastoral care suggests, though, E. K. and a host of other readers are not simply mistaken in seeing in "July" the 'dispraye of proude and ambitious Pastours'" (45). According to Shore, E. K. is

simply another critic and reader; that E. K.'s reading holds a privileged position by virtue of being authorized by Spenser and being printed with the original text seems to be of little consequence.

In *Spenser's Pastorals: The Shepheardes Calender and "Colin Clout,"* Nancy Jo Hoffman takes the same position as Shore with respect to E. K. According to Hoffman, "To E. K., Spenser's language is obscure, his sources enigmatic. E. K. is too close to *The Calender* to understand it as both original and synthetic" (9). With this, Hoffman virtually dismisses E. K.'s role in the *Calender* and concentrates on what the eclogues reveal about Spenser's personal attitudes and beliefs. Once again, E. K. is marginalized, trapped in the extraneous paraphernalia surrounding the pastoral poem. He has no authority, he simply exists; he has no claim to the secrets of the text; he is simply a reader "bewildered by the work he is praising" (Hoffman 9). Hoffman at least implies that E. K. has a voice when she recognizes how unobjective he can be, but she ignores the possibility that E. K.'s reaction may be an aesthetic function of the text.

D. M. Rosenberg, concerned with an examination of "the generic and thematic development of the pastoral and epic as expressed in the works of Virgil, Spenser, and Milton" (13), treats E. K.'s contribution as a function of the text but implies that E. K. has no voice, only a position. Rosenberg considers the importance of the glosses and the commentary in terms of visual impact:

Ambivalent motives compelled Spenser to choose the pastoral form when he wrote *The Shepheardes Calender*. On the one hand, he emphasizes the traditionally humble rank of pastoral by concealing his identity under the pseudonym of "Immeritô"; on the other, he is introduced as "our new poete," and he includes E. K.'s complicated machinery of erudite gloss and commentary as if to encourage the reader to think that this poem is a major contribution to world literature. (59)

According to Rosenberg, E. K.'s work quite clearly serves to provide the text with credibility and authority but adds little or nothing to the real meaning of the eclogues proper.

At times, critics appear to give E. K. a higher profile in the text. In "*The Shepheardes Calender as Document and Monument*," for instance, Michael McCanles begins his discussion by announcing:

It is part of the fiction of *The Shepheardes Calender* that E. K.'s glosses and commentary are not part of the fiction. This fiction's success shows it to have been through the centuries a kind of *trompe-l'oeil*, since editors, critics and readers have usually taken it for the real thing.

(5)

McCanles seems to berate the critics who take E. K. at face-value, but finally his own attitude toward the glosses and

commentary gives the material even less credence. Like Rosenberg, McCanles determines that the glosses are basically artifice and that they function to emphasize the generic value of the centre:

Their significance lies not in what they say about the twelve eclogues, but what they contribute to the meaning of the whole volume of *The Shepheardes Calender* by their simple presence in it. And what they contribute is to establish the genre of this volume not as pastoral poetry but rather as a scholarly edition of pastoral poetry. (7)

McCanles contends that Spenser's objective was to create a "fictional imitation of a humanist edition of classical texts" (6-7) and that he included E. K.'s work to complete the effect. The inclusion of this material, McCanles argues, has led to the generation of a body of critical information where "critics quote E. K. when it suits them and ignore him when it doesn't, and in either case treat his glosses just as one would treat those of any other critic of the same text" (5-6). McCanles is correct in what he notes about the mistreatment of E. K., but his consideration of E. K. is equally negligent. He bases his entire hypothesis of the text on the premise that Spenser intended E. K. to perform one basic function, that of participating in the illusion of greatness. "*The Shepheardes Calender*," according to McCanles, is "very much a book about itself" and no matter who E. K. is, he argues, he functions

"within the fiction," (18) or the illusion, to draw the reader's attention to the text's self-authorized establishment within the literary canon.

Underlying the argument of McCanles and the others is the assumption that E. K.'s actual identity has no bearing on the interpretation of the poetic centre. According to many critics, however, the real identity of E. K. is central to the meaning of the text. If the identity of E. K., "one of the darkest and most controversial mysteries in Spenser scholarship" (McLane 280), could be revealed, and the mystery solved, the treasure of the text would spill forth. Although several solutions have been put forward, the mystery remains and, in recent years, the controversy has abated.

In Spenser's own time when, of course, even the author's identity was unknown to the reader, E. K. was accepted quite simply as the author's friend (William Webbe in *Spenser: The Critical Heritage*). As the centuries elapsed, however, and the *Calender's* readership became further removed from its cultural access to the text, the need to reconstruct the historical circumstances of the text became more of an issue. And clearly the mystery of the initials had to be resolved.

The secret of E. K.'s identity appears unproblematic to C. H. and Thomas Cooper who, in 1860, write with confidence that E. K. was Edward Kirke and it was "very probable that Harvey was the tutor both of Spenser and Kirke at Pembroke

Hall" (42). In 1863, a critic identified ironically only as "C," suggests that Spenser himself was the mysterious commentator (102). Almost immediately, the Coopers counter:

It is a pity the writer of this article had not recourse to the last and best edition of Spenser (that by MR. J. P. COLLIER). Had he done this, your readers might have been spared the repetition of the paltry and preposterous insinuation that the illustrious poet was his own commentator and encomiast. We have proved with reasonable certainty, that 'E. K.,' the author of the *Glosse and Scholion on the Shepheard's Calender*, was Edward Kirke--a contemporary at Pembroke Hall of Spenser and Gabriel Harvey . . . and MR. COLLIER has expressed his opinion, that we have cleared up the matter. (140)

The tone of the Coopers's statement gives the impression that the matter ended with this biographical determination.

In 1900, Jefferson B. Fletcher, obviously not satisfied with the idea that E. K. was either Spenser or Edward Kirke, suggests that E. K.'s name does not really matter. What is important, according to Fletcher, is the relationship established between the author and the commentator:

The issue is of some importance, since statements are made in the 'literary apparatus' of 'E. K.', which, if made by Spenser himself, certainly must seriously discredit him. (165)

Fletcher believes that E. K. as Spenser or E. K. as any other person writing in an independent role are two extremes and neither solution explains the fact that the *Calender* went to print time after time with noticeable errors. "The somewhat obvious third possibility," Fletcher argues, "that Spenser and any other person, 'E. K.', may have been jointly responsible, seems to have escaped notice" (165). The difficulties of the *Calender*, according to Fletcher, can be explained away by reading the glosses and commentary as the product of a collaborative effort. In short, Fletcher suggests that E. K. had some authority within the poem and a distinct role in terms of directing the poem's readership.

John W. Draper, writing on the glosses in 1919 takes up Fletcher's basic position. In a study of language and diction in the *Calender*, Draper determines that any unsupervised contributions to the glosses on the part of E. K. are few:

In short, the evidence of the lexicography points to a very large share of Spenserian authorship of the glosses. E. K. may have added remarks of his own without Spenser's oversight; but, I think, undoubtedly, Spenser inspired, if not actually wrote, most of the entries. (571)

As to the actual identity of E. K., Draper notes that the initials are usually connected with Edward Kirke but determines that E. K.'s identity is of no real consequence. Why Spenser needed an annotator or why the annotator was

given so much responsibility in the text by virtue of his initials are not questions which concern the critic. Once again, E. K. is only a critic, separate from textual meaning, that is, meaning within the poetic centre.

In the mid-40's the debate over E. K.'s identity was renewed by D. T. Starnes, Raymond Jenkins, and Robert Mitchner. Others joined the fray, but these three men refer specifically to each other's work and the debate takes on the tone of a running commentary. In "Spenser and E. K.," Starnes examines the Epistle and the glosses for "characteristic language and expressions" and finds that E. K. employs many references that Spenser continued to use in later poems (183):

Those agreements of poet and commentator in which they deviate from the conventional classic accounts seem to me especially significant. Such agreements are seen in the references to Flora, the Fates, the Furies, Helicon, the Muses, Pegasus and Perseus, Lethe, and Orpheus. In my opinion, these deviations can be best explained by the assumption that one and the same hand was poet and commentator throughout. (200)

Starnes does not ask what this does to the interpretation of the poem; he leaves it to stand as simple fact that Spenser is E. K.

Raymond Jenkins, in agreement with Starnes regarding the identity of E. K., claims that the mystery of E. K. is a

"crux in literary history" (Part I 147). That E. K. is Edward Kirke, he argues, is groundless, based on guesses and assumptions:

Many scholars have held that Spenser would never have had the effrontery to praise himself and that E. K. must therefore be somebody else (147) . . . But modesty has never been a virtue of authors, especially of Elizabethans [Spenser] realized that elucidation of the text by a commentator was necessary to give his pastorals standing among the learned. To employ all possible devices to enhance the mysteries of the *Calender* that he might pique the curiosity of his readers was his prime concern. (Part I 149)

Jenkins does not consider that the errors might discredit Spenser or diminish the value of the text. The Renaissance reader, according to Jenkins, "took the various veiled allusions and mysteries *cum grano salis*" . . . "The initials were too obvious a hoax, merely another palpable disguise for the pseudo-anonymous poet, *Immeritô*" (Part I 149-50). Jenkins adds that Spenser never mentions E. K. again, and therefore it is hard to accept that E. K. was either a friend or a trusted collaborator (Part I 155). Clearly, however, if Spenser were to mention E. K. again, or to reveal his identity, he would remove the very mystery that Jenkins claims E. K. enhances.

In Part II of his three part series, "Who is E. K.?" Jenkins contradicts his statement made in Part I regarding the Calender's contemporary readership. "The pseudonym," he claims, "enabled the poet to intimate that an offensive passage was merely aimed at common abuses, or that it concerned a convenient scapegoat" (Part II 22). In other words, "the mask of E. K. also enabled Spenser to leave much unexplained" (22). But if the sixteenth-century reader knew that Spenser was "spoofing" them, as Jenkins asserts (Part I 149-50), then surely the pseudonym could claim no such function. Jenkins does not pursue his argument, but returns, in Part III, to Starnes's contention that Spenser and E. K. worked so obviously from the same information base that the errors and misuses of classical allusions clearly identify the two figures as the same person.

Starnes and Jenkins, like the Coopers before them, seem to solve the mystery of E. K. and their arguments, although only educated guesses, appear to settle the debate. Robert Mitchner, however, reopens the case. According to Mitchner, "the arguments Mr. Starnes presents are not valid ones" (183); the errors and misconceptions regarding classical allusions, which Starnes suggests were lifted from Renaissance reference texts, were, Mitchner points out, available to and used by other writers of the time. In particular, he asserts, the Perseus and Pegasus error that Starnes picks out was a "confusion common to the period" (189). Finally, Mitchner's own belief is that Spenser and

E. K. were clearly collaborators, and the errors are "only to be expected of author and glosser working together" (189). Mitchner's conclusion, however, works against his own desire in the article "to clear away the obstacles [Starnes] has put in the path of the identification of E. K. as a man with a personality of his own" (183). His contention that the glosses are the result of collusion essentially illustrates that E. K.'s personality is subsumed, inextricably bound to that of the author. Mitchner's hypothesis clarifies nothing with respect to the individuality of E. K. but rather obfuscates the glossator's role and function and declares the ultimate futility of identifying E. K.

Mitchner's argument resulted in a pointed, and almost personal, attack from Raymond Jenkins, whose response, however, has the effect of merely emphasizing the futility of the exercise:

By admitting that Spenser and E. K. worked together, Mitchner has taken the precise position of all who maintain that they were identical. He has indeed disposed of E. K.'s entire reason for being. ("A Note on E. K." 79)

Jenkins's rebuttal is finally an admission of his own inconsequential efforts to remove the disguise worn by the glossator. In what amounts to a last-ditch effort to redeem his position, however, Jenkins closes with the statement, "On the assumption that one mind was at work throughout the

Calender virtually all its anomalies disappear" (79). The fact remains, the anomalies, the mysteries, the secrets of the Calender do not disappear. The attempts to identify E. K. and discover the truth of the text by dealing with the "crux" of the mystery lead nowhere.

The issue of E. K.'s identity was not completely forgotten, however. In his effort to unravel the allegory of *The Shepheardes Calender*, Paul E. McLane puts forward the possibility of Fulke Greville as E. K. He suggests "Spenser took the last letters of Greville's first and last names (Fulke as Fulk or Foulk), and reversed them, just as he reversed the syllables of Grindal and Aylmer . . . to get Algrind and Morrell" (288-89). In addition, according to McLane, Greville's personality and wit match E. K.'s, but admittedly "Perhaps the strongest reason that may be advanced for not accepting Fulke Greville as E. K. is the tremendous difference between Greville and Spenser as poets" (293). McLane also admits that his theory is "pure speculation" but speculation based on "the known background of the poem, the circumstances of its publication, and the implications of its allegory" (295). The last point implies that the poem holds the key to the mystery of E. K.; it ignores what the intentional mystery of E. K. does to the poem.

Ultimately, any attempt to read the poem through the identification of E. K. is a reading based on assumptions and speculations. The logical question of how the errors

affect the text is not raised, the insinuation being that the learned reader or critic should recognize and ignore the errors, or take them as Jenkins suggests, *cum grano salis*, and get on with investigating or interpreting the poem proper by sifting through the glosses and commentary for clues and supportive evidence. Thus criticism of the *Calender* has become criticism of the poem proper and E. K.'s contribution is used when and if it supports that criticism.

This selectivity seems currently to be the major trend in the treatment of E. K. In each case, E. K. is marginalized. He stands outside the poem proper. Three examples will be examined here, however, to illustrate how E. K.'s role is denied a position within the structure of the text. Two examine the genre of the *Calender*. The first concerns a case where E. K. adds to the generic complexity of the critic's argument, and the second example involves a case where E. K. is reformed to fit the critic's theory regarding the generic unity of the text. The third example, provided by Bruce R. Smith, considers E. K. as an integral part of the text, but not integral to meaning found in the poetic centre.

In "The Dialectic of Genres in *The Shepheardes Calender*," A. Leigh DeNeef explores Patrick Cullen's idea that the text is basically the optimistic and confident Arcadian perspective in opposition with the Mantuan perspective of disillusion and withdrawal (1). According to DeNeef, "this dialectical structure extends beyond the

motifs of the individual eclogues or the voices of the different shepherds to a dialectic of poetic genres as well" (2). E. K. surfaces in De Neef's argument where necessary to show that he directs the reader to the generic emphasis of the poem. For example, DeNeef points out that E. K. describes the merging of poetic choices in "October" when he describes the scope of Virgil's poetry in the accompanying gloss. However, in his discussion of the "February" eclogue, DeNeef gives no credit to E. K. for contributing to the analysis of genre.

DeNeef subscribes to a generic dialectic of tale and fable subsumed in poetry with respect to "February." He does not mention that E. K. has already suggested the generic tension or how E. K. suggests it. In his gloss, E. K. disagrees with Thenot that the tale of the Oak and the Briar is Chaucer's (or Tityrus's as Thenot would have it). E. K. suggests that it is "cleane in another kind, and rather like to Aesopes fables," failing to acknowledge Chaucer's use of fables. DeNeef sees the eclogue as a mixed genre integrating *débat* and *fable*. The *débat* is the age-youth opposition between Thenot and Cuddie, and the *fable* is the opposition between oak and briar (DeNeef 4). The tension occurs when the aged Thenot tells a fable to the youthful Cuddie who calls it a "lewd tale" (4). Thenot calls his story a "tale of truth" that he learned as a young man from "Tityrus." He claims a wisdom learned in his youth. E. K. enters the eclogue and undermines Thenot's

authority when he urges the reader not to accept Thenot's source as the rightful one. E. K.'s comment, on the surface, seems straightforward, but he ultimately warns that the tale Thenot tells might not be as accurate or as truthful as Thenot wishes Cuddie to believe.

By ignoring E. K.'s contribution to the generic description of "February," DeNeef does not hear the warning, or question why E. K. ends the gloss with the following comment on Cuddie's emblem: ". . . it is to plaine, to be gainsayd, that olde men are muche more enclined to such fond fooleries, then younger heades," or why E. K., when explaining Thenot's emblem, points out that even evil men can grow old. Clearly, E. K. is attempting to interfere with and distort what most readers expect to see in the eclogue. It is not simply an eclogue about the "truth" that with age comes wisdom. By denying E. K. a voice, the interpretation of the eclogue is virtually closed; by letting E. K. enter the debate, the eclogue is opened to new readings.

In contrast with DeNeef's call for multeity of genre, for the intertwining and mixing of genres to produce a fuller text, is Waldo F. McNeir's request that the *Calender* be read as a drama. In developing his argument, McNeir defines a role for E. K. that subordinates the glossator's presence in the text. McNeir selects examples from the glosses and Argument to create a fundamentally unpleasant personality for E. K. He chooses from the editorial

material at random in order to undermine E. K.'s reliability as an authority over the structure of the poem.

The analysis of the drama begins with McNeir's enumeration of the shepherds. "The cast of characters," he asserts, "consists of eleven speaking roles with E. K. as chorus or commentator" (35). Rosalind and Menalcas are given the status of off-stage characters (35). According to McNeir, the glosses and commentary of the *Calender* are not to be taken seriously:

I include the extra-dramatic E. K. because of the comic relief he contributes in the Argument and the Gloss accompanying each eclogue. (36)

Implicit in McNeir's following comment on E. K. is the idea that E. K. must necessarily be considered outside the fiction because he is real and not part of the creation that is the poem. McNeir asserts:

Whoever he was, E. K. is a pretentious bore, his pedantry threatening to smother sense with a dense weave of guesses, obfuscations, and fatuities. Spenser was gently ironic when he wrote to Gabriel Harvey that in the *Calender* 'some things [are] excellently, and many things wittily discoursed of E. K.' (36)

Also implicit in McNeir's attitude toward E. K. is the fact that E. K. cannot be ignored because he definitely has a voice in the text.

The examples McNeir uses to emphasize E. K.'s buffoonery in the text denigrate E. K.'s role as any kind of learned authority. For example, in his analysis of the opening eclogue, McNeir writes:

E. K. as chorus gets in the usual plug for Colin's verse as he finds another 'pretty Epanorthosis,' and he calls attention to the self-evident difference between Colin's emblem in 'January' expressing lingering hope despite his unreturned love, and his emblem in 'June' expressing hopelessness. (44)

With respect to "July," McNeir describes E. K. as waffling "by finding some merit in each of [Morrell's and Thomalin's] diametrically opposed attitudes" (45). And in his discussion of "October" and its place in the dramatic structure, McNeir again snubs E. K. when he adds, "On the periphery in 'October' as usual is the ubiquitous E. K., with more than his usual quota of inaccuracies and supererogations" (50-51). At no point in his argument for the *Calender* as essentially a dramatic work does McNeir give E. K. any credit for possibly directing the drama or for operating in the functional role usually attributed to the chorus as echo or affirmation. However, McNeir's selectivity with respect to E. K. is not without its goal; McNeir concludes his article with a schematic of the drama as a five-act structure that necessitated reclassifying two of the eclogues. By undermining E. K.'s authority in the

Calender, McNeir is able to justify changing "October" from moral to recreative, and "November" from plaintive to moral. In effect, McNeir usurps E. K.'s role as an authority on the divisions of the poem and the text is reformed to fit his own concept of a five-act play.

Although McNeir's treatment of E. K. reduces the status of the glossator to a single supportive role, it also has the effect of giving E. K. a peculiar vitality. In essence, although McNeir would probably deny it, E. K. emerges from his analysis with a voice, albeit the voice of a jester. Bruce R. Smith, in his article "On Reading *The Shepheardes Calender*," also points out the levity of E. K.'s commentary, and suggests that it "may be a kind of academic in-joke" (89). Unlike McNeir, however, Smith credits E. K. with a more fully developed character which cannot be dismissed lightly:

E. K. represents one way of confronting a literary text: detached, analytical, aware of precedents, full of schemes, but curiously aloof from the emotional force of the poetry. His commentary figures as a parody of a certain kind of overly zealous reader. (89)

Smith calls for a reconsideration of E. K. as an intended part of the physical text:

Scorned though it is by many modern editors, who pick out only those notes that seem pertinent, E. K.'s commentary must have been seen as an

integral part of the book, since it was faithfully reprinted--misinformation, miscitations, and all--in every edition down to the eighth printing in 1653. (79)

According to Smith, E. K. was intended to be seen as a figure with some authority over the reading of the text; his work must be considered part of every subsequent reading, even though it is apart from the poetic matter of the text.

From this survey of the various ways critics have treated the figure of E. K., it is evident that his presence in the text has still not been fully investigated. Critics have proposed that E. K. provides comic relief, that he represents only one way of reading the text, that he prattles on in order to create a body of work simply designed to emphasize the classical appearance of the text, that he points out the text's generic complexity, and that he explains, underscores, and interprets the real text which is the poem proper. When he makes misjudgments or errors, his work is dismissed, or silently ignored. Some critics, essentially biographers, have tried, and failed, to penetrate the mystery of the text by naming E. K.

Ultimately, all attempts to define E. K. or to explain his presence in the *Calender* are attempts to impose a form of unity on the poetic content. Although Jack Stillinger's concern is for the physical integrity of the text, his comment on the modern treatment of its glosses is appropriate to this discussion of E. K.'s indeterminacy. He

asserts that "in correcting the order of the glosses [modern editors] have introduced new disorder" (205). Like the editors that Stillinger describes, modern critics have attempted to impose a legitimate function for E. K. on the text. They are essentially suggesting that E. K. is not fictional in his qualities but a real entity (no matter whether Spenser or not) who exists outside the poem. If, however, the text is allowed its disorder to function as a virtue of the intended text, so too must the mystery of E. K. be allowed. His identity, considered as voice and character, becomes what Catherine Belsey calls "the point of contradiction within the text, the point at which it transgresses the limits within which it is constructed" (104). E. K. as mystery, as indeterminate, represents through his presence in the text the complexities of the poem he is interpreting. That Spenser intended E. K.'s curious commentary to accompany the text without changes is evident from the history of the text's publication. That E. K. is privileged by being both a real annotator and an unidentifiable figure who is first to read the poem has not been considered. That E. K. is almost real has, on the contrary, served to discredit him, to marginalize his importance. E. K., however, like the narrator who must piece together the narratives of the other characters in order to present the reader with a plausible structure, must be allowed to exist within the fiction. His voice must be read into the poem. As a glossator, E. K. forces the reader

to accept, refuse or temper his particular criticism or commentary. If E. K. functions as a narrator, if he is given the voice of a character furnished with the authority to speak about the text, the reader is faced with a text that Belsey calls "plural, open to re-reading, no longer an object for passive consumption but an object of work by the reader to produce meaning" (104). Through E. K., the critic is allowed to glimpse Spenser's "unfollowable world."

Chapter Three: Re-instating the Margin: The Prefatory Unit

Margins and frames are ambiguous in their manner of registering power relations in textual terms. This ambiguity has not always been recognized. As well as offering traditional sanctuary to the powerless, margins are also places of authority and coercion. (Sneja Gunew 142)

In "Framing Marginality: Distinguishing the Textual Politics of the Marginal Voice," Sneja Gunew attempts to define the dilemma the reader faces in handling the presence of the margin or the marginal. Although Gunew's discussion of margins and centres sets the stage for an analysis of the marginalization of women and migrant writers, it also clearly articulates the necessity for recognizing the tenuous relationship between the text proper and its margins and for reconsidering the value of the latter. The traditional manner of reading the marginal constituents of the text, according to Gunew, is to place them in an economic relationship with the centre of the text:

The following has been the prevailing narrative: by the very method in which it has been constructed and positioned, the marginal has always constructed the centre; the centre speaks by virtue of the marginal. That there should be a marginal allows the centre to explain itself. The

textual productions of marginal minorities exist
to confirm hegemonic textualities. (142)

The function of the margin, then, is to define; by framing it establishes an identifiable centre. What is also apparent in Gunew's explanation of the typical relationship between margin and centre is that the critic essentially extorts the margins in his desire to interpret or to establish "the dynamism of the centre" (143). There is a failure to consider that the margins of the text may have an authority of their own, a particular reason to exist and to speak that does not serve simply to explain the centre. By selecting from the margins to confirm the meaning of the centre, or its "hegemonic textualities," the critic successfully undermines the authority of the margin. He asserts a new authority over the text by choosing if and when the margin is allowed to speak.

The situation that Gunew describes is particularly pertinent to a re-evaluation of E. K.'s presence in *The Shepheardes Calender*. Because the *Calender* is so clearly a text of margins and centres, it has fallen prey to this type of critical activity. The centre, the poetic discourse, is privileged in the interpretive process, and E. K.'s commentary is used simply as a first critical discourse. What this critical process neglects is the issue of E. K.'s authority. By allowing E. K. to speak only when spoken to, the critic usurps the authority given to the margins by the author himself. The text is readjusted to suit the critic's

sense of textuality, and E. K.'s voice is supplanted by the new critical voice. By assuming authority over the margins of the text, the critic tampers with the original unity of the text.

That E. K.'s contribution to the *Calender* was authorized and approved of by Spenser has already been established. It is obvious, however, that the material is still subordinated or ignored. Surely, the sheer volume of the marginal apparatus indicates that Spenser wished the reader to attend to its content; the poetic structure itself would be almost skeletal without the prefatory material, the arguments, the glosses, and, of course, the woodcuts. The presence of so much extra-poetic text demands that it be examined, as Gunew puts it, as a place of authority, not necessarily of explanation, clarification, or truth, but an authorized part of the text that speaks to the complexity of the whole text.

There is obviously a need to perform such an analysis with respect to the marginal material of the entire book, but meeting that need is impossible within the limits of this thesis. Two units have been selected, therefore, for the present: the prefatory unit (the Epistle and the General Argument) and the "January" eclogue, the exploration of which will constitute the next chapter. The analysis of these two selections serves primarily to establish that E. K. is engaged in a relationship with the text and the reader that does not simply explain the centre, but

continually tests the relationship and thereby defines the centre as complex.

The Epistle and the General Argument form a prefatory unit which occupies the text between Immeritô's envoy and the poem proper, just as E. K. mediates between the voices of the anonymous author and the first poet figure, Colin Clout. E. K.'s 'preface' is usually examined for what it can tell the reader about the genre and structure of the poem (how it defines the construction of the centre), and for what it may reveal about the author's intention. Although no thorough analysis has been made, almost every critic who refers at all to the prefatory material refers to one or more of the following passages.

The first selection is from the Epistle and is usually considered to reflect the author's conception of his own career. E. K. writes in the Epistle of the experience of growth and the natural trials faced by a worthy poet:

So flew Theocritus, as you may perceiue he was
already full fledged. So flew Virgile, as not yet
well feeling his winges. So flew Mantuane, as
being not full somd. So Petrarque. So Boccace;
So Marot, Sanazarus, and also diuers other
excellent both Italian and French Poetes, whose
foting this Author euery where followeth, yet so
as few, but they be wel sented can trace him out.

This passage seems to indicate that the poet consciously fashioned his career after the best classical

and Continental writers and that the learned reader should be able to locate within the poem the stylistic allusions to these authors. The list of names, however, suggests more than notable influences, for it sets up a poetic heritage for Spenser. Theocritus, "generally regarded as the inventor of pastoral poetry" (D. M. Halperin 2), provided the pastoral model which served Virgil and, later, Petrarch, Boccaccio, and Sannazaro through the works of Virgil (Halperin 2-4). His primacy in the list establishes him not only as influence but also as the recognized patriarch of the poets who followed him.

The heritage that E. K. sets up for Spenser is not the only quality of this selection, however. The list, by virtue of providing a poetic lineage, indicates that Spenser also inherited the 'genetic' qualities of his forebearers. The list: Theocritus, inventor of genre; Virgil, pastoral writer, eventually a writer of epic verse; Mantuan, humanist, cleric, poet; Petrarch, humanist, idealist, believer in pure love; Boccaccio, noted for wit, realism, and romance; Marot, pastoralist, king's poet, defender of the artist's right to speak freely; and Sannazaro, poet, epigrammatist, noted for his loyalty to his exiled king. So flew the author's well-appointed family. As the humble descendant of this patriarchy, Spenser, under the shadow of the lowly Colin Clout, follows earthbound in his first poetic exploration. He will, however, E. K. suggests, reveal the traces of his lineage in his style and

innovation; in realism, idealism, humanism and faithfulness; in short, in his diversity and skill.

By constructing the passage as he does, E. K. challenges the reader both to seek meaning within the poetic structure and to realize the intertextual nature of the *Calender*. Spenser's worth, therefore, emerges from the margins; his artistic nobility and poetic status are established by his spokesman, not simply by the poetic centre or the world of texts that precedes the *Calender*. Finally, Spenser's authority is defined by the mediator, by E. K. speaking from the margins.

Another passage, also from the Epistle, to which critics often refer is E. K.'s statement regarding Colin. E. K. tells the reader that Colin is the character "vnder whose person the Author selfe is shadowed." The temptation, then, becomes to look to the figure of Colin for clues regarding Spenser's voice, to see Colin as Spenser's "poetic mask" (Miller, "Authorship" 233). According to Paul McLane, "behind the protective mask of Colin" (37), Spenser could be critical of England's state of affairs. McLane also calls Colin Clout "the Christian man, or Everyman" who represents the disillusion that comes from a dependence on worldly things (320). That Colin is a poet figure disillusioned with poetry and that he is the figure of the author who chooses to criticize through poetry the world he inhabits are not exactly compatible ideas; Spenser must use poetry to speak freely but he speaks through a character (if Colin

truly represents Spenser) whose Muse has fled and who gives up the making of poetry. By asking the reader to accept that Colin is representative of the author, E. K. sets up a tension between reality and fiction, between real author and poet figure, and between the language of shepherds and the affairs of government. E. K.'s suggestion that Colin is the author, then, veils as much as it reveals.

The temptation to take E. K. at his word has led critics to seek a logical explanation of Colin's plight in the *Calender*. How can the poem be Spenser's debut if it represents the misery of a failed poet? According to D. M. Rosenberg, who tries to justify a bond between Colin and Spenser, "Colin's abandonment of the pastoral world in some sense prefigures Spenser's, but Spenser, unlike his shepherd protagonist, leaves Arcadia in order to progress to a higher mission, writing heroic poetry" (62). Rosenberg is correct in noting the issue of abandonment, but Colin does not abandon the world. He abandons poetry. The other characters in Colin's world are perhaps more correctly literary figures; it is they who find joy and instruction in stories and song, and in Colin's abandoned verse. On the one hand, Colin does represent the author, but perhaps any author who abandons the making of poetry and whose poetry sustains itself. The anonymity of the *Calender*'s author, allowing him to be any and every poet, allows the text to be given up to a readership who remake the text upon every reading, just as Colin's verse belongs to and is remade by

his fellow shepherds. On the other hand, Colin is the antithesis of the poet figure. He is the failed poet who turns to the real world of aging, decay, and death. E. K.'s statement, then, is not simply a clue regarding the centre of the text; it is an invitation to the reader to engage in the mystery of the text, to locate the shadowy personage of the anonymous author. If McLane is right in saying that Colin is a protective mask for Spenser, it is because E. K. establishes the possibility that Colin may or may not be the author of the text.

A third passage, commonly selected by critics who comment on it, is E. K.'s division, in the General Argument, of the *Calender* into "three formes or rankes." This passage is usually taken at face value, as E. K.'s guide to the thematic structure of the poem proper. D. M. Rosenberg sums up the general critical response when he writes:

E. K.'s classification of the eclogues into "plaintive," "recreative," and "moral" helps place *The Shepheardes Calender* in a clarifying perspective. While the idea of three "formes or rankes" simplifies the complex unity of the whole poem, it enables the reader to trace its overall pattern with greater ease and understanding. (60)

The pattern, however, is not clarified, as a plethora of diverse critical material on the unity of the *Calender* indicates, and this is because E. K. does not clearly divide the months of the year. He tells the reader:

These xij Aeclogues euery where answering to the seasons of the twelue monthes may be well deuided into three formes or ranckes. For eyther they be Plaintiue, as the first, the sixt, the eleuth, and the twelfth, or recreatiue, such as al those be, which conceiue matter of loue, or commendation of special personages, or Moral: which for the most part be mixed with some Satyrical bitternesse, namely the second of reuerence dewe to old age, the fift of coloured deceit, the seuenth and ninth of dissolute shepheardes and pastours, the tenth of contempt of Poetrie and pleasaunt wits. And to this diuision may euery thing herein be reasonably applyed: A few onely except, whose speciall purpose and meaning I am not priue to.

E. K. suggests the twelve months can be well divided, that the division should be obvious. However, "ranckes" implies an ordering and it is not clear which classification is first in terms of value. Nor is it truly clear which eclogues are recreative. The category becomes ambiguous in terms of the composition of the passage. E. K. numbers the plaintive and moral eclogues but the recreative eclogues are only defined by virtue of that numbering and by their containing "matter of loue, or commendation of special personages." The first temptation for the critic seeking to interpret the possible pattern of the Calender is to number the recreative eclogues as those E. K. does not number

(March, April and August). But E. K.'s definition is not exactly exclusive. "January," for example, is clearly plaintive, but it is also about love. "July," clearly moral, describes the humiliation of Archbishop Grindal, who Spenser thinks worthy of commendation. The recreative category, in E. K.'s terms at least, overlaps with the plaintive and the moral classifications.

The three categories are not exclusive. In fact, by not numbering the recreative eclogues, E. K. plays a game with the reader who busies himself numbering these eclogues. Meanwhile, E. K. goes on to describe a fourth category which contains those eclogues he cannot name or number because he is not privy to the "purpose and meaning." The division that E. K. offers only appears to simplify the unity of the poem proper. What E. K. does not say or cannot say because of his partial authority is, in effect, an implicit statement regarding the complexity of the poetic centre. On one hand, it seems to clarify; on the other hand, it points out the futility of trying to fit the *Calender* into any clear pattern. It seems to suggest a ranking but ultimately makes a statement about the indeterminacy of categories and, consequently, makes a statement about the dangers of classifying the eclogues according to meaning or purpose.

The General Argument itself appears to be an extended metaphor describing what a critic can produce when he tries to explain authorial intention. E. K.'s distinction between "Aeglogues" and "Eclogues," for example, really tells the

reader very little. However, it gives E. K. the opportunity to point out the idea of invention and to reassert the honourable history from which the *Calender* emerges. It also points out that the characters of the poem can be the authors of their own tales. Finally, however, the discussion of "Aeglogues" is ambiguous and E. K. himself chooses a composite spelling, "Aeclogues," in his categorization of the poem. It is evident that he is trying to distract the reader, to draw him into seeking meaning where none exists. The explanation, or lack thereof, becomes a parody on philology and how the scholar's search for deeper meaning can often be futile.

The major part of the General Argument is taken up by E. K.'s detailed and intricate explanation of the calendar year. Again, one particular passage continually surfaces in critical writings. After pointing out the logic of beginning the year with the natural spring season, E. K. counters with the Christian rationale:

By sauuing the leaue of such learned heads, we
mayntaine a custome of coumpting the seasons from
the moneth Ianuary, vpon a more speciall cause,
then the heathen Philosophers euer coulde
conceiue, that is, for the incarnation of our
mighty Sauior and eternall redéemer the L. Christ
.

Following what appears to be a legitimate and straightforward reason for choosing the January to December

calendar year, E. K. embarks on an extended description of Egyptian, Hebrew, Greek, and Roman calendars. The Hebrew calendar is perhaps the most interesting example E. K. provides because it exemplifies the traditional conflict between affairs of church and government. The Hebrew people follow two calendars simultaneously. Abib is the first month of the sacred year and the seventh month of the civil year; Tisri is the first month of the civil year and the seventh month of the sacred (OED). Time, therefore, is defined by naming. The calendars are separate and yet inseparable. Time is defined only by man's needs and state of being; the natural course of the mutable world needs no calendar.

What emerges from E. K.'s monologue on calendar types is not an explanation of the Calendar so much as a commentary on man's need to contain and structure his world. Structure is artifice, a necessary boundary by which man can enclose or attempt to construct, a unified and meaningful world of relationships. The use of the Christian calendar for the framework of the text is a convenient and understandable structuring device. E. K. himself tells us that the author has chosen a structure that will appeal to common understanding, but what truly matters is the telling: "So therefore beginneth he, and so continueth throughout." With this, E. K. ends what promised to be an explanation of the central purpose of the poem. Finally, the structure of the poem, its unity within an acceptable framework, is

artifice, as Spenser himself tells the reader in the final envoy: "Loe I have made a Calender for euery year." The poem itself knows no season, no year, no time, for it is eternal.

The General Argument alerts the reader to the possible ambiguity of structures and frames, but it is the rhetorical quality of the Epistle which allows it to do so. The Epistle, it can be argued, is by far the most significant element in E. K.'s preface. The General Argument becomes an extended example for the reader of what E. K. establishes in the Epistle regarding language, textuality, and authority, notions which he plays with in a rhetorical style as confident and as complex as the poem itself. His claim that his role is to explain "old wordes and harder phrases" is in itself deceptive when the language of the Epistle is considered.

E. K.'s authority to gloss the poem is not as simple as it seems. His letter to Harvey is usually referred to as the Dedicatory Epistle because it seeks patronage for the new poet. What is unusual about the Epistle is that the poem is already dedicated by the author to Sir Philip Sidney. That E. K. was allowed to add a dedication to Gabriel Harvey establishes a position of authority granted him by the author. At the same time, however, it separates his discourse from Spenser's. The language E. K. uses and the manner in which he fashions his letter become important to the reader's search for meaning within the poem. E. K.'s

marginal voice does not define the centre so much as it defines the indeterminacy of the centre. In his own right, E. K. is a craftsman, aware of the power of language to hold more than one meaning at a time, to divert, to suggest, and to explain. Because of his marginal position and because the margin exists to define the meaning of the centre, E. K.'s role has been simplified by most critics. He is expected to annotate, to clarify. A closer examination of the Epistle, however, will show that E. K. plays, not only with language, but with these very expectations.

The opening lines of the Epistle provide the reader with the key to reading the text, not only the poem but the scholion that accompanies it. E. K., through example, illustrates that he is capable of manipulating meaning. The Epistle begins:

Vncovthe Vnkiste, Sayde the olde famous Poete
 Chaucer: whom for his excellencie and wonderfull
 skil in making, his scholler Lidgate, a worthy
 scholler of so excellent a maister, calleth the
 Loadestarre of our Language: and whom our Colin
 clout in his Aeglogue calleth Tityrus the God of
 shepheards, comparing hym to the worthines of the
 Roman Tityrus Virgile.

Chaucer, however, did not say "Uncouthe, unkiste." The reference is to a speech in *Troilus and Criseyde* when Pandarus counsels Troilus on courtship:

Thow mayst allone here wepe and crye and knele,--

But love a womman that she woot it nought,
 And she wol quyte it that thow shalt nat fele;
 Unknowe, unkist, and lost, that is unsought.

(Book I 806-09)

E. K.'s misquotation of Chaucer should not, however, be considered an error, but rather a deliberate alteration. "Uncouthe," in one sense, is equivalent to unknown but its meaning is not as exclusive; "uncouthe" more accurately means not certainly known. It also includes the meanings "awkward," "unseemly," "foreign," "unfamiliar," "ignorant," and "strange" (OED). "Unkist" not only means "not kissed," but also carries the meaning "unknown." By altering the reference ever so slightly, E. K. is able to draw attention to Chaucer, Virgil, Colin Clout, all further textual references to Tityrus, and to language itself. He illustrates that language is capable of doubling in on itself, of suggesting the positive and the negative at the same time, expanding to gather in other meanings. That E. K. repeats the misquotation clearly indicates that the alteration is deliberate:

Which prouerbe, myne owne good friend Ma. Haruey,
 as in that good old Poete it serued well Pandares
 purpose, for the bolstering of his baudy brocage,
 so very well taketh place in this our new Poete,
 who for that he is vncouthe (as said Chaucer) is
 vnkist, and vknown to most men, is regarded but
 of few.

The doubling of meaning emphasizes the very uncertainty and deceptiveness of language.

The allusion to Pandarus is particularly important and usually considered a simple allusion to the origin of the quotation. The misquotation, however, should signal that the reference to Pandarus be examined more closely.

According to David Miller, who sees E. K.'s role as glossator to be the role of poet-maker, E. K.'s glosses are "literally 'marks' of respect" ("Authorship" 222):

"Uncouthe unkiste," is the line [E. K.] borrows from Chaucer's Pandarus, and the glosses can be seen as little scholarly pandars, soliciting hugs and kisses for the paronomasiai and pretty epanorthoses ("Authorship" 222)

Pandarus's role, however, is not as simple as the solicitor of hugs and kisses. His role in *Troilus and Criseyde* is that of a match-maker. He manipulates through what E. K. refers to as "baudy brocage." Pandarus is a mediator, a go-between, a broker. Most significant, however, is that his means of control and deception is language. If it can be claimed that the *Calender* is Spenser's poetic debut ("Authorship" 219) and that E. K. is responsible for soliciting attention, it is not too fanciful to suggest that E. K. uses the Epistle to announce the nature of his own role in the text. The reference to Pandarus and all that it suggests, is quite clearly a reference to E. K.'s own position as mediator between poem and reader. Like the

match-maker, E. K.'s role is not necessarily to be truthful, but to accomplish a union between the parties concerned in the relationship.

The idea of secrecy, deception, and manipulation is central to the Epistle. E. K. continually refers to the manipulative and concealing qualities of language. And he does so through the very language of deception. When E. K. continues with the play on "uncouthe," and "unkiste," he changes the terms of reference:

But I dout not, so soone as his name shall come
into the knowledge of men, and his worthiness be
sounded in the tromp of fame, but that he shall be
not onely kiste, but also beloued of all, embraced
of the most, and wondred at of the best.

Central to this passage, where "unknown" becomes "knowledge" and "unkiste" becomes "kiste," "beloved" and "embraced," is the phrase "and his worthiness be sounded in the tromp of fame." "Tromp," in Spenser's time, had two meanings and E. K., it can be argued, was well aware of both. The word meant trumpet, but it also derived another meaning from the French verb, *tromper*, to trick or deceive. The phrase then, on the one hand, means that Spenser's reputation will be trumpeted forth. On the other hand, it suggests that reputations are made and that fame in itself is not necessarily the mark of true worthiness. E. K., by choosing language that embodies the very idea of multiple meanings, places himself in a position where his glosses cannot be

taken at face-value. In the Epistle alone, it is clear that he is deeply concerned not with clarifying but creating meanings.

When E. K. turns to the style of the poem proper, he continues to use the language of artifice. What he describes is more a poetics of reading than an explanation of the meaning or purpose of the poem. He writes of "ornament," the "eternall image of antiquitie," and ancient words that "maketh the style seeme graue." He is concerned with the creation of art as mirror, art as imitation, but not necessarily only of beautiful objects. He compares art to old buildings that are "disorderly and ruinous":

But all as in most exquisite pictures they vse to
blaze and portraict not onely the daintie
lineaments of beautye, but also rounde about it to
shadow the rude thickets and craggy clifts, that
by the baseness of such parts, more excellency may
accrew to the principall.

Beauty exists not only in order and refinement but in roughness and naturalness as well. The beauty of the text, in other words, is not only in the poem, but in the seeming disorder that surrounds and defines it. The inherent beauty of an object can be defined by the shadows if the beholder looks not for clarity but for value. The true appreciation of beauty, therefore, is not only in the object, in discovering the centre, but also in the very act of seeking meaning and working one's own imagination:

. . . for oftimes we fynde ourselues, I knowe not how, singularly delighted with the shewe of such naturall rudenesse, and take great pleasure in that disorderly order.

And it is E. K.'s function to make the game of reading more demanding and exciting, to make the centre more beautiful. This is not to say that he does not reveal the meaning of harder words and phrases at times or that he possibly veils meaning at times in order to protect the author, but the reader cannot be sure when and if E. K. is revealing or concealing. In the Epistle, he says he was made "priuie to [the author's] counsell and secret meaning"; in the General Argument, he admits that this is not necessarily true. Throughout the prefatory unit, E. K. speaks with confidence about the worth and craftsmanship of the Calender, but he reveals virtually nothing about the meaning or purpose of the poem. According to Annabel Patterson, in her description of E. K.'s introduction to the poem:

It need hardly be said that these are the strategies of a discourse that cannot risk either full transparency or incomprehensibility; and that the new function of the commentator in the native pastoral of state is not to explain, but on the contrary to incite the reader to interpretive speculation. (Re-opening the Green Cabinet 67)

But what Patterson says must be said. If E. K. cannot be trusted to explain with any consistency, the centre of the

poem cannot maintain a definite relationship with the margin. The margin is not solid; the ambiguity of the margin only increases the indeterminacy of the centre. If E. K. is truly an annotator, a teller of truth, then the centre could be more easily interpreted, but he is not, and the complexity of the centre is increased by the complexity of the margin.

Chapter Four: Re-instating the Margin: "January"

Footnotes in a literary work highlight the interplay between author and subject, text and reader, that is always at work in fiction, giving us occasion to speculate on self-reflective narration as an aspect of textual authority. (Benstock 205)

Shari Benstock, in "At the Margin of Discourse: Footnotes in the Fictional Text," examines the function of the literary footnote in *Tom Jones*, *Tristram Shandy*, and *Finnegans Wake*. She determines that the notes perform various narrative tasks: they "extend the narrative voice," they "counterpoint and undermine," and they merge to "develop a new line of narrative" (205). Literary footnotes, she claims, "constitute direct efforts to engage us in the text" at the same time they "remain part of the fiction" (206). Operating from the margin of the discourse, these footnotes "negotiate the middle ground between this author and other authors, between this author and the reader" (204). Benstock, in her discussion of what is essentially defined as a marginal voice, would no doubt agree with Sneja Gunew that the literary footnote is in itself a place of authority and disruption.

Although written well in advance of the texts that Benstock discusses, *The Shepherdes Calender* employs the footnote in a similar manner. Even though E. K. literally

speaks from the textual margin, it would not be difficult to imagine him transported to another century announcing, "Dear Reader, take time to pause and consider" It is the visual externality of E. K.'s discourse that makes it difficult for the reader to comprehend E. K. as a voice within the fiction. Unlike the voice that Benstock describes, E. K. does not stop the flow of the poem, at least upon the first reading. His gloss encourages the reader to return to the poem and seek out the referents. E. K. thus incites a re-reading of the centre. In one sense, he is responsible for redirecting the reader through the poem, but because he sometimes misdirects, digresses, or errs, most critics consider him to be outside the fiction, outside the privileged literary discourse. But E. K. is not outside the fiction; his discourse, it can be argued, is a precursor of the fictional footnote that Benstock describes.

E. K. mediates between the poetic centre and the reader, wearing the disguise of an interpreter. He is the Hermes figure, and the reader, if he chooses to engage with the text that Spenser presented, must recognize that Hermes was both thief and messenger. The reader who accepts E. K.'s commentary at face-value, ignoring what appears to be irrelevant, accepts only one aspect of the text. The excitement of reading with the aid of an unreliable guide, whose every statement must be confronted, is lost. Perhaps it is a cultural necessity for the modern critic to seek unity and singularity of meaning, to peel away the layers of text

in the hopes of exposing some universal truth. One manifestation of this desire for single meaning is what Michel Foucault refers to as modern criticism's "desire to 'recover' the author from a work" (127). In Foucault's terms, the modern critic "employs devices strongly reminiscent of Christian exegesis when it wished to prove the value of a text by ascertaining the holiness of its author" (127). In addition to being able to locate and explain certain events in terms of the author (as Paul E. McLane has spent a career doing), the author figure forms a locus for textual unity. Although Foucault refers, in the following excerpt from "What is an Author?," to the canon of the individual author, the description applies equally well to modern criticism of the *Calender*:

The author also constitutes a principle of unity in writing where any unevenness of production is ascribed to changes caused by evolution, maturation, or outside influence. In addition, the author serves to neutralize the contradictions that are found in a series of texts. Governing this function is the belief that there must be--at a particular level of an author's thought, of his conscious or unconscious desire--a point where contradictions are resolved. (128)

John W. Moore, Jr. is an example of a modern critic whose desire to establish the unity of *The Shepheardes Calender* leads him to an easy or unexamined recovery of the

author. He openly states that Spenserians "have sought in recent years to remove the major impediments to its accessibility: its appearance of disunity" (3). For Moore, disunity is resolved when Colin is accepted as the poet figure, Spenser's persona. Implicit in Moore's reading of "January" is the belief that E. K.'s contribution impedes the critic's "quest for unity" (4). The *Calender* finds its unity in "Colin's quest to become a truly effective and responsible shepherd-poet" (23-34). But E. K. is the voice responsible for identifying Colin as the author. To accept E. K.'s statement as a fundamental truth concerning the poem and at the same time to consider his gloss as a whole extraneous to the meaning of the poem is to hear E. K. but to deny that he has a voice. Once he says what the critic wishes to hear he is no longer of any value. If "January" truly sets the stage for the entire text, then E. K. has value only in a single comment and the text closes around a single meaning. But E. K. does not restrict his commentary to Colin Clout, and an examination of the rest of his contribution to the eclogue will show that E. K. exists to tell the reader that no single reading of the poetic centre is ultimately the correct reading. The game is to seek out as many readings as possible.

E. K.'s gloss, in "January," on Colin's name is more interesting than critics such as Moore acknowledge. While it is true that E. K.'s voice is the voice responsible for pointing out that Spenser "secretly shadoweth himself" under

the name of Colin Clout, the gloss tells the reader a great deal more:

Colin Cloute) is a name not greatly vsed, and yet haue I sene a Poesie of M. Skeltons vnder that title. But indeede the word Colin is Frenche, and vsed of the French Poete Marot (if he be worthy of the name of a Poete) in a certein Aeglogue. Vnder which name this Poete secretly shadoweth himself, as sometime did Virgil vnder the name of Tityrus, thinking it much fitter then such Latine names, for the great vnlikelyhoode of the language.

The reference to Skelton has two functions. First, it ties the *Calender*, at least partially, to the English literary canon. Second, the reader recalls that Skelton's poem is a satire on the clergy of his day and its corruption. Skelton speaks for the English people through the innocuous and unpretentious name of Colin Clout:

And if ye stand in doubt
Who brought this rhyme about,
My name is Colin Clout. (Colin Clout 47-49)

Expectations of ecclesiastical satire are set up through E. K.'s simple reference to an author who dared to criticize the church. These expectations are not fulfilled in this eclogue, but they are in later eclogues such as "May" and "July." This is an instance of how E. K. manipulates or, in this case, sets up and defers the fulfilment of expectations.

The reference to Skelton and satire is not the only information provided by this gloss. The allusive quality of Colin's name is expanded to include mention of the work of Clément Marot who used the name, E. K. pointedly remarks, in a 'certain' Aeglogue. He hints that the reader would do well to seek out the reference. The eclogue to which E. K. refers is Marot's "Eclogue for Louise de Savoie." It is a poem which claims, according to George Joseph, the honour of being "the first pastoral elegy in French" (76). Colin, the poet-shepherd, is paid by Thenot, also a shepherd, to write an elegy mourning the death of Louise, the shepherdess/queen, "who had so well protected France" (Joseph 77). With what seems to be a simple justification for using a base or common name, E. K. successfully alludes to ecclesiastical satire and to the love a countryman has for a dutiful queen. Should the latter allusion be taken the wrong way, E. K. quickly adds his opinion--"if [Marot] be worthy of the name of a Poete." That E. K. has already honoured Marot by naming him in his Epistle as a model poet is counterpointed here in the gloss. What E. K. truly feels about the status of the French poet is difficult to establish. However, the contradictory aspect of E. K. serves to separate his voice or opinion from the author's, for the November eclogue mourning Dido is quite blatantly modelled upon Marot's elegy to his queen.

The English and Continental connections having been made, E. K. moves on to incorporate the classical allusion.

The actual name, Colin, has no reference, but the use of a pseudonym is reputed to carry with it a certain dignity. Virgil, E. K. points out, used Tityrus to designate his voice within his eclogues, so it is fitting that the new poet establish a pseudonym of his own. E. K., in one note, alludes to satire, elegy, duties of state, and classical precedent. At the same time, he creates expectations that the poem may or may not satisfy and he makes a comment on the power of poetry to convey several meanings simultaneously. In short, he warns the reader that the *Calender* is not a simple shepherd's tale. He also speaks here in opposition to the narrator of the poem proper, who asserts that Colin is "A shepeheardes boye (no better doe him call)."

Although E. K. glosses a few words straightforwardly, he throws in a gloss on a simple term here and there to show off his own talents and to prove himself worthy of commenting on the text. For instance, he glosses "neighbour towne" as "next town" which in his day would have been quite clear. However, he adds that this expresses the "Latine Vicina." It would make sense if he were to gloss "Vicina," if that were the word in the poem, as "neighbouring," for that is what it means. It appears to make little sense to complicate the gloss by adding a foreign expression. Unless, that is, E. K. is suggesting that the reader take note of the establishment represented in the woodcut. Perhaps this is the town where Colin first met Rosalind.

The town, architecturally, suggests Rome, which in turn suggests Rosalind's possible affiliations. "Town," however, also referred to an enclosure or a farm (OED) and so the allusion to Rome is not a direct one. The argument emphasizes that Rosalind is a "countrie lasse" as well. By diverting the reader's attention to the woodcut, E. K. implies that Rosalind has concerns beyond those of her compatriots, but if anyone should associate Rosalind with Elizabeth and find the *Calender* to be a seditious comment on Elizabeth's proposed marriage to the Catholic Duc Alençon, the poet would be protected by the argument and the common understanding of town as farm.

Elsewhere in the gloss, E. K. points out an allusion to Virgil's eclogues, adding the Latin to prove his expertise, and he takes a moment to point out the poetic techniques used in what appear to be simple lines. He glosses the lines:

I loue thilke lasse, (alas why doe I loue?)

And am forlorne, (alas why am I lorne?)

He indicates that the lines display the use of a "pretty Epanorthosis" and a "Paronomasia" or a play on words. Epanorthosis is the recalling of a word to substitute a more correct word. The play on "lass" and "alas" is quite simple and clear, but the epanorthosis in the second line increases the impact of Colin's question. "Forlorn" and "lorne," in one sense mean the same thing, "lorne" being the shortened form of the word. But "lorne" was also the past participle

of the word "leese" which meant to ruin, to destroy, or to spoil. The correction of the epanorthosis is actually an extension of the meaning. Colin is not simply forsaken or deserted; he is ruined and spoiled by his emotions and by the rejection he faces.

The main body of the gloss is taken up with E. K.'s explanation of two "feigned" names: Hobbinol and Rosalind. Hobbinol, E. K. states quite clearly in the "September" gloss, is Gabriel Harvey. Rosalind, E. K. does not identify, but the reference to "secret personages" has led to speculation that Rosalind is Queen Elizabeth, Rosalind being an anagram for Elisa Regina (McLane 32). E. K. does not find the identification of the two persons here as important as their relationship to Colin and the nature of the love between Colin and Hobbinol, and Rosalind and Colin.

The gloss on Hobbinol diverts Colin's poetic voice. What appears to the modern reader as innocent--in essence, an honest love of one man for another--is not left open for interpretation. E. K. goes on at length to protect the Platonic nature of the love between Hobbinol and Colin. He draws attention away from innocence by his passionate denial of a tainted relationship. E. K.'s lengthy explanation of Hobbinol's courtship of Colin is, in effect, a comment on how the reader may misread the poetic centre. His gloss is intended to allay any fear that homosexuality is involved in Hobbinol's affection. The love is purely of a Platonic nature. It is curious, however, that E. K. should go on to

suggest that "paederastice" is to be preferred to "gynerastice," or a perverted lust for women. At first, it seems that the statement is made solely to allow E. K. the opportunity to display the breadth and liberality of his own reading. But then he refers to Unico Aretino. Pietro Aretino is the more likely reference, the "deuelish disciple . . . in defence of execrable and horrible sinnes of forbidden and vnlawful fleshlinesse." Pietro Aretino, also known as the "Scourge of Princes," has to his credit sixteen obscene sonnets and an extremely pornographic work called "Ragionmenti." The name Unico Aretino was the public name for Bernardo Accolti whose powers of poetic improvisation made him popular among ecclesiastical officials (Universal Enc.; Kernan 103). The error in naming, if it is an error, is considerable. If it is an intentional confusion, it is not unlikely that E. K. is making his own comment on the corruption and immorality within the church. Both Aretinos were writers; they were contemporaries. If E. K. or Spenser were questioned as to the possible seditious nature of the reference, pleading ignorance would be a reasonably easy task. Ultimately, E. K.'s explanation of Hobbino's name is negligible, and the discussion of pornography, homosexuality, and Platonic love, virtually in the same breath, perverts, as much as it pretends to clarify, Colin's narrative. By glossing Hobbino, E. K. clarifies little but succeeds in introducing the subject of sexuality and, more daringly, perverted sexuality.

E. K.'s gloss on Rosalind, "also a feigned name," contains a list of literary and historical precedents where a woman's dignity and public honour are maintained through the employment of a pseudonym. E. K. refers to a list of women in significant public positions: Julia, the emperor's daughter; Madonna Coelia, the Paragone of Italy. The assumption is that Rosalind, too, has prominent social status. Within the poem, Rosalind comes from the town, which may be a farm or an actual town. What is important is the suggestion of a difference in social status. Colin's station is lower than that of Rosalind even though Colin creates beautiful poetry.

E. K. closes the gloss to "January" with an explanation of Colin's emblem, "Anchora Speme," Italian for "still hope." E. K.'s translation is far more elaborate. He explains that the cause of Colin's turmoil, "extreme passion and luckless loue," has not destroyed Colin, that Colin is recomforted by hope. The emblem, then, adds to the situation within the poem; in the poem itself, Colin's last words to his "vnlucky Muse" indicate that he will put aside the making of music. The narrator describes the action of Colin's breaking the pipe and despondently driving his flock homeward as evening falls. There seems to be little hope within the poem itself. E. K.'s elaboration, however, gives him the opportunity to create an ambiguity for the reader. Colin is rejected by his Muse and by Rosalind within the poem. E. K.'s "extreme passion and luckless loue" could

refer to Rosalind, to poetry and Rosalind, or to Rosalind and poetry. E. K. uses the gloss for the emblem to force a re-evaluation of the poetic centre.

The emblems throughout the *Calender* are in various languages: Italian, Latin, French, Greek, and English. That Colin's emblem in "January" is Italian suggests the humble state of Colin's poetry. Italian, as opposed to Latin, the language of epics, is the common language and suitable for the humble pastoral poet.

E. K.'s commentary on January is obviously not a simple annotation. His gloss on "Vicina," for example, tells the reader to go back and consider the woodcut. His gloss on Hobbinol, by negating the sordid, emphasizes the possibility of Colin's sexual confusion; in essence, E. K. interprets Colin's narrative. What the pastoral poem cannot talk about, E. K. does. In the references to Skelton and Marot, he draws in elegy and satire; he plays with the boundaries of genre and text. With the gloss on Hobbinol and Rosalind, E. K. establishes the allegorical aspect of the poem. That the Renaissance reader would recognize the allegory at once is not a certainty, and E. K., as the guiding voice, the mediator between text and reader, author and text, simultaneously signals the allegory and disguises it. From the margins, E. K. interpolates, including in Colin Clout the voice of everyman through satire and the voice of court poet through elegy. He frames the poem by drawing attention to the woodcut, another marginal voice. And he errs,

perhaps not unwittingly, in order to play with the notion of sexuality. E. K.'s role is not, ultimately, to support the centre nor to define any specific, hegemonic textuality. By existing, ostensibly, to explain language, and by making a mockery of the expected scholarship of a gloss, E. K. quite clearly announces that language itself can be called into question. By literally playing with the language of the centre, E. K. warns the reader that the centre may not hold a single meaning. E. K. as a voice, speaking to the reader about the poem, is in himself an example of how every reader can play with language and meaning. Speaking from the periphery of the text, E. K. essentially challenges Spenser's presentation of the poem; he adds to, alters, and changes the poem proper. The reader does not have to accept E. K.'s reading but he does have to accept that E. K. is not simply talking about *The Shepheardes Calender* but about the complexity involved in reading poetry.

The complexity of *The Shepheardes Calender* is a challenge to the reader; in its own right it provides a source of pleasure even in what most critics consider disorder. Surely the removal of its impediments is also the removal of that which generates some of the excitement in the first place. If the reader is willing to consider that the pleasure of the *Calender* may be generated by its variety and disorder, the text becomes accessible without being simplified, and textual integrity is maintained..

Chapter Five: Re-Covering the Text

The Shepheardes Calender, Spenser's literary debut, was printed throughout the author's lifetime with only minor decorative corrections to the title page. The composite text remained intact. No effort was made to modernize the woodcuts or to update or improve upon the editorial material. And even though Edmund Spenser was known to be the author, the text remained anonymous.. Each element of the *Calender* was considered to be valuable to the text's presentation. Although each textual component came from a recognizable source, Spenser succeeded in synthesizing a new text. No part could be eliminated without altering the integrity, or the total statement, of the text. The poetic centre was the privileged element but each marginal element also performed a function with respect to textual unity.

Modern criticism for the most part has tampered with and, on occasion, destroyed the textual integrity of the *Calender*. In order to determine what the poem--that is, the eclogue proper--means, critics have stripped away the body that incorporates the skeletal centre. That which defined the centre and spoke of its strength and heritage has been fed upon and discarded; it has been treated as baroque ornament embellishing a clean classical design. Criticism seldom considers that the poetic centre was never meant to stand on its own, that the marginal elements are bound to

the centre by the intended construction of the complete text.

The most pathetic victim of modern criticism's quest for unity and meaning has been the *Calender's* glossator, E. K. He has been described as a buffoon, a bore, and a bewildered reader. Having only initials by which to claim partial propriety of the secrets of the text, E. K. has been the cause of heated debate by critics who assume that the identification of the editor would do away with the anomalies of the text. The futility of these efforts was soon accepted by most critics.

With the dismissal of the issue of E. K.'s true identity came the unfortunate dismissal of his importance in the text. He became like any other critic, valued for some opinions, condemned for others. That his work was part of the original publication became inconsequential. Many critics claimed his presence was virtually decorative; he simply gave the text the look of an established literary work, instant document, instant monument. Other critics ignored his work completely, or at least refused to acknowledge him, usurping his place in the text, replacing his observations and opinions with their own. For the most part, however, critics have allowed E. K. to remain with the text, acknowledging the historical flavour he brings with him and every once in a while they turn to him for evidence to support their own readings of the poem or what they

consider the real text. In short, E. K. is not considered relevant to the interpretation of the poetic centre.

The general critical response to E. K. has not been intentionally brutal. Modern editorial practice demands truth, accuracy, and objectivity, and E. K. has simply fallen short of these expectations. He obfuscates. He explains where no explanation is necessary. He provides his own metaphors regarding the poem, and when it seems as if he may be elucidating the centre, the reader is no longer sure that he is telling the truth. Ultimately, E. K. has not proven himself to be a reliable editor. But still critics have believed some of what he has said and have begun rebuilding the poem. They seek unity, meaning, and value within the poetic structure by eliminating all that seems to be disorderly, by removing what appear to be obstructions or diversions.

This thesis, too, is concerned with the unity of *The Shepheardes Calender*, but with a unity that differs from the one critics have sought solely within the centre: the thematic unity. It is a reaction against criticism which refuses to reread the text in favour of rewriting it. In order to rewrite the *Calender*, the primary structure or meaning must be located; to reread the text is to respect its complexity, its disorder. This thesis then is only a beginning. I consider it to be a step toward reintegrating at least one of the discarded components. I have concentrated on reinstating E. K. as a pervasive presence

within the text, a marginal but significant voice which tells us that the centre will forever have its mysteries.

I cannot argue with those critics who believe the *Calender* contains political allegory or religious satire. I cannot disagree that the *Calender* is a conscious announcement of England's "new poet," and that E. K. is Spenser's encomiast. Nor can I dismiss completely the arguments which seek out the biographical references within the text. The majority of critics present rhetorically valid arguments. I propose, however, that the meanings and structures they discover are only partial truths of the poem because they are based on only part of the *Calender*, on the voices from the centre. By casting off the disorderly coverings of the text, each critic has discovered a different centre, a single order. That so many readings of the *Calender* can exist is in itself an argument for the complexity of the text. If the reader accepts that the marginal components also affect the centre and each other, then he is confronted with an even more complex text.

There are signs that critical commentary is beginning to recognize the complexity of the text. Jonathan Goldberg, in *Voice Terminal Echo*, for example, provides an excellent reading of the "October" eclogue. His analysis of the eclogue is the only example to date of a critical approach to the *Calender* based on the original presentation or relationships within the text. "Spenser's entrance onto the

poetic scene," Goldberg states, "occurs in a dispersal of names and voices" (38)

In short: this new poet has no name of his own, no beginning except as he is received and as he receives, no story to tell until he has been taken under another's wing, unless the text is consumed.
(38)

Through the power of anonymity, Spenser forces the reader into the text to find him. And, according to Goldberg, understanding E. K.'s role or function in the text, is crucial to seeking out the author and to understanding the complex relationships Spenser has set up within the poem.

E. K. is a guide, moving between reader and text:

E. K. reads and glosses. This, too, needs to be considered, for how are the glosses to be taken, what voice (as insistent as any 'within' the text, as illustrative as any cut 'outside') does E. K. designate? Subsequent, sequent, coming before in his arguments, after in his glosses, E. K., editor and reader, offers a panoply of texts as guides to this one [His] is a present voice that aligns the poem with antique tradition, a modern commentary on a classic text. Yet, he is also part of the text, not simply "outside" it, although often the function of what he says is to posit an outside or to maintain some boundary between the text and himself (and with him a world

in which he belongs and to whose existence he testifies). (62-63)

E. K. enriches the textual centre; he does not simply edit, explain, or extract meaning from the centre. Were this his only function, his textual contributions could be easily discounted because any other reading could be considered equally valid. E. K.'s glosses, however, are not the voiceless definitions provided by modern commentary. His commentary extends the text. It proves the power of poetry to appear simple and contain many meanings at any given time. His voice, Goldberg argues, "insists upon the play of the text"; E. K. "reconstitutes the text, and his readings, rather than simply reduplicating the arguments, redistribute them and rewrite them" (63).

In his analysis of "October," Goldberg suggests the reader notice how often "E. K. denies the supposed differences in the text he cites" (63). From the argument to the end of the gloss, E. K. abandons the "theme of social disesteem of poetry" and posits "a celebration of the divinity of poetry and poet's divine fury" (63). E. K., Goldberg asserts, "speaks two ways at once" and by so doing, exemplifies the multiplicity of meanings within the centre:

A shade away from the anonymous voice, not quite a proper name, E. K.'s status cannot be distinguished from the text "itself," or the woodcuts. All are speaking pictures, double, triple, quadruple in their overdetermination and

indetermination of this fragmentary and endless text. (Goldberg 64)

Calling for a reading of the *Calender* that incorporates all aspects of the text and acknowledges the interaction of each voice, each part of the text with the other, Goldberg also describes a text that reaches out to consume former texts and stories, a text that increases in complexity beyond its own language.

While I have argued for reappropriating E. K.'s contribution to the text, I also realize that E. K.'s voice is only one of many offered by *The Shepheardes Calender*. The text is indeed "a palimpsest" as Goldberg suggests (38), a combination of various voices, stories, and texts; it is a single text with messages surfacing through messages. The metaphor allows the text to maintain its textual unity or integrity. The text does not have to be dissected in order for it to bring enjoyment. The pleasure emerges from understanding the complexity of its construction. As a palimpsest the *Calender* becomes a text of voices and ways of speaking, a text that continually refers to itself. The poetic centre cannot be expected to explain itself or to refer to the way in which it comes to generate meaning. The woodcuts, the arguments, the glosses, and the emblems, by offering different ways of reading the centre, eliminate the possibility of meaning residing solely in the centre. Each voice extends, shadows, and alters the centre, recreating the text each time the voice is considered.

The marginal voice, E. K., tells the reader how to generate meaning or meanings. He represents not only a reader but the reader, all readers, without whom the text has no value. The errors, miscitations, the redundancies that E. K. voices are examples of the variety of interpretive processes. Therefore, the error many modern critics make of ignoring E. K. is the error of believing that language always contains a logical, referential meaning that can be found within the poetic construction. By virtue of the way E. K. speaks, he tells the reader that no single meaning can be privileged. He directs the reader not to what the *Calender* means, but to how it can mean. E. K. is the voice that refers, by his complexity, to the danger of trying to uncomplicate the text. He speaks about the centre to prove that no single centre exists. The poem is a plurality of meanings and readings existing concurrently, and the joy of reading *The Shepheardes Calender* is the joy of being able to read a new text every time. Spenser's *Calender* endures forever, "till the worlds dissolution" because, like the seasons of the year, it continually turns in upon itself and recreates itself upon each reading.

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