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Nota di contenuto	Title Page; Contents; Acknowledgements; Preface; Abbreviations; Introduction: 'Subject unto chaunge': Spenser's Complaints and the New Poetry; Part One: The Translations; 1: 'Clowdie teares': Poetic and Doctrinal Tensions in Virgils Gnat; 2: Forming the 'first garland of free Poesie' in France and England, 1558-91; Part Two: The Major Complaints; 3: The Major Complaints; 4: Poetry's 'liuing tongue' in The Teares of the Muses; 5: Cracking the Nut? Mother Hubberds Tale's Attack on Traditional Notions of Poetic Value; 6: 'Excellent device and wondrous slight': Muiopotmos and Complaints' Poetics 7: The New Poetry beyond the ComplaintsAppendix: Urania-Astraea and 'Divine Elisa' in The Teares of the Muses (Il. 527-88); Bibliography; Index
Sommario/riassunto	This gracefully written and well thought-out study deals with a neglected collection of poems by Spenser, which was issued in 1591 at the height of his career. While there has been a good deal written in recent years on two of the poems in the collection, 'Mother Hubberd's Tale' and 'Muiopotmos', Brown innovatively addresses the collection in its entirety. He urges us to see it as a planned whole with a consistent design on the reader: he fully acknowledges, and even brings out further, the heterogeneity of the collection, but he examines it nevertheless as a sustained reflection on the nature of poetry and the auspices for writing in a modern world, distancing itself from the traditions of the immediate past. The strength of this work lies both in

the originality of its project and in the precision and enterprise of the close reading that informs its argument. Interest in the concern of Spenser's poetry with the nature of poetry is in the current critical mainstream, but here the attentiveness is both unusually focused and unusually sustained. Brown garners more than would be expected from the translations in the Complaints, while at the same time including striking and individual chapters on the better known 'Mother Hubbard's Tale' and 'Muiopotmos'; he advances understanding of these extremely subtle texts and fully justifies his wider approach to the collection as a whole. Arguing that Spenser's relationship to literary tradition is more complex than is often thought, Brown suggests that Spenser was a self-conscious innovator whose gradual move away from traditional poetics is exhibited by the different texts in the Complaints. He further suggests that the Complaints are a 'poetics in practice', which progress from traditional ideas of poetry to a new poetry that emerges through Spenser's transformation of traditional complaint.
