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Abstract

This doctoral thesis looks anew at the representation of women in the non-Shakespearean plays of early Stuart England (1603-1642). The chapters progress chronologically, locating common themes of the period, which I analyse independently in each chapter, and consider in the conclusion comprehensively. The introduction serves to present these recurring themes and alert the reader to their importance and relevance to the period as a whole.

Chapter 1 considers adultery and torture, as well as the ramifications of a woman's speaking and writing in George Chapman's *The Tragedy of Bussy D'Ambois* (1604). Chapter 2 investigates the nature of villainy, and also the moral ambiguity in the representation of suicide in Thomas Heywood's *The Rape of Lucrece* (1607-08). Chapter 3 is a reading of Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher's *The Maid's Tragedy* (1611): the analysis takes exception to the common perceptions of villainy, and considers narcissism and melancholy in women. Chapter 4 examines early modern humoral theory in Nathan Field, Philip Massinger and John Fletcher's play, *The Queen of Corinth* (1616-17). The chapter also explores the period's views of the Self. In Chapter 5, on *The Sea Voyage*, by John Fletcher and Philip Massinger (1622), colonial discovery, its metaphorical associations with appropriating women, and its links with utopian ideals in early modern England are explored.

Chapter 6 surveys the women in John Ford's *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* (1629-22). It presents a critical examination of natural law and morality, and investigates melancholy in women. Issues relating to women and knowledge, and the nature of women's revenge are also considered. Chapter 7, on *The Lost Lady*, by William Berkeley (1637), deals with race, the fetishising of the anatomical parts of a woman, and the representation of friendships between women. The final chapter, on James Shirley's *The Cardinal* (1641), undertakes an examination of the similarities between colonial exploration and the appropriation of women's bodies. Additionally, views on both virginity and widowhood are explored. This chapter also demonstrates how the successful execution of revenge is denied to women, and how melancholy was often exhibited as madness when it was diagnosed in women.

The conclusion contends that the playwrights, far from reinforcing gender stereotypes, create women with whom we can sympathise even though they ignore the period's imposed expectations and overthrow cultural assumptions about their natures. It further suggests that the reason for their having been ignored is a fault of modern scholarship, which has either exalted Shakespeare to the detriment of these other worthy plays, or turned to these plays with an essentialist analysis that excludes the multi-faceted nature of women from their work.

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Declaration

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Women Who Wreak Havoc:

A New Perspective on Early Modern Drama, 1603-1642

By

Julie Sutherland

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University of Durham

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Acknowledgements and Dedication

And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars (Rev. 12.1).

I have no hesitation as to where I should begin my thanks. Mandy Green has been the most supportive of supervisors, and I am grateful for her dedicated guidance and dear friendship; I also owe a debt of gratitude to Richard Maber for his unfailing backing, both academic and financial. In addition, many thanks to Michael O'Neill in the English Studies department at Durham, and to the Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, at the University of Toronto. Further, I am deeply indebted to Sally Bayley and David Crane, whose recent insight and encouragement rescued me from considerable despair.

I would like to thank several people in the United Kingdom for their friendship throughout this project: Freda Winter, Michelle and Dave, Fiona and Marco, Naima, Doug, Jonathan, and Katie. I add to this list of dedicated friends Elisabeth, Madeleine, Monika, Bianca, and Jules, who I met much later, but whose timing proved to be impeccable. I hasten to honour my parents in Canada, Sharon and John, whose endorsement of this endeavour has been nothing short of incredible. Other family members have been consistently encouraging: my brother, Steve, who never once in my entire life suggested I oughtn't to do something ambitious, *even though* I was youngest, and a girl; my sister-in-law, Olga, and my Belarussian sisters, Alesia and Oksana, who were loving and encouraging throughout this project. Profound thanks as well to Carolyn and Alan Winter, and Nancy Brindley, who stayed engrossed and supportive despite my whining, and to my uncle, Murray Martin, who led the way back home.

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A Note on Texts

I would like to make a few comments on my primary sources. In situations where I have not used original publications, I have upheld the decisions made by the editors who have compiled the primary sources, and have made quotations accordingly. This means that I quote certain primary sources using modern spelling and punctuation. In cases where I have extracted quotes from original publications, I have maintained the integrity of the original printers, except that I have modernised the long *ſ*, replacing it with the modern *s*. All other printing conventions, such as *VV* for *W* or *ff* for *F*, I have kept intact. Further, unless otherwise stated, all quotations that include portions in italics are italicised in the primary source.

I have taken special care with the texts used in translation to quote from, where feasible, vernacular translations that would have been available in the Early Stuart period. For this reason, I have quoted from the *Authorised King James Version* of the Bible, which, while it was not in circulation in the earlier part of the period at hand, took eighty per-cent of its translation from its precursor, the *Tyndale* Bible (1524). I have also used Arthur Golding's translation (1567) of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, which, while others were in circulation, such as Sandys' translation (1632), remained a popular translation at the time.

Introduction

"All Shadow and Silence:"[1] Neglected Women of Early Stuart Drama

The span of time and material embraced by this thesis derives from a single intention: to give greater prominence to the drama of the early Stuart period which has, in my view, suffered unjust neglect because of the overwhelming critical pre-eminence accorded to Shakespeare. The eminence Shakespeare has secured as a cultural icon for the present age has meant that only a strictly subsidiary attention has been given to the wealth of extant material by other dramatists from this era, to Chapman, Heywood, Beaumont, Fletcher, Field, Berkeley, Shirley, and Ford. These playwrights have been comparatively neglected, due to the ultimate criterion of excellence provided by Shakespeare and a few other dramatists of the period: Marlowe, Middleton, Webster and Jonson among them. These latter literary giants have so overshadowed their contemporaries that even the critical efforts of the past decades to compensate for the preponderance of critical works concerned with Shakespeare has seen the bulk of its research limited to works by a select few. My thesis is one attempt to address this imbalance of critical attention.[2] By investigating the principal female characters within a number of unjustly neglected plays, I address both this 'Shakespearean problem' and also the companion problem of the undue prominence of male over female. Where these neglected plays have been analysed at all, scholarship has been predominantly dedicated to their male figures.[3] My thesis will, by contrast, be chiefly concerned with the female figures in these

---

[1] Shakespeare, *Measure for Measure* III.i.249.

[2] Scholarship has begun to consider the role of women in some of the drama addressed in this thesis. Increasingly academics are turning to the female roles in collaborations by Beaumont and Fletcher (for instance, Ronald Huebert and Kathleen McLuskie), as well as to plays by John Ford (Sandra Clark and Lois Bueler, to name a couple. A broader literature review is offered in the following section of this introduction.). However, the disproportionate amount of research which excludes either these playwrights or their female characters needs rectifying, a point that will become clear in the Literature Review (see pp. 11-13).

[3] John Ford's *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* is the obvious exception to such critical neglect; however, the sizeable body of research which is available on this play makes the lack of analysis given to its principal female character, Annabella, even more pronounced.

plays, so that both my initial choice of material and my treatment of the material chosen constitute a kind of critical rescue operation.

A difficulty of modern scholarship is determining to what extent it is legitimate to impose anachronistic judgement upon the texts of another era. It would seem impossible to fully ignore the possibilities for readings of contemporary relevance, but it seems ill-advised to neglect the cultural contexts that so richly inform these works; therefore, I will read these plays both through the eyes of a twenty-first century (Western) woman reader and with historical lenses (conceding to the subjectivity of historical interpretation). Consider, as an example, the situation of women and domesticity, and the subjection of women in marriage. The emphasis on uxorial subjection is indeed evident in early modern England. Daniel Rogers argued that "the first Dutie of the Wife [is] Subjection" (253), and William Perkins hammered the point home with similar emphasis in his definition of a 'couple' as "that whereby two persons standing in mutuall relationship to each other, are combined as it were in one. And of these two, the one is alwaies higher, and beareth rule, the other is lower, and yeeldeth subjection" (*Christian Oeconomie* 10). There is no denying that women were viewed as below men in the social hierarchy, but literary-critical discourse has often tended to view women's domestic role as emphatically menial and extremely limiting.

Such a line of thinking presumes it was *impossible* to assume power or self-actualisation within the limited sphere in which women found themselves. Although to a considerable extent this was so, and I will dedicate some time to considering these plays from such an angle, I will also consider how the playwrights who created these women maintained the audience's sympathy for them, while endowing them with a certain power. It would seem these playwrights were either calling into question the lower position of women by creating women who defied the limitations imposed on them, or they were not considering the female sex as notably inferior.

In a thesis of this kind the moving back and forth between sympathetic consideration of seventeenth-century and of twenty-first century modes and attitudes is a constantly complicating factor. To present torture or rape as stage entertainment is something some present-day Western readers might find offensive, but this would not necessarily have seemed as repugnant to the audience at the time. It is important to consider, then, how a play that presents such situations may be applauded in spite of its potential offensiveness to a modern audience. In a conscious effort to avoid the danger of imposing false analogies and cultural contexts on these plays—the latter being, in any case, an impossible task, given the heterogeneity of today's societies—I will be very concerned to place them in their own socio-cultural contexts, as well as looking at them from a modern viewpoint. In the process I will deliberately avoid conforming to any one mode of theoretical analysis, offering instead a broad reading of the plays. I will try to give proper weight to both dominant and marginal physio- and psycho- logical, religious and political publications which may have affected the playwrights in question and influenced their writings. While I can never claim to know an individual playwright's original artistic or political intentions, I hope to uncover the circumstances that may have sparked his[4] desire to devise or renew a particular plot.

In analysing the plays I have selected for study I will note the variety of vantage points from which men viewed women (and from which some women viewed themselves). At one extreme, women were 'Other' and terrifying in their distinctness from men. At the other, they were simply not fully-formed men. They were *like* men, but had never quite 'arrived' at full physiological and intellectual development. John Milton called them "Manlike, but different Sex" (VIII.471). They were also, on one end of an alternative spectrum, witches, crones, and extensions of the very devil, while at the other, they were as goddesses, to be worshipped and

---

[4] The use of exclusively masculine pronouns with reference to playwrights is not a careless error: I have chosen to focus on male playwrights in a desire to narrow my field to a particular mode of representation, that of a masculine depiction of the female. A more basic point is, that with the exception of Elizabeth Cary, female playwrights of original work prior to the Restoration were almost unknown (Allman 17).

admired. King Lear, in the extremity of his madness, had launched a powerful attack on their hybrid nature, poised between heaven and hell:

> Behold yon simp'ring dame,
>
> Whose face between her forks presages snow,
>
> That minces virtue, and does shake the head
>
> To hear of pleasure's name.
>
> The fitchew nor the soilèd horse goes to't
>
> With a more ritous appetite. Down from the waist
>
> They're Centaures, though women all above;
>
> But to the girdle do the gods inherit;
>
> Beneath is all the fiend's (IV.v.116-24).

In nine lines this speech captures how woman was viewed as part divine, part devil; potently alluring and dangerously sexual. Men are afraid of her dissembling; she presents herself as modest and chaste, but in reality her sexual appetite is monstrously insatiable. Despite the misogyny embedded in such an image, evidence of a desire to believe that she has the qualities of a divine being still emerges. The tone of the entire passage is one of simultaneous awe and disgust.

When women are replicated in manifold ways, as in the passage from *Lear,* they can exploit those heterogeneous representations to their benefit: from a place of apparent disadvantage, women can self-actualise because they have not been uniformly constructed. The playwrights studied in this thesis highlight the inconsistency with which men viewed women by representing their characters with similar inconsistency. A single character may be both active and passive at different times in a single play; she may also be first 'masculine' in her activity and then 'feminine,' either in her dangerous sexuality or her passive subordination (or both, in several instances). The conflicting and ambivalent ways in which women were

viewed is reflected in the complexity of response that a single female character within a play may elicit.

Of the multifaceted nature of women which early Stuart drama explores, this thesis will present a study of the tragic, deviant and sensational aspects, including adultery, incest and suicide. The focus on such sensational topics has much to do with the early Stuart playwrights' preoccupation with theatricality. After all, the first half of the seventeenth century saw a burgeoning of secular theatre in England not unlike the myriad films today which exploit the human desire for the spectacular. What sells is violence, sex, and the visually grotesque: "*such is the simplicity of man to hearken after the flesh*" (Shakespeare, *Love's Labour's Lost* I.i.215). There is not always a marked distinction between the dark and disorderly and the potently sexual in the plays in question. The effort to fuse these elements is highlighted in Chapter 4, on Fletcher, Massinger and Nathan Field's *The Queen of Corinth* (1616 or 1617), and again in Chapter 7 on William Berkeley's *The Lost Lady* (1637). In a play such as Massinger and Fletcher's *The Sea Voyage* (1622, Chapter 5), the 'disturbing' is supplanted by flagrant titillation. Distinctions are always being blurred in these plays; boundaries are always being crossed. This can be interpreted as the playwrights making an effort to compete in a market of spectacular theatricality. On the other hand, perhaps it was also a deliberate attempt to question early Stuart 'absolutes' about gender roles or to underscore the ambiguities and inconsistencies so prevalent in attitudes to women. In the chapters that follow I will address how, in the crossing of these boundaries, these plays interrogated some of the social mores of early Stuart England. So many plays of the period took part in this interrogation and it was, therefore, a challenge to determine which ones to make a focus of study. My method was to ensure that I selected plays which met the following criteria: they fit within the designated period and, further, were relatively evenly spaced throughout that period, in terms of supposed date of composition; they involved

female characters who were ambiguously represented in terms of their 'goodness' and 'wickedness', 'purity' and 'lasciviousness', 'passivity' and 'activity'; finally, that they were plays which, in terms of technical astuteness, I feel ought to still have some place in the literary canon.

Literature Review

The study of the representation of women in early modern drama is, of course, not a new area of research; however, as literary criticism continues to develop as a discipline, the methods of considering these women have evolved, as have the range of plays examined. As early as 1832, Anna Jameson was focusing on Shakespeare's female characters (*Characteristics of Women*); but however grateful we can be for Ms Jameson's then-new focus, her conclusions are of their time. Jameson's emphasis is revealing: Isabella is lauded not only for her "fine powers of reasoning" but also for her "natural uprightness and purity which no sophistry can warp" (82); Desdemona is noted for her "modesty, tenderness, and grace" (224). Subsequent Shakespearean scholarship, especially following the rise of feminist literary theory, would turn from a preoccupation with female modesty and proceed to explore the multi-faceted nature of women.

The first edition of Juliet Dusinberre's *Shakespeare and the Nature of Women* (1975), its subsequent editions (1996 and 2003), together with Lisa Jardine's *Still Harping on Daughters* (1983) were brilliant efforts at shifting the way we perceive female characters. Their approaches, however, are considerably different, and from their scholarship, two distinct positions emerge. Jardine takes exception to Dusinberre's view that, as Jardine herself articulates, "Shakepeare's genius enabled him to transcend patriarchal partisanship and to project on stage a spectrum of female qualities which reflect burgeoning emancipation of wives of the London bourgeoisie" (2). The opposite approach, Jardine notes, is to contend

that "Shakespeare's *maleness*...makes it inevitable that his female characters are warped and distorted" (3).

Shakespeare's work is not entirely sexist, nor is it simply an early modern attempt at reflecting, on stage, a society with a limited understanding of women; consequently, I feel, like Jardine, that there needs to be some middle ground between these diametrically opposed contentions. Shakespeare, and, more importantly for the subject of this thesis, his contemporaries, were *asking questions* about the perceptions of the nature of women – they were opening up a can of worms, so to speak, in the hopes that their audiences would go from the theatre re-considering their views. In a source study of Shakespeare's approach to gender (1988), Claire McEachern helpfully articulates this view of the playwright's task:

> The conception of text as involved in the production of historical differences rather than in the unwitting or complicit replication of ideology not only leaves behind the mimetic model of literary production...but points to the possibility of a literary text as a significant intervention into history (271-72).

Where I move outside of Jardine's influence is to consider how not only Shakespeare but also his contemporary dramatists and successors explored the representation of gender.

This, too, is not an entirely new field – in 1977, Ronald Huebert began to consider, from a less moralistic perspective than some of his predecessors, such as Boas or Ornstein, the notion of the "forsaken woman" in Beaumont, Fletcher, Massinger and Ford. Huebert, however, so focuses on their hopeless isolation that he leaves little space for instances in which the playwrights are creating the potential for action and aggression in some of the female characters – areas in which they are moving outside the bounds of an enforced isolation. Dymphna Callaghan also emphasizes the "precarious state of phallic power" in early modern tragedy (*Women and Gender* 1), without celebrating some of the opposing attempts to see where women gained certain though varying amounts of agency in the drama.

Laurie A. Finke (1990) helped my research by placing this sort of 'precarious state of female power' within a convention that suggested "man's own fears of mortality" (357), and led me to conclude that the playwrights may not have been reinforcing stereotypes so much as laying bare the anxiety that led to these vies held on about women. Jeanne Addison Roberts also addresses this point, referring to women on the margins in early modern drama as "representations of male fantasies or male fears" ("Sex and the Female Tragic Hero" 200). I also found Roberts' contention that "tragic women who do not fit neatly into stereotypes...can be judged by some of the same criteria as male tragic heroes" (214) most helpful. This, perhaps, is a good place, then, to explain the only partial employment of feminist theory in my thesis. Rather than looking at women characters solely from a feminist perspective, I have been influenced by literary scholarship more holistically: is there a place for these female characters in literary scholarship outside of the study of feminist theory? The answer is surely 'yes.'

It is, of course, impossible – and entirely undesirable – to look at women as men, or as homogeneous within the confines of their gender, and to fail to consider how men construct notions of women, and how stereotypes are set by those constructions. However, to consider women from only one perspective limits the ways in which we can perceive a particular text. This is where Ania Loomba's research (particularly *Gender, Race, Renaissance Drama* and *Post-Colonial Shakespeares*, which she co-edited with Martin Orkin) has been enormously influential on my own work; interested in gender, she does not confine women to a singular category of Woman – oppressed, alienated, marginalized. Rather, she considers women from various perspectives placing them into scholarship concerned with race, post-colonialism, and the binary of orderly and disorderly. Adopting her mode of employing multiple methods of analysis, I have broadened the typical canonical set, in an effort to further the work of these scholars who have preceded me.

The Plays

There was no dearth of extant material to select from when I embarked on this doctoral project. In order to determine which plays would be appropriate for a thesis of this nature, I created a set of criteria which aided in the selection process. The plays needed to be embraced by the reigns of James I and Charles I; they had to feature women who fluctuated between passivity and activity, and who challenged either the 'angel' or 'demon' stereotypes which early Stuart literature often promoted; finally, it was compulsory that they were of enough roundness of character to support my position that these literary creations, emblematic of women in 'actual' society, were worth more than the sum of their allotted parts.

Chapter 1 will consider adultery and torture, as well as the ramifications of a woman's speaking and writing as they appear in George Chapman's *The Tragedy of Bussy D'Ambois* (1604). Critics of Chapman's first serious drama are equally interested in plot and subplot. Even the earlier and more conservative critics, such as Eugene Waith and Millar Maclure,[5] who focus on Bussy's character and its metamorphosis during his rise to power, are forced to expend considerable critical energy on the subplot, Bussy's adulterous love affair with Tamyra. A.R. Braunmuller offers the ultimate example of this fusion of interests by shifting focus from one to the other in a single sentence: "Bussy's frail humanity—his passion for honor, for fame, for secular grandeur...betrays him through Tamyra's love into the politicians' hands" (56). In one sense the relegation of the love affair to the subplot suggests the stereotypical de-valuation of women's roles. On the other hand, that plot and subplot are inextricably linked—so much so that four centuries later, critics still combine the two in their analyses—raises estimation of Tamyra's part in the overall story. This is not without considerable irony, considering she plays the adulterous villain. Tamyra's sexuality leads

---

[5] See Waith, *Herculean Hero* (1952) and Maclure, *George Chapman: A Critical Study* (1966) for their analyses of Chapman's *Bussy*.

first to a position of power and subsequently to a fall from that same eminence. The power on which the main plot revolves in the play—Bussy and Montsurry's struggle to conquer each other—is inseparably linked to Tamyra and her sexuality which begs attention from the margins of the subplot.

Chapter 2 will investigate the nature of villainy, and also the moral ambiguity in the representation of suicide in Thomas Heywood's *The Rape of Lucrece* (1607-08). The story of Lucrece has endured more than many narratives that were staged in early modern England. Not only does it have its origin in the legendary history of ancient Rome, immortalised by Livy and later by Ovid, and then thoroughly analysed by Augustine, but it has been retold in English by, among others, Chaucer, Shakespeare and Middleton. By the early modern period, the figure of Lucrece had become an archetype of honour and chastity, reconstructed to meet the interests of each culture into which she was reinserted as a potential example for other women to follow. However, she presented an interesting problem because for a Christian audience this faithful and obedient wife commits the sin of suicide.

In this chapter I will also consider how the act of suicide captures the discrepancy between the voices of authority and the worldview of ordinary citizens. I will also offer a close study of Tullia, whom I have presented as the 'other' woman—a foil to Lucrece—who has been largely overlooked by literary scholars. In particular, I will analyse the machiavellian nature of her ambition and how this links with her sexuality.

Chapter 3 will present a reading of Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher's *The Maid's Tragedy* (1611): the analysis offers a revisionary reading of the common perceptions of villainy, and explores narcissism and melancholy in women. A conservative critic such as Robert Ornstein has considered the morality of Fletcher's theatrical efforts, both independent and collaborative, and has concluded that Fletcher, if he were writing today, would be comparable not with the Arthur Millers and Tennessee Williams of the "urbane Broadway

audience," but would be appealing to the rather less-refined tastes of Hollywood (167). I disagree with most of Ornstein's criticism of Jacobean tragedy in this early publication; nevertheless, there is a certain amount of truth in what he says here about Fletcher's tendency toward commercialism. *The Maid's Tragedy* is full of the sex, violence and strong language—less buried in double entendres than is the case in the work of many of his contemporaries—that has characterised Hollywood cinema for decades. However, even Ornstein admits that "it would be unjust to leave the impression that Fletcher's influence on the drama was merely harmful" (169). And while he does not expound on what Beaumont and Fletcher did collaboratively that was worthy of studying four centuries later, he does concede the possibility of a level of profundity in Jacobean drama. It is this profundity, stirring beneath the level of the purely spectacular (which is itself not without merit) that I intend to consider in this chapter.

Even critics writing more recently, such as Sandra Clark, far more palatable to my taste, are not full of unqualified praise for Beaumont and Fletcher's collaborations. In 1994 Clark observed:

> It is not easy to identify 'real' selves for whom an inexpressible subjectivity can be constructed which will unify the fragmented utterances of speakers...the characters seem to 'posture'; that is, to adopt attitudes not natural to them because they have no 'nature' (8).

I do not intend to argue that Beaumont and Fletcher's characters necessarily maintain a psychological depth of selfhood that competes with those of Shakespeare or Ford;[6] however, remarks like Clark's tend too quickly to rule out the possibility of character study in Fletcherian drama, and collaborations by Beaumont and Fletcher. This, I would argue, is a

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[6] We will see a heightened sense of self in Fletcherian drama in Chapter 4, when looking at Merione, in *The Queen of Corinth*.

grave error—for the intriguing aspects of the plot are often heightened through the actions and psyches of the characters, such as in the strange circumstances of the 'romances' of Evadne, Aspatia, and Amintor.

Chapter 4 will examine early modern humoral theory in Nathan Field, Philip Massinger and John Fletcher's play, *The Queen of Corinth* (1616-17). This chapter will also explore some characteristic attitudes to the self that are expressed in the early modern period. The female character who demands the greatest attention is Merione. As a literary character, she independently presents many aspects for consideration, which will constitute the large part of this chapter. However she also emblematises the stereotypes of 'woman-as-show' and 'woman-as-commodity,' that a modern reader may find frustrating. As a powerful emblem of the theatricality and commodity of women, Merione fairly throws herself—or, rather, she is (un)fairly thrown—in front of her audience. The theatricality of her character lies in the linguistic strength of Fletcher, and the dramatic vision of all three playwrights.

Although a contemporary audience would not have been likely to cheer on Merione's attack and rape by her assailants, the spectacle of the macabre masque, which represents the on-stage version of Merione's off-stage sexual victimisation, is perhaps too enticing for even the more conservative members of the audience to turn have turned away a chaste and respectful eye. Adumbrating a climax of titillation, the playwrights taunt the audience with the expectation of a second rape, supposedly to be carried out on a second female, but executed instead, once again, on the theatrical showpiece, Merione. Merione's substitution of herself for her friend, Beliza, serves as further proof that she is intended to be the main instrument for the playwrights' attempt at dramatic spectacle and theatrical horror. Women, after all, are those on whom society turns its gaze, and Merione proves no exception to this rule, even if she is in fact a boy player dressed up as a woman. Perhaps this only strengthens

the point, because those in the audience are then forced to remind themselves continually that it is a 'woman' at whom they are staring, in whose rape they are, if only by proxy, taking part.

In Chapter 5, on *The Sea Voyage* by John Fletcher and Philip Massinger (1622), colonial discovery, metaphorically analogous with appropriating women, and its links with utopian ideals in early modern England will be explored. The playwrights envisaged presenting to their audience of 'stay-at-home' voyagers a type of travel writing that dealt directly with the fears and delights of the unknown. However, the dramatists were not merely entertainers with a keen eye for fame and fortune—they were also shrewd social critics. These dramatised tales were what Stephen Greenblatt refers to as "representative anecdotes" that are "significant in terms of a larger progress or pattern" (*Marvelous Possessions* 3). In other words, travel writers of this calibre were meeting a political agenda that had as much to do with their ideological views on colonialism as it had to do with their isolated tales.

Out of this stock arose Fletcher and Massinger, who created a sexual utopia, in which was expressed 'men of the West's' innermost fantasies, and which at the same time both undermined the thrills and underscored the disillusionments actual travellers were reported to be facing. This chapter will explore the very different experiences of individual colonists as portrayed by the sea-faring Aminta and her companions. It will further analyse the way these characters were employed for the purposes of questioning, distorting, or subverting the various positions held on European colonisation of 'virgin' territory. Finally, it will question the notion of utopia, and how utopian ideals drove colonists to barbarous exploits in their quest for an ideal world.

Chapter 6 will survey the women in John Ford's *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* (1629-32). It will investigate melancholy in women; further, issues relating to women and knowledge, and the nature of women's revenge will also be considered. To the twenty-first century reader, the title of Ford's play might seem humorous, suggesting a comedy, and leaving readers

unprepared for the shock of being hurled into a world of torture, murder, skewed revenge, and rebellion against 'natural law.'[7] These circumstances—and the male characters involved in them—have been the source of considerable literary comment up until the last few decades, when publishing on the play seems to have decreased considerably.[8] Perhaps scholars felt the discussion had been exhausted, and indeed perhaps enough has been said about Giovanni, Friar Bonaventura, and the Cardinal for the present. However, the female characters in the play, so essential to the 'shock' of the above concerns, have been undervalued and therefore conspicuously omitted from past scholarship.

Annabella is given some attention in her own right, but more often she is addressed only in relation to Giovanni's sexual drive and to neo-platonic theories of Beauty and transcendental love. Putana, likewise, is given a certain consideration in comparison to the nurse in *Romeo and Juliet*, and Hippolita is frequently referred to when writers are considering the superfluity of Ford's subplots. It is my contention that each of these female characters has been incompletely explored, and I propose to continue the investigation of the women so integral to this play.

Chapter 7 will look at *The Lost Lady*, by William Berkeley (c. 1637), a play first performed well into the reign of Charles I and Henrietta Maria. Despite its later date, this drama shares many concerns with plays earlier in the century. These include: a fascination with the anatomy of the body, and also with the macabre, particularly writing in blood; a thirst for revenge, and a concern with the operations of destiny. Another theme which is evident in a high proportion of the plays examined in this thesis is appropriation, of land and of peoples. This is also apparent in *The Lost Lady*, but in this play the issue is examined specifically in

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[7] I put 'natural law' in quotations only because to fail to highlight the term would indicate an acceptance of the how it is defined, or at least a belief that there is a unanimous agreement on its definition—acknowledging the ambiguity of the term, I bow to linguists and philosophers to carry on that debate.

[8] For a few examples of male-centred analysis, see Ewing, *Burtonian Melancholy* (1940), 71ff., Leech, *John Ford and the Drama of His Time* (1957), 49ff., and Florence, *Opposing Absolutes* (1974), 23ff. Each of these makes mention of Annabella, but she does not seem central to their analysis.

terms of race. In *The Lost Lady*, the focus is no longer upon the excitement and disillusionment attendant upon exploration, but on the anxiety, consequent upon colonisation, in the colonists themselves.

A theme that until this chapter I will not have had cause to address, partly because it seemed to surface less frequently than other topics in early modern drama, comes into prominence in *The Lost Lady*, and that is the issue of friendships between women. Certainly homosociability was of interest in the early modern period, but this interest was most explicitly expressed in relation to the male characters in drama—this can be easily exemplified by the friendship between Sebastian and Antonio in *Twelfth Night*, and between Melantius and Amintor in *The Maid's Tragedy*. However, the homoerotic element of friendship between *women* was less frequently explored territory, not so much unmentionable as unconsidered, but in this play there is scope to give it due consideration.

Another shift in thematic emphasis becomes evident in this later play, and that is the impression given of the extravagances of courtly love. Henrietta Maria fostered the revival of this medieval French phenomenon, and Berkeley, who was active in the circles of the Court, was likely to have been acutely aware of the conventions, and its shortcomings. *The Lost Lady* would suggest Berkeley was observant of the tradition's unrealistic portrayal of women and its emasculation of men: it is precisely these limiting portrayals of gender maintained by courtly love literature that draws comment in the play.

The final chapter, on James Shirley's *The Cardinal* (1641), will undertake an examination of the similarities between colonial exploration and the appropriation of women's bodies. *The Cardinal* reflects the century's, and the nation's, interest in both global expansion and the languages of the indigenous peoples. Everywhere in the play readers and audiences encounter the consideration and interweaving of these preoccupations. In this play the duchess and her lover, who is of lower rank, become, in part, emblematic of the tensions

latent in colonialist expansion of territory and English imposition of culture and language. The lovers' scandalous rebellion, juxtaposed with the pity that same defiance ultimately evokes, is in part representative of the multi-faceted nature of colonialist experiences in the New World. The importance the English placed on their language, and the consequences of their high view of themselves, is further extended in *The Cardinal* to the issue of cultural appropriation. This is observed in the duchess's letter writing, dissembling, and final mental breakdown, considered in the final sections of the chapter. Additionally, views on both virginity and widowhood will be explored. This chapter will also consider a successful execution of revenge being denied to a woman, an event so frequent in these plays, and how melancholy, as it was so often, is here exhibited as madness when it was diagnosed in a woman.

Thematic Motifs

Recurring themes bond the dramatic representations of early Stuart England, and I will be looking not only at what some of these themes were, but also at some changes in their representation over the course of the thirty-five year span I am considering. For this reason, I have presented my analyses of these plays as far as possible in the chronological order of their performances. This order is only conjectural, of course, because we cannot always be precisely sure when plays were first written. My research has uncovered certain themes that seem frequently to arise in relation to the women characters in this period. These are: colonial appropriation; sexual transgression; the impact of Eve; the importance of virginity; woman as Amazon; woman as Christ-figure; the slippery nature of the tongue, the equally slippery nature of the pen in a woman's hand; adultery and suicide; torture and rape; dissembling and revenge; melancholy; bodily dissection; and the nature of the self. Each of these will be discussed in detail under the separate subheadings that now follow.

Colonial Appropriation

During the course of this study, I will be looking at discovery and colonisation in its metaphorical sense of discovering and appropriating women. I have chosen to highlight this theme first because it is an appropriate metaphor for the early Stuart female character as presented in these plays: figures constructed by men and then set in various contexts—historical, fantastical, or contemporary—to see how they might react, or, rather, to see how the male playwrights will represent their reactions. The analogy between colonisation and the domination of women was typical in early modern writing (Hopkins, *Female Hero* 56). The woman-land metaphor was emblematised in "allegorical personifications of America as a female nude with a feathered headdress," which, by the 1570s, had begun to appear in "engravings, paintings, maps, and title pages throughout Europe" (Montrose, "The Work of Gender" 179). These parallels between the European oppression of aboriginal peoples and cultures and the suppression of women of their own descent cannot be ignored. Montrose describes it as "the blending of these basic ingredients of protocolonialist ideology with crude and anxious misogynistic fantasy" in a "powerful conjunction of savage and feminine" (181). Even the supposed intention of honouring their queen by naming the colonisers' conquered land 'Virginia' is suggestive of the taming of the female wild. Captain John Smith's *Map of Virginia* (1612) calls the land "a nurse for souldiers" and by drawing attention to such aspects as the land's "mildnesse" and "fertilitie, and how it is "convenient for pleasure and mans sustenance" (353 / 18), describes the natural setting in words that could easily be transposed into a man's description of a woman.[9]

[9] Walter Ralegh is remembered for, among other things, his apt conflation of woman and newly discovered territory (see p. 171).

Sexual Transgression

Sexual transgressions evident in early Stuart drama include cross-dressing, incest, and homoeroticism. I will take note of the effects of cross-dressing in Chapter 3, on *The Maid's Tragedy* (1611). There is a positive aspect to Aspatia's donning of masculine attire, despite the attempts of early modern moralists to eradicate the trend. The anonymous writer of *Hic Mulier*, a pamphlet that addressed cross-dressing in the early seventeenth century, claimed that this activity made women's "soules fuller of infirmities then a horse or prostitute, and their mindes languishing in those infirmities" (B1r). In such "barbarous" (B1r) attire, Aspatia, in *The Maid's Tragedy*, adopts an assertiveness that she had not previously revealed. Of course, she dies for it—the play makes it clear that she would not have been stabbed had she not represented herself as a man; however, in her culture, presenting herself effectively as a woman was virtually impossible because as a woman she was exhorted to be silent and passive, which made her the more easily ignored.[10] In her disguise, Aspatia dies with the suggestion of a sexually-driven fulfilment that would not have been accorded her as a woman. Whether or not her cross-dressing can be viewed as satisfactory is open for debate. Did this cross-dressing serve as an instrument of political agitation, or was it merely provocative sexual transgression? How much does the basic fact that a boy was playing a woman playing a boy factor into its importance? These are intriguing questions, but I will address the significance of Aspatia's cross-dressing in terms of how it is 'revolutionary,' in that the playwright seems to be challenging the absolute belief in an essential self.

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[10] A woman's silence, particularly in public, was a biblical principle (see, for example, I Cor. 14.34, I Tim. 2.11). Further, Aristotle had noted that "Silence is a woman's glory" (qtd. in Kamensky 25). Richard Braithwait's *English Gentlewoman* (1631) is one of many early modern conduct books that continues this imposition of silence: "It will beseem you, gentlewomen,...in public consorts to observe rather than discourse...Silence in woman is a moving rhetoric" (84).

Another sexual transgression explored in this period is incest. While several plays of this period treat this transgression,[11] John Ford's *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* (1629), which dramatises the incestuous relationship of a sister and brother, will be considered here (Chapter 6). I will consider how Annabella is not given the same initial absolution from this sin, in that her awareness of their consanguinity is never removed, even though it is eliminated from Giovanni's perspective. A third potentially transgressive issue is female-female friendship, which I will analyse in Chapter 7, on *The Lost Lady*. I will consider how homoeroticism is dismissed in women where it is praised as homosociability in men, and how, in this play, the deviancy of this relationship is linked to race.

The Impact of Eve

I do not consider the transgressive woman in her specific role as a type of Eve to any very emphatic extent in this thesis—the topos rather sets the stage for how or why women are presented as they are in drama of the time: Eve hovers in the background, an emblem of the humiliation they must face. Because of Eve's sinfulness she becomes the justification for domination in marriage,[12] and the explanation for human despair; in other words, she is the ultimate cause for the continuing inversion of Edenic bliss.[13] This particular aspect of Eve's influence will be discussed in the first chapter, on George Chapman's *The Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois*, together with the way in which Eve's tongue seduced Adam, another aspect of the 'dangerous Eve' figure. However, as we shall see, Tamyra—the play's heroine—also implicitly subverts the story of the Fall by repudiating the serpent, who in this case is figured by her husband, refusing to believe his lies. Through this, she achieves what can be read as a

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[11] Examples of other plays that address incestuous behaviour are *Women Beware Women* (Middleton), *The Lady of Pleasure* (Shirley), and *A King and No King* (Beaumont and Fletcher).
[12] Genesis 3.28: "Unto the woman [God] said…thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee."
[13] This was because of the change that took place in the conditions that were established after the Fall. Because Eve succumbed to the Serpent, human sinfulness began: bitterness, jealousy, murder and exile were professed to be the immediate ramifications of her decision.

Lilith-like division from her husband, rather than the consequential submission with which her foremother was cursed. In Chapter 5, on *The Sea Voyage*, I will show how Aminta was turned into a type of 'wicked Eve' so that men could point accusing fingers at her, thereby justifying their own physical weaknesses.

Eve was the perfect justification for placing women lower than men in the great chain of being: she had legitimated the suppression of women, and was evidence of the consequences of disobedience, since antiquity, and the early modern period was no exception to this understanding. Her transgressions ran into the realm of sexuality; the stereotype of the lascivious woman had been a commonplace of the classical as well as the Christian tradition.[14] In many senses, early modern men loved Eve: they were fascinated by her transgressive nature, and delighted in the excuse she provided for domineering over women. Milton's Eve captures her misdemeanour; in *Paradise Lost*, the fallen Eve is a woman, laden with sexual promise, "whose eye darted contagious fire," and who taught Adam what "pleasure be / In things to us forbidden" (IX.1027ff.). Fallen womankind, following Eve's lascivious behaviour, is defined and oppressed by the humoral theories that were prevalent in the early modern period.[15] Accordingly, woman was viewed as naturally lascivious because of what were hypothesised to be her wet humours; consequently, her womb was like a hungry animal, desperate to be nourished with more moisture.[16] It is the coldness of her wet womb

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[14] Classical literature's famous lascivious women include Messalina in Juvenal's Satire VI (esp. lines 82-141) and Lesbia in Catullus XI.

[15] A detailed account of the continuing importance of humoral theory will be offered in Chapter 4 (see pp. 138-46). However, briefly: this theory derives from ancient times and maintains that an individual's health and personality were determined by the relative amounts of the four main humours of the body. These four humours were further associated with four elements: air, water, fire, and earth, thus causing people to be described as hot and moist, cold and moist, hot and dry, or cold and dry (Murfin and Ray 204).

[16] This is a good example of medical material being manipulated to reinforce potentially harmful stereotypes. While in the early modern period this moist aspect of women's constitution was held against them, Galen, the second-century Roman physician, whose humoral theories persuaded thinkers well into the seventeenth century, found a laudable necessity in a female's cooler, moister humoral composition. Contrary to the early modern belief that this resulted in her inferiority, Galen argued that if a woman were too hot her body-heat would evaporate the foetus within her (Erickson, *Language of the Heart* 2-3). Her womb, then, is rather virtuously life-preserving, and was the bed wherein lay the fulfilment of God's commandment to people the earth (Gen. 8.16-17).

which is perfected by the heat of the male seed. Gail Kern Paster guides her readers to *The Problems of Aristotle* (1597), which addressed this phenomenon: "it is the nature of cold to desire, and draw [the seed]" ("Unbearable Coldness" 432). This physiological phenomenon was popularised through various media, including medical treatises and popular drama: writing in the early seventeenth century, the physician, Dr Thomas Wright, quotes King Solomon on this subject, reminding readers, "Hell, earth, and a womans wombe...are vnsatiable" (71). In 1606, John Marston's *Sophonisba* endorsed the popular notion: the enchantress, Erichtho, remarks, "Know we, Erichtho, with a thirsty womb / Have coveted full threescore suns for blood of kings" (V.i.9). Eve's sinfulness and the subjection of women, as a fate they are doomed to suffer in consequence, will be explored in Chapter 2, on Thomas Heywood's *The Rape of Lucrece*, as well as in Chapter 4, which analyses *The Queen of Corinth*. In this latter play, Merione, the protagonist, suffers because she only has recourse to a discourse that emphasises her sexual vices inherited from Eve.

Because Eve was the woman who brought humankind into its fallen state through her persuasion of Adam to sin, she, as the ultimate source of human sin, became identified as the cause the fallen human race gave to explain their bitterness and hatred of their inherently sinful natures. An awareness of the human inclination to evil results in a sense of insecurity and a loss of self-control, which is how I consider this aspect of Eve-imagery in Merione, the play's heroine.[17] Merione, as descendant of Eve, accepts but still bewails the sinful state to which she is condemned. Subjection, preached the early moderns, is the result of Eve's desire for forbidden knowledge, her hubristic attempt for acquisition of an understanding that went beyond prescribed limits. Even works in woman's defence, such as Barnabe Rych's *The Excellency of Good Women* (1613), admitted that "the sinne of Adam beganne at Eue" and

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[17] Article IX of England's *XXXIX Articles*, the Church of England's unified statement of faith (1562), is very clear about humankind being "inclined to evil," and "very far gone from his original righteousness," taking special care to emphasise that original sin "is the fault and corruption of the nature of *every man*" (Green, *Thirty-Nine Articles*, 68).

lamented that, "amongst all the trees in paradise, none would serue, but that which was her husbands bane" (16; 26). In Chapter 6, which considers *'Tis Pity She's A Whore*, the audience encounters Putana, the protagonist's "tut'ress," whose fate suggests that female acquisition of knowledge has the potential to result in death.

Virginity

Early modern writers are often concerned with a woman's virginity and her fidelity within marriage, since when a woman is not chaste it threatens the order of succession on which this society based itself. The plays in this thesis which approach the theme of virginity ask a number of compelling questions. In Chapter 2, on *The Rape of Lucrece*, we observe the presentation of a 'good wife' whose chastity is compromised by the lustful Tarquin. However, while she is—at least until the rape—chaste, she is certainly no virgin. Heywood, then, is addressing the question of chastity within marriage. Chapter 4, on *The Queen of Corinth*, portrays another woman whose chastity comes into question after she has been raped. However, while Merione views herself as now-corrupted, Fletcher, Field and Massinger demand the audience's sympathy: with Merione's sexual violation we experience the agony of a woman coming to terms with her new position.

Duchess Rosaura, in *The Cardinal* (Chapter 8) is a virgin, in contrast to Lucrece and Merione, and the tension in this play stems from her reluctance to marry, and her consequent refusal to beget children on whom to bestow her noble rank. Certainly in this instance a virginal woman was felt to arrogate too much power to herself.

Woman as Amazon

A compelling image of woman is the Amazon, dangerous because she falls outside of the boundaries of a marital, and therefore a hierarchical, relationship. Representations of the Amazonian woman feature in two chapters, both dated in the middle of the period in question: *The Sea Voyage* (Chapter 5), and *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* (Chapter 6). The Amazonian

image, particularly in its presentation in *The Sea Voyage*, encapsulates the problems latent within the active woman who is situated in a world that would pacify her: the main problem is that men, it would seem, may be attracted to the aggressive woman. Indeed in early modern representations the Amazonian figure may, in certain circumstances, appear sexually desirable, or even be treated with a fondness not necessarily attached to sexuality. Kathryn Schwarz more fully articulates the surprising implications of early modern representations of the Amazonian woman:

> Despite Purchas's wistful nostalgia for solitary unimammians, the Amazons of English Renaissance texts are aggressively implicated in social structures...they are not lesbian separatists or ritualised descendants of goddesses but mothers, lovers and in some cases wives ("Missing the Breast" 158).

Early modern men often wrote positively of warlike women. Heywood, for example commemorates the British queen, "Bonduca" (Boadicea), as "one of the bravest Shee Worthyes in the whole universe" (*Exemplary Lives* 91). However, the Amazons are often subdued by men in early modern representations, and this is a point I take up in Chapter 6, on *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, in a parallel study between Ford's Hippolita and other representations of the Amazonian queen from whom she derived her name.

Woman as Christ-Figure

There is no unified image of woman as entirely bad, despite the rich imagery associated with Eve-the-temptress that permeates early modern literature. Woman is simultaneously the embodiment of vice (Eve) and the embodiment of virtue (Mary). The emerging Protestant society in England, however, was less inclined than the Catholics to venerate Mary, and so virtuous acts by women are likened rather to those of Christ. The

representation was not this simple, however; no women are simply as 'culpable' as their 'great-grandmother,' or as 'virtuous' as Christ.

Aminta, in *The Sea Voyage* (Chapter 5), is perhaps one of the best representations of a woman who can be read not only an extension of Eve—the sinful woman—but also an incarnation of the mercy of Christ. Her forgiveness of the men who attack her is reminiscent of Christ's mercy from the cross (Luke 23.34). Hippolita and Crocale, two Amazonian women in the play, also exhibit selfless moments of compassion. The pagan Lucrece (Chapter 2), is also, paradoxically, emblematic of Christ's sacrifice—her suicide, like Christ's crucifixion, is a redemptive act that brings the Roman republic to birth. Another example of a female character assigned a Christ-like role is Merione, in *The Queen of Corinth* (Chapter 4): she is a merciful redeemer, saving Theanor's life, when his execution is imminent, and Beliza's body from rape. She is an innocent, the sacrificial lamb. Rosaura, too, in *The Cardinal* (Chapter 8) is similarly a "lamb given up to a tiger" (V.ii.68). Each of these depictions of women forces the reader to appreciate the rich range of possibilities and ambiguities in the representation of woman: both Eve and Christ, she could simultaneously embody both evil and good.

The Slippery Nature of the Tongue, and the Evils of the Pen

Women who acted outside their restricted sphere of influence were seen to be disorderly, hence my title, *Women Who Wreak Havoc*. A woman's active tongue is a metaphor for her active body. The harmful effects of Eve's tongue became one precedent for arguing that disorder is borne from a woman's speech; consequently, women's silence was particularly prized. For example, in 1622 William Gouge stated of women that their "words must be few, so those few words must be reverend and meek" (90). Early modern perceptions of the tongue will be considered in Chapter 1, on *Bussy d'Ambois*, together with the dilemma the speaking woman posed for a culture that desired her silence. The tongue is the organ

whereby women destroy their husband's reputations, through gossip and loquaciousness. More dangerous, the tongue permits the woman to lie, a link to the larger fears men felt about female dissembling.

The preoccupation with the tongue was but a small portion of a larger preoccupation with a woman's body, an issue which will also be considered in some detail, especially in Chapter 7 on *The Lost Lady*. Figuratively dismembering a woman is one way of silencing her. Reduced to her individual parts, she cannot speak. She loses her essential humanity and is unrecognisable as a single, intelligent entity. She is, moreover, disabled from harmful activity. Speaking and writing for public consumption are both forms of communication from which women were seriously discouraged. However, whereas almost any woman could speak, comparatively few women could write, and those that did write, it was often suggested, wrote, like those who spoke, with harmful consequences. Daniel Tuvill's 1616 publication, *Asylum Veneris, or A Sanctuary for Ladies,* states:

> Learning in the breast of a woman is likened by their stoical adversaries to a sword in the hand of a mad man, which he knoweth not how to rule as reason shall inform him, but as the motions and violent fits of his distemperature shall enforce him. It doth not ballast their judgments, but only addeth more sail to their ambition; ...The pen must be forbidden them as the tree of good and evil, and upon their blessing they must not handle it. It is a pander to a virgin chastity, and betrayeth it, by venting forth those amorous passions that are incidents to hotter bloods...(qtd. in Goreau 35).

A potential message in *Bussy D'Ambois* (Chapter 1), for example, is that what women write is death.[18] Thirty-five years later, the Duchess Rosaura writes a letter which will be the catalyst

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[18] In Chapman's play, Tamyra is forced, under torture, to write the name of her lover, an act which results in his murder.

for enormous bloodshed, driven by male pride and ambition (Chapter 8, *The Cardinal*). However, both characters demand their audience's sympathy, and raise the question as to what the playwrights were hoping to accomplish through their representation of these characters.

Adultery and Suicide

In the plays discussed here, the memorable women are those who are *not* silent and passive. They are dissemblers, revengers, and active agents in defiance of their own fates. In *Bussy D'Ambois* (Chapter 1), Monsieur is driven to jealous rage and wild distrust at Tamyra's calm demeanour, expecting that below that smooth surface she is plotting to undermine his authority. Tamyra's role as 'bad wife' is in stark contrast to Lucrece's ultimate sacrifice as a 'good wife'—her willingness to commit self-slaughter to restore her honour (Chapter 2, *Rape of Lucrece*). Adultery and suicide, then, feature as two disturbing themes that arise in this period's drama. Interestingly, however, the playwrights seem to have constructed these characters so that readers and audiences find themselves lauding the efforts of the 'bad' wife and weeping for the suicide of the 'good.' Lucrece's suicide, as we shall see in Chapter 2, created a genuine dilemma for a Christian society that wanted simultaneously to uphold the exemplary nature of Lucrece as a good wife, and to condemn the act of self-slaughter.

From my perspective, Lucrece's suicide is not her redemption, but rather her forced martyrdom by a society that she believed would otherwise ostracise her. Heywood's Lucrece, for example, believes that, following her rape, she may no longer "rank / Among Roman Matrons" (286).[19] It would seem playwrights of the period, rather than reinforcing stereotypes that would condemn women, are opening up possibilities for women within those

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[19] Recent editions of Heywood's *The Rape of Lucrece* have not updated the text to reflect partitions of acts and scenes. The definitive edition of Heywood's works, published in 1874, offers no act and scene guidelines, and it is common practice to use this edition to refer to Heywood's works. Therefore, this chapter adheres to this tradition, marking only the page numbers of the fifth volume of this series.

polarised categories of 'good' and 'bad' that offer a redemptive path for their existences as trapped individuals. Hopkins helpfully elucidates this point: "ironic though it may seem, the staging of a constant stream of bad or fallible women worked not to reinforce misogyny, but to prise it open, revealing grounds on which it was constructed" (*Female Hero* 3). This is especially evidenced in the tyrannical ways in which we observe men treating women, good and bad: torture and rape seem to be the two main modes prescribed for punishing women regardless of the seriousness of their offences.

Torture and Rape

In *Bussy D'Ambois* (Chapter 1), torture is portrayed as a pathetic and desperate act resulting from envy. How this violence is sexualised will also be observed. Montsurry's frustrated lust, exacerbated by the jealous belief that Tamyra, his wife, is being unfaithful, results in the horrifying torture inflicted upon her. Rape, too, is another hate-driven action, perhaps having even less to do with lust than the torture we witness in *Bussy D'Ambois*. The threat of rape permeates several of the plays in question, but it proves to be a particularly important motif in *The Queen of Corinth*, and so is discussed most thoroughly in Chapter 4.[20] In this chapter the subjectivity of rape stories will be carefully analysed: I will tentatively propose that Merione's rape, and her response to it, was actually part of an elaborate plan devised by Merione herself to assert her independence. By crying rape, she was able to marry the man of her choice, even if the seemingly unforgivable nature of his action should have turned her irremediably against him. The story Merione tells is the one that the audience has witnessed, but is different from the one perceived by other characters in the play, who accuse the wrong man of the rape; moreover, if the way she forms the story is not how she actually perceives it herself—this based on my tentative reading of her tale as being part of an

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[20] *The Rape of Lucrece, The Maid's Tragedy* and *The Cardinal* are also plays where rape is raised as a serious issue.

elaborate plan—then another layer of 'truth' appears in the scenario. The multi-vocality and co-existence of contradictory perceptions take to a plausible extreme what Higgins and Silver call the "split reality that often characterises rape cases" (2); in the retelling of any history there is no single truth, but perhaps in rape, where so much is at stake, the significance of more than one version of events is even more marked. Which version is the truth? The audience is offered two possibilities: either that Merione was raped and, as a victim of her society, felt obligated to marry this rapist; or, that she asserted her own will by posing as the victim of rape in order to marry the man she loved. In a desire to locate a *single* truth, spectators and readers fail to appreciate the complexity of these multiple possibilities. This same sense of multi-vocality within a single story is exemplified in the jocularity of Valerius's voice in *The Rape of Lucrece* (Chapter 2), which is set up as a counterpart to the agonised voice of Lucrece: the polyphony in the sex tales of the period indicate that there was a co-existence of different responses to sexual morality.

Returning to *The Queen of Corinth*, I do not establish the 'truth' of Merione's elaborate plan to the detriment of the equally plausible, in fact stronger, possibility that the rape was very much a rape, and that Merione serves as an example of the damaging way in which women view that experience as a reflection of their own culpability. This alternative reading puts back into place what Barbara Baines refers to as "the reluctance to acknowledge the reality of rape as the history of rape" (69) rather than as symbolic of other, more abstract, forms of tyranny, hate and domination. The psychological connection between rape and suicide, as we observe in Lucrece (Chapter 2), is that "rape destroys a woman's most important sense of autonomy and agency: control over her body" (Baines 89). Suicide, then, is the escape from that sense of loss.

Dissembling and Revenge

Unlike Tamyra (*Bussy D'Ambois*) and Merione (*Queen of Corinth*), Lucrece seems incapable of dissembling, and her honesty leads to her death. This does not suggest, however, that deceit ensures a long life. Aspatia, in *The Maid's Tragedy* (Chapter 3), dissembles *so that* she may die. She is driven to dissembling in order to recover her sense of loss; in an explicit act of blurring the boundaries between the genders, she dons masculine attire to bring herself closer to the man she loves. Evadne, too, is a dissembler; she seems deliberately to have fooled Amintor with the intent of furthering her ambitions. Aspatia is driven to subterfuge in order to be permitted the opportunity to act. This dissembling is a point of connection between these two women whom scholarship generally polarises. In a much later play, *The Cardinal* (Chapter 8), first acted thirty years after the opening of *The Maid's Tragedy*, Rosaura is forced into a similar dissembling, with a comparable purpose for the act, a desire to avenge the wrongs done to her. As we will see in the case of Rosaura (*The Cardinal*, Chapter 8), Milesias (*The Lost Lady*, Chapter 7), Hippolita (*'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, Chapter 6), and Aspatia (*The Maid's Tragedy*, Chapter 3), female revengers seem never to be entirely successful. In part, the representation of failed female revenge may have to do with the fact that vengeance was viewed as a masculine prerogative, and a female desire for the same must be suppressed because it presents a challenge to male authority. Rosaura's revenge, in *The Cardinal* (Chapter 8), is subsumed by Hernando's own act of revenge. Hippolita, in *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* (Chapter 6), is somewhat more successful. In this chapter, the gendered nature of her revenge will be explored: Hippolita is seen to appropriate a masculine privilege. But even Hippolita's action is not fully successful, in that Ford does not permit her to know she has attempted to appropriate a masculine privilege: it was not an act committed in conscious defiance of her gender. Further, she dies before she learns that the enemy, Soranzo, has died.

Evadne, in *The Maid's Tragedy* (Chapter 3), is more successful at claiming this male prerogative. Eileen Allman observes how, although it was Melantius who taught Evadne "how to act the man," the latter "betters the instruction":

> It is she [Evadne] who writes, stages, directs and performs the scene; she who deprives the King of motion, command and volition; she who renders him chaste, silent, and obedient to her; she who makes her knife his lover (138).

However, Evadne, too, is victimised by her action, and it is her victimisation that is considered in more detail in Chapter 3. The multi-faceted nature of her character helps lead to the conclusion that the representation of 'vicious' and 'virtuous' women is not so diametrically opposed in this period—there are aspects of both vice and virtue in women, highlighting again the ambiguity with which the period approached defining its women.

Merione, in *The Queen of Corinth* (Chapter 4), is a good example of such a blending of virtue and vice. Whilst the small amount of literary criticism to have addressed her characterisation has tended to emphasise her status as victim, little attention has been paid to the way in which, like Aspatia, Evadne and Rosaura, Merione is a *dissembler*. I will argue that she was forced to dissemble as a strategy for survival, rather than because it was an innate attribute of her character. In *The Lost Lady* (Chapter 7), the arch-dissembler is Acanthe, who is in fact not Acanthe at all, but the play's 'dead heroine,' Milesias, disguised as a black woman. Acanthe's external façade is connected to internal infection. Not only is she black, and therefore, in terms of the play, inferior and potentially diseased (a theory I will explore in Chapter 7), but also her ability to dissemble is infectious: Hermione becomes a dissembler through her contact with Acanthe (II.iii.755). In this play, dissembling signifies once again the same fear it suggested in *Bussy D'Ambois* (Chapter 1), first performed thirty-three years earlier than *The Lost Lady*. In the earlier play, Tamyra's dissembling threatened to overthrow social order. As the century develops, however, and naval and terrestrial exploration

increases, greater concern is shown for race, and dissembling is linked here specifically to ethnicity.

Melancholy

Psychology, in the early modern period, was often linked intimately to assumptions about physiology. The belief in a somatic root for mental disorders was as prevalent in the early modern period as it is today; there is abundant evidence for this in the medical and philosophical sources in the day, a number of which are highlighted throughout this thesis. Melancholy was a very common topic in early modern drama, a physio- and psycho- logical disorder that fascinated writers, theologians and physicians. However, what was sometimes viewed as potentially positive in men was, when manifested in women, usually diagnosed as a base disease. Genial melancholy—that strain of melancholy that was viewed as a gift and reserved largely as a condition that affected men—has its sources in classical authorities (Schleiner, *Melancholy, Genius and Utopia* 20),[21] and a belief in its being a blessing was sustained by medieval writers (Klibansky, Panofsky and Saxl 217). André Du Laurens, writing in the late sixteenth century, "was a respected and even principal source" for Robert Burton, whose *Anatomy of Melancholy*, went through several editions in his lifetime (Jackson, *Melancholia* 86). Du Laurens was a proponent of genial melancholy: when the melancholic humour grew hot, it could cause "a kind of divine ravishment commonly called *Enthousiasma*, which stirreth men up to play the Philosphers, Poets, and also to prophesy" (Du Laurens 10).

This understanding of the effects of genial melancholy was promoted by the fifteenth-century philosopher, Marsilio Ficino, who "revised negative ambiguous assessments" about

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[21] Schleiner considers genial melancholy as it was articulated in *Problem XXX*, which she attributes to Theophrastos. His work considers why "all those who have become eminent in philosophy or politics or poetry or the arts are clearly melancholics" (20). She also emphasises the importance of Cicero's *De divinatione*, "which made famous Aristotle's view that melancholics have 'aliquid praesagiens et divinum' " (23).

melancholics, "insisting they were especially gifted" (Schiesari 7).[22] As well as Shakespeare's melancholic genius, Hamlet, Ben Jonson explicitly made a connection between melancholy and creativity in *Every Man in His Humour*, thereby further popularising the hypothesis amongst London theatre-goers:

> Oh, it's your only fine humour, sir, your true melancholy breeds your perfect fine wit, sir: I am melancholy myself divers times, sir, and then do I no more but take pen and paper presently, and overflow you half a score, or a dozen of sonnets, at a sitting (III.i.80-84).

In this study I hope to demonstrate that certain male playwrights also attributed the elevated construct of melancholy to female characters, thus modifying the notion that the psychological state of melancholy, which resulted in the Ficinian celebration of melancholic genius, was a male privilege.

Some of the most important strains of melancholy, as they were articulated through a number of early modern writers and physicians, such as Thomas Wright, Robert Burton and Jacques Ferrand, will be investigated in Chapter 3, on *The Maid's Tragedy*, where I will maintain that Aspatia exhibits both the strains of melancholy as illness, and melancholy as mental endowment. The classical roots for this hypothesis and its foundation in humoral theory will be thoroughly documented in that chapter. Like Aspatia, Annabella, too, in *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* (Chapter 6), exhibits signs of 'love melancholy,' predominantly thought of as a masculine illness, but one which philosophers, such as Burton, felt that women suffered much more acutely, on those occasions when they were afflicted with it. Typically, female melancholy was diagnosed as being more of a physiological disease, rather like hysteria, a sickness understood to be the consequence of rotting female *sperma* due to, as

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[22] For Ficino's observations of "divine frenzy," see *Commentarium in Phaedrum*, which can be found in *Marsilio Ficino and the Phaedran Charioteer*, ed. Michael J.B. Allen, 1981 (Schiesari 7, 16n).

Edward Jorden claimed it, "the want of the benefit of marriage...and therefore," he goes on to argue, "we do obserue that maidens and widdowes are most subiect thereunto" (Jorden G2v-G3r).[23]

Borrowing from Hippocrates, Jacques Ferrand, an influential medical writer in early seventeenth-century France, immediately links melancholy in women with madness, as opposed to genial melancholy:

> You may see more, concerning the Nature of this Disease [*furor vterinus*, or 'hysteria'], in *Hippocrates*, in his *Tract, De his quoe ad Virgin. spect.* where he saies, that young Girles, when they now begin to be ready for Marriage, are apt to fall into a kinde of Melancholy, or Madnesse...For the cure of which Disease he prescribes speedy Marriage: otherwise it is to be feared, that through Madnesse and Impatience, they will make away with themselves (XII.96-97).[24]

Ferrand concludes that hysteria is not a form of love melancholy (XII.98). In other words, women were denied the nobility of melancholy, being more commonly diagnosed as having the physiologically-explained strain of melancholy, regarded as a base disease, or a form of madness. Many of the female characters considered in this thesis, however, seem to exhibit signs of genuine love melancholy, and many men, likewise, exhibit the strains of 'troubled blood,' which was typically a symptom of hysteria. I hope to show over the course of this thesis that the lines between the female illness of hysteria and the masculine domain of love melancholy were not so clearly demarcated.

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[23] Edward Jorden was an early modern English physician who played a key role in developing the concept of hysteria (Jorden, "Introduction" vii). He wrote his seminal work, *The Suffocation of the Mother* in 1603.

[24] The medical treatise, *Erotomania*, was printed in English in 1640. Ferrand, born in France in 1575, had his work published twice in his mother tongue in the early seventeenth century. While the English translation may not have been published until 1640, it is likely that the French original may have been available to educated medical circles, and may have influenced English writing on the subject.

Anatomy and Dissection

This preoccupation with melancholy was linked to a curiosity about the connections between psychology and physiology. The amount of extant material on the subject would suggest that early Stuart society was fascinated by the human body. From the mid-sixteenth century forward there was a "reinvigorated science of anatomy" (Neill, *Issues of Death* 102). Perhaps the vital publication for a renewal of interest was Andreas Vesalius's *De Humani Corporis Fabrica* (1543), which began a movement towards empirical evidence for anatomical knowledge (Greenfield 233). The revivification of classical texts also influenced early modern scientists and writers. In the late sixteenth century dismemberment was already explicitly depicted in such visual works as Titian's "The Flaying of Marsyas," the anatomical fascination of which is underscored in Golding's early modern translation of the *Metamorphoses* (VI.510ff.).

Evidence of the interest in anatomy can be found, for example, in *The Lost Lady* (Chapter 7) where the effect on drama in the early modern period of the growing attention to anatomy is notable. My discussion of this play will also address the question of whether or not the use made of imagery from anatomy and dissection is congruent with the belittling of women. In *The Lost Lady*, Berkeley highlights the convention in courtly love poetry of the blazon, which anatomises women into their constituent parts. However, the satirical nature of the courtly love speeches in this play, which inadvertently demean them by suggesting they are 'unwhole,' would suggest that Berkeley upheld the view that women were of more worth than their fragmented pieces. On the other hand, they do not, when re-assembled, seem to be worth more than the sum of their parts. The same sort of fragmentation of women is seen outside of the realm of courtly love. In *Bussy D'Ambois* (Chapter 1), Tamyra's hand and tongue become the synechdocal agents of those actions which villainise her in the eyes (pardon the fragmentation) of her masculine authorities.

The Nature of the Self

Another aspect of curiosity about the body emerges in representations of individuality and notions of the self. In this post-Copernican era, humanity's confidence in itself as central and integral to the cosmos was being undermined.[25] Another part of the early modern interest in the self originated in humankind's inherent insecurity in their self-worth, due to their fallen human state. Calvinism was one movement which had increased the awareness of human depravity: "whatever is in man, from the understanding to the will, from the soul even to the flesh, has been defiled" (II.i.8). In *The Queen of Corinth* (Chapter 4), Merione struggles to escape her tormented self through a form of self-erasure—marriage. Part of this chapter, then, will seek to discover to what extent individuals are portrayed as having any personal agency, especially in the case of women. The interest in the self creates a discourse that expands or tests various hypotheses. This would argue for an 'Essential self' inscribed in each of these characters which could teach us absolutes about a transhistorical and transcultural human nature. I propose to look directly at questions of the self and their impact on notions of gender. Aspatia, for instance, in *The Maid's Tragedy* (Chapter 3), discovers herself only when she adopts the guise of another, an act which undermines centuries of criticism that imposed an essentialist ideology on early modern tragedy: Aspatia does not find truth *within*, she is rather constructed from *without*. Is there any internal sense of self? This is a question that will be addressed through analysing Tamyra's soliloquies in Chapter 1, and Merione's soliloquies in Chapter 4.

Finally, in my concluding chapter, *Hoping for Future Havoc*, I will review crucial observations about this gallery of female characters, staking claims that, I hope, will warrant their ongoing study. The intense and specialised nature of this argument is not executed with

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[25] Early Stuart 'decentering' and the influences of such figures as Copernicus and Galileo is a common theme in the period's literature and is not overlooked in this thesis; see, in particular, 101n.

brought into the more common marketplace of literary discussion. I will, therefore, consider what discourse their representations helped to precipitate in terms of launching social criticism and change. In so doing, I will highlight these female figures who have been cast in shadow, and raise up their voices once again, that have, for so many decades, fallen into silence.

Chapter 1. Tamyra's Tragedy, in *The Tragedy of Bussy d'Ambois*

Plot Summary

Readers and spectators are immediately introduced to the title character, Bussy d'Ambois, a poor but valiant soldier who is rescued from poverty by his benefactor, Monsieur, brother to the King of France, Henry III. Success goes to Bussy's head and his insolence results in a duel wherein he kills three courtiers, and gains further enemies, including the powerful Duke of Guise. Tamyra now enters the scene. She is the wife of the Count Montsurry, and is a passionate woman who pursues an affair with Bussy. Unfortunately for her, Monsieur also desires her and, in his jealousy, publicises her affair to Guise and Montsurry, although he does not know who the lover is. The furious husband subjects her to graphically staged torture, thereby forcing her lover's identity from her, by a note written in her own blood. Through this Montsurry tricks Bussy into revealing himself and his guilt. Bussy is murdered, but not before he and Tamyra have confirmed their love, and Tamyra and her husband have determined that they should separate.

Marriage For Worse: Adultery and Torture

Even Adam and Eve failed to get it right. Marriage was understood to be a mystical union, first ordained in Paradise, and writers fostered the connection between matrimony and Edenic perfection. Joshua Sylvester's popular translation of *Du Bartas His Diuine Weekes and Workes* (1641) celebrates the first union, as instituted by God, in his description of the sixth day of the first week: "For perfect patern of a holy Love, / To *Adams* halfe another halfe he gave, / Ta'en from his side, to binde (through every Age) / With kinder bonds the sacred Marriage" (Sylvester 57). Later in this passage the narrator acclaims marriage as the "source of all joys! Sweet *Hee-Shee*-Coupled-One / … / O blessed Bond! O happy Marriage" (57), drawing attention to the mystery that unites the divided sexes: "Come, come and see the

Womans rapting features: without whom, heere, man were but halfe a man" (57). John Donne also highlights how, "in the Creation of the world...*God brought the woman to the man*" and reminds his listeners and readers that God brings people together in marriage "according to his Institution, and Ordinance" (Sermon XVII, 335-36). However, we all know how the story of the marriage in Paradise ends. God's voice, "with thundering Majesty" questions Adam's eating of the fruit. Adam attempts to exonerate himself by placing all the blame on Eve, arguing, "I am free / From this offence; the wife thou gavest me, / For my companion and my comforter, / She made me eat the deadly meat with her." She is now no more than a "frail treacherous Bride" (Sylvester 93).[26] God's curse of wifely subjection and male toil follows, and the honeymoon is over. Perhaps it was no wonder then if early modern drama exploited the great irony that even the archetypes of conjugal bliss not only frustrated and deceived one another, but also experienced jealousy, murder and exile in the domestic tragedy that was their family life. Richard Helgerson also considers the Fall from an early modern perspective. Naturally enough, he puts forward Milton's *Paradise Lost* as the prime example of the 'Fall' story, noting the way in which "the highly eroticised temptation of all mankind through the first woman, an episode in the no less highly politicized struggle for dominion between Satan and God, is itself presented as a domestic drama" (4). George Chapman was among those early Stuart writers who brought the tragedy of domestic life to the popular stage. *Bussy d'Ambois* has all the elements of fallen Eden, but in this play he has turned the screw a little more tightly, and contemporised scenes of adultery and torture while telling a conventional tale of cunning and deceit, jealousy and violence.

Readers and spectators are forced into feeling somewhat uncomfortable in this play because they are manoeuvred into complicity with the clandestine efforts of Tamyra and

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[26] I am grateful to Catherine Belsey for guiding me to these texts on marriage, in her publication, *Shakespeare and the Loss of Eden*.

Bussy to consummate their adulterous desire. In this way the play is reminiscent of courtly romances of earlier centuries, which tended to celebrate adulterous relationships, perhaps the most famous being that of Guinevere and Lancelot.[27] The paradox in this, and in *Bussy d'Ambois*, is that if the lover were successful and the love was consummated, death was sure to follow, as the punishment for adulterous, passionate love (Lawson 11). In this lies the tragedy: we must watch what we love perish. Chapman highlighted the suffering of love through the means of presenting staged torture both of a physical and of a psychological nature.[28] Tamyra undergoes both in the final scene: Montsurry literally subjects her to physical torture in order to force her to divulge her lover's name, and she suffers mental torment when she must make the agonising decision between Bussy and her husband. Where the courtly lover rapturously embraces death in the name of love (Brodwin 8), Bussy in fact urges reconciliation between husband and wife (Chapman, *Bussy* V.iii.165-66). This surprising shift of emphasis marks the confusion of attitudes to love that was accumulating as the Protestant world busied itself with its emphasis on the details, sexual and economic, of married life.[29]

Something that is clearly brought out in Tamyra and Bussy's love affair is the demonstration of the opposing attitudes they have towards this affair as they plunge more deeply into their relationship. For Bussy, their affair is merely the pastime of the courtier, a game played by both sexes. Monsieur articulates the commonplace nature of this game

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[27] See the account in Malory of how Lancelot starves himself to death after seeing the dead Guinevere at Almysburye (XXI.V.11-12). Previous to this Guinevere had admitted that "thorow thys same man and me hath all thys warre be wrought...for thorow our love that we have loved togydir ys my moste noble lorde slayne" (XXI.V.9.15ff.).

[28] Lancelot, the title character of Chrétien's "The Knight of the Cart," is a medieval precedent for the convention of physical torture emblematising psychological torture. His crossing of the Sword Bridge on his quest to retrieve the abducted Guinevere, is a point where such a convention is employed (*Arthurian Romances* 244-46).

[29] While Protestant theology emphasised love and mutuality, it also provided legitimation for patriarchal authority. For a helpful study on emerging views of marriage in Protestant England, see Sinfield, *Literature in Protestant England*, esp. pp. 61-77.

himself: "A husband and a friend all wise wives have" (Chapman, *Bussy* II.ii.69).[30] For Tamyra, it is the presage of her downfall. Her fear versus Bussy's confidence is the sole focus of the opening of the third act. Tamyra's speech is full of trepidation: their "close embraces" are the entrance to "death and hell" (III.i.1-2). Much of the imagery in her opening speech indicates an openness that seems to emblematise the openness of her adulterous body, and these images are ironically juxtaposed with those "close embraces," that play on the idea of 'closed,' or kept chastity. Their affair has instead "set open all the dores of danger" (2), with the result that she has been made subject to various threatening presences of the outside world—shadows and gushing storms (6; 13). She has exchanged the "firmnesse" of an enclosed domestic life for the fearful trembling of an "aspen leafe," tremulously exposed to all the forces of the great outdoors (7). By shedding herself of her domestic obligation to marital chastity, she now has "no roofe, no shelter" to secure her (16).

Bussy almost callously scoffs at Tamyra's fear, dismissing her pangs of conscience as mere cowardice (III.i.18), and proceeds, valiantly (though futilely), to vow that he will defend her honour:

> For my truth I sweare
> Sooner shall torture, be the Sire to pleasure,
> And helth be grievous to men long time sicke,
> Than the deare jewell of your fame in me
> Be made outcast to your infamy (34-38).

Here it would appear that he plays the active role, and she the passive, but in fact the lovers' affair has offered Tamyra an excellent opportunity for agency. Braunmuller comments,

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[30] Chapman's *Bussy D'Ambois* was printed twice in the seventeenth-century; while many modern editions are based on the later quarto (1641), I have chosen to quote from the 1607-08 quarto. For a thorough argument on the validity of this edition, see N. S. Brooke, lx-lxxvi. However, in brief: while the authorship of the first quarto has never been challenged, there are sufficient amendments and corrections to the second quarto to raise questions as to Chapman's undisputed authorship (Brooke, *Bussy* lxi).

"Chapman gives Tamyra an aggressive role in the love affair," pointing out that Bussy himself "appears a passive sexual object...needing Comolet's instruction...and responding to most of Tamyra's advances" (49). Adultery, in this sense, often accords a woman power she would otherwise never acquire. Annette Lawson recently published a comprehensive study of adultery. She elucidates that it is in this adulterous space that women "have been able to begin and end relationships, to refuse and reject advances, to set the pace of involvement, to gain material advantage...and to know the extent of their powers of attraction" (31). The clear message in much of this agency, at least as it appears in Chapman, is that women in active roles are destructive. Tamyra's adulterous act stirs her husband's ire so that he physically tortures her, and subsequently, because of her active role in writing, is an accessory to Bussy's death.

While Bussy's death has all the elements of tragic heroism, it only marginally overshadows the significance of Tamyra's own tragic experience, and this only because the play closes focusing on him. For a time, the audience is more captivated by Tamyra. Her tragedy, it would seem, is more complex than his, for she undergoes first physical torture, and then mental torture. Her physical torture returns us once again to socio-political conventions of the medieval period. Just as Tamyra and Bussy's affair has elements of the medieval courtly love romance, so does her torture seem to recall the practice of judicial torture, which began in the late middle ages.[31] Chapman once again manipulates the significance and efficacy of torture, and reworks its conventions.

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[31] Judicial torture was the "inflicting of pain on defendants...to elicit evidence for a court conviction" (Ruff 92). Of course, Tamyra's was an 'unjudicial' torture. While she certainly undergoes a trial, Montsurry, her husband and her judge in the proceedings, diverged from the legalities of such cases, since he was not, as the law dictated, a judge, and there was no scribe to record the questioning (Ruff 94). Although Montsurry had vowed he "would not passe the verge that boundes a Christian, / Nor breake the limits of a man nor husband" (Chapman, *Bussy D'Ambois*, V.i.34-35), he was an angry husband who abused what he thought were his privileges as head of his household, and suffered the consequences of a guilty conscience.

One way in which Chapman reworks the convention is through his use of Tamyra as the recipient of torture for the purposes of extracting the name of the other guilty party. Where torture was typically employed to determine the sufferer's innocence or guilt (as well as perhaps indicting other parties), Tamyra's trial was to reveal *another's* guilt. Montsurry is torturing his wife so he can exact punishment on the lover whose identity he hopes this violence will reveal to him. After she writes Bussy's name for Montsurry, he leaves her to chase after her lover, rather than carrying out judicial punishment on her (V.i.182-85). In this case she becomes a type of sacrificial lamb, the replacement for Bussy himself: she suffers *for him*. This is not the only time her character bears sacrificial images. She goes so far as to offer her blood as a healing agent for her husband and torturer: "Feele, ô feele / How you are turn'd to stone; with my heart blood / Dissolve your selfe againe" (V.i.128-30).

Another way in which Chapman extends the medieval convention of torture is by sexualising it.[32] (Tortures in the medieval period, or at least the records of trials by ordeal and judicial torture, are rarely pornographic.) One of the most widely employed methods for torture was the strappado.[33] This is a device "in which the hands of the accused, tied behind the back, were fastened to a rope, raising the accused off the floor and leaving him suspended" (Ruff 94). Tamyra's experience on the rack recalls this sort of 'stretching' torture. This, however, follows what Anja Müller has termed "full-frontal violence" (1). While Müller is referring to the explicit nature of the *entire* ordeal, I see it as particularly pertinent to Montsurry's stabbing Tamyra with the ever-phallic knife. His stabbing her is insufficient incentive for her to divulge her lover's name. It is significant that his sexualised approach is ineffective with his wife, who is not attracted to him. When he promises his

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[32] Violence, like sex, is the closing in on the physical space of another; both violate boundaries, although the latter, of course, is often a permitted 'violation;' nevertheless, it is a sort of "assault on the bodily territory of another" (Wiltenburg 183).

[33] Heywood's *A Woman Killed with Kindness*, printed in 1607, makes reference to this, and other, forms of torture. The adulterous Anne wishes these as punishments for her infidelity: "O to redeem my honour / I would have this hand cut off, these my breasts seared, / Be racked, strappadoed, put to any torment" (xiii.137).

quick return to her earlier in the play, the audience is made aware of her lack of desire for him, by her reply, unheard by him: "Would that would please me" (Chapman, *Bussy* II.ii.31). He realises "this tool" (his blade) has outlived its usefulness to him, at least in terms of its effect on Tamyra: it "hath wrought enough" (V.i.136), and so he calls for the engine not only of his lust, but now also of his hate. It is the rack, something that will stretch her body out of the proportions he and other men have desired.

Montsurry's hate, of course, originates in his envy, a theme that permeates the play, although it is deflected onto other characters. In fact, Montsurry even seems initially immune to envy, an emotion described earlier in the play by King Henry:

> Less then either ['braverie' and 'great spirit']
> Will make the Gall of Envie overflow;
> She feedes on entrails like a Kite:
> In which foule heape, if any ill lies hid,
> She sticks her beak into it, shakes it up,
> And hurl's [*sic*] it all abroad, that all may view it.
> Corruption is her nutriment (II.i.3-9).

Indeed, when Montsurry is alerted to the possibility of his wife's affair with Bussy, he seems to brush it off, observing rather that "she flies him like her last houre" (III.ii.264). Tamyra, likewise, shows a similar lack of jealousy. Montsurry suggests Tamyra is jealous that Bussy's attentions are directed towards the duchess and not towards her, a comment to which Tamyra takes vehement exception: "I am so farre / From Envie of her honour, that I sweare, / Had he encounterd me with such proud sleight, / I would have put that project face of his / To a more test, than did her Dutchesship" (II.ii.12-16). It would seem both wife and husband's remarks are misleading: Montsurry turns out to be tormented by envy, and Tamyra's apathy is feigned, as we see when she pursues Bussy to the peril of her peace of mind. Montsurry even utilises

his sexualised torture on other women, in an envy-driven attempt at retaliation: if his wife can 'have' another, then so can he. This is the only explicable reason for his stabbing Tamyra's servant Pero, who has betrayed Tamyra to him. In a jealous rage, it would seem, he would stab her, an act so unjustified that the other characters comment, "This was ill done y'faith" (IV.ii.114). Montsurry has already admitted prior to this that his envy springs from his "troubled blood and not from me," as though he had grown near hysterical from Tamyra's lack of sexual attention (IV.i.153).[34] He has been emasculated by adopting the hysterical-woman's symptoms of green-sickness, the disease brought on by lack of sex.[35] He admits as much himself: "The man that left mee / When you appear'd, did turne me worse than woman" (170-71).

The secondary nature of Tamyra's tragedy, which serves as an addition to the primary tragedy of torture, is her emotional dilemma, where she struggles to choose between lover or husband. Eugene Waith comments, "it is her tragedy, that feeling equally her obligations to both men, she has equally betrayed both" (*Herculean Hero* 95). Waith has inadvertently captured Tamyra's double bind, although he is not generally sympathetic to her—he earlier remarks that "her behaviour shows Tamyra to be a deceitful and consciously sinful woman" (94). Tamyra herself vocalises her dilemma: "If I right my friend / I wrong my husband: if his wrong I shunne, / The duty of my friend I leave undone; / Ill plays on both sides" (Chapman, *Bussy* V.iii.208-11).

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[34] "Troubled blood," of course, can be read here as 'unused seed,' the rotting of which (in a woman) was to go to her head and cause her to be hysterical (see Ferrand, chap. 12). For further discussion see p. 53, esp. 37n. By playing with the possible suggestion of hysteria in Montsurry, Chapman has challenged the gender distinctions that would attribute solely a female's lack of sexual contact to a mental disease.

[35] The condition was also known as 'maid's-sickess,' the 'falling sickness,' or 'green disease,' and is medicially referred to as chlorosis. This is an anaemic disorder that results in a greenish pigmentation of the skin. Early moderns noted this as a sign of sexual desire and frustration in a woman, for which the best cure was marriage (see, for example, Ferrand, *Erotomania* 276ff.). Playwrights made great use of maid's-sickness, such as is seen in Shirley's *Lady of Pleasure* (III.ii.307), or Middleton's *Revenger's Tragedy* (IV.iv.68).

It is frankly convenient for both Chapman and Tamyra that Bussy dies; as a 'victim of passions,' Tamyra has not proven herself to be a character that would easily give up such an affair had he lived. As one with a heavy conscience, neither would she have been likely to have been able to bear the emotional weight of her guilt if she were to choose to continue the affair. There are certainly indications that she despises her conscience, a signal that, were Bussy to live, she would wish desperately to continue the affair, if only she could rid herself of what she terms her "wretched piety" (V.iii.206). Bussy's death solves the first problem. The second is: how to live with an abusive husband. Bussy begs for reconciliation between them (easy for him to say, since he is dying). Montsurry solves the second problem by banning her from his house (230), and even exacts a plea for forgiveness from her (233). In the end, order has been restored, and Tamyra has lost the active role she briefly celebrated. The two men in her life make these final decisions for her. The play goes so far as to end with the focus on Montsurry's nobility, as if he in fact *deserves* forgiveness, and has the right to bestow forgiveness. Chapman urges the audience to a certain limited sympathy for him, when Montsurry vows never to love another, although their love has "lost his hony" (250). Tamyra and Montsurry, at this point, leave the stage "*severally*" and the tragedy closes with the audience's gaze on the murdered d'Ambois.

Writing in Blood

Chapman does not appear to have been particularly concerned with historical detail when composing *Bussy d'Ambois*, but Tamyra's act of writing to her lover in blood, thus betraying him to her husband, seems more poignant than many other of the deviations from historical accuracy and seems an especially dramatic diversion from the historical account. G.R. Hibbard is an example of a contemporary critic who is concerned with Chapman's historicity. Hibbard highlights the scant nature of the historical details pertaining to this story: "Montsoreau thereupon forced his wife to write a note to Bussy, giving him an

assignation, laid an ambush for him, and had him assassinated in 1579" (32). In contrast, Tamyra, after enduring horrific torture says, "I will, I will. / Ile write, but in my bloud that he may see, / These lines come from my wounds and not from me" (Chapman, *Bussy* V.i.167-69).

Perhaps Chapman was merely trying to make the story more gruesome, more dramatic. Perhaps he was trying to heighten its pathos and romance. It would seem, however, that the implications of this act are more profound and numerous than sheer theatricality. He draws too much attention to the act of the writing itself for theatricality to be a satisfactory explanation. The entire opening scene of the fifth act is preoccupied with the word, 'write.' In the course of just over one hundred lines, the word is used eight times in the text. It then reappears one last time: the act culminates with the word alone in the margin, in the stage direction, "*Writes*." In effect, Tamyra writes her lover's death warrant. Women, the lesson goes, write bad things, destructive things, they write death, a point I established in the introduction, where I quoted from Tuvill's *Asylum Veneris* (see p. 30).

In *Bussy d'Ambois* Tamyra's writing in blood signifies the 'atrociousness' of the act of writing. The message here would seem to be clear: good women, life-giving women, do not write. Margaret Atwood usefully articulates the 'catch-22' for the woman writer:

> If women said nice things, they were being female, therefore weak, and therefore bad writers. If they didn't say nice things they weren't proper women. Much better not to say anything at all (18).

Of course, many middle- and upper- class women of the early Stuart period *were* writing, but they were not writing for publication. While Tamyra was not writing for publication, her act of writing brings to the forefront the dangers of female expression. The injurious nature of a woman's writing is highlighted by Montsurry's connection of it to singing—both to the 'badness' of utterance in women, and more specifically to the destructive song of the Siren:

"Come Syren, sing, and dash against my rockes / Thy ruffin Gallie, laden for thy lust" (Chapman, *Bussy* V.i.60-61). A few lines later Montsurry clarifies his meaning: "Sing, (*that is, write*) and then take from mine eies / The mists that hide the most inscrutable Pandar / That ever lapt up an adulterous vomit" (68-70, emphasis added). He further highlights the sins of his wife by connecting his, Montsurry's, destructive act to lessons about a woman's deceitfulness; he argues that by destroying her lover he may "with my soul beames search / The crankes and caverns of his braine, and studie / *The errant wildernesse of a womans face*" (74-76, emphases added).

Despite the finality of the stage direction "*Writes*," the implications of Tamyra's writing have only just begun: rather than being the end of something, her action is the catalyst for Bussy's tragic demise. It serves as an instrument, just like so many acts of women in these plays, to intensify the tragedy of the male tragic hero.[36] Here, by synecdoche, 'hand' replaces writing just as tongue replaces speech (see next section). At first Bussy's reference to Tamyra's hand is innocent, though rich with dramatic irony because of the scene of torture and Tamyra's written betrayal that has just been played before the audience. Bussy muses about Tamyra's circumstances, wondering "what hand she now holds on the troubled bloud / Of her incensed Lord" (V.ii.32). The macabre nature of his musings—macabre because his love-thoughts are made perverse by the actuality of her torture—is emphasised by the response he receives: the spirit Behemoth rises from the depths, introduced by ominous thunder, and utters "Her hand shalbe thy death" (V.ii.56). He does not really internalise the destructive nature of her act until Tamyra herself explains it: "this hand / That lead thy life to

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[36] Shakespeare offers a number of striking examples of females who are blamed for being instruments of male destruction. Examples include *Macbeth* and *Othello*: despite so much evidence that *Macbeth's* title character is an agent of his own destruction, Lady Macbeth's conscience is shown to have been the betraying factor in her husband's regicide (V.i). Similarly, although Othello's jealousy was provoked not by his wife but by Iago, readings of Shakespeare's text could suggest that it was Desdemona's alleged adultery that drove Othello to a murderous jealousy which ultimately destroys him (III.iii).

this unworthy end /... / In which I writ the summons of thy death" (V.iii.167-70). Only now does he recognise the full implications of her action, and moans, "my heart is broken" (174).

Bussy's self-expectations at the opening of the play include a determination to remain separate from the falsity of the Court (I.i.84-104). Although his ideals have been corrupted by his becoming embroiled in court politics, it is perhaps this initial determination that safeguards him from being indoctrinated in the evils of woman. Whatever the reason, Bussy refuses to read death in his lover's bloody letter. He is astonished at Behemoth's warning; with some disbelief he utters, "shall the hand / Of my kinde Mistresse kill me?" (V.ii.65-66), and rather than thinking blood signifies death, chooses to believe Montsurry's claim that it is "the inke of lovers" (89), and interprets it as "a sacred witnesse of her love" (90). However, even the 'innocent' Bussy links Tamyra's writing to sexuality, as though a woman must be lascivious to also be in a position to choose to write for public reception, since writing is active and the active woman is a promiscuous woman. Her 'bloud' (her seed),[37] "dropt in the lightest [most promiscuous] dame, would make her firme / As heate to fire" (92-93). Her writing has heightened his sexual drive, as he admits himself: "O how it multiplies my bloud with spirit" (95). Sexual drive in a man, of course, was 'normal.' In a woman, it was lascivious, and damning, and aligning it with writing only further argued that, for the sake of femininity, women were better off 'silent,' here referring metaphorically to the silence implied by not writing. Kim Walker helpfully articulates the connection:

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[37] Words such as 'blood,' 'spirit,' 'heat,' 'fire,' were charged with sexual overtones in the early modern period. 'Blood' and 'spirit' were often synonymous with the sexual seed that anatomists and society at large believed to be common to men and women. In the early modern period heat was one of the elements that distinguished the sexual being from, in the words of Jacques Ferrand, *"Eunuches,"* for example, because it "makes men hardy, strong and lively" (37). It was a common term in English drama, throughout the early modern period, for dangerous lust. An early example is Beaumont and Fletcher's *Maid's Tragedy* (1607), in which Evadne refers to a woman's sexuality as "hot and rising blood" (II.i.267). The term is still in use much later in the period, evidenced by William Davenant's *The Unfortunate Lovers* (1643), in which Hieldebrand, King of the Lombards, wishes, "Thou couldst prepare me with a little wound, / That might let out my lustful blood" (V.i). An excess of it has the danger of driving a person sick with lust: "except by frequent and vilent [*sic*] exercise, or Labour, they consume the Superfluity of blood, which otherwise would be converted into seed" (Ferrand 59).

> Silence was a heavy injunction for the potential woman writer, particularly since it was so closely intertwined with chastity. Where eloquence in a woman is praised, it is often in terms that make her a sexually ambiguous figure. Thomas Heywood...cites the example of a Roman woman who pleaded her own cause 'with such a manly yet modest constancie, that from that time forward shee was called Androginie' (10-11).

Public writing, it has been established, is, in early Stuart England, a masculine domain. When women write, it signifies death—not only literal death, emblematised by the murder of Bussy, but also the death of femininity. Tamyra's act of writing was not public in the sense of *for publication,* but it publicised information that damaged Montsurry's pride, raised his ire, and set in motion the actions that would lead to Bussy's death. The message concerning the harmful effects of writing is clear in more than just this play. Perhaps Chapman's most famous precedent is Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy*, where a grief-stricken Bel-Imperia writes to her lover Horatio's father, urging revenge. She, too, writes in her blood (III.ii.26), and begs Hieronimo to "Revenge thyself on Balthazar and him: / For these were they that murderèd thy son" (28-29). Another parallel between these plays, significant for the following section of this chapter, is Hieronimo's own refusal to write, and his further grisly biting out of his own tongue (IV.iv).

"The tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity"

Chapman seems determined to make modes of communication in *Bussy d'Ambois* spectacularly perverse: these include a murderous duel and a letter written in blood and forced by torture; further, the play is also preoccupied with the independent nature of the tongue. Chapman is particularly concerned with women's tongues, although he does not fail to concede that even the tongues of men cause trouble. Bussy charges Monsieur of having "a

tongue so scandalous, twill cut / A perfect Crystall" (III.ii.384-85). However, Chapman's greater concern is with the babbling and deceitful tongues of women.

Chapman was certainly not alone in his concern about the loose tongue. The period saw an enormous amount of publications, some serious, some satirical, on what in 1675 Richard Allestree referred to as "this poor despicable member...being of such a gigantic insolence...as even to make war with heaven" (12). However, although both men's and women's tongues could cause considerable harm, early modern writers were particularly concerned with the female tongue. This was not a new concern. Jane Kamensky argues that this gendered bias against the 'slippery member' had "been around...since Genesis," and that "evil speaking was a primordial feminine transgression."[38] Kamensky highlights George Webbe's early modern pamphlet, which testifies: "By the tongue of the *Serpent* was Eve seduced, and her tongue did seduce Adam" (Webbe 8). The sexual association with the tongue, it would seem, was prominent in this period, evident, for example, in Webbe's suggestion that Eve *seduced* Adam with her speech. Kamensky's research reveals, "from roughly 1560-1660, evidence ranging from drama to theological treatises to local court records betrays a virtual obsession with 'scolding' women" (20). As a result, the female tongue seemed to be a loathed body part. Indeed, in one anonymous collection from 1638, readers learn from the work's title that a woman's tongue is "divided into five Parts: A *Medicine,* a *Poison*, a *Serpent*, *Fire*, and *Thunder*" ("Anatomy of a Woman's Tongue").

Chapman dramatises many of the period's views of the tongue, and exhibits his concessions variously. On a satirical level, in stride with some of the ballads and misogynistic epigrams the period produced (discussed below, see p. 57), Chapman introduces Tamyra's wily and garrulous servant, Pero, who represents the gossiping woman. Gossiping,

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[38] Kamensky is right to draw attention to the Bible, which is replete with references to the tongue. The sub-heading for this section is taken from James 3.6, one verse among many that early modern writers were quick to exploit. Other common references were Ps. 56.21, Jer. 9.3, Prov. 16.1, and Jude 16.

sadly, had the same double standard as sexual freedom: what was acceptable in men, for the purposes of court testimonies and neighbourhood policing systems, was unacceptable, indeed dangerous, in women. Gossip, or "common fame", which was the gender-neutral term for the same, had, "a respected function in the community as a means of enforcing canons of morality and neighbourliness" (Mendelson and Crawford 215). The same study demonstrates how gossip was acceptable as testimony in the eyes of the ecclesiastical courts, whose officials "often asked witnesses about the existence of a 'common fame' " (215).[39] Further, as Bussy and Monsieur discuss in the play's opening act, there is a place for "Rhetorike" in that it is a verbal art (Chapman, *Bussy* I.i.132). However, in this very speech there is some ambivalence and fear concerning the outcome of speech. Bussy suggests that rhetoric "works not perswasion, / But only is a meane to make it work" (I.i.132-33) and likens this to the manipulation of ambitious men: "So no man riseth by his reall merit, / But when it cries Clincke in his Raisers spirit" (134-35).

The perceived difference between 'common fame' and women's gossip was considerable. Men hated women's gossip in large part because it could destroy their reputations. Husbands were not only concerned about their brutality being reported—they were also anxious about being cuckolded and having that news spread through a chain of gossiping women.[40] This fear is articulated in *The Gossips Greeting* (1620), in which a group of women come together and slander their husbands. The writer refers to this type of women as "a lewd disdainefull idle lott" (W.P., C3v).

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[39] 'Common fame' was no less harmful than gossip; it was merely a legitimate brand of slander. The libertine, Cleon, in Berkeley's *The Lost Lady* (1637), knows its censorious power: "Is he not somewhat startled at the report of / thy debaucheryes, for though your thick sett woods / and spreading Vinyardes, make excellent shades / to keepe a way the Sunn, I meane the piercing eye / of censure, yet some suspitions common fame / will raise" (I.ii).

[40] As we shall also see in *The Maid's Tragedy*, Amintor—the jilted husband—is willing to remain celibate even within marriage, as long as Evadne and himself can *feign* a happy marriage to the general populace (II.i): in other words, he is more concerned for his reputation than for the satisfaction of his sexual desire.

In *Bussy d'Ambois*, Montsurry certainly fears his wife's tongue, and seems more upset at the possibility of the besmirching of his reputation than at the fact that his wife has been unfaithful. Referring to the inevitable horns of cuckoldry, he chastises his wife: "Your tongue will still admire, / Till my head be the miracle of the world" (IV.i.139-40). He is "stricken dumbe" (IV.ii.93) by the news of Tamyra's infidelity, but Monsieur assures him, "Your case is common: were it ne're so rare / Beare it as rarely: now to laugh were manly" (94-95).

The contrast between Montsurry's mute horror and Pero's babbling tongue would not have gone unnoticed by an audience continually exposed to ballads with the same contradictory pairings. Examples of this subject in these songs are abundant in both the Pepys and Roxburgh collections of ballads. See, for example, "The Cruell Shrow", which juxtaposes a husband's desire for silence with a wife's "bauling":

> When I, for quietnesse-sake, desire
>
> my wife for to be still,
>
> She will not grant what I require,
>
> but swears she'le haue her will.
>
> Then if I chance to heaue my hand,
>
> straight-way she'le 'murder!' cry
>
> (*Roxburgh Collection* I.28,29; lines 49-54).[41]

In *Bussy D'Ambois*, the stereotype is reinforced when Pero utters damaging words: in the course of a few lines, she draws attention to her speech repeatedly (*speak* once, *to tell* twice). First, because she has been given assurance from Monsieur that "I may *speak*" (III.ii.179), she resolves to divulge what her "Lady hath not trusted me with / that I can *tell* you" (181-82). She then articulates: "To *tell* you the truth, my Lord, I have made a strange discovery"

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[41] For other good examples of scolding wives and distraught husbands, see: Roxburgh I.382-83; Pepys II.49.

(183, all above emphases added). In contrast, Monsieur vows silence: "may I sincke quicke into / earth here, if my tongue discover it" (185-86).

Pero's gossip is one of the contributing factors that leads to Tamyra's being tortured and Bussy's death. In III.ii she tells Monsieur that she saw "*D'Ambois* and she [Tamyra] set close at a banquet" in her "innermost chamber" (189-90). However, the greater crime of the woman's tongue, from Monsieur and Montsurry's perspective, is that it lies, and here the attention turns to Tamyra, in whom there are "infinite regions / betwixt a womans tongue and her heart" (III.ii.195-96). Her crime causes the greater pain: "Heer's one (I thinke) has swallowd a porcupine, she casts / pricks from her tongue so" (223-24). The imagery here is noteworthy in its strength and would suggest that actual fear of harm in a woman's tongue is not merely an anachronistic superimposition of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Further, the characters are not only persistently occupied by the female tongue, but also with individual parts of women's bodies in general. In III.ii, Tamyra's body is anatomised into parts: as the previous quote displays, the men make an intimate connection between a woman's tongue and her heart (III.ii.195-96). Attention is also drawn in this scene to her liver and, more importantly in terms of linking women with the negativities of speech, her windpipe (III.ii.221; 223).[42] This verbal dissection of her body would certainly seem to be setting the stage for the literal breaking of her body when she is subjected to torture. The verbal attention to body parts also recalls an early, even more graphic stage presentation, Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus*, which displays an equal preoccupation with synechdocal word-images that foreshadows actual dismemberment:

> The palace full of tongues, of eyes and ears,

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[42] The attention drawn to her liver could, of course, be indicative of their view of her sexuality. Phineas Fletcher (1633) refers his readers to Plato's view of the liver as being held as a seat of love which is less noble than the heart, because of its lower position in the body (III.9-10, marginal notes). See also *Duchess of Malfi*: Ferdinand observes of women who marry more than once: "their livers are more spotted / Than Laban's sheep" (I.ii.208-09).

The woods are ruthless, dreadful, deaf, and dull.

There speak and strike, brave boys, and take your turns.

There serve your lust, shadowed from heaven's eye,

And revel in Lavinia's treasury (II.iii.128-132).

The scene in *Bussy D'Ambois* that exhaustively considers Pero's gossiping and Tamyra's untruthfulness revolves around sexual anxiety, therefore linking a woman's speech to sexual concerns.[43] In imagery that explicitly refers to 'rotting maidenheads,' a servant, named Charlotte, voices her concern about her being single for fear she, and others like her, might "hang till we be rotten" (III.ii.230), and the riddle Pero poses is about lost maidenheads and the dishonour of an unchaste life. The talkative women are dismissed in the following sequence: "Farewell riddle," / "Farewell medlar," "Farewell winter plum" (III.ii.256-59). Here Pero's voice—her riddle—is linked with the sexual terms of rotting fruit, a grotesque image of decay.[44] A less graphic image, but one more sinister, and revealing a greater masculine anxiety, comes from Monsieur, who knows that it is through a woman that Bussy's enemies can precipitate his fall. In a speech thick with double-entendres, and preoccupied with the theme of women's dangerous tongues, we learn that it is women "through whose charmed mouths / We may see all the close scapes of the Court" (III.ii.150-51).

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[43]The word 'tongue' itself, Carla Mazzio explains, "like the Latin, *lingua* and the Greek, *glossa*...also means 'language'...the very invocation of the word encodes the relation between word and flesh" (54). Mazzio further comments that the "duplicities of language were imagined to have emerged from the inherent and slipperiness and duality of the organ of speech," causing such writers as Erasmus to lament the " 'ambivalent organ' " (54).

[44] The medlar was a tree, like a pear tree, the fruit of which is more palatable as it rots (Maus, *Four Revenge Tragedies*, 415n.). Further, pears are shaped like female genitalia. The image is captured in, for example, Middleton's *Women Beware Women*: "For he that marries a whore looks like a fellow bound all his lifetime to a medlar-tree, tis no sooner ripe but it looks rotten" (IV.ii.99ff.) The term plum tree was slang for female genitals (Maus, *Four Revenge Tragedies*, 415n.). Middleton again exploits the image, this time in *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside*: "See and they have not / culled out all the long plums too—they have left nothing here / but the short riggle-tail comfits, not worth mouthing" (III.ii.71-73).

The Dishonest Woman

The reasons for fearing a woman's tongue were various, many of them connected to a masculine anxiety about lack of control. Men were afraid that they could not control their wives from gossiping about their (the men's) capacity for control, or their virility. In *The Gossips Greeting* those "quotidian Gossips...behauiour...is most odious" because they do not "demeane and behaue themselues, both towards their husbands and in their families" (W.P. A3v). They conspire against their husbands: "Ile teach you gull your husbands cunningly" (C1v). Also serious to the early modern mind, these wagging tongues "with enticing words do men ensnare" (C4r), thus narrowing the gap between women's speech and women's sexuality.[45] The relevant stanza is worth quoting in full because it so aptly connects the 'catastrophic' nature of a woman's speech with her insatiable and 'filthy' sexual urges:

> Then Ciren-like theile vse anothers power:
> And with their Cirean words such musicke play,
> That soone perforce theile cause a man to stay.
> And thus they their allurements do begin,
> To tempt a man till they haue got him in.
> The full pauncht Baude (that Dung-cart full of filth)
> Full of diseases, euer wanting health,
> Stands at some loopehole vaporing out of smoake,
> Like *Etnas* sulphurous fume; ready to choake

[45] The link between a slippery tongue and a potent sex drive is perhaps more abstract than physical. The tongue, even in the seventeenth century, was paralleled with the penis, each a body part with "an apparent will of its own" (Mazzio 59). Mazzio refers her readers to John Bulwer's publication of 1649, *Pathomaitomia*, in which he discusses the similarities of these two organs. A woman's loose tongue, then, further masculinises her, consequently threatening to blur the boundaries on which England's gender hierarchy depended. Of course, talkativeness was a female trait, but the art of public speaking was a masculine prerogative. A woman's verbosity, therefore, had to be labelled as shrewish and harmful instead of intellectual so that she would *not* be threatening to take over a masculine privilege. To further the paralleling of the cuckolding tongue and the phallus, Wiltenburg notes: "the female tongue, like the weapons used against husbands, acquires strong phallic associations...it is a cudgel for battering her spouse, the sceptre of her potency, a member at which men may well tremble, knowing that their own puny tongues are helpless against it" (155).

Any that but the smell thereof come neere (C4r).

A woman's wagging tongue, then, can be analogous not only with the male phallus, thereby questioning gender distinctions, but also with hysteria, the psycho-sexual disease of the wandering womb (see 23n., 34n., 46n.). Gynaecological disorders were frequently recorded in diaries, and are retrievable in, for example, John Hall's medical journals, edited by James Cooke in 1657. Hall specifically addresses one particular woman's 'matrix' (womb) displacement:

> *Mrs Mary Comb* of Stratford, aged about 13...Two years before this she had her Lunar Evacuations sufficient...but now they being stopped...she became cruelly vexed with the Mother [i.e., hysteria]...from which she was delivered by the following Medicines: She had a fume of *Horse-hoofs*. There was also given *Aq. Hysteris*...I applied *Emplast, Hyster.* Below the Navil. Lastly I appointed [an ointment]...to anoint the inner part of the Matrix...By this it returned to its place...By these she was delivered (131-32).[46]

Female disorderliness, which had already been seen in Eve's disobedience in the Garden of Eden, was viewed in early modern physiology as being a result of her wet humours: "Her womb was like a hungry animal; when not amply fed by sexual intercourse...it was likely to wander about her body, overpowering her speech and senses...the female...became hysterical" (Zemon Davis, "Women on Top" 156-57). In the seventeenth-century, Edward Jorden enumerated some of a woman's vocal transgressions which "accompanie this disease, (as *suffocation* in the throate, croaking of Frogges, hissing of Snakes, crowing of Cockes, barking of Dogges, garring of Crowes, frenzies, convulsions, hickcockes, laughing, singing, weeping, crying, &c.)" (B2r). With words reminiscent of

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[46] The Duchess of Malfi tries to hide the fact that she is pregnant by remarking, "I am so troubled with the mother" (II.i.109). The term 'mother' was the contemporary word for hysteria, a disease attributed to various uterine and sexual problems. Hysteria is merely the English rendering of ὑστέρα ('hustera'), meaning 'womb.'

some of the images in *Anatomy of a Womans Tongue* (see p. 55), Jorden articulates one origin of vocal transgressions:

> The other substance which most commonly is found culpable of this disease, is nature or *sperma* [woman's seed]: which besides the suspition of superfluitie in some persons, may also receiue diuers sortes of alteration and likewise corruption...So being depraued or corrupted, it passeth all the humors of our bodie, in venom and malignity...And therefore it is compared to the venom of a serpent, a Scorpion, a Torpido, a madde dogge, &c., which in a small quantitie is able to destroy or depraue all the faculties of our bodies at once (F4r).

In the mind of *Bussy's* Monsieur, the fear men may experience from observing a woman's physiological lack of control is bound to their fear of the feminine act of dissembling—in other words, they are not afraid of the woman's illness *per se*, but rather are afraid that such 'malfunctioning' indicates a similar mental deficiency, and one which could lead to a subversion of masculine control of the feminine. Monsieur is both frustrated and afraid of "the *unsounded Sea of womens bloods*, / That when tis calmest, is most dangerous" (III.ii.274-75, emphasis added).[47] In the same speech, he further describes the dangers of such dissembled calm in women as "not any wrincle creaming in their faces," lamenting the "damned nooks / Hid with the vailes of womens vertous lookes" (276; 281-82).

The fear of a woman's dishonest tongue is also intimately connected with the larger fear of her dishonest nature. *England's Parnassus* has numerous references to this fear, perhaps the most explicit being from one Ed. Fairfax, who remarked: "Women haue tongues of craft, and hearts of guile, / They will, they will not, fooles that on them lust, / For in their

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[47] Although many interpretations are possible, I read the italicised portion of this quote to be referring to the raging and rotting "*sperma*" of Jorden's account.

speech is death, hell in their smile" (315). Tamyra clearly exemplifies the connection society made between a woman's speech and a woman's deception. Her voice, the play would suggest, is always employed for the purposes of deceit. To her husband, she is the demure and dedicated wife who says her "husbands height / Is crowne to all my hopes: and his retiring / To any meane state, shalbe my aspiring" (Chapman, *Bussy* II.ii.56-58). However, in the same scene, but now only to herself, she explains that "in the wane of our affections / We should supplie it with a full dissembling" (146-47).[48]

Even when Tamyra is offering wisdom, giving advice to Bussy, it is not entirely innocent. She simultaneously teaches the virtue of patience and encourages the vice of deception (IV.ii.139-151). Her nature is contagious; we observe this in Bussy's heeding her words and adopting a similar dissimulation: he says about Monsieur, "Ile sooth his plots: and strow my hate with smiles" (152). Tamyra has played persuasive Eve to his Adam. Earlier than this she has already employed Temptation/Fall imagery, when she likens herself to Eve facing the serpent. However, in her retelling she rebukes the serpent, and subverts the story of the Fall: "I will tell the serpent / Even to his teeth (when in my honors soile, / A pitcht field starts up twixt my Lord and mee) / That his throat lies, and he shall curse his fingers" (IV.i.184-87).

One must consider Tamyra's circumstances in order to have any admiration for this kind of duplicity—whether or not they justify such dishonesty is another matter, but they may shed some light on the reasons for her actions, and offer some insight into Chapman's potential sympathy for female 'villains.' In the same scene (III.ii), Tamyra admits to her husband that Monsieur has sexually harassed her: "I cannot live at quiet in my chamber / For opportunities almost to rapes / Offerd me by him" (116-18). Montsurry's response is that she

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[48] Julia, mistress to the Cardinal in *The Duchess of Malfi*, represents a woman whose tongue is used for the purposes of deceit, to disastrous consequences. She promises Bosola that she will discover the Cardinal's cause for melancholy: "You shall see me wind my tongue about his heart / Like a skein of silk" (V.ii.211-12).

"beare with" him. In fact he repeats this order three times in fourteen lines, the repetition making the exhortation increasingly ludicrous and increasingly pointed simultaneously. It is also significant in that it highlights the stiff nature of his speech, and establishes him as a weak counterpart to Tamyra, whose elevated soliloquies (considered below, see pp. 65-71) form a striking contrast. There is no variety in his words—he drives his message home with an unadmirable monotony, setting the stage for his later unadmirable, indeed despicable, behaviour towards his wife.

With Montsurry's words, Tamyra has been given the 'go-ahead' to be a sexualised woman with other men, but has also been further repressed into submission. The first is liberating, the second oppressive, and she acts from both places: she purposefully misinterprets her husband's words to sexualise herself towards another (Bussy), and she voluntarily occupies that position strategically for the purposes of defying social limitations. She has been what Elizabeth Harvey might call "consigned to a marginalised position by the patriarchal order," but has "voluntarily (and self-consciously)" occupied that position for the purposes of "subverting the dominant discourse" (*Ventriloquized Voices* 57).

Despite her deliberate choice to dissemble, Chapman suggests that Tamyra is not inherently dishonest; however, her tendency towards deceit, and her adept handling of the same, leaves even the audience wondering at the sincerity of some of her speeches. When she speaks of "one / That sits above, whose eie no sleepe can binde: / He sees through doores, and darkeness, and our thoughts" (II.ii.261-64), it is difficult to immediately determine whether she is dissembling a particular piety, or suffering from a nagging conscience. Her continuing the affair would suggest she is merely dissembling piety, but her concern for her husband in the final scene (V.iii.206ff.) might suggest a genuine conscience at work. If it is the former, it is not the only instance of dissembled piety, since her feigned concern for purity is argued from a similarly pious angle. When Montsurry invites her to bed, she refuses: "O no my

Lord, your holy Frier saies, / All couplings in the day that touch the bed, / Adulterous are, even in the married" (III.i.91-93). If the dissembling originates in the latter, the nagging conscience, then Chapman has presented the stereotypical lascivious woman who, even despite a strong sense of morality, is a helpless slave to her passions. Of course, he has determined this already, even while creating a situation which leads readers to side with her. Tamyra herself admits to a "licentious fancy" that she "cannot stand above" (II.ii.42; 45).

The Art of self-Expression: Tamyra's Soliloquies

Chapman grants Tamyra another method of expression: the soliloquy. Here the audience would expect to experience an openness in Tamyra that is different from the openness of her mouth, signified by her tongue, and the openness of her body, signified by her adultery and her wounds. Now we would expect to meet the openness of her heart, her interior self. But do we? How revealing are these dramatic monologues?

Tamyra's soliloquies are similar to the soliloquies of later classical writings, such as of those in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Readers observe in such monologues as those of Byblis (IX.446-469) and Myrrha (X.354-402) the same representational qualities evident in *Bussy D'Ambois*. None of these women directly address the audience, nor clearly utter a moral. They are, in the Ovidian tradition, psychically divided: Ovidian women, in a tradition which was passed on to the early moderns,[49] must attempt to align their subjective drives with objective rules (Milowicki 21). What this does is to set them up as "inimical to the classic ideal of reason" (24). While in one sense such divided consciousness creates cause for celebration because it challenges nature and convention with introspective relativism (30), it would seem to me that in the hands of Chapman, Tamyra's moral relativism only enforces men's belief in women's moral ambiguity. Her soliloquies typecast her, despite the illusion

[49] Milowicki and Wilson trace the history of 'Ovidian' monologues, from their birth before Ovid, to his codification of the same and to their flowering in the Renaissance (43).

of self-musing they are intended to create, and it is this typecasting that causes the question of 'openness,' or candid truth in Tamyra's speech. In analysing her monologues, it becomes clear that these are not in fact self-musings: either she is aware of an audience, or these are not her words at all, but rather she is being used as a mouthpiece to ventriloquize the playwright's thoughts, and thereby she becomes the instrument for his own hypotheses and stereotypes.

What, then, is the purpose of the soliloquy: is it intended to reveal something significant about Tamyra's character specifically, or is it supposed to articulate what may have been seen as an absolute truth about women, promoting early modern stereotypes? Many of her reflections seem incongruent with her actions, suggesting they are more generalised contemplations about one of the perceptions of women. In the case of the first soliloquy (II.ii.34-39) the question of a woman's lascivious nature is addressed: Tamyra admits to her lust, referring to her adultery as "licentious fancy" (II.ii.42). She is here constructed as the lascivious woman against whom early modern conduct books preached. She is the evil woman who would go so far as to use her priest as "agent for my bloud" (see 37n., where blood is identified with lust) (Chapman, *Bussy* II.ii.49).

It would appear from Tamyra's first soliloquy (II.ii.34-39) that her sexual drive extends beyond the limits of her control: she struggles to reconcile her conflicting desires, which are her passion and her knowledge of what is socially accepted. Linking her libido to her voice Tamyra admits, "she must utter that / That will in parting breake more strings in me, / Than death when life parts" (45-47). However, she does not mention Bussy in this speech, and just previously has (admittedly, perhaps only in pretended apathy) snubbed Bussy as one who "should have made more maners / Deserve more welcome" (II.ii.9-10). It causes one to wonder if her affair has anything to do with Bussy in particular, or everything to do with her own lascivious nature in general. She seems to withstand much torture for his sake, but such fortitude could, in the end, have been only for her honour's sake. After all, she does finally

divulge his name. However, Tamyra has already established that she is not able to withstand physical trial. Her opening soliloquy already exhibits her inability to endure violence. Her first soliloquy is crowded with violent words and images: *rageth, tosseth, insolent fury, riots* (Braunmuller 45). It would seem this violent lust "which she must needes, or rest unsatisfied" (Chapman, *Bussy* II.ii.189), is the internal parallel to the later external bodily torture she also fails to bear.

The ambiguity of Tamyra's love is never fully resolved. It is understandable, then, that Gunilla Florby wonders whether Tamyra is "a passionate, tormented heroine or a shabby liar, making a laughing stock of her husband" (127). Despite the various possibilities, the arguments seem to lie more persuasively on the side of her true love for Bussy, perhaps marking Chapman as one who did believe in woman's capacity for constant love. Although she eventually writes down his name, she has endured horrific torture, and insists that she will write "but in my bloud that he may see, / These lines come from my wounds and not from me" (Chapman, *Bussy* V.i.168-69). The only point that remains certain from Tamyra's first soliloquy is that a "fume, / Hot, drie, and grosse," in her words, "riots within me" (II.ii.34-35; 43), and she joins a long line of women who must face internal battles.

Tamyra's second soliloquy (II.ii.157-79) affirms another stereotype: woman as disorderly, even diabolic. Braunmuller indicates this speech as one which sets Tamyra "outside the moral order," and indicates that she "begs for a new world beyond Time, motion and Fortune" (47). This threat of chaos and spiritual decrepitude is not instantly recognisable from this second soliloquy, in which she invokes "all the peacefull regents of the night" (Chapman, *Bussy* II.ii.157). There is rather a sense in these lines of a faint, cold fear of her own doom, and also an expression of the battling emotions inside her, of which she says, "feare and hope / Of one thing, at one instant fight in mee" (168-69). From a modern perspective we see Tamyra as brave and independent. She can count herself among those

women "who defined themselves," says Elaine Showalter, "however painfully, as autonomous" (*Inventing Herself* 18). These are women who "have been feminist icons, symbols of aspiration who have exercised both spiritual and psychological power" (14). Tamyra herself admits "I flie my sex, my vertue, my Renowne, / To runne so madly on a man unknowne" (Chapman, *Bussy* II.ii.174-75). Although a powerful sympathy is constructed for the affair between Tamyra and Bussy, it is still adulterous, and a heinous crime in the early modern period.[50] In *The Fall of Man*, Godfrey Goodman, chaplain to Queen Anne, admonishes adulterers:

> Call foorth the incestuous or adulterous person...Thou beast, thou worse than beast, (for many beasts seeme to obserue the Rites and sanctite of mariage [*sic*]) seest thou not how thou hast sinned against heauen, and against thine owne soule? Doth not thine owne conscience accuse thee? or thinkest thou that the close night, or darknesse it selfe can couer or conceale thy sinne? (55).

Tamyra's behaviour was not something to be taken lightly—indeed, it was legally punishable. Because domestic economies reflected the state, disturbing the order of the family effectively set the state in disarray. And, as James I was quick to point out, the hierarchy of the state was divinely instituted.[51] What such battling emotions seem really to do then is to serve as support for Chapman's view that the " 'natural' order exists to be challenged; and will destroy the man of daring who challenges it" (Tomlinson 257).

Tamyra's upsetting of this order (she was, after all, the active agent in this affair), is embedded in the language of natural disasters that pervades the play. Such imagery is more

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[50] Tim Stretton remarks that "while both wives and husbands accused each other of adultery, the operation of the 'double standard'—the community belief that male fornication and adultery were less threatening to the stability of families and of society than female fornication and adultery (even though most writers believed they were equally sinful)—meant that accusations were invariably more damaging when directed against women" (195).

[51] James I likens the orders of family and state in *True Law of Free Monarchies*, claiming, "the argument of the *law of nature in this our ground* with the laws and constitutions of God and man already alleged will...easily appear" (10, emphasis added).

evident in the other speeches, many by men, indicating their anxiety over the potential subversion of natural order. Law, complains Guise, "runnes, much like a turbulent sea" (Chapman, *Bussy* II.ii.25). Bussy, too, refers to "stormie laws" (IV.i.77) and lawyers' mouths, that gush blood "like so many Torrents" (79). There is clearly a fear that the law is unstable, and that it will not secure order. Even the king fears natural disasters are ahead:

> Heer's nought but whispering with us: like a calme
> Before a tempest, when the silent aire
> Laies her soft eare close to the earth to hearken
> For that she feares is coming to afflict her (IV.i.103-06).

He sees "Almighty *Æther* in the smoake / Of all his clowds descending: and the skie / Hid in the dimme ostents of Tragedy" (109-11).

Tamyra's language in her soliloquies is violent, too, but hers is of a spiritual nature, as though her plight is so great that all the catastrophes of the earth could not change her situation for, in her mind, the better. For Tamyra, metaphysical intervention is essential. Earthly disasters only exacerbate her plight, and cause greater earthly turmoil; her sins, for instance are "like to the horror of a winters thunder / Mixt with a gushing storme" (III.i.12-13). Her references in soliloquy to terrestrial elements are much more calm in comparison with her earlier images of chaos. She refers to "languishing windes, and murmuring fals of waters" (159). She has abandoned the physical realm for the supernatural one, because she needs the spirit world to extend its utmost strength and "make the violent wheeles / Of Time and Fortune stand" (164-65).

Even Tamyra's reference to earthquakes in her first soliloquy has spiritual implications rather than merely earthly ones. She speaks of a passion that "tosseth Temples in the aire" (II.ii.40). Earthquakes "were generally regarded as portents presaging evil and misery" and were "held to be disruptions of the order of nature" (Florby 120). We see this

argument being upheld in Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi*. After Ferdinand has charged his sister, the duchess, with a loss of virtue and reputation, encouraged her to kill herself and threatened to kill her lover, the duchess hears another knock on the door, and she laments, "How now? Who knocks? More earthquakes?" (III.ii.154). Consistent with the early modern view of earthquakes and their metaphysical significations, Tamyra's reference to a "gulfe" that is opening, "that will swallow / Me and my fame for ever" (Chapman, *Bussy* II.ii.177-78) seems less a reference to a rift in the earth, and more to the spiritual abyss of hell, or the great gulf that divides the sinners from the saints. This point is visually exaggerated as, while she finishes her soliloquy, a stage direction indicates that the "*Vault opens*" and the Friar ascends. The appearance of a holy man would highlight the spiritual nature of her speech, and the later literal summoning of the spirit world proves the point (IV.i). She shows no fear of exorcising spirits in terms of doctrine. Her misgivings are, rather, pragmatic: she is only afraid of how the spirits may look: "Good father raise him in some beauteous form, / That with least terror I may brooke his sight" (28-29).[52]

Tamyra's third soliloquy (III.i.42-67) reads like a lament, and further highlights the stereotype of 'woman as victim of passion.' Her lament is defensive, and she questions "What shall weake Dames doe, when th'whole worke of Nature / Hath a strong finger in each one of us?" (III.i.47-48). However, even while she laments her fate—women "cannot keepe our constant course in vertue" (53)—she engages in scholarly debate. Like so many philosophers before her, as well as her contemporaries, she ponders the great body/soul divide. It would seem she joins the Platonic school of the soul, that "thought of the rational

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[52] This connection of women and holy men to witchcraft has an interesting precedent. In the fifteenth century Inquisitors' guidebook on witchcraft, *Malleus Maleficarum*, the authors make the same association: "For some learned men propound this reason; that there are three things in nature, the Tongue, an Ecclesiastic, and a Woman, which know no moderation in goodness or vice; and when they exceed the bounds of their condition they reach the greatest heights and the lowest depths of goodness and vice. When they are governed by a good spirit, they are most excellent in virtue; but when they are governed by an evil spirit, they indulge the worst possible vices" (Sprenger and Kramer 28).

soul as imprisoned in the body" (Hoeniger 86). It also adheres her more closely to her lover, Bussy, who similarly bewails the rift (Chapman, *Bussy* V.iii.126ff.). She laments that "our bodies are but thicke clouds to our soules" (V.iii.59). Like Andrew Marvell's Soul, "enslaved so many ways" ("A Dialogue Between the Soul and the Body" 2), Tamyra's body heavily impedes the goodness of her soul, a goodness established by the heaviness of her conscience. This, too, is consistent with Platonic thought, as it was Christianised by Augustine and medieval Christian philosophers, who "in general adapted Platonic and Aristotelian views of the tripartite soul" (Hoeniger 90). The Church maintained that the rational soul was sacred, and "included aspects of conscience, penitence and redemption," which were perturbed by "immoderate passions or desires" (90). Tamyra likewise refers to the murky vapours that have disturbed her conscience, although again she dissociates herself to some extent from blame, in language which would rather see her as a victim of those passions. Likening herself to an insignificant mote in comparison with powerful sunbeams she laments, "O how can we...disperse our passions fumes, with our weake labours, / That are more thick & black than all earths vapors?" (Chapman, *Bussy,* III.i.64-67). Again, there is a consistency with the Ovidian development of the soliloquy in her line of questioning: she is, like Medea, exhibiting the passion of "a mind divided between desire and duty" (Milowicki 28). In the end, Tamyra chooses desire, and is marked as 'whore' for it.

The messages in Tamyra's soliloquies do suggest male authorship. They are too focused on the negative stereotypes of a woman to suggest an authentically female voice: "poetry in which a woman speaker condemns herself out of her own mouth as 'bad'...can be reasonably assumed to be written by a man" (Stevenson and Davidson xxxv). Tamyra's voice, then, is not really her own, not even in these soliloquies. The gender of the authorial voice has not been erased, and the masculine fear of the subversion of order is dispelled by the control with which those very words of fear have been created.

Conclusion: Learning about Women

The Tragedy of Bussy d'Ambois is a very goldmine of educational material on the received opinions concerning women, both psychologically and socially. For one, readers and spectators learn that women's education was frowned upon, which has the possible implication that the construction of subordinate, or even sub-human beings was encouraged instead. In a memorable speech on women's connection to the moon, Bussy conjures the image of "still unweaned sweet Moon-calves with white faces" (IV.i.17). A moon-calf was an insult, referring to a monstrosity, something mutant, and malformed. In *The Tempest*, it is a term used for Caliban (II.ii.135), the "freckled whelp...not honoured with / A human shape" of Prospero's appropriated island, and son to the witch Sycorax (I.ii.284-85).

Woman as monster is a frequent image in Chapman's play. Montsurry comments that "Tis horrible to think with what monsters womens imaginations engrosse them when / they are once enamour'd" (III.ii.268-70). Growing more serious, Monsieur comments that "in their hearts are *Scylla* and *Charibdis*, / Which still are hid in monster-formed cloudes" (III.ii.277-78). Scylla was a young girl who was turned into a monster by a spell placed on her. Thomas Heywood explains that a jealous Circe, who was a rival in love for the affections of Glaucus, "sprinkled the well wherein she vse to laue her selfe with such venomous iuice, that from her wast downewards she was translated into diuers monstrous shapes" (*Gynaikeion* 41). Charybdis was "likewise a most deuouring woman...transformed into that monster of the sea" (41), and Scylla and Charybdis are equally treacherous neighbours: "when there is shipping in those parts amongst those rockes and shelues, they are either swallowed by *Charibdis* or Scylla" (*Gynaikeion* 42).[53] The impossibility of controlling

[53] Homer was one classical author to narrate the tale of the twin terrors, in Book XII of *The Odyssey*: "Therefore in your strife / To 'scape Charybdis, labour all for life / To row near Scylla, for she will but have / For her six heads six men" (168-71).

women, to which Monsieur is referring, is signified in being in the inescapable position of being caught between the two.

Perhaps it is this fear of the dangerous nature of women that led men to suppress women's opportunity for education, owing to the rebellion more erudite women, in their enlightened state, might incite. In the words of Tamyra, and one can imagine it being performed with a deep sense of irony, intoned purposely like a schoolchild saying something by rote, "The Schoole of Modesty, not to learne, learnes Dames: / They sit in high formes there, that know mens names" (Chapman, *Bussy* IV.i.50-51). It is difficult to imagine Chapman endorsing such a limiting view of women's schooling, however, and this is what would indicate he is in fact taking exception to how women were perceived. After all, this is the same man who encourages women not to internalise the arguments that might impede their learning. In his poem, "A Good Woman," he exclaims: "Pious and wise she is, and treads upon / This foolish and false opinion, / That learning fits not women" (15-17). He believes learning would ennoble them, and "being noble," he contends, "is the noblest meane / To spend her time" (21-22).

Chapman's defence of women here, unfortunately, is a limited one. Education, he would suggest, is not for education's sake—it is a means to an end, "preventing" and "suppressing" those "thoughts idle and unclean" (22, 23). His view of women in *Bussy d'Ambois*, those creatures inconstant and dangerously powerful as the moon, the very "plague of *Herod*" (IV.i.132), are those, perhaps, who would be, in Chapman's mind, perfect candidates for such ennobling education.

Chapter 2. Forgotten Figures and the Evolution of a Genre in *The Rape of Lucrece*

Plot Summary

Thomas Heywood's *The Rape of Lucrece* opens with the Machiavellian and persuasive Tullia plotting to usurp her father, Servius, from the Roman throne, and to establish her husband, Tarquin Superbus, as king of Rome. Aruns and Sextus, Tullia's power-hungry sons, are then introduced. They seek counsel from the Oracle at Delphi as to which of the two will be more powerful. This thread of the plot rests for some time while the audience is introduced to Colatinus (who is married to the eponymous character) and his fellow soldiers, who are arguing over whose wife is most virtuous and most beautiful. They devise a plan to surprise their wives by returning to their homes unexpectedly; the husband whose spouse proves to be conducting herself in the most 'wifely' manner will be rewarded with a prize, a horse and fine armour. Colatinus's wife, Lucrece, proves to be the most dutiful. While the men are at Colatinus's home, Sextus, who is among them, is overwhelmed by her beauty and her chastity, and steals back to the house, using Colatinus's ring as proof of his allegedly honourable intentions. He desires to sleep with her, and when she refuses, he threatens to kill her, and place her in the arms of a servant, thus framing her and charging her with adultery. When she still refuses, he rapes her. Lucrece calls her husband and father home, truthfully reveals the whole story and then kills herself. The men, with Brutus most prominent among them, vow revenge. This leads to the expulsion of the Tarquins from Rome, and the emergence of a Roman republic.

"To be a queen I long, long": the Cruelly Ambitious Tullia

Tullia is significant to this drama for many reasons, perhaps the least of which (and also, in light of the analysis which follows, the most astonishing), is that she seems to have been a peripheral figure to Heywood's English predecessors who told the story of the rape of

Lucrece, as well as to some of his successors. Indeed, Tullia is never once mentioned in Shakespeare's *Rape of Lucrece*, nor, going back further, in Chaucer, and she is never mentioned, after Heywood, in Middleton's *Ghost of Lucrece*. In contrast, Heywood develops her at length in his own Roman drama, borrowing directly from his main classical sources, Livy and Ovid. Also astonishing is the lack of present-day analyses of Tullia's character and behaviour. She is, after all, the evident 'villain' of Heywood's sub-plot, her 'wily female nature' ranking with such a memorable female villain as Lady Macbeth. In fact, what little scholarship does exist on Tullia tends to mention, more or less in passing, her likeness to Lady Macbeth. However, even this appears to be for the purpose of highlighting Heywood's debt to Shakespeare, rather than to consider Tullia as a character type. Past critics of Heywood's *The Rape of Lucrece* seem not to look at Tullia in her own right, but rather understand her to be part of that which makes the play "bargain-basement *Macbeth*" (Shepherd, *Amazons* 185).[54]

Of Machiavellianism and Murder—Tullia's Ambition[55]

As a 'type,' Tullia is the scheming, ambitious leader. She is the archetype of the female villain, against whom the seventeenth-century Englishman John Reynolds railed. Of 'Ambition,' 'Revenge,' and 'Murder,' which he duly places in capital letters, Reynolds claims the following:

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[54] See, for example, Frederick Boas, who says that Heywood "had also without little doubt a debt to Shakespeare;" he also draws attention to Tullia, suggesting that Heywood "prompts his criminal ambition after a cruder fashion than Lady Macbeth with her husband" (52-53). Heywood's biographer, Arthur Melville Clark, considers Tullia in light of her "parallels to Shakespeare" as well; he also concludes that Heywood was "imitating his contemporary's *Macbeth*" finding in this a clue to the date of composition, setting it at 1606 or 1607 (47).

[55] In this section I distinguish between Machiavelli himself and the early modern Machiavel as a stereotype *created* by early modern writers, such as Marlowe's title character in *The Jew of Malta*; by the time the stage-Machiavel had been perfected s/he had evolved into something virtually diabolical. Some scholars would argue, "it was through the stage, without a shadow of a doubt, that the majority of Englishmen first heard [Machiavelli's] name" (Raab 57). The stage-Machiavel was in fact an hybrid creature—a fusion of Machiavelli's effective Prince with any coldly-calculating and scheming individual. Perhaps the playwright's inspiration for this merging of types came from the late sixteenth-century wit, Thomas Nashe's, *Christ's Teares* (1593), in which he states: "the spyrite of monarchizing in pryuate men, is the spyrite of Lucifer" (44).

> Now as they are powerful in Men, so they are (sometimes) implacable in Women, who (with as much vanity as malice) delight in their sins: as if they could add grace to their bodies, that deforms their souls (Bk. I, Hist. I, 2).

Tullia indeed appears to delight in her sins. Her callousness is remarkable. A ghastly scene occurs in which her father lies dead before her, and Tullia glories in the "second life" this death gives her: "Teare off the Crowne, that yet empales the temples / Of our usurping Father: quickly Lords, / And in the face of his yet bleeding wounds, / Let us receive our honours" (Heywood 172). Much later when Tarquin tells Tullia he has forbidden her father's funeral, Tullia ruthlessly responds "No matter" (187).

Parricide—and in Tullia's case, parricide and regicide—is not, and never has been, easily condoned (although there are times when the act seems remotely justifiable due to the tyranny or perverse nature of the father/monarch). To an early modern audience, the horror would be particularly pronounced because of the emphasis its society placed on family, and Tullia's remorseless hatred would probably have seemed an indefensible abomination. In early modern England, the significance of the family, and one's connection to family, cannot be overstated. Michael MacDonald and Terence Murphy usefully summarise recent historians' views on this matter:

> the very concept of the person had a different meaning for early modern people from what it has for us. [Recent historians] argue that the person was conceived of in terms of his relationship with others in his family...rather than as a psychologically unique and independent being (261).

Heywood's *The Rape of Lucrece* was produced shortly after the re-printing of James I's *The True Law of Free Monarchies* (1603; reprinted 1642), which established for England the supreme authority of the father within the family, and made it analogous to monarchical absolutism:

> The king towardes his people is rightly compared to a father of children...For as fathers the good Princes, & Magistrates of the people of God acknowledged themselues to their subjects. And for all other well ruled common-wealths, the stile of *Pater Patriæ* was euer, and is commonly, vsed to Kings...And nowe first for the fathers parte...consider, I pray you, what duety his children owe to him, and whether vpon any pretext whatsoeuer, it will not be thought monstrous and vnnatural to his sonnes, to rise vp against him, to control him at their appetite, and when they think good, to sley him (D3r-D4v).

Even Tarquin comments upon Tullia's hatred for her father, calling it "unnaturall, in thee, my *Tullia*," to which she replies coldly: "A kingdoms quest, makes sonnes and fathers foes" (Heywood 166). Tarquin repeats the charge a little later on: "Thou shewest thy selfe in this unnaturall strife / An unkind Daughter" (174).[56] Tullia views the death of her father as her passage to power, and when he is slain, she rejoices: "My fathers death gives me a second life" (172). A gruesome image is prompted by the stage direction which confirms the wickedness and disrespect of this usurping villain: "*As they march,* Tullia *treads on her Father & staies*" (173). When Lucretius remarks on what she has done, she simply comments, "No matter, let his mangled body lie" (173).[57] Her cold nature is only admirable in the stoic resolve she demonstrates at her death:

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[56] The word 'unkind' is significant here because of its semantic possibilities in early modern English. It could mean not only 'lacking in kindness,' but also 'unnatural,' and playwrights often employed its double meaning (see, for example, Middleton, *Women Beware Women*, II.i.8; Middleton, *Ghost of Lucrece*, line 99; Shakespeare, *Titus Andronicus*, V.iii.47). Here, in light of Tullia's unnatural and vicious action towards her father, Heywood is certainly taking the opportunity to exploit the word's potential.

[57] Although the stage direction indicates that Tullia has literally trampled on her father, and Lucretius remarks to her that "Your shoe is crimsond with his vital blood," (173), readers and audiences later learn that in fact she has driven over him with her chariot. (Heywood's classical sources, Livy and Ovid, also present Tullia in a horse-driven chariot at this point in the story.) Horatius remarks that he and his compatriots' revenge on Tullia is justified because "in her pride, / In blood paternall, her rough coach wheeles di'd" (241). More explicitly, Brutus refers to Tullia as "this Monster, this infernall hag, / [who made] her unwilling Chariotter drive on, / And with his shod wheeles crush her Fathers bones" (174); he later amplifies the ghastly spectacle: "to tread upon her fathers skull, / sparkle his braines upon her Chariot wheel" (191). This is perhaps the sort of inconsistency these playwrights demonstrated in their haste to churn out plays for a demanding audience. Nevertheless, both images are consistently grotesque and emphasise Tullia's evil nature.

Had I the heart to tread upon the bulke

Of my dead father, and to see him slaughtered,

Only for the love of *Tarquin* and a Crown,

And shall I fear death more then losse of both?

No, this is *Tullia's* fame, rather then fly

From *Tarquin*, 'mongst a thousand swords sheel dy (Heywood 249).

Here again Heywood strays from his source. Heywood has created very little in Tullia that we can admire. However, the potential nobility in the nature of this death suggests a depth to her character that she was denied in earlier accounts. Livy chronicles how throughout the confusion of Brutus and his compatriots' uprising, Tullia wandered aimlessly, "cursed wherever she went by men and women," (I.59), but conspicuously silent when compared with Heywood's representation. In Livy's account, her death is not recorded.

From the perspective of many early moderns, the lascivious woman is an evil woman. It has become a commonplace to claim that early modern sociology was no different from many other periods in that it linked 'bad behaviour' to women's insatiable sexual drives.[58] The insatiability of a woman's lust meant they were often driven to a madness derived from sexual deprivation. One of the early modern physicians to underscore this link between mad behaviour and lustful women was Edward Jorden, who in 1603 wrote, "But amongest all the diseases whervnto that sex is obnoxious, there is not comparable vnto this which is called *The Suffocation of the mother*...the *Symptoms* of this disease are sayd to be monstrous and terrible to behold" (B1v-B2r). While physicians spoke about it rather clinically, possibly even sympathetically, anti-woman polemicists blamed women themselves for their physiological shortcomings, justifying the double standard of their own lust by referring to women as, for example, "necessary evils" and "more vile than filthy channel durt" (Swetnam E4r; E2r).

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[58] This connection has already been made in Chapter 1, see pp. 60-65, esp. 61.

From such invectives it follows that Tullia's ambitious nature, and the persuasiveness she wields, inheres in her sexuality. Swetnam's *Arraignment* (1615) comments on exactly this manipulation: "What is it a woman cannot doe which knowes her power" (D3v). Perhaps it is a tribute to Heywood, whose notoriously beneficent nature was often acknowledged, that he does not capitalise on this stereotype.[59] However, Tullia is not entirely lacking in this composite of sexuality and ambition, thereby exhibiting even Heywood's capacity to succumb to stereotypes. The connection is made early in the play, shortly after Tullia has persuaded Tarquin Superbus to join with her in overthrowing her father. Tarquin fantasises about this situation with pleasure, stating that the peers and senators will "all imbrace my faction; and so / Love the change of state, a new King to obey" (Heywood 167). Only following her husband's submission does Tullia suggest she will gratify him sexually: "Now is my *Tarquin* worthy *Tullia's* grace. / Since in my armes, I thus a King embrace" (167). The double meaning of this line must not be overlooked in the light of its sexual innuendo—this "embrace" proved to be something of a vice-like grip.[60] Sex and death, in fact, were often equated in drama of this period. The hesitant lover, Berowne, in *Love's Labour's Lost*, approaches love with some suspicion, in part because he knows "there's an eye / Wounds a leaden sword" (V.ii.480-81).[61] H.R. Hays offers a long history of the fear of female sexuality, connecting it with a general fear of the alien nature of female genitalia. The 'openness' of the woman, a concept explored in Chapter 6 (see pp. 215-19), was equated with a wound; as Hays concludes, "if in addition to the menace of the recurring wound, the cleft between a woman's thighs is felt to be a castrating scissors, we begin to perceive, more and

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[59] T.S. Eliot refers to Heywood's "sympathetic delicacy" (106), and Arthur Melville Clark concludes that Heywood reveals in his plays "a humanity all his own which is far removed from the commonplace" (221). Even more emphatic is Marilyn L. Johnson's assessment: she refers to Heywood as "a gentle optimist, sympathetic and tolerant...even toward his villains" (x).

[60] Livy gives similar attention to Tullia at this point; Heywood borrowed the idea of Tullia's "maniacal ambition" (Livy I.47, more literally translated as 'feminine madness'—*mulieribus furiis*), directly from Livy, but fleshed it out in a way entirely his own.

[61] 'Eye' was early modern slang for the vagina.

more, how intensely alien the second sex is thought to be" (60). Moreover, we begin to appreciate the power a woman could extract from the knowledge of the fear with which her lover may approach her. Of course, the extent to which men feared women's sexual power was probably grossly disproportionate to the actual threat they posed (Capp 25), but the fear displayed through the wicked and sexual nature of Tullia serves to highlight just how afraid men could feel, whether or not it was justifiable.

Tullia is acutely aware of her power, and pressures her husband accordingly. She initially appears more powerful in the Senate than the other counsellors; at least her voice is heard and heeded more than the rest.[62] Tarquin affirms Tullia's status in the senate: she is their "Oracle and save from thee / We will admit no counsel" (187). She is the quintessential early modern Machiavel who advises Tarquin Superbus to rule by fear: "Since you gaine nothing by the popular love, / Maintaine by feare your Princedome" (187). This echoes Machiavelli's discourse, which emphasises that since a prince cannot be both feared and loved, it is safer to be feared, because fear induces a dread of punishment, which in turn ensures the prince's power since the subjects are too afraid to protest (Chapter XVII).

Tullia has internalised the confidence of power articulated by Machiavelli. She is cunning enough to know that she and Tarquin "must seeke some means how to maintaine this awe" (Heywood 188), but she receives strength from the belief that her children will succeed them in ruling this regime: "barren Princes / Breed danger in their singularities.../ But when in topping on three *Tarquins* more / ...It terrifies blacke treason" (188). It is quite bizarre that Tullia has so much faith in her children when she has proved so cruelly faithless to her

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[62] Here Heywood has strayed for the first time from his source in earlier parts of Livy. In his classical source, Tullia loses her voice at the moment of her husband's seizure of the throne. Livy narrates: "Now began the reign of Tarquinius Superbus—Tarquin the Proud," and Tullia is never again mentioned. Also different from the source is Tullia's Machiavellian nature, which Heywood carefully and thoroughly establishes as very much her own. The Machiavellianism originates in fact from Livy's Tarquin, rather than Tullia: "Without hope of his subjects' affection, *he could rule only by fear*" (Livy I.48, emphasis added). In Livy, Tullia is irrelevant to Tarquin's early reign.

own father. Her self-confidence is balanced against Tarquin Superbus's personal insecurity; he reposes on the assurance of the Oracle at Delphi to which he has sent his sons. His trepidation rings true and Tullia's confidence in her children proves false when the Oracle affirms Tullia's sins must be expiated, and that the child who kisses the mother first will succeed her reign. Both sons rush home to be the first to kiss their mother, foolishly misinterpreting the Oracle. It is in fact Brutus who wins the contest, having immediately knelt down to kiss Mother Earth. Tullia, who in turn misinterprets her sons' desires as filial love, offers them each the opportunity to kiss her, but once Aruns has done so, Sextus no longer cares to show his mother 'affection.' They do not love her; they are only hungry for her power. The children plan to "gaine a kingdome by a mothers kisse" (186).

There is a long break in this subplot of parricide and regicide as attention narrows down to one episode in the overthrow of this race of Tarquins. Legendary history has marked the fall of the Tarquins as the beginning of a new Roman republic, or, in Heywood's own words, "which was after, the cause that the Tyrannicall monarchy of Rome was transferd into a Consular dignitie" (*Gynaikeion* 126). Heywood, while never raising Tullia to a place of admirable importance, does give her the notoriety of 'villain.' Rome needs to be purged not only of the race of Tarquins, but also of Tullia's evil. When Apollo's Priest appeals to the Oracle for information on whether Rome will be blest, the Oracle responds: "Then *Rome* her ancient honours wins, / When she is purg'd from *Tullia's* sins" (184). Horatius vows a "combind revenge" that will destroy "the perpetuall tyranny / Of all the Tarquins, *Servius Tullius* death, / And his unnaturall usage by that Monster / *Tullia* the Queene" (239). Following this, we never again hear Tullia's voice until just before her death, when she summons up a remarkable courage before she is slain. Her ambition has led to nothing: her power was brief, her children failed to maintain the Tarquin dynasty as a direct consequence of her son, Sextus', sins (his rape of Lucrece), and their empire has crumbled, a republic

rising from its ashes. Heywood has dramatised the futility of ambition, which his near-contemporary, Thomas Nashe had articulated so well in print just a few years earlier: "O what is it to be Ambitious, when the dust of the streete (when it pleaseth her) can be Ambitious" (*Christs Teares* 42).

The Royal 'We'

While Tullia appears ambitious from the outset, she displays a discomfort with the role that verifies the reality of her usurpation. This is best seen in the development of her 'royal' speech. From the very beginning Tullia consistently refers to herself in the first person. Her very first speech draws almost exaggerated attention to this, as it is a speech in which Tullia is contemplating her sense of self-importance. She refers to herself as 'I,' 'me,' or 'Tullia' eight times in nine lines (Heywood 165). The entire scene unfolds with tiresome and repetitious references to herself, 'I, *Tullia*,' establishing both her hyper-individualism, and her failure to have adopted the royal first person plural.

By the second scene, which takes place in the senate, Tullia is beginning to employ more naturally the conventions of royal speech; however even here she fluctuates between the usage of first-person pronouns, both singular and plural. In one instance she remembers the convention, as in, "*Brutus* you trouble *us*" (169, second emphasis added), but shortly after, when she is overcome with angry emotion, she forgets her regal position and refers to Servius as a "dotard" who is "not *my* father" (171, emphasis added). Throughout this meeting of the senate she fluctuates between 'I' and 'we,' and 'my' and 'our,' the oscillation sometimes occurring even within one sentence: "*We* ore his truncke may in *our* Chariot ride: / For mounted like a Queene, 'twould doe *me* good" (173, emphases added). After her father is slain and Tullia no longer feels nervous about the stranglehold she has on her position, both confidence and time remedy her tendency to forget her usurped place, and she adopts a more

consistent usage of the royal first person plural. A later scene in the senate reveals this development:

> From our love,
> How happy are we in our issue now
> When as our sons, even with their bloods contend
> To exceed in dutie, we accept your zeale.
> This your superlative degree of kindnesse
> So much prevailes with us that to the King
> We engage our owne deere love…
> We do not yet esteeme you least in love,
> Ascend and touch our lips (189-90).

This royal speech, however, is not without its dramatic irony. Tullia has grown exceedingly proud upon the throne, and has recognised her monarchical status as having made her like the "Gods" (188); consequently, in her speech to her son (Tarquin Sextus), she has exhibited a mercy and grace towards him which she has deemed worthy of her great state. However, the audience knows a nastier truth: what has just taken place to prompt this speech is the wild and selfish scrambling between her sons, alluded to above, each to ensure his place as successor to the throne. They care nothing for her, only for her power: the apple does not fall far from the tree.

Interestingly, when Tullia faces imminent death, she reverts to the first person singular—"Mercy I scorne," and "Life I despise" (249), as though death is returning her to her natural position. She is forced to accept the curse of mortality. Until the moment of her death, however, and despite her progressive marginalization at the senate, carefully manufactured by Heywood, Tullia remains the proud, ambitious and cunning human being, who is referred to throughout the play as, for example, "proud *Tullia.*" Tullia herself admits

"there is no earth in me, I am all fire" (Heywood 166). Fire has a long history of being accorded a place of honour among the elements. Ovid, for example, celebrated fire, "most pure and bright," and further amplified its significance, making it not only the 'gods' soul-stuff,' but the most perfect of the elements. It is "the substance of Heaven it selfe;" because of its lightness it "did mount aloft, and set it selfe in highest place of all" (*Metamorphoses* I.25-27).[63] Tullia is also likened to "*Pallas*, or the wife of *Iove*. / Will not be spoke to without sacrifice, / And homage sole due to the Deities" (177). Her hubris, referred to in this passage, seems almost like a proud denial of the actual mortality she must finally confront in herself; this self-aggrandisement creates an ironic contrast to the reality of her mere mortality. As a final attempt at superiority, her last lines are mocking and derisive, calling Colatinus a "cuckold" and referring to those who kill her as "slaves" whom, by slaying her and felling her body, will "make this earth divine" (249). This strength of character, unadmirable as it may seem in its pride and viciousness, is established early on, and the cruelty of it is immediately evident in Tullia's willingness to overthrow her father, all of which demonstrate a technical capability on Heywood's part for which he is rarely given credit.

Tullia Concluded

Scholarship in the late twentieth and twenty-first centuries has typically been eager for opportunities to examine the villainous women of early modern drama. While prior to the rise of feminism criticism tended to focus on the moral weaknesses of 'bad women,'[64] more recent scholarship studies these women for the purposes of considering *why* they act as they do, and

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[63] Cleopatra, in Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra,* likewise, emphasises the superior nature of fire, remarking, "I am fire, and air; my other elements / I give to baser life" (V.ii.289-90).

[64] See, for example, Irving Ribner's study in 1960 of *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, in which he determines that Annabella's initial magnificence "declines to sordid desecration" (47) and that Putana's loyalty is "rendered sordid" (42). Robert Ornstein (1960) also serves as a fine example of this tendency. While he has a small amount of sympathy for Evadne, in *The Maid's Tragedy*, she is predominantly a "whore," "seducer" and "portrait of perversity" (174-76). Likewise, Annabella, in *'Tis Pity*, "plays too ambiguous a role in the moral action to serve as an ethic touchstone…Now she plays the repentant sinner, now the wanton who brazenly boasts of her lover" (212). John F. Danby also refers to Evadne in 1952 as "a study in radical perversity" (193).

what freedom or opportunity it may give them. In her essay, "Sin and the Politics of Penitence," Anne Haselkorn maintains that certain 'female villains' of the Jacobean stage, "unable to change the circumstances of their lives, subject to the domination of father, brother, husband and rule...bypass the traditional female route" (130). However, Haselkorn has concluded this study with an analysis of certain Jacobean characters whom she considers to have been built around the playwrights' "initial empathy" (130) for their situation. Tullia, in contrast, never reveals a side to which an audience can warm. She is presented as inherently evil, and, like anyone inherently evil, must be suppressed. And so she is. In fact, by writers other than Heywood, such as Shakespeare and Middleton, she is effaced altogether before she even begins: she never makes it to the page, or the stage.

In contrast, Heywood, who is remembered for a greater humanity than many of his contemporaries, grants Tullia her Warholian 'fifteen minutes of fame,' in which all her evil is highlighted, and then he makes her existence insignificant. Her initial intrigue is stifled, her evil suppressed. In the final scenes her voice and presence are no longer the focus of attention. One of her last actions is of defeated retreat: "*Tarquin and Tullia flying, pursued by Brutus*" (240, *S.D.*). This is followed by a sighting of her among the members of the council who meet in order to be informally arraigned by Brutus (240, *S.D.*). However, though she is implicated in this discussion—Horatius states that "Tullia's guilt / Shall be by us reveng'd" (241)—her voice is never again heard in the play as possessing persuasive power. We still see her strength, and in fact, even her constancy is alluded to: she scoffs at death when she sees her ruin, and promises to stand by her husband until they are slain (249); however, her authority has been trampled under the feet of a new republic.

Tullia and Lucrece—Emblematising a Roman Dichotomy

One possible reason for Heywood's illumination of Tullia in his play might be for the purpose of highlighting the heterogeneity of women, adding his voice to the popular debate

which revolved around whether or not all women were bad, and whether one woman's bad behaviour was indicative of the inherently evil nature of the gender.[65] The inclusion of Tullia in Heywood's *The Rape of Lucrece* does nothing to defend the nature of women, but it does highlight, by having her placed in direct contrast to Lucrece, who stands out so prominently as an exemplary figure, that one woman's sin must not be the cause of condemning the sex as a whole. Brutus himself enumerates various types of womankind:

> I hold some holy, but some apt to sinne,
> Some tractable, but some that none can winne,
> Such as are virtuous, Gold nor wealth can move,
> Some vicious of themselves are prone to love.
> Some grapes are sweet and in the Garden grow.
> Others unprun'd turne wilde neglected so (208).

Another likely reason for Heywood's inclusion of Tullia is not only to have an antithetical counterpart to Lucrece, for the purposes of symmetrical patterning, but, on a deeper and more symbolic level, to construct the women as emblems of the ambivalence with which early modern England viewed Ancient Rome. Clifford Ronan describes the perceptions early modern England had of their ancient forbears: "to Early Modern England the Ancient Roman was sometimes a refined Stoical monarch, sometimes an appetite-driven barbarian" (152). In Heywood's play, Lucrece would appear to be the 'Stoical' figure, whereas the actual monarch, Tullia, is the 'appetite-driven barbarian.' Ironically, too, Lucrece, whom Heywood and much of English literary history praised for her exemplary qualities, was, in the end, the damned 'self-murderer'—the type of figure whom English theologians and politicians, largely unchallenged, vehemently condemned.

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[65] The printed material that fed the fire of this debate is most remembered from Swetnam's *Arraignment*, in which "hee doth most impudently rage and rayle against all the whole sexe of women" (Sowernam A2r), and the famous responses of Rachel Speght (esp. p. 13), Esther Sowernam and Constantia Munda (esp. C1v-C2r).

English self-Murder and the Roman Lucrece

Lucrece's suicide created a genuine dilemma for a Christian society who desired to uphold her as the consummate woman of nobility and honour. Although Shakespeare, for one, dramatised suicide in pre-Christian Rome as the honourable thing to do and so early modern playgoers were exposed to this tradition,[66] it remained a contradiction to their own culture's expectations: how could they turn a blind eye against what early modern sermonisers, educators, nobility and royalty railed against as "very madnesse, and extremitie of folly" (Tuke 26)? In the same composition, *A Discovrse of Death, Bodily, Ghostly, and Eternall* (1613), Thomas Tuke, addresses the type of suicide that could stem from a situation like Lucrece's: self-murder as "very vanity of the minde, and to auoide reproach, infamy, beggary, contempt, and the despight of the enemy" (28). This was exactly Augustine's dilemma over Lucrece. He felt the only way she could be acquitted of murder is if she actually enjoyed her sexual experience with Tarquin, in which case death should be the just outcome of her adultery: "For if she is acquitted of murder, she is convicted of adultery; and if she is acquitted of adultery, then she is convicted of murder…If she was an adulteress, why is she praised? If she was pure, why was she slain?" (I.19).[67] Either way, from this point of view, she is a bad woman, and does not deserve to be held up as an exemplum of virtue.

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[66] See, for example, Cleopatra's speech in Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*: "Let's do it after the high Roman fashion, / And make death proud to us…/…We have no friend / But resolution, and the briefest end" (IV.xvi.89-93).

[67] More contemporary to Heywood than Augustine, the early modern English clergyman, John Reynolds, linked murder and adultery as like-crimes, thereby emphasising the severity of adultery: "God who is Truth it self, and who cannot lie, has said, that …*Adulterers he will judge*; he has promised it…if not in this World, yet with more dreadfull punishment of that to come…But indeed, these two grand crimes of Murther and Adultery seldome escape an Exemplary, and severe punishment in this World" (1).

However, while some writers may have hinted at either Lucrece's pride or her 'enjoyment' of the assault, Heywood refuses to acknowledge these aspects of her behaviour.[68] In contrast, Heywood establishes her as the archetypal 'good wife,' at least from the perspective of early modern conduct books, and the majority of her speeches revolve, monotonously, around her chaste marriage to her husband. Significant, though, is her final act of disobedience that, in all ways, runs contrary to her otherwise impeccable obedience. She ignores the words of her husband who has "quit thy guilt, for what could *Lucrece* doe / More then a woman?" (Heywood 238), and further disobeys, from the perspective of Heywood's Christian audience, the laws of God. While Greek and Roman attitudes had been generally tolerant of suicides, English law, especially between 1500 and 1660, treated suicide severely, denying suicides normal funerals and burials (MacDonald and Murphy 19).[69] This early modern perspective has been preserved by both social history and literary history. In the personal accounts of several women we encounter tales of suicidal desires denied because of the fear individuals feel for their souls. One woman, passed down to us merely as "E.R.," relates the devil tempting her to "hang myself, or cut my throat," so that she cried out to her parents "that I was damned, and that there was no salvation for me," (qtd. in Crawford and Gowing 273). Another woman, "E.C.," wrote about her temptations toward suicide from which she was deterred when she "considered what the causes of it might be" (268). Contemporary cultural views on suicide are also preserved in the period's creative literature: a priest in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, who thought the circumstances surrounding Ophelia's death

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[68] Shakespeare's suggestion of Lucrece's pride in her act of suicide is discussed in a later section (see pp. 91-98). Middleton, in his *Ghost of Lucrece*, is unique, so far as I can ascertain, in intimating that Lucrece may have enjoyed her sexual encounter with Tarquin Sextus; in this work, Lucrece remarks: "It bribes the flesh to war against the spirit, / With tickling blood must'ring in every vein; / It weans the conscience from her heavenly merit, / Depraving all chaste thoughts... / It taints the breath with fire, the brain with blood; / And sets a devil where a god had stood" (365-71).

[69] Suicide in the classical world was seen as potentially both appropriate and praiseworthy. Seneca taught, "no man should keepe you liuing against your will...[God] made nothing more easie then death" ("Of Prouidence" VI.509), and indeed among prominent classical figures were many suicides, including Socrates, who is said to have willingly drunk hemlock when ordered to do so, Cato, who killed himself in order to defend the Roman republic, and Seneca, who took his life on his emperor, Nero's, orders.

to be doubtful, states, "We should profane the service of the dead / To sing sage requiem and such rest to her / As to peace-parted souls" (V.i.231-33).

If from an English perspective suicide was an assurance of one's damnation, could Lucrece's suicide be in any way justifiable, so that she might be honoured as one who prized "her life less then her honor'd fame" (Heywood, *Rape of Lucrece* 238)? Even Augustine had conceded that Christians could legitimately commit suicide if God had commanded them to do so (I.22), but he clearly condemned Lucrece (I.19). In English law, one who was insane—*non compos mentis*—was also exempt from the criminal penalties of suicide (MacDonald and Murphy 15-16). Heywood's Lucrece, while she may or may not exhibit signs of despair, cannot be diagnosed as mentally unfit. Heywood devotes a whole scene to her reflections after the rape, demonstrating that she is able to assess her situation well and conclude that she is "now / Devote to death and an inhabitant / Of th'other world," resolving that "these eyes must ever weepe / Till fate hath closed them with eternall sleepe" (Heywood 235). From another early modern perspective, Thomas Tuke assures his readers that self-murder may be forgiven "if God will; for Gods mercy is greater then the mischiefe and malice of any sin or sinner." However, he qualifies this mercy by stating that those who kill themselves will only be forgiven "if hee doe repent of his murder, before he be dead" (31). Again, however, there is no remorse on Lucrece's part. On the contrary she dies resolved to "not debare my body punishment" (Heywood, *Rape of Lucrece* 238).

It would appear Lucrece's only hope for absolution comes from John Donne, who in *Biathanatos* charges other writers on suicide with the crime of "rigorous suspition" (Preface). Like those people who charge all women of innate evil because of Eve's action, an issue addressed in the previous section, Donne argues that men who criminalize suicide indiscriminately do "not allow to indifferent things the best construction they are capable of" (Preface). He raises the example of "*disorderly long haire which was pride and wantonnesse*

in Absolon, *and squalor and horridnes in* Nebuchodnozor, *was vertue and strength in* Samson, *and sanctification in* Samuel" (Preface). In perhaps the only work of the period which rejects Christendom's reductive attitude towards suicide, Donne argues against Augustine that God could not possibly command a sin, but he can command a murder, and therefore self-murder cannot in every case be a sin (I.i.7). This, however, does not absolve Heywood's Lucrece, who nowhere suggests she has been commanded by the gods to take her own life. Donne systematically considers suicide from the angles of natural law, rational law and divine law, concluding that human beings have wrongly interpreted suicide as being contrary to natural law (II.iii.1-4), and as for divine law, since the Bible nowhere explicitly condemns self-killing, "the whole Church may not be bound and concluded by the fancie of one, or of a few, who...dreme arguments to establish and authorize that" (III.i.1).

Donne has only absolved Lucrece in so far as he has placed an act of suicide such as her own into a Christian context and not condemned it absolutely. He has left the possibility open that the human mind is too small to grasp entirely the unrevealed nature of God's providence and God's mercy. However, Donne in no way offers a solution—he merely uncovers the potential ambiguity in what had been regarded as the inherently evil nature of suicide. By daring to suggest that Christ's redemptive crucifixion is the model suicide (III.iv.5), Donne challenges the mobs that would argue against him. If Heywood chose to be influenced by an argument that celebrates redemptive deaths, then looking at Lucrece's rape from an historical perspective—this circumstance set into motion the overthrow of the Tarquins and the rise of the Roman republic—then Lucrece, like Christ, is a model suicide, and therefore absolved from the guilt that would otherwise attend the action.

It seems that Heywood does not resolve Augustine's dilemma, or employ his predecessors' or contemporaries' voices to clarify his opinion on Lucrece's status in the

afterlife. He merely takes the fame of her conflict and capitalises on it by dramatising it for the English public.

England's Lucrece(s): A Comparative Study

Lucrece has become such a prototype of obedience and nobility, and her actions have been resurrected so often over the centuries, that it is difficult to analyse the character specific to Heywood's Lucrece. Each writer treating the story seems to be so dependent on a chain of writers before her or him that it seems as if the discussion of one representation results in the discussion of all versions, however reductive that may end up being, considering the differences in narrative representation. However, there are some notable differences, which Marilyn L. Johnson touches on. In terms of English writers on the subject, Johnson observes that "Chaucer and Shakespeare...devote relatively little attention to Lucrece's chastity and her degradation" and she further remarks that in the section of Heywood's play in which he deals with Lucrece, he "follows Shakespeare very closely in setting, plot, characterization, and even bits of dialogue" (123). What Johnson does not explore, and neither is this mentioned in other comparative analyses,[70] is the extent of Lucrece's participation in the plot *prior to* the threatened rape scene.

Despite critics' lack of analysis, the difference between Shakespeare and Heywood's representations of Lucrece amounts to the degree of attention they give to Lucrece's voice, and it seems the discrepancy is little short of remarkable. In Shakespeare, readers do not encounter direct speech from Lucrece until line 575, at which point Tarquin Sextus has already entered her bedchamber intent on violating her. Prior to this moment, we only know *that* she speaks, but the sound of her voice, and the language that she chooses, is given no significance. There are many instances in Shakespeare's poem in which action on Lucrece's part is noted, but they do not involve speech. On the contrary, her silence is emphasised:

[70] For two examples, see Donaldson and Catty.

"Her joy with heaved-up hand she doth express, / And *wordless* so greets heaven for his success" (111-12, emphasis added). Later on readers learn from Tarquin Sextus that "She took me kindly by the hand, / And gazed for tidings in my eager eyes" and shortly after that "she smilèd" (253-54; 264). We only learn she has the faculty of speech when we are told, although notably not through a direct vocalisation on her part, that Lucrece "with vehement prayers urgeth still / Under what colour he commits this ill" (475-76). Her oratorical skills are even praised (563-74), but all this before she is ever actually given voice. She is a character whom Margo Hendricks assesses as one who is "transformed from a silent object of male gaze to an iconographic model of feminine subjectivity" ("A Word, Sweet Lucrece" 104).

In contrast to Shakespeare's reticent Lucrece, Heywood bestows upon her a significant number of lines upon her very first appearance. Her opening line is spoken as a command (Heywood, *Rape of Lucrece* 196), signifying her authority and signalling to the audience that this is a woman to whom they ought to listen. She then immediately establishes her concern both for chastity in general and for her own reputation. She chides her gentlewoman for receiving "amorous glances, wanton lookes, / And privy becks" (196), and warns her, "I let you know you are not for my service / Vnlesse you grow more civill" (196). Lucrece's interest in chastity is paralleled by a similar concern for her reputation: "my reputation / Which is held precious in the eies of *Rome*, / Shall be no shelter to the least intent / Of loosenesse" (197). Following this she further commands authority with the threat that she will "discharge you both my service" if her serving staff fail to meet her exacting moral standards (197). She is resolved on this matter, and speaks with utmost confidence: "Sirrah, you know our mind" (197), going so far as to adopt the plural voice of royalty.

Writers have continually criticised Lucrece's dangerous obsession with reputation, so strong that she would commit self-murder in an effort to keep her good name intact.

Augustine berates Lucrece "being a Roman lady excessively eager for praise" and juxtaposes her with Christian women, more noble because "they did not avenge another's crime upon themselves" (I.19). In a recent article on Chaucer's *Legend of Good Women*, Andrew Galloway observes that in this sense Lucrece is "a central figure for defining the secular ethics and ideology of Rome, especially its zeal for honor and fame" (813-14), and highlights a writer who furthered Augustine's negative view of Roman 'zeal.' Galloway analyses the work of the fourteenth-century Englishman, John Ridevall, who concludes in his works that "Lucretia killed herself to show her 'displeasure,' and because of the Roman zeal for 'human glory' and fear of shame" (822). Even Chaucer who is concerned to place all blame on Tarquin Sextus cannot help but comment on "these Romeyns wyves lovede so here name / At thilke tyme, and dredde so the shame, / That, what for fer of sclaunder and drede of deth, / She loste bothe at ones wit and breth" ("Legend of Lucrece" 1812-15).

But while writers such as Augustine hold this fanatical concern for a good name against Lucrece, many early moderns counted a desire for an unblemished reputation as a great virtue. Writing in 1568, Edmund Tilney suggested that a good name "is the flower of estimation, and the pearle of credit," remarking that it "is so delicate a thing in woman, that she must not onely be good, but likewise apeere so" (135-36).[71] Walter Montagu, in an unpublished manuscript entitled "The Accomplished Woman" (c. 1633-35?), addresses the subject of women and reputation, and laments the passing of better days:

> Reputatio[n] is a great treasure and is not lesse vsefull to vertue then light to pictures to sett them of[f]. It is the fairest ornament of our civill life, and without which, the most glorious and illustrious actions remaine smother'd and

[71] Tilney had been formally appointed as Master of the Revels in 1579, and effectively held the sole place of power for censoring drama (Clare 32).

> obscur'd. But as is gott and lost now a dayes, it may be rekoned amongst the benefits of Fortune (*Of Reputation*).

Shakespeare, perhaps, composed the most famous words on the subject. When the general, Cassio, is dishonourably discharged from Othello's service because of his drunken behaviour, he cries, "Reputation, reputation, reputation: Oh I have / lost my reputation. I have lost the immortal part of / myself, and what remains is bestial" (II.ii.4-6).

Heywood is so liberal with Lucrece's speeches, particularly those about good-wifeliness, that readers and spectators may grow to wish she were not quite so vocal. For an entire scene she speaks rather as though she were reading straight from a conduct book for good wives (*Rape of Lucrece* 209-10). In this sense it seems that Heywood extracted more from Chaucer than from his more contemporary source, Shakespeare. The fourteenth-century English writer is notably interested in roles—domesticity for women, chivalry for men. Readers first encounter Chaucer's Lucrece as a woman with "softe wolle…that she wroughte / To kepen hire from slouthe and idelnesse" ("Legend of Lucrece" 1721-22). Shakespeare, in contrast, emphasises her nobility—she is a "peerless dame" (*Rape of Lucrece* 21), and moreover, not the 'good housewife' (although he does not deny this aspect of her character), but rather a "Roman dame" (51) whose face emits a "heraldry" (64), a description which is complemented by other royal terms: "queen," "sovereignty," and "seat" (66, 69, 70). To Chaucer, Tarquin Sextus's crime is not only against Lucrece herself, but also against the ideological ideals of chivalry: "Tarquinius…/ Whi hastow don dispit to chivalrye? / Why hastow don this lady vilanye" (1822-23). Chaucer would, of course, think no lady should be the victim of "vilanye," but in these lines this *particular* lady seems to be emphasised, this woman so "ful of honeste" and "wifly chastite" (1736-37).

Heywood is likewise concerned to accent Lucrece's role of 'good wife.' In a single scene between Lucrece and her two maids, out of the forty-three lines that comprise the scene,

thirty-six are delivered by Lucrece, in which thirteen times she utters the words 'Lord,' 'husband,' 'wife,' or 'mistress,' offering such maxims on uxorial duties as, "Wives should not stray / Out of their doors their husbands being away" (210). This effectively demonstrates her preoccupation with wifely obedience. Such lines recall the words of the popular Puritan preacher in London, Henry Smith who, in "A Preparative to Marriage" (1591), reminds a woman of the boundaries of her place as "housewife":

> Lastly we call the wife *housewife*, that is housewife, not a street wife like Thamar [Gen. 38:14], nor a field wife like Dinah [Gen. 34:1], but a housewife, to show that a good wife keeps her house: and therefore Paul biddeth Titus [Tit. 2:5] to exhort women that they be chaste and keeping at home (83).

Chastity and good-wifeliness seem inextricably linked for Chaucer and Heywood, and Shakespeare, too, lauds Lucrece's virtues. Chaucer paints her modesty so emphatically that even as she commits suicide, by disposing her limbs modestly, she refuses to compromise her concern for chastity:

> And as she fel adoun, she kaste hir lok,
> And of hir clothes yet she hede tok.
> For in hir fallynge yet she had a care,
> Lest that hir fet or suche thyng lay bare;
> So wel she loved clennesse and eke trouthe (1856-60).

Shakespeare, too, believes that in being raped "she hath lost a dearer thing than life.../ Pure chastity is rifled of her store" (*Rape of Lucrece* 687-692). Further, he combines chastity with the role of a good wife—the way he has represented Lucrece shows her to be concerned that her 'loss of chastity' has destroyed her exemplary status: "But when I feared I was a loyal wife; / So am I now—O no, that cannot be, / Of that *true type* hath Tarquin rifled me" (1048-50, emphasis added). Heywood's Lucrece takes this consolidation of chastity and good-

wifeliness a step further, and desperately uses it in her argument to Tarquin against his intended rape of her: "pittie, oh pity / The virtues of a woman: marre not that / Cannot be made againe," adding shortly after, "behold my teares.../ distilled from the heart / Of soule-chast *Lucrece*: thinke them Orators" (224). And yet, despite her pleas, a stage direction indicates that Tarquin "*beares her out*" (225), indicating the failure of her voice to persuade. Our next encounter with her dispels any thoughts that she may have enjoyed this encounter sufficiently to wish for a recurrence, because when Tarquin Sextus asks for a parting kiss, "*she flings from him*" and exits (226). Like Chaucer and Shakespeare before him, Heywood is not gratuitous in his presentation of the rape around which this scene is based.

Heywood's decision to portray Lucrece as the epitome of the chaste wife is of particular interest given the way the Reformed Church placed so much emphasis on the importance of married love. Of course the Catholic Church also encouraged marriage, but the Protestants altered priorities, placing a new emphasis on the mutual pleasure of companionship. In 1609, William Perkins set out to emphasise the lawfulness of marital conjunction, noting that "God ioyned our first parents *Adam* and *Eue* together immediately" (*Christian Oeconomie* 11). Protestant theology united sexual pleasure and marital purity. While Jerome's "catalogue of 'wikked wyves' and his description of marriage associated sex and sin with women and marriage" (Wayne, *Flower of Friendship* 18), emergent Protestantism, in contrast, challenged the acclamation of virginity as a superior state. Daniel Rogers, for example, views the Catholic attitude to virginity with derision, referring in *Matrimoniall Honour* (1642) to the "Popish magnifying of virginity" (11).

If women are encouraged to marry and have sex, there must be good women who are sexually active women. In an effort to reconcile the tension in a combination of chastity and sexual activity within the realm of marriage, Protestant writers taught a new kind of virginity, based on John Calvin's principle that conjugal fidelity is a second kind of virginity

(IV.xii.28). Daniel Rogers, for example, regarded marriage as the "Preservative of Chastitie" and "the ambition of Virginitie" (7). In William Painter's presentation of the rape of Lucrece (1569), he remarks that Tarquin was "incenced wyth a libidious [*sic*] desire to...*defloure* Lucrece," as though marital chastity was a literal, physiological virginity (Fol. 5v, emphasis added).

Heywood is consistently concerned that Lucrece will be remembered as unswervingly virtuous, whereas Shakespeare at least for a moment adumbrates a potential pride that Lucrece may feel as a result of her effectively memorialising her response to this violation. Admittedly Heywood makes note of her desire to make herself an example: "Let all the world, learne of a Roman dame, / To prise her life lesse then her honor'd fame" (238), but he does not emphasise the same aspiration for lasting fame and honour that Shakespeare does:

> The nurse to still her child will tell my story,
> And fright her crying babe with Tarquin's name.
> The orator to deck his oratory
> Will couple my reproach to Tarquin's shame.
> Feast-finding minstrels tuning my defame
> Will tie the hearers to attend each line (Shakespeare, *Rape* 813-18).

While Lucrece seems proud exclusively in Shakespeare's account, all three writers (Chaucer, Shakespeare and Heywood) highlight Lucrece's lust for revenge. In this their classical forebears influence all three. Livy places vengeful words in Lucrece's mouth: "Give me your solemn promise that the adulterer shall be punished...he...took his pleasure of me. That pleasure will be my death—and his, too, if you are men" (1.59). Shakespeare, too, who noticeably silenced Lucrece in the part of his poem preceding the rape, presents her with a voice with which to utter her thirst for revenge: "That [Collatine] may vow in that sad hour of mine / Revenge on him that made me stop my breath" (1179-80). The speech that

Heywood's Lucrece makes demanding revenge is even more brief: "Ere I speake my woe, / Sweare youle revenge poore *Lucrece* on her foe" (236) are the only words she utters regarding her desire that Tarquin may suffer in retribution for the wrong done to her. Despite the willingness of these writers to give chaste Lucrece some agency through her suicide, questionable as that recourse to action may be, it is disappointing that they still refuse to make her the ultimate agent of revenge. Her only performance is a damning one in English eyes—self-murder. Only Middleton, whose work on Lucrece is largely overlooked by recent scholarship, considers Lucrece an agent of her own vengeance, interestingly from beyond the grave. Her words in Middleton's poem, *The Ghost of Lucrece*, set the stage for a more supernatural and macabre performance of Lucrece's story in a variety of ways. These methods strangely complement the grotesque nature of the songs in Heywood's representation, an issue explored in the next section. Middleton's Lucrece, more enigmatic than her other English representations, takes revenge into her own hands, and wields power by her own voice. She needs no Brutus to proclaim her tragedy:

> "Tarquin the Prince:" sham'st thou to hear thy name?
> Rome, 'tis thy heire; sham'st thou to call him son?
> "Tarquin the Prince": lo, I'll repeat thy shame—
> A Roman heir (from him to thee I run;
> I'll shame you both before my shame be done),
> Tarquin the Prince, Tarquin the Roman heir!
> Thus will I haunt, and hunt, you to despair (120-26).

Distasteful Music: Raping a Genre

The songs which have made Heywood's *The Rape of Lucrece* seem immediately offensive to modern audiences are also likely to have been one of the major reasons for its failure to retain its initial popularity over the intervening centuries. While they are not all specifically about the female characters discussed in this chapter, the songs remain offensive from a moral perspective, especially as it pertains to a feminist understanding of the play, because they insensitively make light of rape. Critics have persistently denounced Heywood's inclusion of such songs. Commenting on how the play is "almost universally deplored by critics because of the inappropriate insertions of songs" (Johnson 121), Marilyn L. Johnson cites Baldwin who defined the play as "a sort of dramatic monster" (121), and Cromwell, who observed how "the harmony is jarred by the incongruous tone of the interspersed songs and low comedy" (Johnson 121). Even Heywood's biographer conceded that, "one can only shudder at the disgusting catch sung by Valerius, Brutus and the Clown" (Clark qtd. in Johnson 121), and indeed went so far as to acknowledge: "critics have wholeheartedly condemned [Heywood's] debasing some of the noblest legends of Livy by the most shocking ribaldry and farce" and he concluded that "even the best of the songs...are inexcusable in their settings" (Clark 219).

Even those critics who have grappled with the songs in an effort to understand their incorporation in the play largely come away with nothing positive to say. In 1950 Boas called them "extraordinary songs quite irrelevant to the Tarquin-Lucrece plot" (55). He deemed it unfortunate that Heywood would have been responsible for this, and concluded that the playwright was making a "reprehensible concession to the taste of the audience at the Red

Bull" (55), a theatre notorious for its 'low' forms of drama and unrefined audiences.[72] In 1982, Ian Donaldson considered Heywood's 'joking about rape' something which Heywood "felt to inhere in the original story" and concluded that such "intermittent humour" was "designed to relieve tension" (86-87). More recently (1997), Kahn claimed that Valerius, the mouthpiece for the majority of the songs, appeared to be purposely created as an anachronistic departure from its classical Roman setting: the songs "seem designed specifically as English entertainments, diversions from Romanness" (*Roman Shakespeare* 4).

Despite stark opposition from critics in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to most of the lyrics in *The Rape of Lucrece*,[73] the plays' songs were obviously not so offensive in the early modern period. On the contrary, it was a very popular play. Arthur Melville Clark calls the play "a palpable hit" (62), noting that it was kept in the repertoire of more than one company late into the 1620s (48). Boas draws attention to its printed popularity, noting that two editions in 1609 followed the original 1608 quarto, and documenting further editions in 1630 and 1638 (55). The text itself celebrates the success of the songs by advertising them in the title page as "severall Songs in their apt places, by *Valerius* the merry Lord," and then revealing that these had even been supplemented during the course of the play's run, by the insertion of "these few Songs, which were added by the stranger that lately acted *Valerius*" (Heywood 254).

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[72] A manuscript ballad existing during the reign of King James I recorded the following: "The Red Bull / Is mostly full / Of drovers, carriers, carters" (Matulka 224n.). This is one of the milder reports of the frequenters of this theatre in Clerkenwell, the area outside of London that was full of prostitutes and taverns of ill repute (Shepherd and Womack, *English Drama* 56, 66). It was considered rougher than the Globe, and, contrary to the 'serious' theatre being lauded at the time, was famous for staging plays that were filled with clowning, fight scenes, noisy devils, drums, and trumpets (Shepherd and Womack, *English Drama*, ch. IV). John Webster's *The White Devil* was staged at the Red Bull some time between 1609 and 1612, apparently much to his dissatisfaction. In his published edition of the same playscript, Webster describes the Red Bull as "so open and blacke a Theater," and he notes, "most of the people that come to that Play-house resemble...ignorant asses" ("To the Reader" ll. 4-8).

[73] T.S. Eliot, for example, remarked about Heywood: "he was gifted with very little sense of humour and therefore could not fall back upon the comic...in attempting to be amusing he sometimes has recourse...to the lowest bawdiness...leaving us less with a sense of repugnance for the man who could write it than with a sense of pity for the man who could think of nothing better" (103-04).

To the modern reader, making light of rape is highly reprehensible, and singing songs that seem to make merry is nearly incomprehensible. However, the lyrics of Heywood's songs could, performed carefully, be a part of the 'grotesque' nature that early moderns associated with Rome, which is very different from those connections made today which tend to more concerned with emphasising the nobility of the Roman past. Clifford Ronan elucidates the differences in attitude to Antiquity of the two periods:

> We moderns often overlook the playfulness and garishness of Antiquity, thinking instead of weather-bleached white marble Doric columns, gleaming in the noonday Mediterranean sun. But to the Renaissance, Antiquity is also grotesquely comic, whether the morose and mordant humor of a Tacitus; the flamboyant sexual reportage of a...Juvenal...the sniggling sadism of Lucan; or the mannerist wit of...Ovid (4-5).

Ronan further notes how early modern Europe associated jesters with Ancient Rome: "recent discovery of Nero's house, submerged beside the Colosseum, had popularised antic/antique designs: 'human, animal, and floral forms, incongruously funning into one another'. And so a whole new sense developed of what came to be known as the 'grotesque'" (4).[74] In this light, it is even more apt that the deliverer of the most appalling lyrics of *The Rape of Lucrece* is a Roman Clown.

That the play's song lyrics were evidently inoffensive despite the hard line early Stuart England took on rape offers considerable insight both into that culture, and also potential discrepancies between early modern law and public opinion. Rape was a capital offence in

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[74] A major portion of Nero's *Domus Aurea*, or Golden House, was demolished by his successor, Vespasian, but about 150 rooms survive, underneath Rome (Romey, "The Rain in Rome"). Artists in the early modern period used to let themselves down into the remains through a hole in the ceiling in order to explore its frescoes and other remnants. Further, the grotesque and macabre representations of the early modern period were, in fact, arguably unprecedented in their popularity. One recent scholar attributes this burgeoning of macabre art to the fact that Western Europe's recurrent epidemics of the plague had forced society to rethink its response to issues of death and dying (Neill, *Issues of Death* 4-5; 15). That the concept of macabre art was already very present in the early modern period helps to justify the potential for such a reading of Heywood's *Rape of Lucrece*.

England from 1285-1840 (Bamford 5; Catty 12-13). However, "in Jacobean England it seems most sexual assaults were not prosecuted in law...between 1558 and 1700, rape usually constituted less than 1% of all indictments" (Bamford 5). The law, in theory, took rape seriously, at least from the perspective of a woman belonging to a person other than her rapist (to a husband or father),[75] but the public did not. This showed itself in the leniency of judges and juries who, we are told, demanded evidence of resistance, reports of cries for help, and insisted upon a prompt reporting of the offence—in England the rape victim was given five days (Ruff 144).

I have already commented on the reputation the Red Bull Theatre held for its 'low brow' productions, and it is from the angle of 'low comedy' that the lyrics, so offensive to an audience sensitive to gender issues, can be approached as potentially 'excusable.' Here it is necessary to consider whether a play, now so 'universally offensive' could be performed without being tastelessly staged as a deliberately insensitive or even pornographic piece. Theory on drama and performance, beginning in the early twentieth century, continues to influence how earlier drama—as well as new material—can be approached in ways more acceptable to a politically sensitive audience. Theorists at the turn of the last century began to experiment with production styles which, if imposed onto works such as Heywood's, could offer ways in which the offensive lyrics could be played as a form of satire or subversion. There may be no excuse for the bawdy nature of the songs as they were likely to have been performed at the Red Bull in 1608, but we may now be able to rescue the play from oblivion, reworking the popular bawdy of the seventeenth century to a more subversive and macabre end in the twenty-first.

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[75] Rape had been seen as largely a property theft; however, the statues of 1555 and 1597 treated rape separately from abduction, thereby highlighting the emergence of a legal definition of rape as a crime against the individual (Catty 12-13). She further draws attention to this semantic shift by quoting John Bullokar's 1616 definition of rape in his dictionary, *The English Expositor*, as "a violent rauishing of a woman against her will" (13).

Filippo Marinetti, an early twentieth-century political agitator from Italy, believed that 'base drama' ought to be politicised. A theory such as his could revitalise Heywood's now much-censored play. Marinetti said:

> We are deeply disgusted with the contemporary theatre...because it vacillates stupidly between historical reconstruction...and photographic reproduction of our daily life; a finicking, slow, analytic, and diluted theatre worthy, all in all, of the age of the oil lamp ("Variety Theater" 124).

The early modern dramatist's songs could be performed in a like-minded style. Valerius could be represented as, what in the history of Italian popular culture, was called the *giullare* or *jongleur*—the strolling folk singer. In John Florio's Italian/English dictionary, which he called *Queen Anna's New World of Words, or Dictionarie of the Italian and English Tongues*, 'giullare' is defined as "to mocke, to frumpe, to iest, to scoffe or dallie with. Also to iuggle or plaie the foole, to plaie the vice." Bakhtin celebrated such a character as the "embodiment of the counter-culture of the Middle Ages" (Drain 159). The Bakhtinian view of clowns and fools is that they "mimic serious rituals" that are filled with a "pathos of change" (Bakhtin 5; 11). The *jongleur* was "a figure who came from the people, and who from the people drew anger and transmitted it through the medium of the grotesque" (Fo xvi). In his controversial play, *Mistero Buffo* (1969), Dario Fo said of the *jongleur*:

> This tongue of yours will lash, and will slash like a sword, deflating inflated balloons all over the land. You will speak out against bosses, and crush them, so that others can understand and learn, so that others can laugh at them and make fun of them, because it is only with laughter that the bosses will be destroyed (53).

This is, as Drain asserts, "a promotion of the common entertainer above the priestly scribe" (159). If Heywood is performed with this same leaning towards the carnivalesque, the end

becomes poignant, rather than bawdy, and has become so through an intelligent fusion of popular and alternative forms of drama.

The song in *The Rape of Lucrece* which is potentially the most offensive, because it presents in frivolous language all the details of Tarquin Sextus's rape of Lucrece, has in fact all the elements necessary for the subversion of a popular form of entertainment. [76] With proper lighting and voice casting, the song has great potential for presenting the macabre. Quoting just one verse will provide sufficient evidence of the whole song's employment of rhythm and repetition necessary for such an effect. Even the disintegration of language recalls such efforts by modernists and absurdists such as Eugene Ionesco or Alfred Jarry, to highlight the less rational aspects of human nature:

VAL. Did he take faire Lucrece by the toe man?

HOR. Toe man.

VAL. I man.

CLOW. Ha ha ha ha ha man.

HORA. And further did he strive to go man?

CLO. Goe man.

HOR. I man.

CLOW. Ha ha ha ha man, fa derry derry downe

ha fa derry dino (232).

[76] The Blue Blouse Troupe is a good example of a group who successfully subverted popular forms of drama, and therefore provides an inspiring model on which to base a new approach to *The Rape of Lucrece*. It began in the former Soviet Union in 1923 with the intent of providing a 'living newspaper.' The troupe created shows based on the principles of variety theatre, "converting cabaret modes to agit-prop purposes" (Drain 157). The Blue Blouse Troupe offered performances which included an "uninterrupted montage of scenes, songs, music, dance, mime, acrobatics and gymnastics," punching the message home with bold visual effects (Stourace qtd. in Drain 157).

A significant emphasis is placed in Marinetti's work on what needs to occur in order for futurist drama to be effective.[77] He demands that "one must completely destroy all logic in Variety Theater performances, exaggerate their luxuriousness in strange ways...and make the absurd and the unlifelike complete masters of the stage" ("Variety Theater" 128). Attempting this with the songs of Heywood's *The Rape of Lucrece* could work to considerable effect.

Another important aspect of Valerius's potentially offensive songs is that they are situated at the point in the plot when Tullia and Tarquin Superbus appropriate power. Colatinus notes of Valerius: "Hee's in a corner, relishing strange aires. / Conclusively hee's from a toward hopefull Gentleman, / Transeshapt to a mere Ballater" (Heywood, *Rape of Lucrece* 179), inadvertently furthering the aforementioned Bakhtinian view of the subversive possibilities for the strolling folk singer. Though the other characters are confused by his behaviour, Valerius makes clear that this transformation is induced by despair over the change in government: "*When* Tarquin *first in Court began, / And was approved King: / Some men for sudden joy gan weep, / But I for sorrow sing*" (179). Valerius's transformation into this strange, mad character was induced by the changes that took place at Court with the rise of the new monarchs. His failure to take women seriously occurs simultaneously with his regression into inappropriate jocularity, which brings out a macabre, tragic sense to his fabricated levity. If members of the audience take their cue from some of the other characters, such as Horatius, who marvels at Valerius's behaviour (180), they should not find this circumstance comic. Lucrece's father remarks, "To heare him sing drawes rivers from mine eyes" (181). Even Scevola who admits the songs "pleaseth" him because the Court has

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[77] Futurism, founded on many principles of modernism, sought to fundamentally change the arts. Its founder, Marinetti, was sickened by the pedantry of literary art, likening the artistic establishment to "sickly palaces" with "dark green beards." In his "Founding Manifesto of Futurism," he exhorted: "Let's break out of the horrible shell of wisdom and throw ourselves like pride-ripened fruit into the wide, contorted mouth of the wind" (48), claiming in the same work that futurists would see that "courage, audacity and revolt" would be "the essential elements of our poetry" (49).

become so "harsh" can be understood to be a drowning man grasping hopelessly at straws. Colatinus understands the psychology behind Valerius's transformation and Scevola's thoughtless acceptance, and articulates his insight thus:

> Thou art not what thou seem'st, Lord *Scevola*,
> Thy heart mournes in thee, though thy visage smile,
> And so doe's thy soule weepe, *Valerius*,
> Although thy habit sing, for there new humours
> Are but put on for safety, and to arme them
> Against the pride of *Tarquin* (182).

The one critic who seems willing to analyse at least one of Valerius's songs, in so far as she does not write it off as inexcusably offensive and therefore unworthy of analysis, does so on psychological grounds. Catty analyses Valerius's song, beginning with the lyrics "She that denies me I would have," which immediately raises the 'no-means-yes' controversy that still rages today:[78] "That crafty Girle shall please me best / That No, for Yea, can say, / And every wanton willing kisse / Can season with a Nay" (Heywood, *Rape of Lucrece* 194). Catty considers how this song "attempts to conflate two distinct cases"—the " 'crafty' woman who employs a coy strategy to enjoy her desires while pretending to be modest" and the "undesiring woman who is genuinely denying" (96). Catty explores the mental and emotional process of the poet's concern that a woman he desires should seem to resist him, and emphasises that "he is not concerned with the veracity of her resistance" (96). She surmises, therefore, that "the song is entirely appropriate to set the scene for a rape, in which the woman's resistance goes unheeded" and concludes that the "concept of female sexual 'coyness', then, which at its most extreme is portrayed as a masochistic desire for violence,

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[78]The argument that a woman's 'no' means 'yes' was so common as to be proverbial, where to 'play the maid and take it' meant to say 'no' but to accept the offer. Middleton employs it in *Trick To Catch the One*: "You do ravish me with kindness that I'm constrain'd to play the maid and take it!" (III.i.48).

becomes closely connected with rape" (97). It would appear that, despite the alleged 'inappropriateness' of these songs, there is an ironic sense of decorum in Heywood's art—the monstrosity of the songs matches the monstrosity of the rape.

Conclusion

The debate about the potentially honourable nature of self-murder maintained a steady presence throughout the early modern period, despite the anti-suicide doctrine pounded from the pulpits. Although suicide was a crime in early modern England, "legal penalties for suicide were sometimes softened because officials or neighbours pitied the survivors" (MacDonald, "The Inner Side of Wisdom" 568). MacDonald and Murphy offer an account of an event in early modern history that exemplifies the controversies latent within the issue of self-slaughter. It is a report on the suicide of the Earl of Essex, Arthur Capel, in the late seventeenth century. His suicide in many ways also illuminated the same Republican ideals that were the result of Lucrece's suicide.

In 1683 Capel, a prominent member of the Whig Party, along with three other prominent Whigs, the Duke of Monmouth, Lord Russell, and Algernon Sidney, were arrested for what would later become known as the Rye House Plot. In short, these men were charged with attempting to overthrow the king. In July of that same year, confined in the Tower and awaiting his trial, the Earl of Essex allegedly cut his throat. Despite the weight of the evidence against him that suggested Capel indeed took his own life, the Whig party (and other sympathetic members of the public) vociferously argued that he was in fact murdered, and the debate would not be laid to rest. It created such political interest that a certain treatise in Capel's defence, written by a fellow conspirator, Robert Ferguson, was immediately translated into French, Dutch and Flemish. After the Glorious Revolution the Whigs, now rehabilitated after their discrediting over the Rye House Plot, renewed their defence of Capel.

For years after his death—close to a decade—people were willing to believe that Capel's suicide was not a damnable, godless act. The energy with which people discussed the Earl's death and either vigorously defended his self-destruction as an honourable act, or were even prepared to see it as the result of another's agency, indicates the extent to which people were willing to defy belief in the inherently evil nature of suicide. MacDonald and Murphy suggest that "the charge that Essex had got hold of some 'strange principles' points to one of the sets of ideas that was eventually to replace the diabolical interpretation of suicide" (MacDonald and Murphy 74-75). Like the macabre songs of Heywood's *The Rape of Lucrece*, the tyranny of Tullia's rule, and the self-motivated demise of the title tragic heroine, evidence continually arises for a discrepancy between the people's and the ruling order's ideology.

Chapter 3. Victims and Villains, Maids and Melancholics in *The Maid's Tragedy*

Plot Summary

Melantius has just returned from war to learn that his sister, Evadne, has been married to his best friend, Amintor, who is beloved by, but has rejected, Aspatia. On their wedding night Amintor learns that Evadne is in fact mistress to the king, who has arranged this marriage to conceal his, the king's, illicit affair with Evadne. Evadne, in turn, has no intention of consummating her marriage to Amintor. She does, however, agree to pretend with him that their marriage is a normal and happy one. Amintor reveals the situation to Melantius, who is enraged that his sister has been thus used by the king, and plans a regicide, using Evadne as the agent of this deed. Contrite, she carries out the regicide in an effort to restore her virtue and begin a true marriage with Amintor. However, Amintor is horrified by her murderous act. At the same time, he is approached by the forsaken Aspatia, who has arrived at Court disguised as her brother. Aspatia's 'brother' challenges Amintor to a duel, and Aspatia willingly allows herself to be killed in the ensuing fight.

Amintor learns what he has done as Aspatia dies, and vows he will love her forever. Before he follows Aspatia to her death by stabbing himself, Evadne enters the scene, and stabs herself when she realises Amintor now refuses to reciprocate her love. Amintor then kills himself, and all three are found dead by Melantius and the king's brother Lysippius. The grief-stricken Melantius vows not to do anything that will preserve his own life, so that he, too, may die with his kindred and friends, and Lysippius—brother to the murdered king—waxes eloquent on the need for wise kingship.

Bizarre Love Triangle: Evadne, Aspatia, Amintor

Even though the most immediately evident love-triangle in *The Maid's Tragedy* is the strange interconnection between the king, Evadne and Amintor—indeed, the main plot seems

driven by this entwining of characters—there is another love-triangle that challenges the first's monopoly on the plot: the extraordinary triangle that comprises Evadne, Amintor and Aspatia. Strains of narcissism, ambition and imitation that drive these three characters not only towards each other but also to their own ruin heighten this triangle's complexity. Their lives are intricately interwoven, as are their deaths: they live intertwined and die, literally physically, intertwined.

Who's the Maid?

The feat of greatest imaginative achievement in this entangling is in the playwrights' blurring of boundaries between characters. This section aims to address just how closely woven are the fibres that constitute the triangular tapestry that is Aspatia, Amintor and Evadne. It is not only that they share similarities, they also seem to share facets of their very selves. The ambiguity of the play's title supports my contention that at any given time, two of these three—Amintor *or* Aspatia—could in fact be contenders for the title role.

A large body of scholarship on *The Maid's Tragedy* assumes that the title refers to Aspatia, and I agree that in part it does. However, the way in which Amintor seems deliberately to be aligned with Aspatia opens up the possibility that Amintor, too, could also be a candidate for the title role, if the definition of 'maid' is understood broadly as 'virgin.'[79] Readers and audience will note many similarities between the two characters, which will be explored shortly, and thus the title of the play takes on new significance when one ponders who precisely is "the maid" in *The Maid's Tragedy*, and, equally importantly, whose is the greater tragedy, Aspatia or Amintor's. Many writers contend that despite the way in which initially the title seems to refer exclusively to her, Aspatia is "no tragic hero," (Shullenberger 152), and is therefore unworthy of being the title character. William Shullenberger maintains,

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[79] The *OED* supports the possibility of a male maid (I.1b: a man without experience of sexual intercourse), dating its usage in this way to as early as c.1300 and tracing this meaning through to the late nineteenth century.

"her pathetic story does not frame the play…it runs alongside the play, irrelevant to the rest of the story" (152). The bizarre love triangle that entangles Aspatia, Amintor and Evadne seems to deny the possibility that Aspatia's character always represents simply herself.

In a more general essay on what *makes* a female character a tragic hero, Jeanne Addison Roberts claims that women characters who are marginal might, by right of their liminality, "communicate a sense of individualism and subjectivity," but argues that this is "rarely the case. Instead they often seem representations of male fantasies or male fears" ("Sex and the Female Tragic Hero" 200). In other words, they serve as emblems of something *else*, something beyond instruments of action for the drama's plot, that add greater resonance to the play. Aspatia is, in many ways, emblematic of wronged virginity (McLuskie, *Renaissance Dramatists* 197), but we care little for her as a tragic hero. Perhaps this is in part because she is so self-obsessed that she neither exhibits magnitude nor stirs up pathos, and thereby she fails to be a tragic hero of Aristotelian proportions, an individual who, he suggests, should evoke both our pity and our terror (*Poetics,* 1448a; 1449b).

If Aspatia is only represented as a wronged woman, an individual character rather than as part of a triadic unity, then she falls short of deserving the title role, and perhaps one must look to the text to find a way in which her character could be amplified in order to make her worthy of the title role: the text produces her *other self*, Amintor. Philip J. Finkelpearl endorses this suggestion: "despite obvious differences the fundamental similarity of Aspatia and Amintor becomes clear as the play progresses" (194); he later refers to these cracked-mirror images of each other as "the two maids" (196). And indeed, these are the only principals who have the potential to be the maid of the title—Evadne has early on eliminated herself as a possibility, explicitly affirming that she is no virgin (Beaumont and Fletcher, *Maid's Tragedy* II.i.173). Amintor on the other hand, like Aspatia, is acknowledged even by Evadne, who has been part of his mistreatment, to be "an innocent, / A soul as white as

heaven" (IV.i.219-20). Beaumont and Fletcher expound heavily on this point. In III.i it is his *virginity* that is explicitly stated: the king directly demands of Amintor "wert thou truly honest till thou wert married?" to which he replies, "Yes, sir" (123-24), thereby clarifying his sexual innocence before the audience.[80]

Also, like Aspatia, Amintor suffers from deep emotional vulnerability, placing himself with her at "the bottom of despair" (II.i.247). Like her, he has grown world-weary, and "all over am a trouble to myself" (V.iii.180). Melantius notices his best friend's mental imbalance: "For you are—I must weep when I speak that— / Almost besides yourself" (III.ii.233-34). Here Amintor's despair is, like Aspatia's, "infectious" (I.i.95) (as will be seen below, pp. 115-21). Further, her suicide is physically carried out by his hand—her *self-murder*, as it were, is done by her *other self.*

Many of 'the maids'' speeches are mirrored in each other—Amintor speaks in the self-pitying and melodramatic tongue of his other self, Aspatia:

> Do not mock me:
> Though I am tame and bred up with my wrongs,
> Which are my foster-brothers, I may leap
> Like a hand-wolf into my natural wildness
> And do an outrage (IV.i.194-8).

Amintor himself is consciously aware that he is not alone in finding himself in a desperate situation, thereby drawing attention to the parallel between Aspatia and himself. Aspatia, disguised as her brother, refers to her sister (i.e. herself) as "the wronged Aspatia" (IV.iii.42).

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[80] While the word 'honest' in early modern vocabulary could be used without reference to sexuality, more simply implying "respectable," or "of good moral character" (*OED*), its usage to imply "chaste" was widespread. Often playwrights would exploit its semantic ambiguity and play with its potential double entendres, as in James Shirley's *The Maid's Revenge*, in which a character who is afraid she may have lost her maidenhead admits that, if that is the case, "I shall never be honest after it" (III.ii). In *The Maid's Tragedy*, however, while "respectability" may be inferred because of Amintor's sexual purity, it is clearly the sexual definition which is being emphasised.

Amintor repeats her phrase, underscoring her position through anaphora, so commonly used for dramatic emphasis in *Maid's Tragedy*, and expounds on it thus:

> 'The wronged Aspatia'. Would thou wert so too
> Unto the wronged Amintor. Let me kiss
> That hand of thine in honour that I bear
> Unto the wronged Aspatia (V.iii.43-46).

The two maids are further united in this speech, through the parallelism of their equally being "wronged."

Finally, the two maids die together, which is a last affirmation of their oneness. They are both "wronged" figures who must live and die as one: Amintor's last words are, "Aspatia! / The soul is fled forever, and I wrong / Myself so long to lose her company.../ Here's to be with thee, love" (V.iii.240-43). The mystical union of marriage was barred to them by the king, and so they both die so that they might live eternally as one in the metaphysicality of the next world.

To add to the complexities of this bizarre love triangle, it is worth mentioning here some aspects which wind Evadne into this reflection of self in other. Evadne and Amintor, for the most part, seem polarised characters; however, they have similarities that are not limited to their being likewise the victims of tyranny. This best evidences itself in their pact to appear to the Court like a happy, married couple. Amintor asks her to agree to act in such a way "that morning visitors / May think we did as married people use," to which Evadne assures him, "Fear not, I will do this" (II.i.331-2; 335). Clifford Leech makes the observation that this dissembling "brings them together as a shared secret must always bring humans closer to one another," adding that "it humanises Evadne and strangely brings to their perverted relationship a sense of marriage" (*John Fletcher Plays* 123).

There are further ways in which Evadne is included in the unity of 'the maids.' Immediately after Aspatia is wounded, Evadne enters with blood on her hands—they are bleeding together (V.iii.107ff.), and they die within moments of each other (V.iii.171). As an immediate consequence, Amintor stabs himself, and falls between the two women: the three parts of the triangle lie dead, still connected to each other. It is important for the purposes of this analysis, then, not only to see how Evadne and Aspatia are set up against each other as rivals in a love triangle, but also to see their similarities. By understanding in what aspects they are aligned together, we are better able to appreciate the bizarreness of the love triangle in which these principals are meshed. Michael Neill points out that the first scene already establishes the two as "rivals in fairness" ("Simetry" 128). He draws attention to early remarks about their physique: in the opening scene both are referred to as "fair" (Beaumont and Fletcher, *Maid's Tragedy* I.i.59; 75), and so immediately we know they are not a Hermia and Helena who are engaged in a rivalry based, in part, on an obvious physical differentiation.

They are also equally admirable women: Amintor has not been forced by the king to marry an inferior; rather, Evadne is Aspatia's equal, "a worthy 'change" (I.ii.137). Their likeness in life is further accentuated by their likeness in death. They both devise their own deaths: Evadne by her own hand and Aspatia by the hand of her mirror image, Amintor. In the final scene we see them both covered in blood at the same time; a stage direction indicates that "*Aspatia is wounded*" by a sword thrust and then, less than two short speeches later, another stage direction indicates that Evadne enters "*with bloody hands, carrying a knife*" (V.iii), a dramatic moment to which I have already alluded. Further on in the scene, when Evadne dies, Aspatia cries "O, O, O," in agony (V.iii.176), and it could be interpreted as

somewhat ambiguous as to whom she is wailing for—her own pain and suffering, or Evadne's.

Another way in which Evadne and Aspatia are set up as images of each other is in their status as victims. Although few would refuse to see Evadne as a pawn manipulated by either Melantius or heaven, or both, more often scholarship has emphasised Evadne's role as seductress, villain, and adulteress. On the subject of her status as victim, Ronald Broude says that she is "an instrument the heavens have employed to scourge a wicked king...and that, having served its purpose, will be cast into the fire" ("Divine Right" 256). Still in her defence, but from a different perspective, Finkelpearl argues that if anyone was God's instrument, it was Melantius, and that Evadne was merely her brother's instrument—it was Melantius's threat of physical violence that induced her to act (204). Either way, it is clear she is acting not only on her own behalf, but also for the sake of others who have been abused by the king. Evadne is concerned to explain for whom she commits regicide: "This is for my lord Amintor, / This for my noble brother, and this stroke / For the most wronged of women" (Beaumont and Fletcher, *Maid's Tragedy* V.ii.107-09). Shullenberger describes this as an "act of tragic courage" because she has not executed this revenge solely for herself (155).

I contend that every act in *The Maid's Tragedy* offers evidence of Evadne's relative subordination in the socio-gendered hierarchy. While scholarship emphasises her ambition as the primary reason for being the king's mistress and using Amintor as a cover, I would argue a further dimension: insecurity, fuelled by a society which fails to foster Evadne's ambition. This vulnerability foreshadows, and lends plausibility to, her brother's later influence on her. Melantius is overjoyed that Evadne has married Amintor, maintaining, "You looked with my eyes when you took that man" (I.ii.108). He has 'approved' this marriage, just as a brother/father figure 'should.' We see the motif of masculine approbation time and time again in early modern drama. We will see it again in Fletcher, Field and Massinger's *The*

Queen of Corinth, in which Leonidas offers his sister, Merione, to Agenor, as an emblem of the peace between warring nations. In both cases, tragedy is a direct consequence of such action, rape being a factor in the latter tragedy (and threat of rape in the former). In the wedding scene of *The Maid's Tragedy,* so often explored in the context of Evadne's 'rampant' sexuality, we encounter the expectation that she will be a passive woman who, in Dula's words, "must endure more and lie still" (II.i.15). She must endure more than she bargained for, in fact, when Amintor, driven to extremes by frustrated sexual desire, threatens to rape her, to "drag thee to my bed" (II.i.256). Likewise, in *The Queen of Corinth*, as we shall see, Prince Theanor, driven to rage at Merione's engagement to another man, is more 'successful' than Amintor at sexually gratifying his rage on a woman.

Evadne is not only the victim of sexual aggression; she is also the injured party of a system which promotes marriage as the only option for women by which they can be both sexually active and chaste. She laments that she is forced to combine her ambition with her sexuality—but as we see with considerable frequency in early modern drama, for women these two are inextricably linked. The same situation was evident in Heywood's *The Rape of Lucrece*, when Tullia gratifies her husband sexually as a reward for his efforts at raising their power in the state. What is happening in these situations is a theatrical publicisation of the female stereotype that ambition derives from action, which in turn derives from heat, which is a masculine attribute. Ambition in women is an indicator of sexuality, and so when women are ambitious they are inherently sexual—a stereotype is set. In *The Maid's Tragedy*, when Amintor questions Evadne's motives for marrying him, she bemoans the system which forced her to it:

> Alas, I must have one
> To father the children and to bear the name
> Of husband to me, that my sin may be

More honourable (II.i.295-98).

Her chastity, the maintenance of which establishes her honour, has been violated—even Amintor admits that the king "has dishonoured thee" (II.i.328). But even though it is admitted that the king is at fault, it is important to understand that *she* is dishonoured; she is the passive recipient of this action, and yet blame is attributed to her, despite her status as victim. She is a victim of the king's "hot pride" (V.ii.42); he is a "foul canker… [that] didst poison me" (V.i.76-77,) and yet *she* is marked with the "base stain of whore" (43).

In this light Evadne seems not so much a villain, as a victim. She may "enjoy the best" (II.i.275), but even so she is a victim of politico-hierarchical pressure. She herself is left feeling "ill" by the situation of this strange 'other' love-triangle between herself, Amintor and the king (III.i.120). By the light of this interpretation, we do not see at this point in the drama a proud and defensive admission of ambition-driven 'licentiousness', but rather a shift in her own representation of her situation. Evadne now refers to her actions as ones executed for the purposes of fulfilling the king's "will and pleasure" (III.i.159). Later still, she dissociates herself from those actions that she previously claimed had been of her own volition, declaring herself to be a victim of her passions: "what my hot will hath done, which heaven and you / Knows to be tougher than the hand of time / Can cut from man's remembrance" (IV.i.224-25). This reasoning is contrary to the early modern belief that nymphomaniacal behaviour is an example of deliberate wickedness. This was because Elizabethans did not think in terms of pathology (Pearse 101). *De nymphomania*, by Johann Neiter, was "one of the first texts to introduce the term," and that was not until late into the seventeenth century, 1694 (Mathes 177).[81] The presentation of Evadne, then, is ahead of its

[81] In fact, the *OED* dates the earliest usage of 'nymphomania' to 1775. At the very least, it would seem not to have been a concept with a recognised pathological name until well past the time of *The Maid's Tragedy*.

time, the playwrights having added a psychological dimension to 'maniacal' behaviour that had yet to be recognised by early modern society.

None of this is to deny that Evadne has interesting aspects of 'villainy.' Initially, it would indeed appear that Evadne is the more fortunate of the two (of herself and Aspatia). This greater fortune underscores the unfairness of her treatment towards Amintor and Aspatia. Her happiness is juxtaposed with Aspatia's misfortune: Melantius says of Aspatia's angry father, "He hath lost himself / Much since *his daughter missed the happiness* / *My sister gained*" (Beaumont and Fletcher, *Maid's Tragedy* IV.ii.186-87, emphases added). Ironically, Aspatia has not lost her sexual happiness to Evadne, despite the fact that in *The Maid's Tragedy*, in Sandra Clark's words, "Aspatia dies a virgin in a play where much of the action is directed by the sexual power of a harlot figure whose role is more significant" (34). Evadne has not laid claim on her rival's 'conquest,' since Evadne does not permit Amintor to be her sexual partner. Shullenberger further adds that Aspatia and Evadne are "inverse images of each other" and emphasises that the "idea of maidenhood or maidenhead is the tragic crux and driving obsession for Aspatia and Evadne" (154). Rather than denying the ways in which Evadne is more 'evilly inclined' and sexually-politically driven than Aspatia, my analysis intends to highlight some of her similarities to Aspatia, who is referred to by others (as well as herself) as a "wronged woman" (Beaumont and Fletcher, *Maid's Tragedy* II.i.104), and one deserving of "pity" (II.i.84). Interestingly, it is Evadne who utters this line, "I pity thee," in reference to Aspatia; Evadne also, we learn, comes to pity herself, because the king has stolen her honour and her fair name (V.i.60-61). In this, as in so many surprising ways, Beaumont and Fletcher create 'like-counterparts' in Evadne and Aspatia's victimisation. Conversely, Aspatia is no meek and passive tragic heroine. She is a multi-faceted character, and some of her characteristics seem as self-interested as the ambitious side of Evadne.

Aspatia, who Loved Herself too Much

Scholarship is intensely interested in the nature of Aspatia's forsakenness and the direct effect it has on her psyche.[82] It is clear she suffers from depression, induced by Amintor's abandonment of her, but it is interesting to see how this misery manifests itself and what its consequences are on Aspatia's psyche. At least two clear conceptions of melancholy are evident in early modern thought: the first is melancholy as "a degrading mental abnormality" rooted in the humoral theory of Galenic tradition, the idea being, of course, that melancholy is caused by an excess of black bile; the second is the idea of melancholy endowing its recipient with "intellectual acumen and profundity, with artistic ability and sometimes with divine inspiration" (Babb, *Elizabethan Malady* 175). The great early modern commentator on melancholy, Robert Burton, explains that in love melancholy specifically, symptoms of 'greatness' abound:

> But aboue all other Symptomes of Louers…they turne to their ability Rimers, Ballet-makers, and Poets…All our feasts almost, masques mummings, merry meetings…Poems, Loue-Stories, playes, Comœdies…proceed [from Love Melancholy]…Most of our arts and sciences…was first invented for loues sake (541-43).

Identifying two strains of melancholy was not unique to the early moderns, especially as it pertained to love melancholy: "from the earliest inception of the theory, erotic love was ambivalently caused by both a state of the psyche and by a state of the body" (Beecher, "The Lover's Body" 4). Further, these two strains of melancholy are not so incongruent as they may at first appear. Burton explains that "for what else may we thinke those ingenuous Poets to haue shadowed in their witty fictions and Poems, but that a man once giuen ouer to his

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[82] See, for example, Allman, *Jacobean Revenge Tragedy*, Chapter 5, esp. p. 141, Finkelpearl, *Court and Country Politics*, Chapter 10, esp. pp. 194ff., and Huebert, "Forsaken Woman," esp. pp. 607ff.

lust...*is no better than a beast*" (523-24). It is as though one strain of melancholic love can lead to the other, or, alternatively, that one who is afflicted by a particular strain is predisposed to becoming similarly afflicted with (or blessed by) the other. And so, there is melancholy of two sorts—a physical illness, and a mental endowment—and yet both can manifest themselves in one person, without necessitating an irresolvable contradiction. The type of melancholy that was noted for its endowment of abilities—'genial melancholy'—was largely reserved for men, a concept more thoroughly discussed in the next section; however, certain playwrights attribute it to women as well. We will see the same strain of love melancholy in Annabella, in *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*.

Aspatia exhibits signs of both these strains. As a genuine illness, melancholy is a terrible burden, and we see symptoms of this sort of melancholy in Aspatia's carriage and behaviour. The king's brother, Lysippus, remarks, "She carries with her an *infectious* grief" (I.i.95, emphasis added), as though it were something with elements of contagion.[83] Thirty years later, Berkeley paints the image of a woman whose "miseryes growne infectious too" (Berkeley II.iii.712), underscoring the period's preoccupation with melancholy as an illness.

Aspatia's melancholy is indeed passed onto Amintor, or manifests itself in him, her other self. We again see melancholy as a genuinely contagious ailment when Amintor meets Aspatia for the last time before his disastrous wedding night. She kisses him and seems to literally pass her grief onto him through that kiss: "methinks I feel / Her grief shoot suddenly through all my veins" (II.i.104-05). Incidentally, Evadne also says of herself that she is "soul-sick" (IV.i.234), interpreting her grief as a literal illness, and further entangling herself in the love-triangle. This devastating physical illness is terminal—Aspatia's grief is the direct cause of her death wish and subsequent 'suicide.' However, it has been established in this chapter that her love for Amintor is in fact a love of herself, in as much as Amintor is her self-

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[83] Cf. Webster's *Duchess of Malfi* I.i.72-73. Bosola's "foul melancholy / Will poison all his goodness."

reflection—and in this neurotic sense, it is a melancholy of the elevated sort with which she is afflicted.

Aspatia's experience is remarkably like that of Ovid's Echo, and also of Narcissus, on whom Echo relentlessly dotes (*Metamorphoses* III.443ff.). Aspatia plays both parts: sometimes she is solely Echo, and Amintor plays opposite her as Narcissus, but sometimes her involvement in this Ovidian plot is executed by herself alone, during which time she simultaneously acts out both characters. By seeking to establish how much her melancholy is affected, I do not wish to deny the profundity of her sense of loss; I rather intend to support the assertion that melancholics often feel a sense of superiority, that their position has somehow brought them to a height so great they paradoxically enjoy their experience. Writing in the seventeenth century, Margaret Cavendish suggests that sadness and solemnity "doth please the Mind" (*Poems* "Of Melancholy" 1), explaining later in that same verse that "What Serious is, there Constancy will dwell, / Which shews that Sadness Mirth doth far excel" (13-14). This elevation of the self within a melancholic affliction is well encapsulated to by Lynn Enterline as "the entanglement of narcissism" (*Tears of Narcissus* 9). Enterline makes the point that, like Narcissus who dies for love of himself, the melancholic will likewise die from that same self-awareness (1-2). This seems directly relevant to Aspatia, whom Shullenberger calls "the most self-absorbed character in the play…the self-conscious artist who weaves out her history as an emblem of the forsaken woman" (152), while Finkelpearl also insists that Aspatia "fancies herself an expert in the art of grieving" (194). It should not surprise the reader that Aspatia, who so loves herself, should be in love with Amintor, a reflection of herself, and then mourn when he is unattainable. This 'wronged woman' does indeed tell others to "Inquire of me and I will guide your moan / And teach you

an artificial way to grieve" (Beaumont and Fletcher, *Maid's Tragedy* II.i.71-2).[84] Her servants see this affected side of her melancholy, and pertinently comment that "It is the lady's *pleasure* we be thus in grief" (II.ii.79, emphasis added). Her affected melancholy is not unprecedented. Another woman who seems to dote on her melancholic image is Olivia, who is described thus by Valentine in the opening scene of *Twelfth Night*:

> But like a cloistress she will veilèd walk
> And water once a day her chamber round
> With eye-offending brine—all this to season
> A brother's dead love, which she would keep fresh
> And lasting in her sad remembrance (I.i.25-31).

It would appear the critics are right: Aspatia does seem self-absorbed. Further examination of the text supplies the reader with consistent evidence that Aspatia delights in her own sorrow. Lysippus remarks:

> but this lady
> Walks discontented, with her wat'ry eyes
> Bent on the earth. The unfrequented woods
> *Are her delight* (Beaumont and Fletcher, *Maid's Tragedy* I.i.87-90, emphasis added).

The narcissist hungers for the dark places, the "unfrequented woods." Narcissus himself seeks a wood, "And with their leaves the trees did keepe the heate of Phoebus out" (Ovid, *Metamorphoses* III.514). It is in this dark place that he both discovers and falls in love with himself, an obsession that leads ultimately to his death. In this shady wood Narcissus bent

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[84] The word 'artificial,' to the early modern speaker, did not hold the modern connotation of insincerity—it inferred, rather, skilfulness. The term can be seen used in the same way in a play contemporary with *The Maid's Tragedy*, Cyril Tourneur's *The Atheist's Tragedy* (1610): "the snail o'th'other side should ha'been wrought with an artificial laziness" (IV.i.25). This meaning suggesting extraordinary awareness, even deliberate cultivation, of a specific action underscores Aminta's self-obsession.

towards the waters, and "as he dranke, he chaunst to spie the Image of his face" (III.249). Aspatia differs from Narcissus in that she does not find herself in the secluded waters, but rather must chase after the figure she loves. In this sense Aspatia is both Narcissus and Echo—like Narcissus, she is the pursuer and pursued, but like Echo she is the unrequited lover who must relentlessly pursue her love wherever he goes. Of Echo's futile pursuit Ovid narrates, "Now when she sawe Narcissus stray about the Forrest wyde, / She waxed warme and step for step fast after him she hyde" (*Metamorphoses* III.461-62). Of course, Narcissus was so enamoured of his own image that Aspatia (separate from her connection with Echo as unrequited lover) could be compared with Narcissus as another unrequited lover: Narcissus cries of himself, "Forsake me not so cruelly that loveth thee so deere" (III.601).

Aspatia is so absorbed in her own grief that, like Narcissus, she fails to recognise Amintor's comparable grief. The entirely self-absorbed Narcissus asks, "Can you remember any one in all your tyme so long / That hath so pinde away as I?" (Ovid, *Metamorphoses* III.558-59). For Aspatia, not even an image of the classic figure of forsaken grief, Ariadne, represents one so wronged as herself. She maintains that representations of Ariadne will remain ineffectual until one is made in the image of herself.[85] Commenting on the tapestry her servants have woven of Ariadne, she says, "Do it again, by me, the lost Aspatia" (Beaumont and Fletcher, *Maid's Tragedy* II.ii.53). She has deliberately entangled herself "into this willow garland," which, she explains, has made her grow "prouder" (II.i.96).[86] She

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[85] Ariadne was in love with Theseus. She rescued him from the labyrinth where he slew her half-brother, the monstrous minotaur, by advising Theseus "to tie / A clew of Linnen at the doore to guide himselfe thereby" (Ovid, *Metamorphoses* VIII.231-32). However, "straight he having winde, / With Minos daughter sailed away to Dia: where (unkinde / And cruelle creature that he was) he left hir post alone / Upon the shore. Thus desolate and making dolefull mone" (VIII.234-37). Ariadne became the archetype of the grieving, forsaken woman. Ovid gives her voice in *The Heroides*, in which she laments, "We both live, Theseus, and I am not yours!—if indeed a woman lives who is buried by the treason of a perjured mate" (X.75-77).

[86] The editors of the *Oxford World Classics* edition of *The Maid's Tragedy* explain that the willow was associated with the abandoned woman. The image appears in Shakespeare's *Othello*, in which Desdemona, after being accused of adultery by her husband, sings of a forsaken woman, "The poor soul sat sighing by a sycamore tree, / Sing all a green willow. / Her hand on her bosom, her head on her knee, / Sing willow, willow, willow" (IV.iii.38ff.).

has become obsessed with this grief, seeking attention from it: "And let all about me / Tell that I am forsaken" (II.ii.57-8). Interestingly, Aspatia's classical counterpart, Ariadne, to whom she has likened herself, is also likened to Echo. In Ovid's *Heroides* Ariadne relates her unrequited pursuit: "And all the while I cried out 'Theseus!' along the entire shore, and the hollow rocks sent back your name to me; as often as I called out for you, so often did the place itself call out your name" (X.21-24).

Aspatia would so elevate her forsaken, melancholic position not only to regard it as a transcendent experience, but even to view it as a sense of renewal. She speaks of the "sudden sadness / [that will] give us new souls" (II.ii.67-68). Aspatia seems entirely wrapped up in this self-love, which transmutes itself into a love for Amintor (who is arguably herself), but also very much for herself as an independent character. Thomas Wright addresses the connection between self-love and obsessive love for another, in his publication, *The Passions of the Minde in Generall* (later edition, 1604). He links the transcendent and the physical when he states that the affections of our minds cause a modification of our bodily humours, which in turn causes a physical alteration that affects human beings both physically and mentally (*cap.*ii.*p.*7). In fact, he attributes such mental "passions and affections"[87] to self-love, which he calls "the nurse, mother, or rather stepdame of all inordinate affections" (*cap.* iii. *p.*11). He likens the war raging inside oneself, between God-directed love and godless self-love, as a divide between the sublime place of Jerusalem and the moral horrors of Babylon: "the love of God buildeth the cittie of the predistinate; selfe-love the cittie of the reprobate" (*cap.* iii. *p.*14). These raging emotions are certainly evident in Aspatia. Perhaps Beaumont and Fletcher placed evidence of pure love—that is, the love Aspatia held for Amintor as a separate person—in Aspatia to evoke sympathy from the audience. However, it

[87] Passions were explained physiologically in early modern treatises. A passion was understood to be "a muscular expansion or contraction of the heart" (Babb, *Elizabethan Malady* 12); terms such as 'ardent love,' 'blazing anger,' 'chilling fear,' and 'cold-blooded murder' were not simply figures of speech to the early modern mind (16).

is the darker side of Aspatia's personality that attracts us, and which adds a profundity to the play that makes it worthy of examination. It is this love, self-love, which Wright inveighs against:

> self-love following inordinate affections, inciteth the cittizaens of *Ierusalem*, to prosecute pleasures, vnbridle their senses, enioy the roses till they flourish, not to let wither the Mayie flowers of their flesh, haleth the poore soules from the libertie of *Ierusalem*, to the captivitie of *Babylon*, thereby casting the children into the thraldome of Sathan (*cap.* iii. *p.*14).

In this way, then, Aspatia's 'elevated melancholy' has become yet again a disease, something which has been catalogued in medical treatises, such as Wright's, as a base illness. Jacques Ferrand also suggests that transcendent melancholy is both psychosomatic and physiological. He explores the fear and sorrow which accompany love melancholy, concluding that the source of these psychological aspects can be physiologically explained: "that by reason of the *Animall spirits being sullied by those black vapours that arise from the Melancholy blood,* all objects present themselves to the Imagination in a terrible and fearful shape" (Ferrand *cap.* v. *p.*37, emphases added). The melancholy derived from self-love does not raise one to the level of the gods; rather, in Wright's words, "self-love...may well be called...olde *Adam*, the law of the flesh" (*cap.* iii. *p.*14).

Aspatia: Mourner or Melancholic, or Both?[88]

If it is possible to read Amintor as an extension of Aspatia, or a mirror image of her (no matter how cracked the image is), it leaves the reader able to wonder how legitimate

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[88] I am indebted in this section to Juliana Schiesari's 1992 publication, *The Gendering of Melancholia*, which has helped me to consider, separate from her own formidable study of women and mental health, the issue of melancholy as it relates to Aspatia. Without Schiesari's accessible exploration of Freud and Lacan, I would be without recourse to so full an understanding of these 'fathers' of psychology. At the same time, I would like to emphasise that my interest in Freud and Lacan is not as relevant to the very important body of work which has emerged under the umbrella of 'third wave feminism,' as it is to their interest in how mourning and melancholy are connected to mental health.

Aspatia's sense of loss is. If she is so in love with herself, does her mourning count? Is she in fact even mourning? Certainly one can mourn for a loss of self. The pertinent question would seem to be: is Aspatia genuinely mourning, or is she exclusively melancholic? It is first of all important to recognize the significance of Aspatia's condition as a melancholic woman. This is not to say that women were seen as immune to falling prey to the "passions of the mind"—on the contrary, Wright, Burton, Ferrand, and other early modern thinkers on the subject all agreed that women were heavily affected by such conditions. However, the 'great melancholics' are not women,[89] and women as a whole are largely left out of the discourse. Juliana Schiesari argues this "points less to a lack of unhappy women than to a lack of significance traditionally given to women's grief in a patriarchal culture" (3). Scheisari herself does not specifically address *The Maid's Tragedy*; however, Aspatia's melancholy becomes significant when considered in the light of Scheisari's further explanation that even though women are acknowledged to be melancholic, "when it comes to the rubric of melancholia as an expression of cultural malaise embodied within a particular individual or system of thought, women do not count as the so-called great melancholics" (4).

Despite centuries of scholarship in which women do not figure in a consideration of 'elite' melancholy, Aspatia seems a perfect test-case for understanding the difference between mourning and melancholy. Schiesari is helpful in elucidating Freud's differentiation between mourning as "more or less a conscious working through of concrete loss" and melancholy as a more seriously "pathological fixation on an imaginary sense of loss" (5). In other words, melancholy is a neurosis. Certainly here we see that Aspatia is a genuine mourner—she has lost Amintor to Evadne, saying to her on the evening of Evadne's wedding, "This should have

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[89] By 'great melancholics' I mean those men, both fictional and real, who have been passed to the twenty-first century reader as paragons of transcendent melancholy: in the fictional realm, Hamlet is the archetype, and in reality, Ficino takes his place as prime melancholic.

been / My night, and all your hands have been employed / In giving me, a spotless offering / To young Amintor's bed" (Beaumont and Fletcher, *Maid's Tragedy* II.i.44-47). Indeed it is an unsympathetic society that would force the forsaken woman, who is grieving her loss of a lover, to help prepare her replacement for the love that was to have been hers.

However, the idea of mourning, and Aspatia as mourner, takes an interesting turn if one considers Amintor as a reflection of Aspatia's self. Can Aspatia grieve the loss of herself? Did Narcissus grieve the loss of himself? Most definitely. His dying words are words of regret for his failure to fully unite with himself: "Out of his lippes beholding still his wonted ymage past: Alas sweete boy beloved in vaine, farewell" (Ovid, *Metamorphoses* III.626-27). The difference, however, between Aspatia and Narcissus and/or Echo, is that Aspatia dies in a knowledge of self-fulfilment, whereas both the classical characters never do attain their love. Aspatia dies realising it is she whom Amintor loves, and though their love was never literally consummated, his final sword-thrust into her is symbolic of the same. Her dying words are ones of self-assurance that she has indeed won Amintor:

> ASPATIA: Give me thine hand. Mine hands grope up and down
>
> And cannot find thee. I am wondrous sick.
>
> Have I thy hand, Amintor?
>
> AMINTOR: Thou greatest blessing of the world, thou hast.
>
> ASPATIA: I do believe thee better than my sense.
>
> O I must go. Farewell. [*She dies*]
>
> (Beaumont and Fletcher, *Maid's Tragedy* V.iii.220-225).

These lines proceed from the fear of not being able to find him, to relief; and, unlike Narcissus, Aspatia dies satisfied. Her reference to believing Amintor better than her sense, indicates not her common sense, but rather her physical sense, which no longer has the

capacity to feel touch. This parallels her experience of a consummation that was not in fact literal but still very real.

And so, Aspatia's mental imbalance—her obsession with self—seems to indicate her symptoms are more neurotic than would be the case in one who is solely mourning a loss. This leads to the consideration of Aspatia's loss. Schiesari explains the Lacanian differentiation between the literal or figurative loss of someone dear and the other loss, a "primordial loss of the original (lost) object" (27). She explains further that this primordial lack "propels the subject into desire, motivated by the impossibility of ever recuperating the original lost object" (28). It is at this point, it would seem, that mourning, which is to say, the grieving of a loss of someone dear, metamorphoses into melancholy. This is because the extended grieving over irrecoverable loss is a sort of neurosis which would occur "as an obsessive and necessarily doomed desire to fix or find plenitude...recover an absolute presence in this absence" (28).

It seems to me that Aspatia has experienced loss in both senses, and therefore blurs the distinctions between mourning and melancholy. She suffers the loss experienced by the forsaken woman, and suffers the loss of herself (when Amintor is read as her mirror image). However, she also *overcomes* this loss, and she overcomes it in two ways. The first is through death. It is at Amintor's stabbing of Aspatia that she consummates her relationship with him, and she recovers what was lost. It is also consistent with early modern medical views that Aspatia recovers from her 'love-sickness' only through this stabbing—this symbolic sex act. The underlying medical premise of love-induced despair was that it could only be cured by sexual possession of the object of desire. Ferrand's study concludes that "there is no Physitian, that ever denyed to his Patient, for the cure of his Love-Madnesse, the enjoyment of the person he loved" (276). Burton remarks, "*The last and best cure of Melancholy, is, To let them have their desire*" (576). Aspatia 'dies' fulfilled: her

suicide/stabbing/reception of a sexual thrust was the required cure for her illness. Ronald Huebert suggests that it is through suicide that Aspatia "claims victory over male social order...she has followed her own values to their consummation" ("Artificial Way to Grieve" 610). This suicide succeeds the first step in Aspatia's action to recover her loss, which is the donning of male clothes.

While Schiesari does not appear to deny that mourning and melancholy can be in certain ways combined, she does not address directly how such a synthesis may take shape; however, it is in this combined sense that I see Aspatia as a conjunction of characteristics from medieval drama, and the more heightened melancholic characteristics of a post-Ficinian society. Klibansky, Panfsky and Saxl's book, *Saturn and Melancholy* asserts that medieval didactic poetry "had personified nearly all objects of human thought and feeling" including "Souci" (worry), "Tristresse" (sadness), and "Dame Mérencoyle" (Melancholy) (221). They further explain that Alain Chartier's influential work, which Schiesari also addresses, entitled *Le Traité de l'Esperance*, "comprises a compact synthesis of all traditional or diffused motifs of Melancholy that were available to him" (225),[90] and that it was this "fusion of the characters of 'Melancholy' and 'Tristresse' during the fifteenth century that brought about...a modification of the notion of Melancholy, in the sense of giving it a subjective vagueness" (231). I believe Beaumont and Fletcher exploited this subjective vagueness to further synthesise elements of classical mythology and the newer hypotheses of mental illnesses into the character of Aspatia.

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[90] The blending of characters begins early in Chartier's work (translated into English in the fifteenth century), with the simultaneous onslaught of Dame Malencolie, Deffyaunce (Distrust), Indignation, and Desesperaunce (Despair) upon the work's speaker: "Dame Malencolie turmentid with hir harde handis...And at the same hou[r]...presented themselves thre horrible semblaunces and fygurys of women passing feerfull to loke vpon." These women were called Defiance, Indignation and Despair (Chartier 6).

Aspatia's Masculine Attire

To follow on from Huebert's consideration of Aspatia's role as an active participant in carving her future, it is interesting to read his assertion that Aspatia's disguise "indicates that woman may take decisive action only by assuming external masculine qualities" ("Artificial Way to Grieve" 610). She must dissemble—must intentionally become what society says she is not—in order to regain what she has lost. Evadne is undeniably a dissembler in words and actions, and academic criticism focuses on her role as dissembler far more than on Aspatia's, but it seems to me that Aspatia's is a more sinuous dissimulation: not only does she fool the world through what she says and does, but she also furthers that misrepresentation through her disguise, thereby entering into what was a lively contemporary debate in seventeenth-century England about women in men's clothing.[91]

One might question the purpose behind Aspatia's cross-dressing. It seems significant that she would, in her narcissism, actually *adopt* facets of that other self that are seemingly foreign to her (in this case, attire), in order to more wholly attain self-fulfilment. However, *both* Aspatia and Amintor's narcissistic tendencies have already been indicated, and it follows that Aspatia, fully comprehending Amintor's self-love, in part because he is part of herself, might also cross-dress as a way to seduce Amintor, to appeal to his narcissistic, homoerotic side. He asserts that he finds this boy/woman attractive and consequently fears his sexual orientation, not realising that behind the male attire is a female body (this, too, of course, is ironic because the actor playing Aspatia would, of course, have been a young man, adding to the 'gender-bending' of this situation). To this 'boy' he cries:

Gentle youth,

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[91] The details of this debate have been analysed at length, and so I will not engage in further explanation at this time. Considerable primary literature is extant on this topic, the most prominent perhaps being *Hic Mulier* and *Hæc Vir*. For a comprehensive article on the subject, which offers a thorough summary of relevant scholarship in recent decades, see " 'If sight and shape be true': The Epistemology of Crossdressing on the London Stage" by Tracey Sedinger.

> Leave me, for there is something in thy looks
> That calls my sins in a most hideous form
> Into my mind, and I have grief enough
> Without thy help (Beaumont and Fletcher, *Maid's Tragedy* V.iii.47-51).

The logic behind this narcissistic, homoerotic desire is elucidated by Schiesari, who views the early modern understanding of "amatory narcissism" as a "positive regression towards God":

> But if the body of the beloved is only a transitional moment in this narcissistic ascent to unity with God, and if the cosmological hierarchy is metaphorised as proceeding not only from higher to lower but also from masculine to feminine, it is not surprising to find narcissistic transcendence buttressed by a privileging of the homoerotic...men catch men more easily since they are more like men than women are...they have blood and spirit which is clearer, warmer, thinner, which is the basis of erotic entrapment (119-20).

Aspatia's disguise, then, has played an active role in bringing Amintor's unconscious desire to a level where he may act on it—he loves this man, himself, and the male reflection of Aspatia (she and her actual brother were said to look very much alike, Beaumont and Fletcher V.iii.40-41) better than he proved, in life, to love Aspatia herself. He was too fickle, and too much a plaything of the crown to take risks for her love.[92] However, he risks and achieves self-slaughter when she comes before him in masculine garments. Aspatia utters what may seem at this moment to be Amintor's unconscious thoughts, who has asked 'Aspatia's brother' to leave his presence. Perhaps in Amintor's homosexual attraction to 'Aspatia's brother,' Amintor is really thinking what Aspatia articulates: "It is unjust / That men and women should be matched together" (V.iii.30-31).

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[92] Amintor says of the king, "there lies a terror, /what fraile man / Dares lift his hand against it?" (II.i.308-09).

It is interesting that Ovid's *Metamorphoses* has had a significant inferred participation in Aspatia's experience because in her cross-dressing the connection to this classical text is expanded, and she herself literally metamorphoses: figuratively, she is both Narcissus and Echo, but literally she is a woman transformed into a man. Paula S. Berggren highlights how, in Ovid's works, a transmutation is imposed from without as the only means of resolving a dilemma incapable of psychological adjustment ("Prodigious Thing" 384). A classic example of this is in the case of Iphys, whose biological composition rendered her labelled 'female.' She thus appealed to Isis to literally change her into a biological male so that she could "take Ianthee to his wyfe" (Ovid, *Metamorphoses* IX.937).[93] Berggren further adds that in early modern drama, theatrical costume can reveal the self that the costume itself physically conceals ("Prodigious Thing" 384). Both observations apply to Aspatia: when Aspatia becomes a man, the psychological barrier which had forced Amintor into reckless submission to the king is conquered, and further the 'forsaken woman' pining away for her lover is altered, and she adopts an assertiveness never before revealed in her character. The stage directions in V.iii indicate action on her part; in this costume Aspatia "*strikes him,*" "*kicks him,*" and "*they fight.*"

Valerie R. Lucas addresses the convention that justified female transvestism:

> in early Christian legends as well as English Renaissance prose, verse, and drama, the female transvestite's subversive potential is defused, for the most part, by fantasy resolutions in which she takes on male attire to defend her chastity, or where her exploits assist men and often end in capitulation to patriarchal authority (75).

Aspatia, however, is in no way *defending* her chastity—rather, she is asserting herself as a sexual being who is, quite literally, desperately attracted to Amintor. Further, she happily

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[93] Readers encounter the description of the metamorphosis of biological sex in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* IX.925ff.

accepts his sword thrusts—these symbols of the sexual thrusts she never received from him are welcomed by her, and he is taken aback by this acceptance: "What dost thou mean?...those [blows] I offer thee, thou spred'st thine arms / And tak'st upon thy breast" (Beaumont and Fletcher, *Maid's Tragedy* V.iii.103-05). This is a far cry from the 'brazen' Evadne, whose resistance to his advances he mistakes, based on his understanding of women, to be "but the coyness of a bride" (II.i.137). He literally has to urge Evadne to "come, come, my love" (II.i.122), and in the sexual context of this play, the orgasmic double entendre cannot be overlooked. In contrast, Aspatia 'dies' contented, both literally and in the figurative 'little death' of the orgasm: "I have *got enough*, and my *desire*. / There is no place so fit for me to *die* as here" (V.iii.106-107, emphases added).

If Aspatia can only 'find herself'—a notion particularly interesting when we have studied her in the light of Narcissus's self-discovery and destruction—when she has become someone 'Other,' this brings into serious questioning the idea of an essential self; Comensoli and Russell refer to this self as a "unified, self-reflexive subject" and would in all likelihood trace Aspatia's position to one whose universal nature has been displaced "by multiple systems of signification" (2). Her self-discovery in the guise of another self undermines centuries of criticism which imposed an essentialist ideology on early modern tragedy, and saw universal, transhistorical 'man' in tragic heroes such as Hamlet. Deliverance from that perspective has come through analysing the significance of more marginal tragic figures, such as Ophelia, and, more marginal still, Aspatia. More perceptive analysis has broadened the reader/spectator experience with the text by denying the existence of 'essential man' (western and Caucasian).[94]

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[94] It has largely been since the 1980s, with the development of psychoanalytic, feminist, and new historicist / cultural materialist criticism that the reductive view of essentialist theories has been challenged (Erickson, *Rewriting Shakespeare* 8). Each of these in themselves could be equally reductive, of course, but they have offered helpful alternatives that have embraced a larger number of possibilities for reading early modern drama.

Consciously or not, Beaumont and Fletcher, and their contemporary dramatists, have reassessed the conclusions many of their contemporaries drew from the Galenic hypothesis of woman, which held that there was only one-sex on a sliding scale of perfection.[95] Rather than using this as a belief which denied women agency, by viewing them as imperfect, sub-human, ignorant and passive, these playwrights celebrated the blurring of gender distinctions. In so doing, they made their voices heard on the issue of woman as 'Other.' If woman is not so different from man, and in this 'one-sex model' not inferior but still an active agent of her own destiny, then the view of woman as frightening or alien is clearly undermined.

Comensoli and Russel suggest, "this one-sex model may have contributed to Early Modern transvestite acting conventions and representation of sexual difference" (5). I would add to this that in doing so it both increased the active capacity of woman and denied the unadulterated 'manliness' of men. Aspatia's donning of masculine garb does not need to imply, as Huebert suggested (see above, p. 130), that only in male form can she act; it can rather imply that her 'essential self' is not limited to the conventional activities of one gender.

Conclusion

The structure of *The Maid's Tragedy* as a whole—the strange blending of parallel characters and interlinking love-triangles—is neatly set up within a tightly structured format. The first sign that parallelism is important in *The Maid's Tragedy* becomes apparent early in the play. In the opening scene, gentlemen of the Court are discussing the forthcoming wedding masque, and comment on the art form:

> [Masques] must commend their King, and speak in praise
>
> Of the assembly, bless the bride and groom,

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[95] The female was, in Galen's assessment, an imperfect male because of a defect in heat, with the result that her sexual organs remained inside her—the heat of her body was insufficient to thrust them out (Galen 47-48). Galenic medical theory still dominated in the early modern period in England. Most anatomy books in the period were "largely a compilation of Galen and medieval masters" (Benedik 103).

In person of some god; they're tied to rules

Of flattery (I.i.8-11).

Reality is paralleled by the masque, a dramatic form which becomes bizarrely imitated in 'real life' itself, in that certain facets of 'real life' parallel other facets of that same reality. For instance, the human body is the cosmos in miniature: "And as the firmament is still moving and working, so uncessant is the wheeling and rolling on of our brains" (Nashe, *Terrors of the Night* 241). But within this universe, where microcosm and macrocosm, fantasy and reality run along parallel lines, havoc is wreaked—between individuals and in society at large. It is in the wedding masque—in the setting of fantasy—that such chaos is forecast. I will conclude, then, with a brief study of the play's wedding masque.

The speech in the opening scene, which I have just quoted, indicates the *falsity* of reality—or, more accurately, the misperceptions people hold of reality, and the only partially perceived awareness that real life is more complicated than the surface would indicate. That surface is but a thin veil of security over a menacing abyss. The masque is intended to flatter the king and his celebrated subjects, but this masque immediately indicates how each power is subject to another, and each so entwined as to be mutually dependent and rendered useless without the corresponding levels of power. Even as Night draws attention to her power (I.ii.13), a stage direction indicates that she rises "in mists" (13), prophesying that not all is perfect in this place of her reign. It adumbrates Melantius's recently uttered speech that Rhodes is not abundant with joy, but rather "a place privileged to do men wrong" (I.i.84). Further, Night, though a "Great Queen" (I.ii.128), admits that she is "dull and black" and "could not find my beauty without [Cynthia, the moon]" (122-23). Cynthia, in turn, whose powers are such that she can boast "Neptune, great King of the waters…by me / Be proud to be commanded" (156-7), is equally subject to the sun: "I must down / And give my brother place" (241-42).

The masque, then, has shown the connection and interdependence even of the gods. It further suggests the havoc wreaked by rebellious subjects, paralleled in the dark reality of adultery, regicide and self-murder that takes place in the central action of *The Maid's Tragedy*. Aeolus, the ruler of the winds, cannot subordinate Boreas, who is "too foul for our intentions" (165). Aeolus reports that "Boreas has broke his chain / And, struggling with the rest, has got away" (184-85). Neptune is not terribly concerned—he is too sure of his power as a god; however, Aeolus prophesies that " 'ere day / Many a tall ship will be cast away" (227-28). That "tall ship," it turns out, is the king himself who, like Neptune, built a false sense of security on his divine right as reigning monarch.

To close, that masque, which is supposed to be "tied to the rules of flattery," as quoted above, indicates rather that the king has little independent power—his power rests upon his subordinates, and his subordinates are rebellious. The parallel is shown literally, in the ropes the king is tied with when Evadne comes to kill him (V.i.45-46). He believes it to be some love-game, as though the ropes are emblematic of his subjects being tied to the rules of flattery. However, his assumption proves false: he is rather entwined in and roughly bound by the rules of human behaviour, which react against tyranny, and in this case excise that "foul canker," the king.

Chapter 4. Identity Crisis in *The Queen of Corinth*

Plot Summary

War between Argos and Corinth has just concluded—as a peace pact, the general of Corinth (Leonidas), offers his sister, Merione, to Agenor (Prince of Argos) to be his wife. Theanor, son to the Queen of Corinth, loves Merione, who has loved him in return, and he is filled with jealous rage at this arrangement. He rapes her, with the help of Crates, elder brother to the virtuous Euphanes. Leonidas, Agenor (who continues to love Merione despite her 'defilement'), and Euphanes vow to avenge the rape. Meanwhile, Euphanes, who is prized by the Queen of Corinth, asks for the queen's permission to marry Beliza; despite her envy, the queen consents. The wedding is put in jeopardy, however, because Euphanes is framed by Theanor and Crates to appear to be Merione's rapist. The virtuous courtier proves his innocence by establishing, with witnesses, that he was elsewhere at the time of the rape.

Theanor, exhibiting a tendency towards erotomania, learns that Beliza is to be married and feels such a desire for her that he decides to rape her before the wedding. The audience is led to believe he does rape her, and he is taken to trial for both sexual assaults. This trial is presided over by the queen herself. He seems genuinely overcome by guilt, and awaits death with pleasure. Beliza believes he should suffer the death penalty for his actions, but Merione, in contrast, pleads that he should not die; rather he should be forced to marry her, since she is the first woman he has 'ruined.' The queen at first condemns him to death; however, the audience learns in a quick conclusion that Merione and Beliza were party to the final plan to transform Theanor's insatiable sexual appetite into new purity, and Merione has in fact been the willing victim of the second rape, in order to protect and sustain Beliza's virginity. Merione is permitted to marry Theanor, and Beliza to marry Euphanes (but only if the queen can enjoy favours of a non-sexual nature in the daytime), and the queen offers herself to a compliant Agenor as a substitute for Merione. The play closes with discussion of the

approaching weddings, and the tragi-comedy appears to have come to a happy conclusion for all.

Overcome by Melancholy: Merione and Humoral Theory

As I have already established at length (see pp. 36-39; 119-22; 125-29), the amount of extant publications on melancholy would suggest it was a topic in which many early moderns were deeply interested. Thomas Nashe's *Terrors of the Night* served as the quintessential pamphlet on the terrifying apparitions of "fuming melancholy" (217). Playwrights most certainly capitalised on this fascination, with Shakespeare's *Hamlet* being the most lasting composition. According to the humoral theory, the ideal person would have the four humours (blood, choler, melancholy and phlegm) in a balanced composition. However, fallen humankind could no longer celebrate this perfect equilibrium and therefore suffered from humoral imbalance. Each individual's temperament was dictated according to the dominant humour, and labelled in terms still in circulation today: sanguine, choleric, phlegmatic, or melancholic. Dr Timothy Bright, addressed each of the four humours in the highly influential *A Treatise of Melancholy* (5-7).[96]

The bodily humour and its diseased effects continued to thrive in literary images during the early Stuart period, despite its physiological basis being challenged and eventually undermined by emerging medical discoveries.[97] An interesting image of the bodily humours, as articulated by early modern English publications, emerges in *The Queen of Corinth*, in which Merione and Theanor become representative of the sanguine and melancholic fluids. These two characters embody the theory of the dynamic nature of the humours. Because the

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[96] Timothy Bright's treatise on melancholy was widely popular. It was first printed in 1586, with a new edition printed in 1613, just a few years prior to the writing and performing of *The Queen of Corinth* (1617/18).

[97] The Galenic theory of the humours, which was augmented by succeeding centuries' medical professionals and philosophers, faced challenges by early modern physiological discoveries, but was finally ousted—though not without opposition—by William Harvey's discovery of the circulation of the blood in 1628 (Lyons xiv). Harvey discovered that the heart circulates blood around the body. It would appear that his breakthrough was well-publicised. By the following year the first response to Harvey's discovery had already been published—Robert Flood's *Medicina Catholica*—and negative critiques were also emerging by 1630 (Gregory 114-15).

humours must co-exist within one physical framework, they are bound to collide and war against each other for dominance. Nashe makes such dynamism analogous to the influence of fire: "even as fire maketh iron like itself, so the fiery inflammations of our liver or stomach transform our imaginations to their analogy and likeness" (233). In this context, *The Queen of Corinth* can be read as a study of the rapacious nature of melancholy, as expressed by Dr Bright:

> Melancholy, of quality grosse, dull & of few comfortable spirits: and plentifully replenished which such as darke[n] all the clearnesse of those sanguineous, and ingrosse their subtlenesse, defile their purenesse with the fogge of that slime, and fenny substance, and shut vp the heart as it were in a dungeon of obscuritie, causeth many fearefull fancies, by abusing the braine with vgly illusions, and locketh vp the gates of the heart...whereby we are in heauinesse, sit comfortlesse, feare, distrust, doubt, dispaire, and lament, when no cause requireth it (122).

Theanor personifies the melancholic humour. Robert Burton, in *An Anatomy of Melancholy,* articulates the type of person who is host to this humour: "we call him Melancholy, that is dull, sad, sowre, lumpish, ill disposed, solitary, any way moued, or displeased" (11). The plan to rape Merione is established with Theanor's first appearance—the place designed for this act is one with "vaults so hollow, and the walls so strong, / As *Dian* there might suffer violence, / And with loud shrikes in vaine call *Jove* to helpe her" (I.i.55-7). Of this hollow seat of misery Theanor comments, "I like the place well" (I.i.52).

In contrast, the sanguine humour, Dr Bright explains, typically projects an aura of merriment and cheer (98), and *The Queen of Corinth* is replete with examples of Merione's tendency to the same, both in herself and in those to whom she relates. Even her name seems to be a play on "merry one." Her brother attributes to her "a loving Soule," and "A sweet

one," by Agenor, who also emphasises the cheering effect she has upon people: "so much joy I carry in the thought of it / So great a happinesse to know she is mine" (II.iii.36-8). In fact, the whole city seems dominated by sanguinity, built up to a climax prior to Merione's rape scene. Beliza participates in mending souls that are rank with depravity by "laughing" (I.ii.239), and the courtier Neanthes celebrates "true mirth" and seeks opportunity "to dye with the extreamity of laughter" (I.iii.2-3). The foreign Prince Agenor finds happiness on his arrival in Corinth: "How happy I esteeme my selfe in being / Thought to be numbred [*sic*] in the rank / Of your confederates" (I.iii.73-5).

While Dr Bright describes blood (sanguine) as "the purest part...temperate in quality, and moderate in substance," melancholy is "of substance grosse and earthie" (5-6). Theanor, though he inhabits these walls of happiness, is the dominant 'humour' in the play. Melancholy proceeds to overwhelm the sanguine humour—the former transforms the latter, originally more dominant fluid by the heated act of rape and defiles her pureness. Melancholy was understood in the early modern period to rise by the process of adustion—intense heat and drying—which, "by excessive distemper of heate, burned as it were into ashes in comparison of humour...turneth it into a sharpe lie" (Bright 134). Theanor's excessive heat—his melancholic adustion—has transformed Merione's sanguineous humour into a shadow of its former self. Theanor drugs her following the rape, and her fatal turn is marked upon awaking and remembering that heated act which now transforms her: "My shame, my shame, my shame: O I remember / My never-dying shame" (Massinger, Fletcher and Field *Queen of Corinth,* II.iii.78-9). She recognises her metamorphosis, recalling "When I was faire *Merione*, unspotted, / Pure, and unblasted... / White as the heart of truth" (II.iii.96-8), and now identifying herself as the worst of the melancholics:

> Send those sad people
>
> That hate the light, and curse society;

Whose thoughts are Graves, and from whose eyes continually

Their melting soules drop out, send those to me;

And when their sorrowes are most excellent,

So full that one griefe more cannot be added,

My Story like a torrent shall devoure 'em (II.iii.108-14).

Merione has placed herself among the ranks of women for whom grief finds a voice, and in whom melancholy asserts itself as being a prevailing trait which each of these women feel has subsumed them more wholly than any other woman in history. We saw a similar self-indulgent grief in Aspatia, in *The Maid's Tragedy* (see pp. 119-25).

Throughout Merione's suffering, allusions are made to her former sanguineous temperament, and her contrasting melancholic nature which now so dominates her. Agenor, Merione's fiancé, grieves for what is now lost—"Is this the happy time? my hope to this come?" (Massinger, Fletcher, Field II.iii.128). Beliza sings a lamentation juxtaposing joy and sorrow, in which the rapacious imagery of a flower plucked—virginity stolen—serves as the thematic explanation for present grief, while at the same time urging for the re-establishment of joy:

Weep no more, nor sigh nor groan,

Sorrow calls no time that's gone:

Violets pluck'd, the sweetest raine

Makes not fresh now grow againe...

Joyes as winged dreams fly fast,

Why should sadness longer last? (III.ii.1-8)

Merione is portrayed as one who is completely subsumed by a melancholic excess. Nevertheless, despite her overwhelming sadness, her sanguineous fluid fights to reassert itself, and by the play's end Merione once again embodies sanguinity. Melancholy has not

irredeemably overcome her, but rather proves to have been "an impudent guest" (III.ii.109); the true, dominant humour merely lies hidden, symbolised by her covered face, whilst enduring a second rape (V.iv.213). The restoration of sanguinity is best represented by the restoration of Merione's honour, desired perhaps the most by Theanor, who is now so "sunck with sorrow" (V.iv.12), that he desires nothing other than the re-establishment of joy in Corinth, even if this means his own death: "these whom I have wrong'd, may wish my ashes / No heavy burden, ere I suffer death, For the restoring of *Merione's* honour, / Let me be married to her, and then dye" (V.iv.173-6).

One might question the playwrights' decision to portray, even emblematically, a physio-psychological hypothesis on stage. One of the reasons for creating symbolic significance in Merione could simply be the theatricality and marketability of melancholy. However, there could be a more noteworthy purpose. The disillusionment endemic in Jacobean society perhaps prompted the influx of melancholic representations on stage. Theanor's rape of Merione serves as reminder of the society's malcontents and depressed who spread their gloom via public houses and printing presses. Discontent was indeed sweeping through England in the economically depleted days of James I, raping the merriment and optimism that Jacobean minds nostalgically remembered about life during the early reign of Elizabeth.[98]

Jacobeans also found in their rediscovery of the classics a precedent for a growing pessimism about their society. Like the Greeks and Romans before them, who believed that

[98] There is also considerable evidence to suggest that English people of the mid-seventeenth century were convinced that they lived in an atypically difficult age (Sharpe 4). While even in the reign of Elizabeth, early moderns were ravaged by disease, warfare and religious schism, selective memories may have been more inclined to remember the length and success of her reign. See Sharpe for a helpful analysis of possible reasons for this nostalgia (4-8).

change was degenerative,[99] the early Stuarts regarded their society's vicissitudes with heavy scepticism. Phineas Fletcher aptly articulated the despair over change in *The Purple Island*:

> How like's the world unto a tragick stage!
> Where every changing scene the actours change;
> Some subject crouch and fawn; some reigne and rage:
> And new strange plots brings scenes as new & strange,
> Till most are slain; the rest their parts have done:
> So here; some laugh and play; some weep and grown;
> Till all put of their robes, and stage and actors gone (I.37).

Fletcher's tone is one of confusion and lament. The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries embraced a period in which a hegemonic Christendom seemed unattainable,[100] and scientific discovery led to a 'decentring' of humankind,[101] breeding within society a strain of despairing and cynical citizens. Some of their disillusionment may have been an affected, or practised, scepticism, in the style of Montaigne, who questioned everything, his motto being "*que sais-je*" (Burke, "Montaigne" 319). In Montaigne's *Apology of Raymond Sebond*, he articulates his jaundiced position:

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[99] See Ovid's influential account of the Four Ages of Man, declining from the idyllic Golden Age through to the base Age of Iron (*Metamorphoses* I.103-170.). Ovid stood out as a sceptic in a period that felt it might indeed have revived the glories of the Golden Age.

[100] Recall, for example, the battle between the Roman Church and some of its major challengers, whose conflicting opinions further threatened a united Church. Some English people readily embraced Protestant values, John Foxe and his *Acts and Monuments* (1563) being one of the most influential pieces of Protestant propaganda. Others, however stubbornly resisted a reformation, seeing the Reformation as a "predatory Crown on the prowl" (Shagan 2), with what may have been perceived as religious coercion through something like the Elizabethan Settlement of 1558 (Todd 369). A unified Church of England did not suggest a people at ease, but rather underscored the violence of religious schism which now dealt not only with "irascible Catholicism" but also with "over-zealous Puritanism" (Shagan 3).

[101] New scientific discoveries made by Copernicus (fl. 1530) and Galileo (fl. ca.1600) were pivotal to an awakened scepticism about humankind's central position in the cosmos. These same discoveries threatened religious 'absolutes' dictated by established theological 'fathers' in that they suggested that "understanding the book of nature lay beyond the authority of professional interpreters of God's other book, Scripture" (Findlen 178-79). Copernicus's theory of a heliocentric universe, heavily endorsed by Galileo, caused sufficient anxiety in the papal unification of faith and knowledge, and resulted in the condemnation of both of these men as heretical.

> Man is the most blighted and frail of all creatures and, moreover, the most given to pride. This creature knows and sees that he is lodged down here, among the mire and shit of the world, bound and nailed to the deadest, most stagnant part of the universe...the farthest from the vault of heaven; his characteristics place him in the third and lowest category of animate creatures (12-13).

Malcontents of this ilk were featured on stage (an obvious example would be Malevole, in Marston's *The Malcontent*), as well as in other creative writing, such as in Donne's poem, "An Anatomy of the World." His speaker's pessimistic worldview of the Jacobean era, contrasted with a glorified view of Elizabethan society, has endured through the centuries:

> And new philosophy calls all in doubt:
> The element of fire is quite put out;
> The sun is lost, and the earth, and no man's wit
> Can well direct him where to look for it.
> And freely men confess that this world's spent (205-09).

Merione's melancholy, then, can be understood as representative of an age in which dismay seems to have replaced the hope remembered—or misremembered—of a bygone age. The play as a whole seems to present a sentimental yearning for days gone by. There are at least two references to nostalgia for Elizabethan England to support this suggestion, both of them pertaining to the title character. It is as though the Queen of Corinth herself holds fast to some remnant of Elizabeth I's maternal concern for her people. The first reference comes late in the play, when Euphanes suggests that his life is not so precious as that of the queen's son. The Queen of Corinth replies to Euphanes' self-effacement with expressions of love of a similar nature to England's beloved early modern queen: "As for my Son, / Let 'em no more dare then they'l answer, I / Am an equall Mother to my Country am, / And every virtuous Son

of it is son / Unto my bosome, tender as mine owne" (Massinger, Fletcher, Field IV.ii.18-22). The queen's words here are reminiscent of speeches Elizabeth I gave in which she established her impartiality towards all her subjects. Indeed, in one manuscript version of her first speech before Parliament, the English monarch called herself "Mother of my Contreye" (Elizabeth I, "First Speech"). That this may be intended to convey more than simply an adaptation of the Latin title for a king, *pater patriae,* is suggested by her assurances to her members of parliament: "though after my death you may have many stepdames, yet shall you never have any more mother than I mean to be unto you all" ("Queen Elizabeth's Answer" 72). Later in the play, she makes herself childless, by disowning her actual son, and claims: "The children I will leave / To keepe my name to all posterities / Shall be the great example of my Justice, / The government of my Country, which shall witnesse / How well I rul'd myselfe" (V.ii.115-19). Like Elizabeth, her greater legacy is in the extended family of her kingdom.

There is a potential inconsistency between Bright's theories and the playwrights' portrayal of Merione and Theanor's representative humours, in that Merione's sanguineous humours do not augment themselves as a direct result of her imbalance. This might suggest the playwrights' were, perhaps unconsciously, challenging some of the medical hypotheses so prevalent in the preceding century. Merione's rape by melancholy does not exaggerate her sanguineous characteristics, as Bright would suggest should be the case. Bright's theory maintains that there exists an "vnnatural Melancholy...by an vnproper speech called Melancholy" that differs from the natural Melancholy, and it is the latter which exaggerates the characteristics of the dominant humour: "If it rise of Choler, then rage playeth her part, and Furie ioyned with madnesse...If Bloud [i.e. sanguine]...euery serious thing for a time is turned into a iest...Thus the passions...by this vnkindly heat aduanceth itself into greater extremities" (Bright 134-5). His contemporary Thomas Wright concurs:

> Now if the blood of Elephants, being incensed with a red colour, had force to stirre in them the Passion of Ire in battell; how much more may we say, that if much hote blood abound in the body, that subiect, by the force of that humor, shall easily, and often be mooved to anger; if temperate blood abound, or be mingled with fleugme, to mirth; if melancholy exceede, to griefe and heavinesse? (64-65)

In contrast to Bright and Wright's theories, Merione's sanguineous characteristics are not aggravated; rather, she is overcome with grief and shame—this highlights the potent effects of mental illness, thereby serving as an alternative to the belief that the explanation for such occurrences can be entirely explained in physiological terms. Further, her illness is cured, but not with the methods Bright asserted are most helpful. Rather than "remouing such causes as first procured the infirmitie" (Bright 294), Merione permits herself to be raped yet again by her original assailant—"To be againe (but willingly) surpriz'd" (Massinger, Fletcher, Field V.iv.208)—as part of a plan allegedly devised to bring Theanor to justice.

Merione's Sense of self: Human Nature and the Early Modern Woman

Although the fervour of discourse on the self intensified in the twentieth century, with such writings as those by Freud and Lacan, theories of one's (in)secure possession of self, its potential instability and even a loss of self, are much older. Already by the fifth century, Augustine was addressing the issue. He contemplated the depravity into which humanity is born, and felt its causal effect was a forced alienation from the innocence humankind had originally been given by God: "So great was the sin of [Adam and Eve] that human nature was changed by it for the worse; and so bondage to sin and the necessity of death were transmitted to their posterity" (XIV.i). He contends that the nature of humankind is pre-ordained—each member is born captive to a prevailing sinfulness: "So it is that each man, because he derives his origin from a condemned stock, is at first necessarily evil and fleshly"

(XV.i). Calvin built upon Augustine's ideas, and his articulation of the divinely-determined state of the individual heavily influenced the theology of the emerging Church of England (Rivers 106-11):[102]

> As Scripture, then, clearly shows, we say that God once established by his eternal and unchangeable plan those whom he long before determined once for all to receive into salvation, and those whom, on the other hand, he would devote to destruction (III.xxi.7).

Aquinas was somewhat more optimistic that humankind had a role to play in its construction. While God is the "cause of everything's action," God still gives humans the "power to act;" further, all things "participate to some degree in the eternal law, inasmuch as from it they receive certain inclinations to the actions and ends proper to them" (*An Aquinas Reader* "On the Power of God" 332; "Summa of Theology" 377). Another influential writer on the subject is Montaigne, whose *Essaies* were translated by John Florio in 1603. He writes about human nature as being manipulated—or, more drastically, unscrupulously redefined—by the tyrant custom, to her own advantage:

> For truly, Custome is a violent and deceiving schoole-mistris. She by little and little, and as it were by stealth, establisheth the foote of her authoritie in vs; by which milde and gentle beginning, if once by the aide of time...it will soone discouer a furious and tyrannical countenance vnto vs (46).

All these seem to accept the view that the self is shaped at least to some extent by pre-existing theological and (or) socio-political frameworks—an idea not at all different from philosophers and literary critics of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

Massinger, Fletcher and Field also seem to explore the hypotheses of the subjective self in Merione's experience of, and reaction to, being raped. Merione appears to adopt the

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[102] For a helpful summary of emergent Protestantism in early modern England, see Youings 178-205.

belief that rape has soiled her unique, physiological and psychological inheritance—the chastity she once upheld, through no fault of her own, has been destroyed. She says she is one who has "been forc'd and broken, lost my lustre, / (I meane this body) so corrupt a Volume" (II.iii.159-60). More than this, she now actively contaminates and infects her surrounding society: "I am nothing now but a maine pestilence / Able to poyson all" (II.iii.103-4). Her identity is ripped away from her by her aggressor, and she denies her individuality in self-repugnance: "I am now I know not what: pray ye look not on me, / No name is left me" (II.iii.90-91). She tries to escape her tormented self through self-erasure: by marrying her rapist and assuming his identity, thereby losing the hope of any individual autonomy.[103] She lobbies for this despite all the other characters crying for Theanor's death. His death cannot restore her honour and so "I aske him for my Husband.../ The Rape on me gives me the priviledge / To be his wife" (V.iv.62-70).

Merione's wilful experience of losing herself suggests the possibility of a subjective self—but perhaps it was a subjectivity, ironically, never really recognised, a contention which will become clear in the pages which follow, as I observe how her interiority is in fact formed by external forces. Her potential for individuality was, in her mind, destroyed and so she attempts to shed herself of that right to self-possession. Merione's sense of self, it would seem, is at least in part dependent on the notion of social construct—Merione is formed by an externally defined set of expectations. Prior to her rape she is submissive to the authority of her brother and her queen, and finds her honour dependent on her chastity. After her body is

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[103] There is—and was—little denying that wives in Jacobean England were, as a rule, identified by their husbands' station, activities, and reputation. With few publicised exceptions, wives submitted to their husbands' authority, and shaped themselves according to their husbands' wills. William Whatley's *A Bride's Bush* is a frequently quoted resource for admonition to wifely obedience: "Then it is laudable, commendable, a note of a virtuous woman, a dutiful wife when she submits herself with quietness, cheerfully, even as a well-broken horse turns at the least turning" (34). Nevertheless, the individual situation within a home may well have been significantly different from the perception that she was being restrained. Many households depended on some income by the wives; certainly this income could foster a sense of self-importance in a woman that early modern preachers and, later, history books, have denied her (Capp 44-47).

'corrupted' she finds herself dependent on external forces to save her from being a social outcast for the rest of her life.

Merione's opportunity for self-construction is limited to a patriarchal series of options: isolation as a 'whore' or nun, or marriage to the aggressor. Not only is the absurdity of her lack of 'rights' as an autonomously constructing self highlighted here, but also her concept of clemency, both of which result in her self-appointed erasure. In the court case in which Theanor is charged with the rapes of Beliza and Merione, the latter seeks

> Your mercy Madam,
> Exempting not your Justice, be but equall;
> And since in no regard I come behind [Beliza],
> Let me not so be undervalu'd in
> Your highnesse favour, that the world take notice
> You so prefer'd her, that in her behalf
> You kil'd that Son, you would not save for me;
> Mercy, O mercy Madam (Massinger, Fletcher, Field V.iv.121-28).

Justice has been defined differently for women than for men. There seems to be little mercy in Jacobean England—justice has distorted it so they cannot assume authority or individuality.

Merione's personal belief in the potential for individuality can be observed in the fact that she seems to represent herself as an independent, without a paternal bind. It seems a conscious decision on the part of the playwrights to keep her 'self' from being fashioned by a father. In an effort to force the readers' or spectators' awareness of this absence, Merione establishes that she will obey Leonidas like a father, since she has no parent present to shape her: "Noble brother, / I have, and still esteeme you as a Father, / And will as farre obey you" (I.ii.11-13). Fathers and daughters are, respectively, the most and least powerful members of

the family; they form the 'cutting edge' of dramatic conflict (Mikesell 237). The frequent appearance of brothers as replacements for the paternal position "reflects the father's loss of power in decisions involving matrimony" (238). The absence of the father, therefore, reflects an independence by default, and a possibility that, in this case, Merione's self can be shaped without paternal influence. Further, her belief in a subjective self is suggested in her attempt to lose that now-ruined self in another. When Theanor faces execution Merione is horrified because it forbids her the possibility of denying her soiled self, by assuming the identity of the rapist, through marriage.

Merione's achievement in saving Theanor, thereby securing the loss of herself (marriage being the death of a woman's identity), denies—or at least obscures—the notion of any sovereignty in self-fashioning, even while paradoxically asserting her autonomy: she successfully demands marriage, and her right to lose identity within that marriage. Her 'self' becomes a mere fiction, dependent on a societal framework which excludes her from its discourse. self-creation is merely an illusion—fashioning is given no effective latitude within the cultural deterministic boundaries of early Stuart England. It is what Jonathan Goldberg calls "self-creation taking place over a void" ("Politics" 536).

Two diametrically opposed conclusions can be reached about Merione's sense of self. Her action in the last scene—her insistence that she marry Theanor—supports the suggestion that these contradictory theories co-exist: one, that she has an individual self which asserts her will, and two, that her self, shaped by pre-existing notions of women, is ruled by the custom which states her only hope for survival is by marrying her rapist. With the latter, her 'liberty' is an ironic one, because in freeing her from social ostracism she is, from a modern perspective, captive to a husband and thereby barred from self-possession. The restoration of her honour requires her loss of self to her husband.

What the opposing conclusions seem to suggest is that in the early modern period, at least for women, self-fashioning occurs as a reaction to, or in relation to, circumstances taking place *outside* the individual—Greenblatt suggests that "any achieved identity contains within itself signs of its own subversion and loss" (*Renaissance self-Fashioning* 9). In the case of Merione, this seems to be true—the point at which she fashions herself is at the point of intersection between imposed external authority and her realisation of what she has lost. If early modern England did not consciously and actively profess a subjectivist philosophy, *The Queen of Corinth* is one indication that, at least unconsciously, Jacobean England considered human nature in qualified subjectivist terms.

"Whor'd, Ravish'd & Robb'd of Honour": Merione and Sexual Violation

The formula of the 'rape drama,' in which a woman is victimised, and then dies as an atonement for his sin and her defilement, reaches back to Livy and Ovid, and continues through such early modern dramas as Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus*, Heywood's *Rape of Lucrece*, and Fletcher's *Tragedy of Valentinian*. One of the most famous models for these tragedies is the rape of Lucrece, whose suicide, as we saw in Chapter 2, resulted in vengeance upon the aggressor and political reform. *The Queen of Corinth*, in contrast to the classical model and contemporary plays, is a rape tragi-*comedy*, in which the woman is victimised and defiled, but rather than paying for her dishonour in physical death, she chooses to marry her assailant, now redeemed from his sin of lust. Several implications arise from this departure from the rape drama's expected formula.

The suggestion that this play will not follow the classical model is made in Act II, after Merione is raped. Crates and Theanor are adamant that she "must and will conceale it; nay, forget it" (iii.21). Crates's next line marks the crucial turn from the formula: "The woman is no *Lucrece*" (22). There is an ambiguity in this phrase—it could imply either that Merione is not exemplary, and fails to be, like Lucrece, emblematic of the chaste ideal, or it

could suggest there is a resilience in her that her ancient Roman sister failed to muster. "No *Lucrece*," Merione explores her possibilities for life following the violation enacted on her. Until this tragic violation, Merione defines herself by her lack of eloquence. She submits to her brother's decision that she marry Agenor in words which indicate this disability: "I yeeld my selfe too weake / In argument to oppose you: you may leade me / Whither you please" (I.ii.48-9).

Not only is Merione's capacity for speech heightened marvellously after the rape, but also, she does not seek to revenge herself upon her assailant, unless her demand to marry him is part of a vengeance against him that the playwrights fail to imply. However, from a performance perspective, the play could be produced in such a way that Merione's outspokenness concerning Theanor's fate could imply that she is plotting some kind of revenge that is not inscribed into the text. Merione's stubbornness about her 'soiled self' might not be because she has internalised her culture's ideology concerning raped women, but rather because if Theanor remains alive, she can carve a path both for him and for herself, which is desirable to her. In other words, a reading of the play could suggest Merione is, in effect, 'faking it,' as so many women characters were forced to do in the period's drama.

Ironically, the revenge I am suggesting is not on Theanor, her aggressor, but rather on his mother, who was the first authority to infringe upon Merione's happiness. This would give greater purpose to the play's title, *The Queen of Corinth*, when other characters seem more prominent. The queen's role is theoretically significant—she is the instigator of Theanor and Merione's enforced division. The courtier Neanthes, in contemplating the lovers' separation, assesses his monarch's character:

> And that 'tis in her power, now it concernes
> The common good, not alone to subdue
> Her owne affections, but command her Sons'

She has not onely forc'd him with rough threats

To leave his Mistris, but compell'd him when

Agenor made his entrance into *Corinth*

To wait upon his Rivall (I.i.37-43).

Further, she plays a queen so dedicated to justice that she would see her own son executed.

Despite her theoretical importance, the queen does not have a large role, in terms of dramatic presence, in the play as a whole. She does not appear until the third scene of the first act, and then appears in only five further scenes. The play has a total of seventeen scenes, of which she is in just over 30% of the total number of scenes in performance. The justification for giving her the title role, therefore, must lie in a significance that is embedded in her powerful presence even when she is off-stage. This power is rooted in the rebellious desire her actions creates in others—in this case, her son, and more importantly for the purposes of this reading, Merione.

I put forward the reading considered in the paragraphs to follow cautiously, because they will contend that a raped woman can firstly enjoy the experience of being raped, and secondly can continue to love the man who raped her. Modern psychology does not deny these experiences in raped women, but neither does it support the view that they are a necessarily healthy response to violence and victimisation. With this disclaimer I suggest the following: the play establishes that Merione and Theanor are lovers—not yet physically, but emotionally. It comes with some surprise to Merione, therefore, when Leonidas announces that the queen has sanctioned a marriage between Merione and Agenor, Prince of Argos. Could Merione have "us'd mine owne eyes" (I.ii.19), she would have chosen "Prince *Theanor's* love" (I.ii.23). Theanor's own rhetoric also implies love—he refers to Merione as "a blessing 'tis not in the Fates to equall.../...what once I lov'd above my selfe" (I.iii.87-91). However, Leonidas reminds Merione that Theanor is "not to love but where the Queene his

Mother / Must give allowance, which to you is barr'd up" (I.ii.27-8). The entire play, therefore, can be read as an effort to overthrow the queen's authority on this matter. Merione appears to submit to Leonidas's will—"you may leade me / Whither you please" (I.ii.49-50)—and her destiny seems thus determined. However, she is given an opportunity to overthrow her brother's and the queen's authority, and it comes in the form of her rape by Theanor.

Immediately following the off-stage rape, Merione appears on stage, "as newly ravished," (stage direction), pleading that her aggressor marry her. The direction "as newly ravished" is significant because of the ambivalence of the term 'ravish,' where the playwrights could have used 'rape,' which is the forceful seizure of something belonging to another. Even when it was not used specifically in relation to the sexual violation of a woman, the term 'rape' non-negotiably pertained to unsanctioned overtaking.[104] The word ravishment, in contrast, indicates 'transport,' 'rapture,' 'ecstasy;' therefore, to ravish is "to transport with the strength of some feeling, to carry away with rapture; to fill with ecstasy or delight; to entrance" (Catty 14). If this is the experience Merione has undergone when she returns to the stage "as newly ravished," as opposed to 'as newly raped,' then it has not necessarily been altogether undesirable. Barbara Baines remarks that "one common assumption about the classical story was Lucrece killed herself because she felt some pleasure when Tarquin raped her" (87). Augustine tentatively suggested this in his largely defensive exploration of Lucrece (I.XIX). Perhaps this suggestion can be made regarding Merione. She, at least at the beginning of the play, did love Theanor (Massinger, Fletcher, Field I.ii.22-23). Her early modern 'sensibilities' and her internalisation of the standing social mores could have influenced her enough to resist the lovers' temptation to consummate their

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[104] See *OED* 1a) To take a thing by force. Readers are pointed to Heywood's *Hierarchy* (1645), line 349: "As before, They rape, extort, foresweare,...Oppresse."

relationship, because they were not officially engaged. Despite this, if she indeed truly loved him, she could potentially enjoy this first sexual encounter. A healthy psyche would more likely turn love to hatred at the point of the rape, but the Jacobean woman's psyche had hardly been defined, let alone fostered healthily. Who knows what pleasure she may have found herself taken by in the dark with this forbidden lover. Theanor is described in the *dramatis personae* as a "vicious Prince," and indeed his character is unattractive in its negativity from the outset, and yet she loves him—internalising a societal code on chastity has not stopped her from loving the 'bad boy.' This points to an inclination in Merione that her brother might not have seen in his virgin sister.

Merione proves to be other than what she has externally presented from the very beginning. She is a dissembler: her original confession to poor speech is dispelled through her subsequent melancholic loquacity. Immediately following the off-stage rape Merione enters and delivers a fifty-one line monologue—which comprises the entire scene (II.i)—before she "swoons" (stage direction). The melancholic nature of the speech could certainly itself be a cover—she would not have been the first early modern dramatic character to feign a madness as a cover under which to seek revenge. Hamlet serves as the most significant precedent in his assumption of an "antic disposition" for the purposes of fooling observers into thinking he was too mentally affected to be planning a terrible revenge (Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, I.v.173).[105] A quarter of a century later, the motif still held fast: in James Shirley's *The Cardinal*, we once again see a character carefully plotting her own madness for the purposes of revenge (see pp. 294-300). In *The Queen of Corinth*, Merione yet again proves her acting abilities when a second rape, allegedly on Beliza, is in fact carried out on her, her dissembling personality here signified by Euphanes' comment that "*Meriones* face was

[105] The term 'antic' had multiple meanings, including an acting performance, which seems to be how Hamlet is employing it here. John Ford attributes it the same signification in *The Broken Heart*: "I but deceiv'd your eyes with antic gesture" (V.iii.68).

cover'd" during this rape (Massinger, Fletcher, Field V.iv.213). Further, she who was "too weak" to argue at the play's outset, passionately defends herself in the court case of the final act, in a quarrel between herself and Beliza (V.iv). The court case involves a sub-scene of nearly tongue-in-cheek politeness, where Merione and Beliza argue passionately over Theanor's fate (V.iv.58ff.).

Merione's plan to insist she marry her rapist is thrown askew by Theanor's desire to also rape Beliza, as well as by Agenor's assertion that "the staine was forc'd upon ye / None of your wills, nor yours; rise and rise mine still, / And rise the same white, sweet, faire soule I lov'd ye, / Take me the same" (II.iii.151-54). She easily casts aside Agenor's magnanimity by adopting the Jacobean standpoint (despite the Corinthian setting) that she is indeed unworthy of him and he should "conferre that happinesse / Upon a beauty sorrow never saw yet" (II.iii.163-64). The problem of ensuring that she might be permitted to marry her erotomanic 'lover' increases when Theanor expresses his desire for Beliza. This segment of the play also proves the above analysis problematic. Clearly, if Merione does love Theanor, she would be happy to replace Beliza in the chamber where she is to be raped. However, if she indeed knew it was Theanor who raped her, why does she pretend not to know his identity, and why does she place a mistaken blame on Beliza's lover, Euphanes?

The only probable answer to this lies in the Jacobean audiences' famous lust for spectacle, titillation and sexual 'overload.' Historical sources agree that after 1612, and especially after 1616 with the rise of Buckingham, sexual vice was increasingly conspicuous at the Jacobean Court, and was reflected in Jacobean drama (Gossett 305). Sir John Harrington, in 1606, despairs that the Jacobean Court was " 'going on...as if the devil was contriving every man should blow up himself, by wild riot, excess, and devastation of time and temperance' " (qtd. in Hunt, "Elizabethan 'Modernism' " 116). By the time of Charles I, opposition towards the drama had not decreased in its vehemence; in 1633, William Prynne's

Histrio-Mastix condemned "all Stage-playes, because the acting of them is obscene, and amorous" (164).

Perhaps the playwrights of *Queen of Corinth* were merely trying to suspend the action by having Merione pretend she is ignorant of who raped her. Steeped in an unprecedented height of theatrical commercialism, it is not surprising that they attempted to heighten sensual expectation to an extreme, in an effort to market their show more successfully. Added to this, Fletcherian drama has never been noted for the consistency of its plots; finding 'holes' in their lines of argument is not uncommon. Because unexpected endings, in which, for example, the dead come to life or the antagonists are united in love, are the "glories of Fletcherian tragi-comedy," the "wit lay in the manipulation of the story-line to achieve the pleasing shock of the last act surprise" (Turner, "Collaborators at Work" 316).

An alternative to perceiving Merione's melancholy as affected, but courting the same analysis, is that Merione was not an inherent dissembler, but rather was given the capacity to dissemble when her body was transformed by rape. This argument finds support in the strange masque situated between her rape and her 'swoon.' A stage direction indicates: "*Enter sixe disguis'd, singing and dancing to a horrid Musick, and sprinkling water on her face*" (Massinger, Fletcher, Field II.i.*S.D.*). The act of sprinkling water on her face could suggest a baptism of sorts. These masked figures 'baptise her' into a new life—she who has died (i.e. lost her virginal identity, or, alternatively, suffered the *petite mort* of sexual orgasm), is symbolically given new life through this sacrilegious baptismal ceremony. The setting for the rape has already been established as a sacred place—Vesta's temple—so the sacred

ceremony is, in a perverted sense, not out of place.[106] Merione's new life invests in her a new power. Indeed, Merione is "no Lucrece"—she proves to be far stronger.

There is, of course, the strong possibility that Merione is in fact brutally, unwillingly, raped, and experiences no joy, and that her melancholy is in no sense illusory. Several writers have addressed this reading in previous works, including Karen Bamford, Jocelyn Catty and Suzanne Gossett. None of them, however, has considered Merione's tendencies towards a likeness to Lucrece—they focus rather on the deviation from that classical paradigm in *The Queen of Corinth*. However, I see that Merione is in some senses strangely aligned with Lucrece—raped, and robbed of her honour, at least in the terms for which honour have been spelled out for her. Her suicide is not physical, like Lucrece's, but is a suicide of sorts, nonetheless. After all, as I established in the previous section, in Jacobean England marriage does not seem significantly different, for a woman, from a kind of death. Few would disagree theoretically with the statement that married women in early modern England held no power, authority or autonomy in the public sphere and that in the domestic sphere her 'power' was significantly undermined by the authority of her husband.[107] Perhaps Moll Frith, in *The Roaring Girl*, articulates a common sentiment for a woman to hold at this time when she states, "Marriage is but a chopping and changing, where a maiden loses one head, and has a

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[106] It is additionally interesting to remember that Vesta was also the goddess of hearth and home (Ovid, *Fasti* VI.249ff.). The domestic nature of this goddess highlights a further perverse sense of Theanor's decorum. The man, as the head of the household has a power over the woman which permits him, in such a patriarchy as Theanor's—or Jacobean England—to 'abuse' those things he 'owns.' Theanor's rape of Merione, therefore, is appropriately executed in a household where he decides the morality of his actions. In other words, he is safe in this domestic setting.

[107] A woman's power and influence within the domestic setting was not insignificant. She was in charge of the upbringing of the children and the household education of young boys, daughters, and servants. Children received information about the social world, religious values, the world of work ("concrete lessons here, if the child was a girl"), and even possibly some reading and writing (King, *Women of the Renaissance* 19). The same historian continues: "The epistles, handbooks, and diaries that mothers wrote to guide the children…constitute the principal genre of secular female authorship prior to the modern age" (23). In many households, especially where the husband was often away, she oversaw the finances of the house and the operations of the family business. Despite this, her identity was defined by her husband's reputation and status, and she was reminded in countless tracts that she was subordinate to her husband (see, for example, Gouge 94). In 1609, William Heale remarked on this injustice: "Law-givers…conceiving perchance no better of a wife, then as a mans best servant, ranked thē in a degree of two [*sic*] low servility" (27).

worse i'the place" (Middleton and Dekker II.ii). Merione, therefore, is committing an 'identity suicide,' restoring her honour in the only way possible for a Jacobean woman: by assuming the 'honourable' identity of her princely husband: "I likewise have an eye upon mine Honour, / But knowing that his death cannot restore it / I aske him for my Husband" (Massinger, Fletcher, Field V.iv.60-62).

According to the classical model, Merione's revenge could have occurred posthumously. Just as Lucrece's rape led to the expulsion of her aggressor's ancestors from Rome, Merione's family and friends would have likewise dealt Theanor a vengeful blow. Leonidas vows "her faire revenge" (II.iii.176). Why, then, did Merione plead for mercy for Theanor? One possibility stems from the previous section's discussion on belief in individuality. Violence and revenge place her in an active role, an option the 'passive, weak' woman of early modern England may not consider for herself. Stephen Greenblatt, writing on non-dramatic literature, comments that the period's publications were "deeply involved in the pre-psychoanalytic fashioning of the proprietary rights of selfhood" ("Psychoanalysis" 223), and considers Spenser's *Faerie Queen* as an example. He considers the tangle of space in which the Redcross Knight finds himself as emblematic of the knight's inner life (see Spenser, *Faerie Queen* I.i.10ff.). Greenblatt concludes that Spenser's noblest representation of inner life is not lyric, but epic, hence the compulsion of Spenserian characters to secure identity by the force of arms (223).

Such an idea as Greenblatt's translates well into a consideration of rapists and rape victims in drama. If active revenge is the external expression of internal chaos and turmoil, and women were denied a right to selfhood (i.e. their identity was defined by their husbands or their fathers), they would not have such tendencies towards violence—their inner selves, they were taught through a plethora of sermons, conduct books, and literature, were passive and insignificant, and so they could not experience the same violent external urges. If

Merione has accepted this ideological understanding of her inward authority, then it is not surprising that she displays a desire for clemency rather than a thirst for violent revenge. If her melancholy is not feigned, as I suggested above as a possibility, that illness serves as evidence that she has adopted a prescribed morality which demands self-abasement for her victimisation. Although she admits that she has been "abus'd, basely abus'd" (Massinger, Fletcher, Field II.iii.121), and considers herself mentally chaste (II.iii.156), she views her body as an "unfit and weak...Cabinet" (II.iii.157), and therefore unacceptable to offer to Prince Agenor.[108]

Alternatively, Merione is not a passive victim of violence, but a representation of the divine—she plays the merciful Christ figure, who redeems a person's sins (Theanor) by taking on human flesh (here, literally, someone else's, and not without violence). Then she dies, in that her life as she knew it is over—her virginity is taken from her—and she marries her abuser, thereby redeeming him through her forgiveness and sacrifice. She died for him, and he has life because of her.

Another aspect of Merione's rape has not been previously considered—scholars have analysed her soliloquy in Act II (i.1-50) in terms of its implications on her view of chastity and robbed honour, but have not considered it as a self-contained *psychological* response to having just been sexually assaulted. I would therefore like to consider the relationship here

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[108] I am confident I am not alone in having difficulty grasping the concept of rape in which blame is placed on the female. While today raped women continue to feel a sense of guilt and defilement following the violence acted on them, the myth of female *blame*, based largely on the notion of the female's potent sexuality and role as temptress, has, in many societies, largely been dispelled, but this has not always been the case. In the *Metamorphoses* there is frequent reference to a woman's beauty provoking a rape (see Daphne and Apollo, I.600ff. for one such example), as though that beauty is justification for the act. Tarquin's lust is sparked by Lucrece's beauty not only in Livy but also in Shakespeare and Heywood, causing Lucrece grief over her lost chastity. Much research has been done on the early modern idea of lost chastity, and so I will not address it at length here (for examples, see Bamford, and Dusinberre, *Shakespeare and the Nature of Women*, pp. 20-76). I will, however, quote Karen Bamford's concise summary of the psychology behind early modern notions of rape: "a woman's chastity is at once an immaterial virtue and a material possession; it is simultaneously a moral code of vigilant self-discipline and a commodity that may be stolen from her in spite of her best efforts; it is both a mode of conduct (the chaste woman *behaves* chastely) and a physical state (the chaste woman is *vaginally* chaste). The heroine who loses her chastity in the second sense (physically) is perceived as unchaste in the first sense; that is, deficient in virtue, no matter how she has behaved" (10).

between narrative and experience. The legal proceedings pertaining to a woman's rape did not adequately consider what the victim might have repressed, since only the "*a priori* and self-confirming assumptions of psychoanalytic theory,"—obviously a much more recent practice—permit that type of consideration (Walker, "Rereading Rape" 3). The court case is not about her rape—her agenda there concerns her right to marry her rapist. The case, therefore, conforms to an established formula, rather than to a psychological consideration of Merione's experience. In order to gain any insight into Merione's psychological reflections on her experience, it is her speech immediately following the rape that may hold some clues.[109] However, even here both she and readers encounter limitations. In a recent work on 'self-speaking' in early modern English drama, Richard Hillman observes: "the relatively small body of traditional criticism concerned with soliloquy as dramatic technique tended to take for granted its role as a mode of human expression, and therefore the presence of a 'self' to be revealed" (5).

Hillman is right in noting this reductive view of the nature of the theatrical soliloquy—critics often fail to note that the full 'self' is limited in its expression even when it seems to be in a situation that gives it ultimate freedom of expression (in cases such as the soliloquy, that freedom is being 'alone on stage'). Even when Merione is completely alone on stage, immediately following her rape, she is (of course) influenced by, and limited to, the language of early modern England, which did not encourage self-expression for women. She never once uses the word 'rape' in this speech. The closest word she uses is "ravisht" (Massinger, Fletcher, Field II.i.2), but this refers to her honour, not her body. By focusing on the idea of something abstract that has been stolen she has separated herself from the physical and psychological horror of the rape. This was, and continues to be, a common method for

[109] In a study of rape narratives in the seventeenth century, Mirana Chaytor concludes that the way the women structured their narrative effaced the actual rape experience, because the psychological pain was too great. They spoke incoherently, or in abstract metaphors, and the meaning of what actually took place was compressed and projected elsewhere (397ff.).

dealing with the inexplicable agony of such violation. Miranda Chaytor has recently analysed the narratives of actual women who were raped in England in the seventeenth century and notes that in "story after story" the rape is "represented through the memory of something broken, dirtied, stolen or spoilt...some small, external damage or loss which, being finite, helped to delineate a horror otherwise too difficult to describe" (383). This, she remarks, causes the rape's significance to be "desexualised, distanced, displaced" (385). Merione does concede to having been abused (Massinger, Fletcher, Field II.i.5), but her usage of the term 'abuse' does not imply *sexual* violation. When her aggressors appear masked on stage, she cries out to them that they restore her honour—her assailants are addressed, then, as potential saviours, who could redeem the woman they have destroyed. She speaks of the main aggressor's "unmanly violence" (24) and "foul will" (37), but again these do not explicitly suggest sexual violence.

Why does Merione not call a spade a spade? A probable reason is because her vocabulary lacks words to express sexual violation; she only has recourse to language that emphasises her sexual vices as inherited from Eve. When she speaks to her friends about the rape, sexual language does emerge, but it clearly reflects defamation of her own character: "I am Whor'd, / Ravish'd" (II.iii.122-23). She has labelled herself a "whore" and used the word ravished, which I suggested earlier suggests some placing of blame on herself, at least on her potential enjoyment of carnality. She also calls herself in this scene a "pestilence" (II.iii.103), as though she will now be the source of contamination and sickness in other people. Garthine Walker helpfully articulates the limitation of women's sexual language in early modern England:

> The popular language for describing male sexual misbehaviour was that of ordinary, male, heterosexual activity...In contrast, the usual popular language for ordinary, female heterosexual activity was that of sin. And for women's

> sexual *mis*behaviour, an extraordinary and rich language existed, that of whoredom. For women, available discourses about sex—sin and whoredom—were confessional and implicatory. Responsibility for sex, and the blame and dishonour that went with it, was feminised in ways that made sexual language an inappropriate medium through which to report a rape (5).

The result of Merione's choice of vocabulary is a turning of attention from Theanor to herself. However, it would seem this is the only way in which the play can be about her, the victim. As Catty and Bamford both expound, rape plots in Jacobean drama were infrequently about rape and the female victims, and more frequently about male power, and homosocial societies, in which women are merely peripheral (Catty 12-13; Bamford 2ff.). Merione only finds a voice when she turns the sexual experience on herself.

Conclusion

Steeped in melancholy, erased in marriage, and socially stained through rape, Merione survives, physically alive, through the final act. No Lucrece, she has not committed physical suicide. However, she has offered herself to Theanor, to be placed under his ownership and authority. This act underscores the stereotype of woman-as-commodity. The yoke of marriage will constrain her limited freedom further, which had been granted by her fatherless status at the beginning of the play (limited, because she was subject to her brother and the queen). She began as the commodity of the state—a peace offering to Prince Agenor, a token of the end of war. She finishes the play as the commodity of the micro-state—that economic unit called the family, to which she is subject to the ruling prince, both literally and figuratively, Theanor.

In my mind, the play can only be viewed as a tragi-*comedy* if it is read as the last laugh being on the queen and Leonidas, who were the perpetuators of the tragic circumstances at the outset. And the last laugh is only on those two, if Merione did indeed desire whole-

heartedly and independently from any societal prerequisite to be married to Theanor. If this is the case, then I raise my voice with the queen, in the play's closing line, "Then on unto the Temple, where the rights / Of Marriage ended, we'l finde new delights" (V.iv.234-5).

Chapter 5. The Sea Voyage: Colonising Paradise

> *The emotive forces behind the...search for the earthly paradise imparted to mass movements an intensity that cannot be explained in the language of politics and economics alone. In visions of paradise terrestrial and celestial, men of the West have been disclosing their innermost desires* (Manuel, *Utopian Thought 34*).

Plot Summary

A tempest forces a French ship aground on a remote island, where two survivors of an earlier shipwreck, Sebastian and Nicusa, dupe the passengers and crew and escape with their craft. The now-stranded Frenchmen, and one woman—Aminta, a noblewoman who has been taken captive aboard the ship—determine to learn who else is on the island. They find no one there, but they do encounter, on a neighbouring island, a group of 'Amazonian' women who, not being of true-bred Amazonian stock, are captivated by them, and even fall in love with them. The leader of this women's colony, Rosellia, accedes to her subjects' pleas to sleep with the men, but with the condition that following their liaisons, the males and any male offspring resulting from their union must leave the island.

The sexually deprived men eagerly agree to this, except for Albert, who is in love with Aminta. Aminta is horrified that he might have to engage in sexual intercourse with a stranger for the sake of survival. In the mean time, Rosellia, who has seen that the men have treasures belonging to her lost husband, is led to believe they are pirates, and her willingness to participate in love-games turns into wrath, spurred by her love for her former husband. It turns out that her lost husband, whom she still loves, is the shipwrecked Sebastian of the first act, and the treasures which she had recognised as his were items that Sebastian had left behind him in order to escape on the French travellers' ship. Her husband returns, which alleviates Rosellia's suspicion of the Frenchmen, and Sebastian is reunited with her. The

other women are partnered off with the French sailors, and Aminta and Albert's love is spared further trial.

Aminta as Coloniser

There is no gracious way of stating it—Aminta enters as a serious nuisance. Throughout the first act she is found whining and lamenting: "O miserable Fortune" (Fletcher and Massinger I.i.46), she cries, and laments, "no help.../ no promise from your goodness" (I.i.51-2). Her unremitting cries, such as, "Must I die here in all the frights, the terrors, / The thousand several shapes death triumphs in" (I.i.57-58), would wear her companions' patience thin. They find themselves wishing they could "clap this woman under hatches," and "stow" her (I.i.51; 54). Finally she literally becomes the embodiment of a millstone tied to someone's neck when the travellers are forced to abandon the ship and fend for themselves in the tempestuous waters: the second scene opens with Albert swimming to the shore with Aminta, "a handsome woman, / Hanging about his neck" (I.ii.54-5). However, in the light of the discussion that follows, such a perspective may be understood as the direct result of her fellow travellers' *perception* of her style of colonisation, the importance of which lies not in what constitutes that particular style, but rather in that it is different from the methods of the others. Europeans are "not to be understood as allegorical representatives of monolithic traditions but as figures improvising sinuous paths through fiercely competing claims" (Greenblatt, *New World Encounters* viii). In other words, we cannot consider the travellers in travel plays like *The Sea Voyage* as emblems of a unified European perspective—we dare not speak of a "European practice of representation" (Greenblatt, *Marvelous Possessions* 8).

The voyagers' divided opinion on Aminta's presence affirms the need to accept variances among groups that tend to be considered collectively. Further, her representation *as* the various sailors' imaginative constructions (she is presented to readers and spectators *as* a scold, for example, as opposed to the audience being *told* that is how the others perceive her),

indicates how a manipulative perception constructs an individual for a willing audience or readership. This casts some light on how many Europeans accepted travellers' tales of their encounters with peoples in foreign territories and also their varying perceptions of each other. When some of the less gallant voyagers become physically desperate, either for sex or for food—the desperation manifests itself ambiguously merely as physical desire—they turn Aminta into an Eve-figure, at whom they can point accusing figures in order to justify their own physical weaknesses. It is she, says one voyager, Franville, who "turned the captain's mind" (Fletcher and Massinger III.85); it is she, agrees Lamure—another explorer—who "bred all our miseries" (91). This woman is also to be blamed as she who "buried us in this base island" (129). In this placing of unjustifiable blame, Aminta is also constructed as a type of Eve, and, further, as the extension of Eve, the sinful woman. The sea-faring men tell Clarinda, who is the youngest of the women on the paradisiacal island, and has been led to believe Albert and Aminta are siblings, that Aminta is no chaste sister, but rather Albert's mistress. They paint Aminta's sins as maliciously as possible by pretending to struggle with the morality of using the word 'whore,' replacing it with intentionally hesitant euphemisms and awkward hints (IV.iii.125). She exists, they say, to serve Albert's 'base' pleasures: "These ten weeks he / Has had her at sea for his own proper appetite" (128-29).

In opposition to these voyagers' defamation and vilification of Aminta as Eve and whore, the playwrights vigorously present another, alternative image of Aminta: as a woman with a notably forgiving disposition. She is not a 'base Eve-figure' but rather an incarnation of the mercy of Christ. When Aminta is rescued from becoming the fodder for the sailors' desires she pleads on their behalf: "Forgive 'em, 'twas their hungers" (III.148). She asks for mercy from the Master (160), and despite their injustice to her, Aminta feeds the starving men with other food (175). Her forgiveness and justification of the men is reminiscent of

Christ's mercy from the cross (Luke 23.34), and her feeding the starving 'multitudes' is suggestive of the miracle of the loaves and fishes (Matthew 14.16-21).

In *Marvelous Possessions*, Greenblatt observes that, while there are profound differences among European colonisers, the variety is not infinite (23). For instance, there is a shared interest in what he terms "mimetic capital," which he defines as a "stock of images...the productive power of representation" (6). I would take this concept of shared interest further, separating it from issues of mimesis and representation, and emphasising the *economic* capital which drove so many colonisers. While Greenblatt never denies the colonisers' economic interests, it is not his main concern. Timothy Sweet usefully comments on the newly emerging economic theory of early modern England:

> Participating in consolidation of economics as a distinct field during the later sixteenth century, promoters began to define the English nation as an economy and to understand it as a system...They argued the well-being of the realm depended on opening this system to New World environments and, to some extent, closing it off from other Old World economic systems (401).

Despite her more benign presentation in comparison with her male companions, who come to blows fighting for gold (see below), Aminta cannot be excluded from a consideration of the desire for possession. Aminta's interest in ownership begins with her affair with Albert, which she capitalises on until Clarinda threatens it in the New World, where issues of ownership are undermined by instances of desperation. Aminta's interest, however, is shown in inter-personal terms rather than monetary ones, underscored by her disgust at the men's lust for gold, and her distinct lack of interest in taming the land. When she senses danger she cries, "For heaven's sake, let's aboard" (Fletcher and Massinger, I.iii.148), and clearly laments her companions' fighting over gold: as they all exit the stage fighting amongst each other, Aminta remains, the sole traveller, and cries, "O Albert! O gentleman, o friends"

(I.iii.191), as if she is giving them up for lost. The stage direction indicates fighting between the travelling companions, and singles out Aminta, whose refusal to fight and subsequent lagging behind with the previously shipwrecked inhabitants, is also clearly detailed: "*Exeunt fighting all except* AMINTA, SEBASTIAN *and* NICUSA" (I.iii.*S.D.*).

While Aminta seems deliberately excluded from her companions' zeal for monetary gain, she is not unaffected by power—she is simply and significantly more concerned with holding sway in relationships. The stereotyping of Aminta's character has already been established by her frequent nagging and complaining, seen above, and in the other voyagers' treatment of that behaviour, where they suggest the remedy for her annoying wordiness is to "take your gilt prayer book and to your business" (I.i.55), as though a woman knowing her prayer book is sufficient for quieting her, as well as a more appropriate and appreciated pastime.[110] However, despite her being represented as an irritation, she is not without power even among her own companions. She begs them to stop quarrelling amongst themselves, as though she knows they must remain unified in order to help them to survive the troubles ahead, and her pleas are not unheeded. One of the voyagers at least, Franville, seems to respect her mediatorial role: "You / Have stopped our angers, lady" (I.iii.89-90). Granted, her authority depends on their gallantry, but courtesy was so engrained in the nature of the European gentleman that social expectation rendered men subject to their own courteousness. The early modern gentleman fashioned his code of conduct after the chivalrous ideal of the middle ages, refining it with the humanist philosophical teachings of the Renaissance (Kelso 70). In 1563 Lawrence Humphrey published a book in which he outlined three chief characteristics of a noble man, the second being "loue and behauiour towards others" (Q1v). Humphrey emphasised the virtue of "curtesye," which required "easie speache, ciuile

[110] Likewise in *The Duchess of Malfi*, Bosola encourages Ferdinand to end his cruel treatment of the rebellious title character and simply "furnish her / With beads and prayerbooks" (IV.i.115-18) as a means to tame her.

company, friendly, pleasant, and curteous talke," and that this sort of behaviour was expected not exclusively towards the upper classes, but "to al men" (R2v; R3r).[111]

Even where Aminta wields power through the men's dedication to gallantry, she is subject to the restraining potential of those same men, whose particular penchant for barbarism on these journeys suggested some were able to overcome the bonds of courteous behaviour. She can order them to stop fighting, but she cannot stop them from considering eating her while she is asleep. Their hunger for her flesh, while she is at her repose, signifies at least three things: it suggests they in truth fear her power when she is awake, it turns the belief in New World savagery on its head, and it reminds the reader that colonisation and sexuality are inextricably linked in the period's literature. Just as there was a colonising venture on unexplored territory, so there was a similar venture on the virginal bodies of women. The men discuss the prospect of 'having' her amongst themselves: they will "cut her throat, / And then divide her, every man his share" (Fletcher and Massinger III.111-12). Early modern travel tales were filled with the horror of native cannibalism,[112] but in *The Sea Voyage* it is the colonists themselves who are contemplating this brutality, which lends support to the idea that the marginalized are not so different from the mainstream, and further that the playwrights intended to offer an ambiguous representation of the men so as to stir up greater sympathy for different, typically more derided classifications of people.

Because the play does not deal with an appropriation of land, but rather of women, it suggests at least two possibilities: first, that colonial enterprise had more to do with

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[111] The concepts of 'manliness' and courtesy were not even uncommon as part of colonial discourse. William Strachey—identified on the title page of his manuscript, *The Historie of Travell into Virginia Britania* (1612) as "gent."—appeals to the 'manliness' of colonisation: "Then, if our Actions must relish all of Piety (not excluding neither any one Perticuler helpe of curtesy, and Manlines) how religious, and manly both, is yt, to communicate with these simple, and innocent people [natives]?" (18). Interestingly, another work of Strachey's, *A True Repertory of the Wrack*, which is partially dramatised in *The Tempest*, was a main source for *The Sea Voyage* (McMullan 241).

[112] See, for example, Whitbourne's account of Virginia in 1620, which includes tales of cannibals who eat their prey when they are still alive (57), or Abbot's *A Brief Description of the Whole World* (1599), which calls the Indigenous people of Brazil "eaters of mans flesh" (F1r).

dominating people than land, and second that it is possible to read the women's bodies *as* the land. In other words, colonial dominance depends on a conflation of woman and land, expressed in *The Sea Voyage* as penetration of virgin territory. Such a conflation is not uncommon. Take, for example, Walter Ralegh's *Discouerie of Guiana*, where the land is depicted as a virgin: "*Guiana* is a Countrey that hath yet her Maydenhead, never sact, turned, nor wrought...never conquered nor possessed by anie Christian Prince" (Ralegh 285). As Louis Montrose observes, Ralegh's description "conveys elegiac sympathy for the unspoiled world at the same time that it arouses excitement at the prospect of despoiling it" (188). This feminisation of the land is translated, on the Jacobean stage, into a metonymic exploration of power, in which sexuality becomes "the vehicle for its expression" (Boose "1599 Bishop's Ban" 197). It is what Boose calls "a sensationalized message about male power welded to male violence" (197). In another essay, she remarks on that same colonial fantasy as it is seen in the fictional work that was a source for *The Sea Voyage*. She notes that *Mundus alter et idem* "involves the discovery of inhabitable land," drawing on the examples of "New Gynia" or "Vira-ginia," remarking that these names, "as in many discovery narratives, are synonymous with women" ("*Taming of the Shrew*" 206). While Aminta is not among the members of the women's commonwealth, she is grouped with them in terms of gender, and the exploration of her body is carried out as savagely as it is later upon the women of the island (who, of course, are also European rather than indigenous, thus allying them to Aminta).

The planned consumption of Aminta, and the consequent subversion of views of civility and savagery, complements the overarching theme of unstable power, and recalls one of *The Sea Voyage's* direct sources, *The Discovery of a New World*, which was an early modern translation by John Healy of Joseph Hall's *Mundus alter et idem*. In this fictional travelogue, a commonwealth of women is described, called Shee-landt, and it is a matriarchy

in the extreme. Within its borders is the city of Lyps-wagg, the horror of all men, because through it "runneth a great riuer called *Slauer*, which some-times will ouer-flow the bankes" (Hall, *Mundus* 98). Such emblematic verbosity, as we have seen in Aminta, is the nemesis of men, and they will go to any extreme to restrain it. Healey's translation depicts the efforts of men to restrain the women: "the countrimen haue now deuised very strong rampires of bones and bend lether, to keepe it from breaking out any more, but when they list" (Hall, *Mundus* 98).

Further, from an economic perspective, the playwrights of *The Sea Voyage* seem to applaud and promote Aminta's position of disinterest in gold rather than subjugate it to the realm of subplot. When her companions (who have reduced themselves to fighting amongst each other for Sebastian and Nicusa's wealth) re-enter, the stage direction indicates: "*Re-enter* TIBALT *and the rest;* AMINTA *above*" (Fletcher and Massinger I.iii.*S.D.*). I read the "above" in this direction as a deliberate stage positioning that is symbolic of her rising above the squabbles of her companions. Fletcher and Massinger join the tradition of those playwrights who use the placing "above" as an expression of power relationships. Alexander Leggatt discusses this very convention, and points to the *Four Ages Cycle* performed at the Red Bull Theatre in the early seventeenth century where the gods appear 'above' to show their power. He exemplifies the same stage convention in *Brazen Age*, performed in 1611, where, as Vulcan catches Mars and Venus in his net, "'*All the Gods appeare above, and laugh*' adding a mocking detachment and superiority to the usual image of power" (49).

Perhaps the most poignant staging of power structures takes place in Shakespeare's *Richard II*, when the embattled Richard returns and "*appeareth on the walls*" (III.iii.*S.D.*)—in an Elizabethan theatre he would appear, then, on the central balcony, above the other players. His deposition is imminent, and he is asked "to come down" to appear in the base court (III.iii.176), to which he acquiesces: "Down, down I come like glist'ring Phaethon, /

Wanting the manage of unruly jades" (III.iii.177-78). The next two stage directions are "*Exeunt Kind Richard and his party*" and "*Enter King Richard [and his party]* below" (III.iii). It is Richard himself who marks the significance of his descent. The request for him "to come down" was made only with the intent of his meeting with Bolingbroke, but Richard's response (above) would suggest he sees it as symbolic of his loss of power.

The significance of Aminta's appearing above is reinforced by a further direction shortly following when she re-enters "*below*" (Fletcher and Massinger I.iii.*S.D.*)—she returns to their level when the events turn again to questions of relationship. She further identifies herself with the other colonisers when she enters into their discussion of Nicusa and Sebastian, whom they mistake for beasts in this New World—Aminta, too, has been influenced by the stories that made their way back to Europe of the horrible monsters that are to be found in the New World. They see these men, who are in fact Europeans like themselves, through the lenses of the weird and warped tales of voyagers that have preceded them; Aminta speaks from an imperialist viewpoint when she says of Sebastian and Nicusa, "What are these things? Are they / Human creatures...How they look! / Are they men's faces" (I.iii.94-98). On the other hand, she stands out again when she exhibits some measure of clemency and good judgment: her companions see the objects of their gaze as beasts with "horse-tales growing to 'em" (98). In contrast, she concludes, "Sure they are wretched men" and takes pity: "Alas, poor souls" (103).

Aminta's compassionate attitude towards their 'discovery' of Sebastian and Nicusa immediately ostracises her, and places her in the category of 'Other,' like the "monsters" in front of them, who are in fact fellow Europeans, and the island women they are to find (who also turn out to be of European origin). Aminta seems at times, therefore, leagued with the people on whom she is in fact intruding, and contrary even to some of her own imperialistic discourse, adheres to the island women's abhorrence of the intrusion. Like the women, whose

virgin soil is intruded on by men, Aminta is originally a captive as well, who happens to fall in love with her captor—this, too, foreshadows the 'Amazonian' women's lust after the male voyagers, and further aligns Aminta with these women. Aminta explains the nature of her captivity:

> O monsieur Albert, how am I bound to curse ye,
> If curses could redeem me! How to hate ye!
> You forced me from my quiet, from my friends—
> Even from their arms that were as dear to me
> As daylight is, or comfort to the wretched (I.i.77-81).

Later she alludes to his violent seizure of her, indirectly likening it to the fate suffered by the Amazon Hippolyta, who was equally subdued by Theseus. Aminta recounts how:

> When with a violent hand you made me yours
> I cursed the doer; but now I consider
> How long I was in your power, and with what honour
> You entertained me!...
> ...Your goodness is the Lethe
> In which I drown your injuries, and now
> Live truly to serve ye (II.i.24-31).[113]

Aminta further becomes an instrument whereby the male voyagers can stake their claim to this territory, when she, in contrast to her discovery-hungry fellows, discourages Albert from the appropriative part of the colonial venture. Albert and Aminta are discussing the likelihood of finding signs of life on the island opposite this barren one they presently inhabit. Aminta does not want Albert to leave her, but he tries to pacify her by promising to find,

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[113] An interesting difference between Aminta and Hippolyta, as she is represented in the celebrated tales by Chaucer (*The Knight's Tale* I.x-xii; xxiv-xxvii) and Shakespeare *(MND* I.i.16-18), is that, while the secrets of Hippolyta's heart are commented on by outsiders, Aminta voices *herself* that she has been wooed and won.

"some most fortunate Continent, yet unknown, / Which you are to be Queen of" (II.i.92-93). This potential power indeed appeases and seduces her, and she permits him to go, having previously warned him of the impossibility of finding such a paradisiacal land: "No, Albert, 'tis not to be hoped" (II.i.69).

Finally, Aminta's womanhood and its link with transcendence so prevalent in earlier literature, more markedly under the influence of Petrarch, also represents her likeness to the women on this mysterious isle.[114] Albert also pays tribute to this nature shared by Aminta and the women when he drags himself upon the women's shore, and mistakes them for goddesses:

> my last breath
> Is for a virgin comes as neere your selves
> In all perfection, as what's mortall may
> Resemble thing divine (II.ii.90-93).

Later, Albert describes these same women to Aminta as "angels— / Such as you are" (III.182-83). Clarinda, one of the women on the island, further forges a link between Aminta and the island women by distinguishing between Aminta and the other colonists: "Ye had no share in those wrongs these men did us" (IV.ii.82).

"Sweet Tongues" and "Horrid Music": Aminta and her Counterparts

While Clarinda and Aminta are fused together in some fashion through the sisterhood of marginalization, they are also very much ostracised from each other—one as native, the other as imposing coloniser. It would seem that Aminta does not fit comfortably anywhere.

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[114] Despite the fragmentation, which is to say, destruction, of the body that feminists have contested in Petrarchan literature, women such as Petrarch's Laura were praised for a Platonic transcendence of earthly imitative forms. Nancy J. Vickers directs her readers' attention to Joachim Du Bellay's "Contre les Petrarquistes" (1558) as an example of the possibility of highlighting Petrarchan neoplatonism: "Of your beauties I will only say that...your beauty is perfectly joined to your good grace...But if you still like Petrarch better...I will choose a hundred thousand new ways to paint your greatest beauties according to the most beautiful Idea" (qtd. in Vickers 234). Of course, Du Bellay was satirising the artificiality of neoplatonic forms, but the point about transcendence is made clear.

As well as Aminta's separation from the viciousness of the other colonisers, she is superior to them in the area of speech. Clarinda describes her rival as having "a sweet tongue" and praises her ability to articulate thought (IV.iii.79-80). Aminta's rhetoric seems to be her weapon in a period where the manner in which women were constructed in the theatre typically involved the imposition of silence upon them. Dympna Callaghan points out that "it is a crucial aspect of the construction of the category of woman...that major female characters are often silent, absent, or dead" (*Women and Gender* 74). In contrast to this, Aminta is very much alive, and very vocal. We see that her verbosity makes her a pariah to the men, who want to kill that garrulousness, literally, by killing her; however, their very barbarity in this action (attempted murder) indicates that the playwrights are not attempting to persuade the audience that the men's desire to abate Aminta's powerful rhetoric, by destroying her, is at all appropriate. Aminta, therefore, has subverted the expectation of woman-on-stage: she is neither a shrew nor a scold, and yet silencing her is ineffective. The play ends with Aminta having regained Albert, whom she had temporarily lost, and having maintained a position of power that even the men, imprisoned by their lust for the women on the island, failed, at least temporarily, to sustain.[115]

The eventual celebration of Aminta's voice is emphasised by the frequent allusion to the silence or poor speech of her travelling companions. Albert, in fact, trusts Aminta to speak for them both, as an advocate of their love. When Aminta reveals to Albert that

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[115] Shrews and scolds were commonly caricatured in early modern drama as incessant, sharp-tongued natterers (see, for example, Leonato to Beatrice—"my Lady Tongue"—in *Much Ado About Nothing*, II.i.16-17: "By my troth, niece, thou wilt never get thee a husband if thou be so shrewd of thy tongue.") Their verbosity emblematises a usurpation of male authority, and the archetype was perhaps Noah's wife in the mystery plays of previous centuries (see, for example, the Wakefield Master's revision of the *Noah* play, and the fifteenth century *De Deluvio Noe* found in the Chester cycle). Angela Ingram makes an association between shrewishness and libertinism and promiscuity, arguing that part of shrewishness was "to encourage a sexual appetite in men in order to enslave them to sexuality, make them 'effeminate' sex" (96). Joseph Swetnam alludes to this when he suggests men will 'reduce' themselves to a subordinate position of subservience simply to keep their wives quiet in bed (F4v). Fletcher, however, as Ingram points out, admits that women can fill a positive social role, that active women need not necessarily produce chaos (93-4). A professed virgin and bold explorer, Aminta seems to be evidence of this contention, not in Albert's bed, but in the power she wields over the men by very virtue of her 'inherently sexualised nature.'

Clarinda is threatening to divide them, she asks him, "How shall I answer her?" (IV.iv.2). Albert is all too happy to leave the mode of address entirely up to her; he simply advises Aminta, "Tell her directly" (2). When Aminta disagrees, he does not argue with her, but leaves her to decide for herself how best to deal with the situation. Also pertaining to this episode, we see the persuasive power of Aminta's voice as potentially effective not only upon Clarinda but also upon Albert himself. Clarinda begs of her to "Speak to him for me, you have power upon him." Aminta knows that the power of her speech is so potent as to be damaging to herself, for, while Clarinda suggests such eloquence "will become your tongue," Aminta associates it with her own destruction and argues rather it will "become my grave" (IV.ii.125-28).

Albert's inferior and submissive style of speech is contrasted with Aminta's "sweet tongue." Rosellia says that every word he speaks is "a Syrens note, / To drown the careless hearer" (II.ii.185-86). It is suggested by this that the "sweetness" of his tongue has an ultimately destructive capacity.[116] It is only when Albert says to the women, "In all things we obey you" (III.250) that his words, in their submissive nature, are praised: "You speak as becomes you" (252). Albert's greatest verbal error implicates Aminta, and threatens to destroy their relationship: he attempts to dupe the island women into believing that Aminta is his sister, in a vain attempt to protect Aminta and himself from being parted in an interesting parallel to a famous episode from the Old Testament.[117] Clarinda asks if Aminta is his wife,

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[116] Sirens are mythological female creatures who, through their song, had the power of drawing men to their destruction. George Chapman translates Homer's account of the creatures: "The Sirens will so soften with their song / ... / His loose affections that he gives them head. / And then observe: They sit amidst a meade, / And round about it runnes a hedge or wall / Of dead men's bones" (Homer XII.63-69). By likening Albert to a "Syren," Fletcher and Massinger have not only emasculated him, but given him a voice which is destructive, thus juxtaposing him with the mediating quality of Aminta's rhetoric.

[117] Genesis 12 recounts the story of Abram and his wife, Sarai, in Egypt. Abram, knowing his wife was "a fair woman to look upon" (v.11) suggested she pose as his sister (v.13). However, this caused Sarai to be brought into Pharaoh's household (v.15). As a consequence, "the LORD plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues" (v.17), and when Pharaoh learned the truth he was angered with Abram and sent him and his household away, crying "What *is* this *that* thou hast done unto me? why didst thou not tell me that she *was* thy wife?" (v.18).

to which he responds, "No, lady, but my sister" and, in an aside, adds, " 'Tis dangerous now / To speak the truth" (II.ii.251-52). Much later Aminta berates him for his lack of wisdom in this speech, stating that such foolishness "undid us both" (IV.ii.185), and advising him to "Take heed of lies" (191). Albert in turn admires her speech, stating that she has "read me a fair lecture, and put a spell / Upon my tongue for feigning" (196-97), and even asks for further counsel from her.

Fletcher and Massinger are not alone amongst the writers of the early modern period in praising women's speech. Antonio, for instance, in *The Duchess of Malfi,* comments on the duchess, "For her discourse, it is so full of Rapture, / You onely will begin then to be sorry / When she doth end her speech" (I.ii.102-04). John Florio was a courtier and language tutor who promoted approbation for women's voices, increasing their status as users of the European vernaculars (Fleming 188). Fleming points readers to Florio's translation of Montaigne, in which he remarks:

> French hath long time beene termed the language of Ladies: So doth it grace your tongues; so doe your tongues grace it; as if written by men it may have a good garbe, spoken by you it hath a double grace (*Essaies,* Preface to Book III).

Florio's advocacy of women as the best vernacular speakers was an idea descended from Cicero (188).[118] Aminta's eloquence, then, may be adduced as evidence for those who contended that the vernacular was successful in the mouths of women where it was less so when used by men. Because of the disdain with which members of the learned fifteenth- and

[118] Fleming guides her readers to Cicero's *De Oratore*, Book III, where Cicero's character Crassus maintains that women "guard the wellspring of pure Latin" (188).

sixteenth- century male public approached the vernacular, women were often the ones who were the patrons for, and readers of, English texts.[119]

In spite of Florio's defence, arguments that praised women's speech were neither common nor popular in the Jacobean period, when women were castigated for their talkativeness. Their chatter and tendency to gossip is noted with frequency, and is notably present in *The Discovery of a New World*, where the principal cities on the island of Sheelandt are *Tattlingen, Scoldonna, Blubberic, Gigglot-angir, Cockatrixia* and *Shrewesbourg*, the "chiefest" being *Gossipingoa* (Hall, *Mundus* 97-98). However, in the power and influence Aminta finds in her tongue, Fletcher and Massinger have highlighted the positive effects of female speech. Initially a bane to the men, Aminta begins to use her voice to her advantage. She is a woman who is acutely aware of her own power, and with this knowledge she dispels the myth that silence was the virtuous and non-negotiable partner of virginity.

Aminta's sweet tongue is further emphasised through juxtaposition to the "horrid music" (Fletcher and Massinger V.iv) that accompanies the island women's planned slaughter of the castaways in Act V. As has already been established, Aminta's voice is one of both authority and clemency—her rhetoric wields power and persuasion. The "infernal music / Fit for a bloody feast" (V.iv.1-2), as Aminta calls it, is not intended to soothe and persuade, but rather "to kill our courages ere they divorce / Our souls and bodies" (3-4). The connection of such a cacophony to the island women simultaneously serves as a construction of the image of savagery imposed upon native inhabitants. We saw a similar sense of savagery, this time in a male erotomaniac, in *The Queen of Corinth*, in the scene in which Merione is about to be raped—the rapist and his party enter "*singing and dancing to a horrid Musick*" (II.i.*S.D.*).

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[119] Heywood's *Exemplary Lives*, dedicated to Lady Theophila, "the learned consort of the right worthy Sir Robert Cooke" and Daniel Tuvill's *Essays Politic and Moral* dedicated to Lady Anne Harington are two fine examples of female patronage.

However, in *The Sea Voyage*, it is significant that the music is associated with women, because of the connection between music and female destruction that dates back to the classical images of the bacchic host. Among William Strachey's observations in 1612 of the indigenous peoples of 'Virginia,' he describes their "kind of Musique," stating that they "togither make such a terrible howling as would rather affright then giue pleasure to any man...making so confused a Yell and noise, as so many frantique and disquieted *Bacchanalls*" (85-86), again narrowing the gap between natives and women.[120] The potential destructiveness of their 'savage clamouring' is well-exemplified in the *Metamorphoses*. The Thracian women's "bedlem howling" is perfectly juxtaposed with "the sownd of Orphyes harp," and their bacchanal is the setting for the sweet musician's death (Ovid XI.1ff.). The irony in the case of *The Sea Voyage* is that the destruction came upon the music makers themselves: it is their matriarchy which is willingly deconstructed for lust.

Stephen Greenblatt furthers the discussion of dissonant music by reference to the mid-sixteenth-century Hugenot, Jean de Léry, who observed the 'horrid music' that accompanies the rites of natives in 'Brazil':

> For Léry the spectacle is the very embodiment of what his culture views not only as otherness but as evil: intimations of bestiality and madness merge with an overarching, explanatory image of demonic possession (*Marvelous Possessions* 14).

Greenblatt notices, however, that Léry's horror and initial recoil from this barbarity is transformed into a fascinated attraction: their "wonder now is not a song of revulsion but of ravishment" (17). Likewise, the otherness of the hunting women in *The Sea Voyage*

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[120] The Bacchic horde of women, in the *Metamorphoses*, are described in like terms: "And first the flocke of Bacchus froes by violence brake the ring... / And then with bluddy hands / They ran upon the prophet who among them singing stands... / Even so the prophet they assayle, and throwe theyir Thyrses greene / At him, which for another use than that invented beene. / Sum cast mee clods, sum boughes of trees, and sum threw stones (XI.21-31).

mesmerises Albert, who wishes upon hearing the hunters' horns and smelling the fragrance coming from the same direction, that they could arrive on that happy isle (Fletcher and Massinger II.i.62). More significant still, the music draws Albert and Aminta *towards* the island: upon hearing the women's horns a second time, Albert comments, "Still, still we are directed" (62). The other men express with a sexual charge what Albert experiences in a more mesmerised and asexual fashion, and find themselves physically attracted to the women—like Léry's ravishment by music, they are ravished by the sight of the women. Léry's, however, is not a sexual passion—he does not interpret his wonder at the music as temptation, but rather "presents his appreciation of the beauty of savage music as a triumph over his own panic fear" (19). In other words, Léry is learning to control his response to 'the Other' psychologically. He is a precursor to Marlow in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, musing over his connection with the indigenous peoples of Africa:

> They howled, and leaped, and spun, and made horrid faces; but what thrilled you was just the thought of their humanity—like yours—the thought of your remote kinship with this wild and passionate uproar" (62-63).

Dominance comes with suppression of one's own fears, and the failed mission of sacrifice on the part of the island women in *The Sea Voyage* underscores this same control. The "horrid music" of the women fails to result in control of the men; on the contrary, shortly after the music is heard, and the island women emerge ceremonially, as priests attending a sacrifice, the men assume control, and patriarchy is established in 'Paradise.'

In this sense, then, the island women are identified as native 'savages,' linked with that same bizarre dissonance colonists attributed to the natives they encountered on their voyages who simultaneously repulsed and attracted them. In this way Aminta remains distinctly separate from these other women. Their Amazonian, and therefore 'Other,' tendencies are indicated by their horns, which Aminta identifies as "free hunters' music"

(II.i.57). However, it must be remembered that these women are not in fact indigenous people of the New World, but rather Europeans who have settled on the island, creating a society that they hope to be more suited to their liking, where the lust for power and riches does not destroy their love for each other, as piracy had previously severed their families. It seems that the horrid music and hunters' horns are insufficient to establish an irreparable rift between Aminta and these island women, once as European as Aminta. In fact, Michael Hattaway likens them both in this respect: "like the Amazons, or any alien race or nationality, Aminta attracts and repels men in equal measure" (188).

Jealous Rivalry: Clarinda and Aminta

Clarinda and Aminta expend much of their energies on envy towards each other. Each apparently poses a more acute threat to the other because of their inherent similarities. Both, for instance, conform to certain masculine stereotypes than the other women on the island who merely copy an Amazonian matriarchy in establishing their society. Clarinda is a hunter of 'manlike' aptitude:

> When the stag turned head
> And we even tired with labour, Clarinda,
> As if she were made of air and fire and had
> No part of earth in her, eagerly pursued him (II.ii.10-14).

Aminta, too, is likened to a man. Albert says: "Sure we have changed sexes: you bear calamity / With a fortitude would become a man; / I like a weak girl suffer" (7-9).

However similar, Clarinda and Aminta's points of likeness do not bring them together into some sense of masculinised sisterhood. On the contrary, they are deliberately set apart from each other. Even the nature of their virginity is juxtaposed, a state in which both have been self-professedly defined. Clarinda refers to Aminta directly as "virgin" (IV.ii.81), and in the same scene Aminta refers to herself as "the fair young virgin" (175). As opposed to

Aminta's sense of propriety, however, Clarinda is a virgin because she has not since her infancy seen a man, until now, and has not known desire; however, upon an awakening of her sexuality, she has no interest in maintaining her virginity. Rosellia designates Albert as the sexual partner of Clarinda, whom she refers to as "this rose-cheeked virgin" (III.290), to which Clarinda enthusiastically exclaims: "To my wish! Till now / I never was happy" (290-91). The playwrights astutely follow this with Aminta's, "Nor I accursed" (91). It is even written so that the two women share the meter of one line, in order to highlight the contrast between Clarinda's arousal and Aminta's fate to stand chastely back, the virgin 'sister.' To further contrast these two women, Aminta is determined to preserve her virginity in spite of her feelings for Albert and his futile attempts to seduce her: "May we not celebrate our loves, / Aminta" (IV.ii.232), he urges, to which Aminta adamantly responds:

> You are wanton.
>
> But with cold kisses I'll allay that fever;
>
> Look for no more, and that in private too.
>
> Believe me, I shall blush else (IV.ii.233-36).

Her virginity is so important to her that, despite the threat offered to her from Clarinda, she refuses to have sex with Albert to secure her position as his mistress. This, however, does not indicate that she is free from the pangs of distrust, and here again Clarinda and Aminta are set up against each other as rivals, each struggling with their own formidable jealousy. Albert recognises that Aminta is "sauced with jealousy" (III.202), and tries to reassure her of his love for her.

Clarinda's envy has surfaced earlier, possessing her in the scene in which she first sees Albert, long before she even knows of Aminta's existence. Clarinda encourages Crocale to approach him, to taste and feel the sweetness of his breath (II.ii.150-52); however, upon saying it she wishes that duty to be her own: "Yet I envy thee so great a blessing" (153). Her

envy is more immediately set against Aminta's in Act III, when Clarinda laments she is not so beautiful as her rival for Albert's attentions:

> 'Tis a beauteous Creature,
>
> And to myself I do appear deformed
>
> When I consider her (III.224-26).

Utopia Gone Wrong

The signs of envy exhibited in Clarinda are a culmination of a number of hints that all is not well in the women's commonwealth. Gordon McMullan suggests that along with Clarinda's "new found infatuation [with Albert] comes jealousy" and that "the fall of man is thus re-enacted in woman's Eden" (250). The "pre-lapsarian state" these women inhabited was "defined by [Clarinda] never having seen a man" (250). This is not to suggest that men are the evil sex, so much, perhaps, as that any utopia sits in a precarious balance between paradise and hell. In fact, the geography of *The Sea Voyage* seems to visually embody this very point. When Rosellia questions Albert as to how he arrived on their island, and from whence he came, he explains: "I have fellows in my misery, not far hence, / Divided only by this hellish river" (216-17). He assists in the visualising of such a place by stating, "Imagine all the miseries mankind / May suffer under, and they groan beneath 'em" (220-21). In contrast, the women's isle is "Upon the blessed shore! 'Tis so: this is / The Elysian shade; these, happy spirits that here / Enjoy all pleasures" (II.ii.77-79). Hell enters into this isle through the masculine incursion into the women's territory, emblematised through sexual awakening and frustration.

Anthony Parr considers the island women's first appearance to be "in bucolic guise like Diana and her nymphs, making a graceful and striking entrance" (26). This is an interesting consideration, because the scene immediately recalled for me Botticelli's mythological painting, *La Primavera* (1477-78), especially the Three Graces who, thinly

veiled, dance nimbly to the left of Venus. In Botticelli's painting, the linear development of the story, from right to left, separates the Graces from the lust of Zephyr. [121] However, they are subject to the same amorous fate, indicated by Cupid, who directs his arrows at the central Grace (Wind 117). They may be in their own private bliss, but they are caught between the solitude of reason on one side (Mercury) and the heat of passion on the other (Zephyr and Flora), and the thinness of their garments suggest not only their inherent sexuality but also their vulnerability.

They may for the moment be chaste,[122] but they are not isolated enough to be safe from the assailing darts of love. In Hesiod's *Theogony* (c. 700 B.C.E.), they are given the names Aglaia (Beauty), Euphrosyne (Mirth) and Thalia (Bringer of Flowers), "from whose eyes as they glanced flowed love that unnerves the limbs" (X.907-11). He names appropriately, in accordance with those attributes that would suggest they sought the fullness of life, a point not overlooked by Seneca: "*Hesiodus* gaue them these names vppon pleasure" (*De Beneficiis* I.iii.3). The Three Graces, then, seem to indicate the same erotic longing that appears to be latent within the island women of *The Sea Voyage*—an isolated sensuality that is only minimally separated from the blindly flung arrows of Cupid. An image of the Graces on the shore of this female and fertile isle of *The Sea Voyage* is particularly apt.

The sexually frustrated castaways quickly and easily conquer—indeed penetrate—this willing 'virgin' territory. The play was first performed in 1622, at a time when possibilities for bodily requisition were proliferating in an age of exciting, and sometimes disillusioning discovery. The shocking massacre in Virginia had only just occurred that year, and news of it

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[121] Of course, there are multiple interpretations of this piece of art; however, the story seems generally to represent the reign of Venus, beginning with an allegorical allusion to the myth of Flora and Zephyr, signifying passion, and concluding with Mercury, signifying reason and knowledge (Busignani 19). The allegory is derived from the neoplatonic philosophy of Ficino and celebrates a "spirit of balance and unity between the freshness of living according to nature and the moral nobility of humanism" (Salvini 25).

[122] In Golding's translation of Seneca's *De Beneficiis* (1578), readers learn that the Graces are "Virgins...because benefites must be without soyle, pure, and holy too all men, wherein there ought too bee no bondage nor constreint" (I.iii.3).

had recently reached England, highlighting to the imperial mind the need to subjugate the flesh of others.[123] This helped to prompt in the minds of many English people an awareness of barbarism that was simultaneously both intriguing and terrifying, as I exemplified by the consideration of 'horrid music.' I here use the terms 'intriguing' and 'terrifying' in their fullest and most polarised senses. However, as was established above, the psychology of human behaviour contends that what repels us also draws us in, and so, while the semantics of those two experiences (intriguing and terrifying) would seem to represent either end of the voyagers' spectrum, these ends also move towards each other magnetically. This is exemplified in the varying experiences that draw Aminta, at one end of the spectrum, towards her various travellers whose ambitions and perceptions set themselves up against her at the 'other' end. Albert himself, who is not the furthest removed from her on the spectrum of colonisers, makes this distinction, referring to "my black actions catching hold upon / Her purer innocence" (Fletcher and Massinger, V.ii.70-71).

In *The Sea Voyage* it seems as though the playwrights anticipated Greenblatt's question, "what would it mean neither to demonize an American culture nor to transform it into an idealized exotic reverie?" (*New World Encounters* xii-xiii), and answered it in the form of this play. On this women's island we encounter all the elements of a potential paradise, but it cannot escape corruption. The playwrights were shrewd business people as well as careful artists, and knew that degeneration would be most sellable in the form of sex. They consequently employed a more graphically salacious genre which was gaining

[123] In March 1622, Native Americans, led by Opechancanough, successor to the famous Powhatan, attacked the Virginians, killing more than 350 colonists. The Virginians turned to England for further military supplies in order to launch a counter-attack on native villages, although by spring of the following year Opechancanough was calling for peace (see, for a further history and documentation, Wrone and Nelson, eds., pp. 50-54).

popularity at this time,[124] one which Boose terms a "monstrously hybrid creature" (196). This term implies a cross-breeding of the satiric invective and sexualised literature "which combined the salaciously erotic with the violently misogynistic excoriations of the Juvenalian satiric speaker" ("1599 Bishop's Ban" 196).

While Boose does not address *The Sea Voyage* directly, she does raise a number of points which are pertinent to it. She speaks of a "graphic 'porntopia' " ("1599 Bishop's Ban" 194), which seems indicative of exactly the skewing of paradise that is taking place in *The Sea Voyage*. She adds to this image a suggestion of the "dark depths and psychic defences that underlie the pornographic" (192), again relevant to the greater representation that the sexual current in *The Sea Voyage* is undertaking. The island, as we see it, is created by women and yet these women (fictional characters) are ultimately moved by male hands (Fletcher and Massinger). Therefore, the action on the island is still driven by male desire. *Porni* (πόρυη) after all, from which 'pornography' originates, is Greek for 'whore.' And as Andrea Dworkin reminds us:

> The word *whore* is incomprehensible unless one is immersed in the lexicon of male domination. Men have created the group, the type...the reality of woman as whore. Woman as whore exists within the objective and real system of male sexual domination...The debasing of women depicted in pornography and intrinsic to it is object and real in that women are so debased ("Pornography" 326).

What *The Sea Voyage* as porntopia seems specifically to be undertaking is an answer to the question: what happens when human beings play Creator God? The answer is, the destruction

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[124] Lynda Boose notes that the "newly sexualized salacious tone with which many of [the literati] had been experimenting...had first begun to seep into English literary texts, inspiring the condemnation of the moralists" in the last decade of the sixteenth century ("1599 Bishop's Ban" 187). Lynn Hunt slightly qualifies Boose's remark: "in its reliance on classical themes, pornography in the sixteenth century was not especially innovative...rather it was the diffusion through print culture that marked a significant new departure" (26).

of paradise. In this case we have a dual consideration: the island women have made their own creation in establishing their single-gender commonwealth, but they in turn had already—in their previous life as Europeans—been constructed by men, a desire to appropriate power underscored by the men's subsequent penetration of the women's self-proclaimed land.

Sexual Frustration: Juletta, Crocale and Hippolita

Frank and Fritzie Manuel have isolated a potential flaw in the utopian genre. They argue that the imaginative construction of an "ideal condition should have some measure of generality, if not universality, or it becomes merely narcissistic yearning" (7). The Manuels are discussing the actual composition of utopian fiction; however, their remarks can be applied quite easily to characters within that fiction. Indeed, it is in part the yearning—in this case libidinous—of Juletta, Crocale and Hippolita that leads to the subversion of their island paradise and the destruction of their utopia. The failure of their system is pre-determined by *The Discovery of a New World*, in which the narrator describes the political system of the women's island:

> Their state...is popular; each one seeking superiority, and auoyding obedience...they set vp a crie all together, none giues eare, but each one yells as if shee were horne made...I hold there is not a court...more corrupt (Hall, *Mundus,* 103-04).

A women's commonwealth, the quote suggests, fails to function for the common good. It may have begun as a system which was founded on a 'law' agreed upon by all the members, but the law, it would seem, grew stale.

In *The Sea Voyage*, the women's leader, Rosellia, has imposed ideals of conduct on Juletta, Crocale and Hippolita from which their libidinal energies rebel. They are very much like the women in Aristophanes' precariously constructed alternative community, *Lysistrata.* The women in this play promise the following:

At home in celibacy I shall pass my life—

wearing a party-dress and makeup—…

…never willingly shall I surrender to my husband.

If he should use force to force me against my will—

I will submit coldly and not move my hips.

I will not raise my oriental slippers toward the ceiling.

I won't crouch down like the lioness on a cheesegrater (224-237).[125]

These lines vowing celibacy are nevertheless composed with a view to their titillating effect. They are simultaneously moralising and arousing, and readers are permitted to revel in what the women are to eschew.

The vows of sexual abstinence imposed on this classical society of females prove too difficult to keep. The leader of the women, Lysistrata, admits, "I can't keep the wives away from their husbands any longer; they're running off in all directions" (Aristophanes 736-37), and the women's utopian ideals degenerate as they are forced to tell lies in order to satisfy their sexual appetites. Likewise, *The Sea Voyage* features what McMullan describes as "the decay of a women's utopia into a dystopia of frustration and rebellion." He describes the progress as the "transformation of the New World paradise to a place of greed and betrayal upon the intrusion of the colonists" (236). This is due to Juletta, Crocale and Hippolita's discontent with their celibate lives on the island. Sandra Clark identifies the inevitable failure of such societies as being a result of "the conflict between the demands of society and the promptings of natural instinct" (72). I would argue a step further, keeping in mind that both *Lysistrata* and *The Sea Voyage* were penned by men, that this is a *male* view of what would

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[125] This image is an odd one, and some translators have not been so literal. The classicist, Stephen Halliwell, for instance, in a recent verse translation (1997), has changed it to, "I'll never kneel in the lioness position." In an endnote, however, he remarks that the position of a lioness on a cheesegrater was frequently depicted in erotic paintings during the classical period (269).

happen to women both left to their own political leadership and unsupplied with opportunities for sexual activity.

It is Juletta who utters the first words hinting at the women's wretchedness, when she responds to Crocale's description of the women's commonwealth as one that begun and must end with them: "Ay there's the misery" (II.ii.19), she acknowledges. Juletta is predominantly concerned with the fact their island, barred from men, cannot last beyond the lifespan of this group of sexually inactive women. Hesiod indicated that the earth of the Golden Age gave forth fruit of itself. self-propagation, therefore, would be an ideal that would successfully parallel the world which Hesiod praised: "for the fruitful earth unstintingly bore / *unforced* her plenty" ("Works and Days" 7, emphasis added). Ovid highlights this aspect as well: "Then sprang up first the golden age, which of it selfe maintained / The truth and right of every thing *unforct* and unconstrained" (*Metamorphoses* I.103-104, emphasis added),[126] adding later that "The fertile earth as yet was free, untoucht of spade or plough, / And yet it yielded of it selfe of every things inough" (I.115-16). In the utopia of the Golden Age, "nature should bring forth / Of its own kind...all abundance" (Shakespeare, *Tempest* II.i.168-69); we immediately observe a key difference from Fletcher's commonwealth of women, who cannot produce fruit spontaneously. The fantasy that lived in the utopian imagination cannot be transferred to the realm of procreation, and therefore discontent is bred among this group of would-be Amazons.

Juletta, Crocale and Hippolita recognise theirs is not a Hesiodic Golden Age where propagation comes without labour—nor are they, despite their leader's dedication to the cause, interested in such. These are sexual human beings on an island whose very fertility is emblematised in the land around them, and deliberately contrasted with the barrenness of the

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[126] The word "unforced" indicates not only the needlessness of labour, but also the willingness of production. This is significant for an island of women surviving in an age of exploration, an age whose travel literature suggested, indeed often praised, a *forced* penetration by male venturers on virgin soil.

neighbouring island. The desolate, infertile island on which the more recent European voyagers have been wrecked "stinks damnably. / There's old rotten trunks of trees too, but not a leaf / Nor blossom in all the island" (Fletcher and Massinger III.19-21). Sebastian says of it, "Here's nothing but rocks and barrenness, / Hunger and cold to eat" (I.ii.23-24). In contrast to this land which causes hunger[127] stands the women's isle: "Sweet, a paradise. / A paradise inhabited with angels—/...Their pities make 'em angels. / They gave me these viands, and supplied me / With these precious drinks" (III.181-85). Using the term 'pity' is a clever touch, since it discreetly suggests the sexuality latent in these women. In *Astrophil and Stella*, Sidney highlights the physical nature of love, proving bodily desire to be both frustrating and inescapable (52.14; 59.12-14; 72.1-3). He opens this work with reference to Astrophil's need for Stella to 'pity' him, and relent to his sexual advances: "Knowledge might pity win, and pity grace obtain" (1.4). Fletcher and Massinger employ it in this sense more than once, consistent with the sexual theme of *The Sea Voyage*.

The men, then, find the neighbouring island of women, bursting with fruit, ripe and ready in the most sexual sense. One of the male voyagers, Morillat, draws attention to the women's need for men, at the very least, for the continuance of their race: "We'll 'get a world of children; / For we know ye are heinously provided that way" (IV.iii.105-06). The suggestion, provided by images of abundance (a *world* of children) suggests an abundance of sexual recreation is ahead. Crocale is the most explicitly sexual and admits the erotic nature of her dreams at length in II.ii. Crocale is also the most protective towards Albert, who has swum to their shore, perhaps because she is the most sexually primed. When Hippolita asks if she should shoot him, Crocale stops her: "No, no! 'Tis a handsome beast, / Would we had

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[127] This hunger is stated as literal hunger but satisfied both through food and the promise of copulation. Perhaps the sexual nature of their hunger is best exemplified by the first items the men mention on arrival at the women's island, and on first sight of the women: aphrodisiacal foods, such as eryngoes (candied sweet-meat), potatoes, or cantharides (a mixture composed from dried beetle carcasses) (Fletcher and Massinger III.212-13; Crystal and Crystal 155; *OED*). Following this list, one of the voyagers admits he is so sexually frustrated that even green cheese and onions for a month "could do wonders" (III.216).

more o' the breed" (II.ii.71-72), and again shows a potentially sexually-motivated act of mercy a few lines later: "Hold! He makes no resistance" (80). It is interesting that she would see him both as less than human (a "beast") and also in light of a reproductive possibility ("more of the breed"). Once again, gender has been subverted, and she is viewing him as woman was typically viewed by man.

Hippolita, with whom Crocale is contrasted heavily in the dialogue, proves to have been more effectively indoctrinated. Upon first sighting of the man, she prepares to shoot him on sight (II.ii.71). Although she may have internalised Rosellia's man-shunning creed, even Juletta admits that she is not cut out for this Amazonian-style existence: "For my part, I confess it. I was not made / For this single life, nor do I love hunting so / But that I had rather be the chase myself!" (II.ii.33-35). Juletta embodies the male fantasy of the Daphne myth. She is a hunter who is hunted, but, unlike Daphne who was opposed to Apollo's chase (Ovid, *Metamorphoses* I.452ff.), Juletta desires to be 'hunted,' as the sexual prey. She even enjoys hearing Crocale's erotic fantasies, prompting her with questions and wistfully greeting the conclusion of the story-telling session with, " 'Twas a pretty dream" (II.ii.68). Finally, when it comes down to actually killing Albert, pity triumphs over obedience to community rules: "By my life," Hippolita exclaims, "I cannot hurt him" (II.ii.98-99).

Hippolita's clemency is followed by Crocale's selfless moment of compassion: "Though I lose my head / For it, nor I. I must pity him, and will" (II.ii.99-100). With the reference here to the losing of her head ('maidenhead'), the sexual significance of 'pity' becomes even clearer. Both these women's comments could be read either as merciful, and

by convention feminine, or as chivalric, and by convention masculine, [128] which indeed adds an interesting dimension to the issues of gender in *The Sea Voyage*. Here, perhaps, the women are exhibiting some of the 'masculine' qualities of the Amazons they are emulating and are entering into the realm of the hermaphrodite. The mid-seventeenth-century poet, Thomas Randolph, in "Upon an Hermaphrodite" (1652) supports an hermaphroditic ideal; his words serve as some evidence of the period's contention that a bi-gendered state was a natural one, and what humans continue to return to through the mystical union of marriage: "For Man and Wife make but one right / Canonicall Hermaphrodite" (17-18). Certainly in *The Discovery of a New World*, such androgynous qualities are viewed, at least by the androgynes themselves, as superior. Admittedly, Hall is emphasising physical attributes, but in a period where sex and gender were apparently so indivisible, the less-physical androgyny celebrated by Fletcher and Massinger is to the same effect. Hall says of what he calls "Double-Sex Isle":

> when they take any that are but simply of one sexe, Lord what a coile they keepe about thē, shewing them as prodigies & monsters...Their onely glory which they esteeme most, is that in their conceite they haue the perfection of nature amongst them alone...For seeing nature...hath bestowed two hands, two feete, two eyes, two eares and two nosthrills to euery meaner perfect bodie, why should not the most excellent creature of all be perfect in two sexes also? (Hall, *Mundus* 111-12).

The suggestion that on Double-Sex Isle propagation is unproblematic points to the difference between Hall's *Double-Sex Isle* and Fletcher and Massinger's women's commonwealth,

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[128] Linda Woodbridge observes that several early modern works associate justice with men and mercy with women, and cites *The Merchant of Venice, Measure for Measure,* and *The Faerie Queene* as examples (310). Much later works, such as Davenant's *The Unfortunate Lovers*, continues the association, by making pity "a little too / Effeminate for ancient magistrates" (I.i). The heroine, Arthiopa, determines to "make my mercy an example" (II.i), and a similar mercy emasculates the Duke, Altophil—it stays his arm, "which grew, / With thoughts of mercy weak" (IV.i). The play is rich with inferences of chivalry and courtesy, calling the former "men's best belief" (I.i). The concept of masculine chivalry narrows the divide between the feminine and the masculine. By forcing the warrior-knight to take pity on his subject, chivalry first emasculates masculine prowess and then immediately raises that same feminisation as something to be praised.

proving yet again that all is not well in *The Sea Voyage's* utopian community. The inclusion of "mules" and "hares", both of which the earlier author identifies as being emblematic of self-propagation, supports the argument that a land could exist where procreation is successfully done *solo*. But as we have seen, and as Clarinda further exemplifies below, the women of Fletcher and Massinger's commonwealth are not advocates of celibate, effortless reproduction.

Sexual Awakening: Clarinda

Even the innocent Clarinda recognises the situation they are in as one tragically limited to a single generation, although her realisation is voiced more innocently than that of her companions: "Nor can you / Or I have any hope to be a mother / Without the help of men" (II.ii.118-20). The course of the dialogue in which this line occurs suggests it is to be delivered more as a question than a statement, showing Clarinda to be at a budding stage of sexual awareness.

Clarinda's feminine sexual nature proves inherent and she embraces it eagerly and quickly, despite those attributes which might have suggested she would do otherwise. She initially seems much more dedicated to this single life, and her likeness to Daphne-the-hunter (as opposed to Daphne-the-hunted) is emphasised.[129] Her ability as a hunter has been discussed above in praises by Crocale, and Clarinda is proud of her skill: "I ne'er turned / From a lioness robbed of her whelps" (II.ii.105-06), she states, in a defence of her unprecedented bravery. We are first introduced to Clarinda in terms that describe her prowess, but a description of her innocence and naivety quickly follow:

> The faire Clarinda, though in few years
>
> Improved in height and large proportion,

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[129] Ovid describes Daphne's love of the hunt: "In woods and forests is hir joy, the savage beasts to chase / And as the price of all hir paine to take the skinne and case" (*Metamorphoses* I.573-74).

Came here so young

That scarce remembering that she had a father

She never dreams of man (II.ii.26-30).

Crocale in fact believes that if Clarinda were to see a man, she would believe him to be "a strange beast" (32), and indeed on Clarinda's first sighting of Albert she questions what "strange game" he is—she sees him as a potential kill, rather than as a potential partner. Moreover, she is even initially repulsed: "What beast is this lies wallowing in his gore?" (II.ii.103).

Clarinda's initial repulsion quickly evolves into curiosity and then finally desperate attraction, as her sexuality unfurls in the most human of manners. The celebration of "Proud *Daphne*, scorning *Phœbus* louely fyre" (Spenser, *Amoretti* XXVIII.9), is replaced with Clarinda's desire to take part in love games. "Of 'the creature' (Albert) she first asks, "What is't?" and then, appropriating the naming powers of Adam, *she* finds it important that the new creature in their 'Eden' is named (II.ii.108). She then fears that this "brave shape" is dead, and wishes that it might rather be alive (110-12).[130] However, this is no longer the hunter in her speaking—Clarinda does not wish to have the honour of killing this creature, rather, she begins to feel protective of him, calling her companions "cruel and ungrateful" for not showing him greater mercy (136). This maternal defensiveness unfolds into sensual attraction, and she becomes aware of his body, breath and lips (150-54). From this follows confusion at a new and dominant sensation: "What fury / For which my ignorance does not know a name / Is crept into my bosom?" (158-60). Clarinda has entered the scene an

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[130] The term "brave" in seventeenth-century English was used in the sense of 'splendid,' or 'impressive,' with the connotation of 'daring' or 'bold' being somewhat secondary. See, for example Miranda's first sight of Ferdinand in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*: "What is't? A spirit? / Lord, how it looks about! Believe me, sir, / It carries a brave form" (I.ii.412-14). The *OED* confirms the term could be used in this former sense for either fashion, as in, it states, Heywood's *Apology for Actors*, where "One man is ragged and another brave", or for a splendid or showy inanimate object, such as in Captain John Smith's *Map of Virginia* (I.11): "At length he came to most braue and fayre houses."

innocent girl, but by the end, a woman has emerged. Crocale articulates it best: "I see that by instinct, / Though a young maid hath never seen a man, / Touches have titillations and inform her" (II.ii.178-80).

Clarinda's hasty adolescence was ignited and then inflamed in a very typical pubescent manner. Her sexuality, for instance, follows her realisation of her mother's fallibility. Clarinda, like any good teenager, complains of the tyranny of her mother, and determines to defy her: "But if she command unjust and cruel things / We are not to obey it" (II.ii.130-31). Innocence was lost at this unveiling of truth; in this Eden Clarinda has finally tasted the bittersweet fruit of the tree of knowledge, and she ripens into sexuality. Through this sexuality she first feels envy, which leads to a damaging hatred. The envy has been discussed above—she watches Crocale soothe Albert, and wishes she, Clarinda, could be the nurse. Her hatred comes much later, when she fears all hope of being with Albert to be lost: "O I could burst! Curse and kill now, / Kill anything I meet" (IV.iii.139-40).

Sexuality Regained: Rosellia

Rosellia is an intriguing character because she is the embodiment of contradictory desires. She is compelling evidence that women cannot live without men. In a very recent article on that very issue, Germaine Greer concludes that

> For whatever reason, women are more heterosexual than men, perhaps because they build men's bodies inside their own...Women would find a world without men flat and savourless ("Do We Really Need Men?" 22).

The heterosexuality of women is here their downfall, in terms of their potential as leaders.[131] This is because heterosexuality can be seen as the "linchpin of male dominance and control

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[131] The irony is, of course, that without men, at the very least for the purposes of creation, the women's commonwealth was faced with its demise anyway.

over women" and that "in heterosexual relations men are able to 'do power over women' to the greatest effect" (Hester 2).

Rosellia is first introduced as one who firmly believes she can build a colony without men, and that she and her companions can "place their happiness" in the "cold and chaste / Embraces of each other" (Fletcher and Massinger III.221-22). However, signs of sexuality emerge even in this most determined of leaders, revealing Rosellia's split desires. On seeing Albert, she admits in an aside that "were not man a creature / I detest, I could endure his company" (III.301-02). These lines precede her mention of "cold" and "chaste" embraces, and this seems to add greater semantic weight to her choice of those pejorative adjectives. It is as though even she does not believe such embraces are so desirable.

When Rosellia succumbs to Tibalt's advances she cannot defend her action by claiming that her decision is for the good of the island, meaning, for the fruitful multiplication of future 'Amazonian' women. This is because she is self-confessedly "old" and therefore, likely to be infertile. When she demands of Tibalt, "How canst thou hope content / From one that's fifty" (III.318-19), her question can be read both as her insecurity that she is no longer a partner who offers sexual pleasure and as an admission that she cannot bring forth for Tibalt the sons so coveted in the early modern period. Having said this, she does begin the process of negotiation, which implies that she still maintains some sense of power and control. She demands goods in exchange for sex: "but I must tell ye sir, / That rich widows look for great sums in present, / Or assurances of ample jointers" (333-35). However, even this suggestion of a mutual exchange of benefits could connote a hint of prostitution in her terms of arbitration, and thus again the power structure would be reverting in the men's favour. More likely, however, she is merely addressing issues, so common in this period, concerning the

remarriage of widows, and therefore this dialogue implies that Rosellia's dignity is still intact.[132]

Rosellia's conflict of desires is a storm that raises a disturbance in the calm perfection of the women's island paradise. As soon as the island becomes a harbour for sexual activity, men become dominant and destructive. It is Tibalt who usurps authority, determines the sexual partners and becomes offensively domineering when Rosellia raises questions. He says to her, "I *must* and *will* enjoy you" (III.317, emphases added). He even arranges their sexual liaisons as though the men are bringing these women a great gift: "having made my choice / *I thus bestow it*" (III.308-09, emphasis added). Having taken control, he then gives orders to these lusty men to satisfy their desires: "To it, you hungry rascals" (311), and even Albert, who has promised faithfulness to Aminta acquiesces with the single word, "Excellent!" (312). Roberts' theory of colonising wilderness, thereby subduing virgin lands, complements this part of the plot perfectly:

> As exploration and civilization increasingly subdued "virgin" lands, and the development of mechanized means of mining and farming encouraged the invasion of "mother" earth, and as doctors learned to anatomize the human body, the beginning of industrialization and the rise of Puritanism seem to have fostered both the domination of nature and a contraction of the sphere of women (*Shakespearean Wild* 52).

In the case of *The Sea Voyage*, the male characters have immediately taken over the women's commonwealth through literal sexual penetration.

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[132] Widows enjoyed rights to spousal property that might deter them from remarrying, as this would not be considered economically advantageous (King, *Women of the Renaissance* 57). A rich widow was not so likely to market herself as eligible to bachelors because she would be averse to losing her fortune to her new husband. The issue was commonly addressed in the period's drama. See, for example, Middleton's *A Trick to Catch the Old One*, in which Witgood observes, "O 'tis a fine little voluble tongue, mine host, that wins a widow" (I.ii.26-27).

It is not inconsistent with her character to see Rosellia's regaining of sexual interest. Despite having imposed an oath on her women "not alone / To detest but never to think of man" (Fletcher and Massinger II.ii.38-39), Rosellia does not speak negatively of the men in her past, at least not of her husband and his companions. She speaks warmly and nostalgically of him on more than one occasion:

> Some five days hence that blessèd hour comes,
> Most happy to me, that knit this hand to my
> Dear husband's, and both our hearts in mutual bands (IV.ii.7-9).

A few lines later she honours other men connected with him, ordering "Our dear remembrances of that dear man / And those that suffered with him" (13-14). It is the loving memory of these men that drives her to revenge herself against those other men who have invaded their island paradise, and whom she comes to believe are pirates who have killed her husband and his men on the seas: "Their lives shall fall a sacrifice to vengeance— / Their lives that ruined his. 'Tis a full vengeance" (15-16). She tries to stir her daughter to similar vengeful feelings by conjuring up the image of a worthy father: "Couldst thou / Remember what a father thou hast once / 'Twould steel thy heart against all foolish pity" (V.i.4-6), and then grows more personal, remembering his "dear embraces" (8).

Rosellia's revenge is truly driven by the love of her husband—it is not the revenge of a woman insane with fury. This again reveals the humanity in her character, though she has previously attempted to construct herself and her companions in such a way as transcends human desires and limitations. She has not lost her power of reason over this revenge. She even longs to discover something that will abate her despair and make her able to liberate these men who have become her enemies: "Perhaps / They may discover something that may kill / Despair in me, and be a means to save 'em / From certain ruin" (V.i.18-21). Her revenge, in a sense, is muted. Alison Findlay describes such a metamorphosis as something

superimposed by the expectation of gender. Revenge is emasculated in this way by becoming the "figure of Justice, the silent female form who held her sword aloft" (53).

Rosellia and her companions are indeed merely human after all, and subject to all the same 'human weaknesses' (sexual drives) as the other, invading Europeans. The lesson in this is not so much that these women have failed in their efforts to be Amazons, but rather that the influence men had over them taught them to be cruel. Where Amazons were believed to be inherently violent, these women lean towards pity, and admit themselves that their constructed paradise was formed out of a desire to escape past negative experiences, not out of some proto-feminist desire for an experimental community:

> No Amazons we,
> But women of Portugal, that must have from you
> Sebastian and Nicusa. We are they
> That groaned beneath your fathers' wrongs; we are
> Those wretched women
> Their injuries pursued and overtook.
> And from the sad remembrance of our losses
> We are taught to be cruel (Fletcher and Massinger V.iv.20-26).

This explains, too, why Clarinda proves to be the most Amazonian of these women, and the least driven to cruelty—because she has not known this other world, where men construct women from the cold and moist humours of which they were believed to be composed.[133]

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[133] Gynaecology in the seventeenth century was not particularly well documented. There was little original work done in gynaecological research and most of the gynaecological texts were translations or plagiarisms of earlier works, or works based entirely on classical knowledge (Smith, "Gynaecology and Ideology" 98). However, the theories pertaining to the cold/moist humours of women were firmly maintained, based on Galen's view of the body ("On the Usefulness of the Parts of the Body"). See Helkiah Crooke's *Microcosmographia* (1618): "That women's testicles are hidden within their bodies is also an argument of the coldness of their temper, because they want heat to thrust them forth…We conclude therefore that universally men are hotter than women" (56).

With the restoration of Rosellia's sexuality comes the restoration of patriarchy. Near the end of the play, when Rosellia has been reunited with her husband, Sebastian, we see her immediate return to a submissive role, as though the mere *presence* of a man is sufficient argument for masculine control. Not only does he begin restoring order by orchestrating forgiveness, but Rosellia happily permits this to take place: "She does give up / Herself, her power and joys and all to you, / To be discharged of 'em as too burdensome" (V.iv.96-98). The male fantasy is complete: they have appropriated this fertile land *and* its women.

Conclusion

> *We have made thee...with freedom of choice and with honor, as though the maker and molder of thyself, thou mayest fashion thyself in whatever shape thou shalt prefer. Thou shalt have the power to degenerate into the lower forms of life, which are brutish. Thou shalt have the power...to be reborn into the higher forms, which are divine* (Pico Della Mirandola 225).

I suggested earlier that a question that the playwrights seem to be addressing in *The Sea Voyage* is, what happens when one tries to play God by trying to re-create one's own nature? This seems to be answered in two parts. The first consequence of such hubris seems to be pain and destruction: chaos enters the commonwealth in the form of men. They do not simply wreck this paradise for the women—they become wrecked themselves. By Act IV the men are a shadow of their former selves; the land of plenty has been cruel to them:

> We were handsome men, and gentlemen, and sweet men,
>
> And were once gracious in the eyes of beauties.
>
> But now we look like rogues, like poor starved rogues (IV.iii.94-96).

The second consequence is the re-establishment of God's patriarchal 'ideal.' Utopias are constructed as human-made ideals; they are a usurpation of God's omnipotence (Manuel and Manuel 112). self-created utopias are "a Promethean act of defiance of the existing order of the world" (112). What Fletcher and Massinger demonstrate is that such usurpation is bound to fail: God reasserts providential authority, as many early moderns interpreted it—that is, the world is 'righted' through the re-establishment of patriarchy. The women, who

have desired to live as Amazons, submit to becoming submissive women again, and become subject to male authority. What Fletcher and Massinger have highlighted is the early modern argument that rule for a woman is unnatural. In the case of *The Sea Voyage* the 'Amazonian' women must in the end be suppressed like many Amazons in early modern literature.[134] It is Aminta's brother, entering the play in the final act, who voices the unnaturalness of a woman's rule:

> And now observe the issue:
>
> As they for spoil ever forgot compassion
>
> To women, who should be exempted from
>
> The extremities of a lawful war,
>
> We now, young able men, are fall'n into
>
> The hands of women that, against the soft
>
> Tenderness familiar to their sex,
>
> Will show no mercy (V.ii.109-16).

This inverted order must be restored to its rightful position—the women must give up the island in order to return it to a 'natural' state.[135] The inevitable outcome of criticism concerned with gender is what Sandra Clark identifies as a substitution of "ideological for aesthetic evaluation" which results in "a sense of disappointment in the recognition that a text which may promise much in terms of a narrative of sexual disguise or role-play turns out in

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[134] *The Faerie Queene* is one of the best examples of a story in which a warrior woman bows to the leadership of men. After Britomart, a woman "full of amiable grace, / And manly terror" (III.i.46) rescues Artegall, overthrows "that proud Amazon", Radigund, and reigns "as Princess" in her land, she then makes all the men she frees magistrates of the city: "the liberty of women did repeale, / Which they had long vsurpt; and them restoring / To mens subiection, did true Iustice deale" (V.iii.34; 42; 43; 42). Even Thomas Heywood, one of the 'champions of women,' praises the Amazonian queen, Penthisilæa, for her passive aspects as much as for her active ones: "and though she was always conversant amongst Souldiers, and armed men...yet she studied nothing more then Virginall Chastity...and was worthily ranked in the life of the Heroicke Ladies" (*Exemplary Lives* 99).

[135] This supports Aristotle's claim in the *Nichomachean Ethics* that a woman's rule tends to be oligarchic (Jordan, *Renaissance Feminism* 33). In Book VIII, Chapter 10, on the three species of polity, Aristotle contends: "Sometimes, however, women rule, because they are heiresses; their rule is thus not in accordance with virtue, but due to wealth and power, as in oligarchies" (1161a).

the end only to endorse 'sexual difference and gender hierarchy' " (54). This indeed seems to be the disappointing outcome of *The Sea Voyage*, a play that had begun to set the stage for women who ruled themselves. However, one might question, in light of the admirable qualities that Fletcher and Massinger allotted to some of their female characters, such as Rosellia's desire for justice, whether the playwrights should be 'forgiven' for their re-establishment of patriarchy. In other words, does their ambiguous representation of both societies—the travellers' and the women's—excuse their re-establishment of a society along traditional lines? Simon Shepherd thinks not. He argues that the play "compliments the male, celebrating his sexuality...placing him at the centre of everyone else's interests" (*Amazons* 136). Indeed, the women, without men, are sexually frustrated and disgruntled. They embody the image of the colonists who, having spent enough time in what they once thought was paradise, long for the comforts of home. Crocale complains, "Every hour something tells me I am forsworn. / For I confess, imagination helps me sometimes, / And that's all is left for us to feed on" (Fletcher and Massinger II.ii.40-42).

However, the men's society, of whom Aminta is a part, but from which she separates herself in these respects, is both barbarous and sub-human. In Act III, many unadmirable adjectives are associated with the men; within the course of forty lines they are described as "barbarous" (136), "damned villains" (149), "rascals" (157), "damned cannibals" (161), "inhuman" (168), and as ones who "snarl like dogs" (177). The belief that bullies act aggressively because they are insecure themselves conforms with the later behaviour of these explorers, when the women on the island imprison them. Juletta is disgusted by their behaviour: "They say they are gentlemen, but they show Mongrels" (IV.ii.35), observing that they suffer "like boys. / They are fearful in all fortunes" (36-7).

Crocale disagrees with Juletta's conclusions about the men. Those over whom she has charge, Crocale remarks, are "not cast / In such base moulds.../ All sorts of cruelties they

meet like pleasures" (IV.ii.57-60). Her men lead "lives never linked to such companions / As fears and doubts" (64-65). The women's different perceptions of the colonists support a recent contention by Stephen Greenblatt that "native cultures were...'impure'—that is, neither transparent nor timeless, but opaque, complex and constantly changing" (*New World Encounters* xiv). It further suggests a counter-colonialism—an inversion of the notion that European colonisers created the image of the native.[136] Crocale's construction of these men as bold and brave shows the 'aboriginal' creating an image of the impostor in a like fashion.

One could hope, that by representing the virtues of women's rule, the newly emerged patriarchy on this island might retain some of those 'feminine' virtues, thereby balancing patriarchal extremes with a partial feminisation of society. The women are portrayed more positively than many of the men whose idleness has been well noted by early moderns and contemporaries (Parr 26). The famous English explorer, Captain John Smith, in *A Map of Virginia* (1612) speaks derisively of such men as "verbal and idle contemplatours...deuoted to pure idlenesse" (373-37 / 38-38), and Richard Whitbourne notes that the women are "more...laborious than their lazie husbands" (94). In this sense, the women have adopted some of the traits of various native women, who were noted for their hard labour. John Smith's understanding of native labour proves of interest here. Smith noticed that men fish, hunt and go to war, and leave the rest of the work to the women and children, "which is the cause that the women be verie painefull and the men often idle. The women and children do the rest of the worke (356 / 21-2). However, the outcome of the restored patriarchy is not discussed, and, perhaps shrewd from a commercial perspective, *The Sea Voyage* leaves the reader begging for a sequel.

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[136] The concept of counter-colonialism is one which will be addressed in detail in Chapter 8, on James Shirley's *The Cardinal*.

Chapter 6. *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*: Women and the Violation of Order

Plot Summary

Giovanni and his confessor, Friar Bonaventura, are arguing over the potential justification for an incestuous relationship, a conversation instigated by Giovanni's reciprocated passion for his sister, Annabella. Because she is pregnant by her brother, Annabella agrees to marry one of her suitors, Soranzo, pretending the child is his, in order to preserve her honour. Soranzo, meanwhile, is embroiled in his own scandal with Hippolita, a jilted lover who has come to Parma to seek vengeance. When Soranzo discovers Annabella is pregnant by another man, he feigns forgiveness on the advice of his wily servant, Vasques, in order to uncover who the father is. Meanwhile, Vasques extracts the secret from Annabella's undiscerning tutor, Putana. Soranzo then hosts a feast where he intends to seek vengeance on Giovanni. Giovanni, just prior to the banquet, meets Annabella one last time, and stabs her. He carries her heart into the banquet room, where he kills Soranzo and is then killed himself by Vasques.

Annabella

Desire and Conscience in Context

If Annabella is a whore—rather, if society has created a moral structure that labels Annabella's activities 'whorish'—she is not a solitary moral pariah. If she is plagued with conscience because her choices run contrary to society's ideals and its perception of natural law, others have come before her who are similarly plagued. If she questions her expected submission to fate, she can rest assured she is not the first to have cried out in anger at the stars. Annabella is one of a group of women who have been portrayed in literature as outcasts who have not been cast out silently, without question and self-analysis. The fascination lies in considering the similarities and differences in their responses to their circumstances.

'Tis Pity is a popular play for intertextual analysis. Most commonly it is compared with *Romeo and Juliet*, due to the evident similarities in character and plot.[137] It is also assessed against Middleton's tragedies, *The Changeling* and *Women Beware Women* (Brooke 111ff.). Alison Findlay notes the presence of similar religious themes in *'Tis Pity* and Marlowe's *Dr Faustus*. She furthers her intertextual analysis with a lesser-known literary work, *A Godlie Dreame* (1606), by Elizabeth (Melville) Coleville. Like many other women who are depicted as sexual beings, Annabella, outcast as a whore, hangs in an uncertain equilibrium between conscience and desire.[138] She fluctuates between a conscience which moves her to regard herself as a "wretched creature" (III.vi.6), and a desire which helps her to cast aside the mark of shame: "how these stol'n contents / Would print a modest crimson on my cheeks, / Had any but my heart's delight prevailed" (II.i.6-8). As a result of acting on her desire, she is marked as a social outcast, whose 'whorishness' is shunned by homilies and cultural convention.[139] Friar Bonaventura admits she has "unripped a soul so foul and guilty / As I must tell you true, I marvel how / The earth hath borne you up.../...you are wretched, miserable wretched, / Almost condemned alive" (III.vi.2-4; 8-9).

Annabella is seized by a suicidal melancholy because of her incestuous act, and here the parallel to earlier incestuous women in literature is most evidently marked. She moans: "Pleasures, farewell, and all ye thriftless minutes / Wherein false joys have spun a weary

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[137] For a few examples of this focus of study, see Huebert, *John Ford,* pp. 79ff.; McCabe, pp. 228ff.; Ribner, pp. 47ff.

[138] We saw a similar sting of conscience in Tamyra, in Chapman's *Bussy D'Ambois*, a sense of principle which similarly provoked an internal battle. Annabella's conscience, however, proves to be the stronger—she obeys it to her death. We did not observe the same strength of obligation to social standards in Tamyra. While she is plagued with grief over her adultery, she is not so repentant as to leave her lover. As I stated in Chapter 1, it was convenient that he died, so that the decision to end the affair is made for her. Had he lived, there is every indication the affair would have continued. The sequel to the play would certainly suggest as much. When Tamyra sees Bussy's ghost she is desperate to embrace it (Chapman, "Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois" V.iii.47-48).

[139] See, for example, the *Homily on the state of matrimony* (1562): "For God hath straightly forbidden all whoredom and uncleanness and hath from time to time taken grievous punishments of this inordinate lust" (22). Swetnam also rails against 'whores:' "we must not giue our strength vnto harlots, for whores are the euil of all euils, and the vanity of all vanities, they weaken the strength of a man and depriue the body of his beauty" (D1v).

life... / My conscience now stands up against my lust" (V.i.1-2; 9). Of course, the most famous precursor to *'Tis Pity's* theme of fatally-ordained incest would be Sophocles' *Oedipus the King*, and Seneca's rendering of the same in *Oedipus*.[140] The consideration of Annabella as a "mere puppet in the hands of destiny" (McCabe 74) is similar to the Greek and Latin tragedies of Jocasta (the Latin rendering of the Greek *Ιοκάστε*—"Iokaste," by which name I will refer to Sophocles' tragic heroine. I make this distinction here to distinguish between Sophocles and Seneca's tragic women in the analysis which follows).[141] In this way, Ford seems to be taking up the question of autonomous human action: to what extent are individuals in control of their lives? Both Jocasta/Iokaste and Annabella lament their fates; however, it appears that Annabella at least—if not her classical sister—in some fashion steps outside of the ruling arena of fate, and in her 'fateful independence' finds her death. By 'fateful independence' I mean that Annabella seems to purposefully challenge what would seem to be her fate (to love her brother). When her conscience intrudes upon her delights she weeps for her brother's and her own fatally-ordained future: "O Giovanni... / Would thou hadst been less subject to those stars / That luckless reigned at my nativity" (Ford, *'Tis Pity* V.i.17-20).

Stepping outside of the boundaries of Fate's ruling, by terminating her relationship with Giovanni, Annabella suffers death at her brother's hands, which are, in effect, her hands[142]—she does not resist his murdering her, having recently uttered her death wish: "now I can welcome death" (V.i.59). In this stoical response, Annabella more strongly resembles

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[140] McCabe notes that Seneca's *Oedipus* was far better known to the Renaissance audience (74). Its popularity was enhanced by an English translation of Seneca's ten tragedies, printed in 1581, the edition I use here.

[141] The classical world was also interested, of course, in the tension between conscience and desire, evident in such characters as Byblis (Ovid, *Metamorphoses* IX), Phaedra (Euripides, *Hippolytus* 374 ff.; Ovid, *Heroides* IV.129 ff.), and Myrrha (Ovid, *Metamorphoses* X), all of whom were tormented by incestuous passion.

[142] I say they are in effect her hands somewhat ironically, for at this point it seems likely that the union of "one beauty" (I.II.234) which Giovanni boasts is proven mad logic. On the other hand, they have passed through a mystical union, recognised throughout much of history as a conjugation difficult to sever. In Ford's time, such a notion was still very much publicised. In 1604 Thomas Wright wrote on this very subject: "The ground of very mans love of himselfe, is the Identitie of a man with himselfe, for the lover and beloved are all one and the same thing" (216). Even this hymn to love has the narcissistic quality we see in Giovanni by the play's last act.

Seneca's Jocasta, who asks her husband/son, "What bootes it Sir these mischiefs great with piteous plaints to aggrevate. / Stoutly to beare adversity, is fitste for Kings estate" (I). Another similarity to the Roman Jocasta is in the manner of their deaths. Roman Jocasta stabs herself, and Annabella is stabbed, whereas the Greek Iokaste hangs herself. Annabella and Seneca's Jocasta both die confessing their moral remorse, each fully aware of her "sin-drownd soule" (Seneca V.ii).[143] That they both die with a knife-thrust further sexualises their experience: Jocasta stabs herself in the womb, which Martin Esslin describes as the "ultimate in ritual symbolism...an act of deadly intercourse with the sword" (qtd. In McCabe 75); likewise, Annabella is thrust through the heart, significant because of its place as the seat of all emotion.[144] Her brother's "rape" of her heart (Ford, *'Tis Pity* V.vi.20) serves more than one purpose—he is purposefully sexualising the event by thrusting an alternative phallus through the most emotive part of Annabella, while simultaneously forever putting to death that same place of emotion, symbolically placing the termination of their relationship into his own hands, thereby denying her the power of choice.[145] Another purpose is even more damaging to Annabella's character. By the early modern period not only was the heart the seat of all emotions, but it was also "the source of desire, volition, truth, understanding, intellect, and ethic spirit...*it was the single most important word referring both to the body*

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[143] Jocasta's regret here seems contradictory to her stoic acceptance of fate. It would seem that although Jocasta knows fate is to blame, her knowledge becomes irrelevant when challenged by emotional conviction (Mc Cabe 77).

[144] There is much literature to prove the early modern belief that the heart is the literal domain of the emotions. Thomas Wright, for instance, noted: "the very seate of all Passions, is the hearte...for who loveth extreamly, and feeleth not that passion to dissolve his hearte?...who is moiled with heavinesse, or plunged with payne, and perceiveth not his heart to be coarcted?...because as our sensitive apprehension hath her seate in the brayne...so the affectations and passions, in proportionate manner, must have some corporall organ and instrument, and what more convenient that the heart?...the heart endued with most fiery spirite is, fitteth best for affecting" (IX.33). Of course, no opinion was ever without contradiction, and this point was often disputed. Phineas Fletcher's *The Purple Island* addresses this debate in Canto III, noting that only "some say" that "Love hath his habitation" in this place (*stanza* 10). The significance of the heart to the passions was already being suggested in the classical period. Plato ascribed the soul's faculty of courage and anger to the "part of the body near the heart" (Levi 8), and, while "Renaissance teachings on the passions had not been merely a revival of classical doctrine" (23), Plato's contentions seem to have had a lasting influence.

[145] Dorothy Farr sexualises the event even further, claiming the dagger on which Annabella's heart hangs is a sex symbol implying absolute possession and, more important, a gathering together in a strong visual impact, the sense of physical, moral, and spiritual violation which runs through the course of the entire play (51-2).

and to the mind" (Erickson, *Language of the Heart* 11, emphasis original). Giovanni's slaughter of his sister's source of passion has already been exemplified. However, his insane display of this organ suggests he is also flaunting the literal murder of a mind he had already poisoned with his sexual persuasion.

What is interesting is the contrast between Annabella's rebellion from her fate and the classical Jocasta/Iokaste, who instead bows to her destiny. Whereas Annabella is afraid to face her fate—she "durst not say I loved, nor scarcely think it" (Ford, *'Tis Pity* I.ii.246-7)—Iokaste is alarmingly unafraid, resolved to accept the motions of Fortune's wheel regardless of how it affects her: "Why should we fear, seeing that man is ruled / By chance, and ther is room for no clear forethought? / No; live at random, live as best one can" (Sophocles, Hall trans., 977-9). The Roman Jocasta is also resigned to fate: "The Destinies are in fault. Blame them. Alas, alas, not we" (Seneca V.ii). Until the moment of her suicide, the Greek Iokaste responds emotionally to her fate, but does not seem to fight against it. At least one translation seems to emphasise her acceptance, noting that she moves "In passionate silence" (Sophocles, Fitts and Fitzgerald trans., 1241). Cries are not heard from her until she closes the door behind her to commit herself to death, and her fateful words remind the reader/spectator of how the trajectory of a life was predestined:

> She made her way
> Straight to her chamber; she barred fast the doors
> And called on Laius, these long years dead,
> Remembering their bygone procreation.
> 'Through this did you meet death yourself, and leave
> To me, the mother, child-bearing accursed
> To my own child.' She cried aloud upon
> The bed where she had borne a double brood,

Husband from husband, children from a child (Hall trans., 1242-50).[146]

Annabella's life, like Jocasta/Iokaste's, ends in a premature death, prompted by an incestuous relationship. However, her actions and her consequent remorse are significantly different from that of Sophocles' Iokaste. Fate perhaps determined Annabella's incestuous love, but her own resolve determines her lack of resistance to her murder at the hands of Giovanni. She contemplates her earlier, sexual pleasures and states that from "my fortunes now I take my leave. / Thou, precious Time, that swiftly rid'st pin post / Over the world, to finish up the race / Of my last fate, here stay thy restless course" (Ford, *'Tis Pity* V.i.3-6). Her actions outside of fate begin with her remorse, which indicates perhaps Ford's Christian revision of the *Oedipus* myth. While Article XVII of the *Thirty-Nine Articles* of the Church of England exhorts people to "walk religiously in good works," because to do so "doth greatly confirm their faith of eternal salvation," the route to salvation is not determined by humankind, but by God, for: "He hath constantly decreed by His counsel *secret to us*, to deliver from curse and damnation, those *whom He hath chosen*" (Green, *Thirty-Nine Articles* 110-111, emphases added). Annabella's dance outside of Fortune's wheel runs parallel with Ford's overstepping the boundaries of predestination preached by the Church of England. At one point in the play, Annabella even uses fate's decree in a mocking sense, as though she no longer even takes such a thing seriously. In the scene in which Soranzo castigates her for hiding her pregnancy from him, she assumes a tone of levity, beginning with mockery at his fate—"Beastly man! Why, 'tis thy fate"—and finishing with songs and enigmatic quotes (IV.iii.15ff.). John Cotta, an English "doctor in physike" writing in 1612, perhaps best articulates Annabella's position, both as a "mere puppet" and as an agent of her own determining:

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[146] Hall makes a note in her edition that Iokaste is not given direct speech at this point in the original (n.91, p.169), and indeed the Fitts/Fitzgerald translation only narrates the events (lines 1244-49).

> For although the heauens doe worke by their hidden power and influence...yet are their effectual productions thereof in men themselues variously alterable...There is no man that can so farre deny himselfe a man, as to make doubt of free arbitrarie choice in himselfe to do or not to do...For if heauenly influences compel or force mens actions, and their wils be led and not free, uniustly any man shall be vniust...but God is iust...and therefore mens actions are their owne, moued from an inward power (96-7).

Cotta's words resonate with Pico della Mirandola's remarks in *On the Dignity of Man*, with which I began my conclusion of *The Sea Voyage* (Chapter 5). Both are concerned with the self-fashioning of human beings, by which they compromise the importance of the role of destiny. This autonomy, we learn, is destructive, at least for the women in these plays. Annabella is literally destroyed when she defies her fate and refuses the advances of her brother, and the commonwealth of women in *The Sea Voyage* is figuratively destroyed through the restoration of patriarchy.

Desiring Divinity

A persistent theme through the lamentations of these fated (or otherwise) women is that a force greater than themselves undercuts their autonomy. The gods are of a station that permits incestuous relationships. Prominent throughout *'Tis Pity* is the regret that Annabella is merely human and Giovanni's kin. Significantly, she does not reproach herself in this way—rather, it is the Friar and Giovanni who continuously remind her of both her consanguinity and humanity.

Giovanni is acutely aware of the moral difficulties of desiring his sister. His discourse with Annabella is filled with frequent reference to pagan deities, as though he is hoping to confer a different status on her—one of divinity, which would permit them to transcend the mortal laws against incest. In this sense he is himself similar to the classical Byblis, who

similarly rationalises her situation: "The Gods are farre better case than wee. / For why? The Gods have matched with theyr susters as wee see" (Ovid, *Metamorphoses* VIII.590-91). He has taken on the moral relativism expressed so often in Ovidian soliloquies (Milowicki 21). In their first exchange, Giovanni elevates Annabella to a station surpassing even Jupiter's sister/wife:

> The poets feign, I read,
> That Juno for her forehead did exceed
> All other goddesses: but I durst swear
> Your forehead exceeds hers, as hers did theirs (Ford, *'Tis Pity* I.ii.186-9).

Further, he likens Annabella's eyes to the life-giving power of Promethean fire (I.ii.191). His reference to Prometheus bears further significance than flattery, if one recalls that Prometheus was thought of as the defender of humankind against the gods' dangerously arbitrary supremacy—his bringing fire to humankind demonstrates this compassion for them. More importantly still, the suggestion that Prometheus may even have been the *creator* of humankind (Ovid, *Metamorphoses* I.95ff.), makes the comparison with Annabella particularly noteworthy. Giovanni believes that loving Annabella is his fate—"'tis my destiny / That you must either love, or I must die" (I.ii.224-5)—and his life seems to truly depend on the promethean-like life-giving power of his sister. Annabella seems more successful than Giovanni at refusing to succumb to this fate—she moves contrarily to a plan written in the stars by eventually shunning this love, and in this sense the "Promethean fire" of her eyes is not her only likeness to the mythological figure who, like herself, defied the gods.

Giovanni refers again to the gods' liberal passion in the second act: "Thus hung Jove on Leda's neck, / And sucked divine ambrosia from her lips" (II.i.16-17). In the same speech he elevates himself above all men—even kings—as though he, like Jove, deserves this right.

Leda and Jove were the parents of Helen of Troy, who is remembered for precipitating the most famous epic conflict of the classical world. Giovanni could not have known at the time of his reference to Leda, that he and Annabella would conceive a child, in whose conception lay the tragedy of its parents and the larger Parmesan society.

Giovanni's emphasis on Annabella's transcendence of mortal status continues in the third act. When he is forced to overhear a conversation between Soranzo and Annabella, he wills her, in an aside, "be not all woman, think on me" (III.ii.11). In one sense, this can be read as simply a jealous man believing that his lover, as a weak woman susceptible to flattery, may forget her vow to her lover. However, the lines take on further significance when one recalls Giovanni has been giving Annabella a divine licence to incest. Is he perhaps not merely wishing her to defy the stereotypes of her sex that would allow her to succumb to flattery, but also willing her to join the ranks of incestuous immortals?

Annabella's identity is not only constructed into something divine—her status as 'sister' also undergoes refiguring. As the lovers emerge from their chamber at the opening of the second act, Giovanni tells Annabella that she is "no more sister now" (i.1). This is a stark contrast to the scene where he confesses his love, and refers to her directly as "sister" six times (I.ii). Despite his rejecting her sisterly position in the second act, he refers to himself in that same disowning speech as "thy brother" (5), and she, compliantly, never verbally disowns him as a brother. This linguistic choice would suggest that, while Giovanni feels himself to be no longer a sinner, Annabella's role as transgressor is less wholly eliminated—he is not making love to his sister, and yet he is still her brother, and therefore she is committing an incestuous act, while his own transcends human morality. As an emblem of the early modern perceptions of 'woman,' Annabella embodies the lust-driven whore—the double standard of the male-female sexual relationship is highlighted in the relation of brother to non-sister in *'Tis Pity*. It is the same unequal shares of grief that we observed in *Bussy*

D'Ambois, where Tamyra's guilt was great and Bussy's nearly non-existent (see pp. 42-50). Annabella's awareness of Giovanni as her brother demonstrates her greater guilt than his, who cares little about their consanguinity, or at least has resigned himself more completely to this fate.

The 'lovers' are not alone on stage together again, until the fifth act, when Giovanni, who has approached the madness that Annabella already feared in him in the first act, is violently jealous. The tender words of Act II—"no more sister now, / But love, a name more gracious" (II.i.1-2)—are rendered false. Now that she is denying him as a lover, he chooses to re-establish the primogenital power-relation of brother-over-sister. He is no longer the Petrarchan lover, who says his unrequited love gives him a "tortured soul" and a body in which he has "suppressed the hidden flames / That almost have consumed me" (I.ii.209; 219-20). He charges her rather with being "a faithless sister" (V.v.9). Giovanni's neo-platonic rationale of their transcendence of societal convention has proven, it would seem, a mere excuse to con his sister into his bed. No longer have his fates laid out their plans for him (I.ii.139); instead he laughs at such a notion: "why, I hold fate / Clasped in my fist" (V.v.11-12). Brother and sister have both acted outside of the arena of their 'fate' to love each other, and it results in both their deaths. However, in their deaths they have resumed the hierarchical structure Parmesan society expects of its citizens—Annabella's fate, no longer determined by the gods, is now governed by her brother.

Ironically, Giovanni himself admits that Annabella has found the platonic transcendence he hoped for them to experience on earth. In Roland Huebert's study of John Ford, he articulates her experience as Annabella having "transcended this narrow little world" (*John Ford*, 90). He is speaking of her soul and Giovanni's escaping social boundaries in order to find psychological and spiritual rebirth, propelling the lovers "psychologically toward a private Elysium" (90). Perhaps this is what Giovanni is thinking when he speaks of her

heart as one "trimmed in reeking blood / That triumphs over death" (Ford, *'Tis Pity* V.vi.9-10). I see it as a self-transcendence, wherein she has escaped her brother's fateful ruling of her life. Her spiritual freedom—in isolation from hierarchical order—begins with her separation from her brother. Annabella dies asking Heaven for mercy on Giovanni, but not forgiving him herself. She is glad for the death—as I stated above, she does not resist it—but there is no indication that, like other lovers, the difficulties of this life will be resolved in another.[147] Rather Annabella dies, emphasising Giovanni's place as "brother" and telling him he is "unkind, unkind," (V.v.93). The repetition seems to indicate her troubled feelings as she now views their sexual relationship as 'unkind'—unnatural—implying she can no longer approve of such a relationship, and must terminate it (see 56n. for definition of 'unkind.')

Annabella, Love Melancholy, and the Erotic Nature of 'Openness'

Even though, as Robert Burton remarked, "Diseases of the head which pertaine to the substance of the Braine it selfe...*Frensie, Lethargie...madnesse, weake memory*" were mental illnesses that affected both genders, melancholy was typically reserved as a diagnosis for men, because it was understood to be an elite disorder that transcended usual mental instability (Burton 8). Philosophers and physicians of the early modern period do not deny that women experience it—it is merely less common. However, it was generally considered that women who were affected by Love Melancholy suffered much more acutely than men: "Of sexes both, but men more often...yet women misaffected, are farre more violent, and grievously troubled" (Burton 33).

Early modern writers agree nearly unanimously that the root of love melancholy is desire (Burton 416; Ferrand 38). Further, the desirer does not necessarily discriminate along expected lines, such as class or physical beauty (Burton 451ff.; Ferrand 31ff.), an indicator

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[147] In contrast, we will see, for example in Shirley's *The Cardinal*, that Rosaura anticipates being reunited with Alvarez when she dies (V.iii.291).

that both Annabella and Giovanni could be affected by it, since neither heed norms prohibiting consanguineous sex. Early symptoms of love melancholy include "feare and sorrow...anxiety, doubt, care" (Burton 514), although the sufferer might not have even been conscious of its roots. Annabella clearly experiences these emotions before she has ever vocalised her attraction to Giovanni: "My soul is full of heaviness and fear" (Ford, *'Tis Pity* I.ii.138).

In an essay on mad lovers in the early modern period, Alan Walworth points out that "this indeterminate fear anticipates Freud's description of Melancholy as 'unknown loss,' " and further highlights Freud's metaphor for melancholy as an "open wound" (54). Indeed, wound imagery, especially a focus on blood and the open heart, is common throughout *'Tis Pity*, and the play closes with a very graphic wounding—Annabella's torn out heart dripping off the end of Giovanni's dagger. The word "blood" occurs more than thirty times in the play, and "rip" and "unrip" are used twelve times in Ford's collected works, with an especial emphasis on tearing in *'Tis Pity* (Hopkins, *John Ford* 130-1): "by the love / I bore my Annabella whilst she lived, / These hands have from her bosom ripped this heart" (Ford, *'Tis Pity* V.vi.58-60). Annabella's mutilated body—her literal openness—represents a general and more figurative theme of openness in the play.

Peter Stallybrass points out that the "patriarchal construction of women as tenuously held property involves the fear of a specifically female 'openness' at such sites as 'the mouth, chastity, the threshold of a house' " ("Patriarchal Territories" 58). Coppélia Kahn supports this hypothesis about the root of such fear in an essay discussing the way women were perceived as sexually promiscuous in Jacobean drama. She makes two points directly relevant to *'Tis Pity*. The first is that the imagery of boundless female lust is in opposition to the image of the closed body and locked house, and the second that if a woman is not exclusive to one man, she is thought common to many men, like a prostitute ("Whores and

Wives" 252). At one level the notion of a woman juxtaposed with, or held captive by, a closed house marks the anxiety men felt over the potential for women to appear outside the domestic sphere. On a more psycho-sexual level, men were attracted to the 'openness' of a woman (one who was not portrayed by locked house imagery): there was something erotic in her transgression.

Significantly, *'Tis Pity* is set with a focus on the domestic sphere. Florio's entrance early in the play places importance on the domestic setting: "What mean these sudden broils so near my doors? / Have you not other places but my house / To vent the spleen of your disordered bloods" (I.ii.20-2). Immediately following Florio's rant, Annabella and Putana "enter above" (I.ii.*S.D.*). Annabella is on the open balcony of her father's house, overlooking the street, poised, as it were, to leave the domestic realm—transgressive both sexually (i.e. erotically), because of the 'openness' this placing suggests, and socially, because of her literal abandonment of a 'woman's place.' She further notices the object of her love below her (I.ii.129)—she is situated above him, literally embodying the 'woman on top' metaphor, and has fixed her gaze on him, both of which are inversions of gendered norms. When she descends to him, he further makes himself vulnerable to her. Rather than only finding her openness erotic, he offers her the opportunity for her to find equal eroticism in his own openness. He desires her to open him up—to create wounds in him—so that she can see his love for her: "And here's my breast, strike home. / Rip up my bosom, there thou shalt behold / A heart in which is writ the truth I speak" (I.ii.205-7). Annabella cannot continue to be assigned such power in a patriarchal society, however, and by the play's end, it is her wounds which are the focus, and her character which is labelled "whore."

Annabella does not suffer purely from her own love melancholy. She is also a victim of Giovanni's. Lovesick youths place a burden onto their beloveds: the object of attraction must sexually gratify the melancholic lover in order to rescue him (presumed pronoun) from

certain death (Beecher, "Antiochus and Stratonice" 14). Giovanni places this exact obligation on his sister: "Must I now live or die," to which she responds, "Live" (Ford, *'Tis Pity* I.ii.240). Consistent with her strength of character, however, Annabella refuses to let the responsibility lie solely with her. They mutually vow, "Love me, or kill me" (I.i.252; 255).

As a literary type Annabella is *la belle dame sans merci*, in the sense of her power over the lovesick Giovanni. Beecher points out, however, that a woman in this circumstance is also mere chattel, where her chastity is bartered and her affections violated to the tyranny of a man's desire and to the will of those who control and possess her ("Antiochus and Stratonice" 115). The heroine of *'Tis Pity* is certainly such a victim, as her suitors fight for her, her father uses her as property to barter, and her brother's mental health depends on her.

Annabella is further victimised by a power from which she is barred, but to which her brother has access: the power of language to express her innermost desires. Even though he relinquishes the decision regarding their relationship to Annabella, Giovanni has been permitted to articulate their love in a way that Annabella never dared. She must rather find an outlet for her emotion merely in sighs and tears:

> For every sigh that thou hast spent for me
> I have sighed ten; for every tear shed twenty:
> And not so much for that I loved, *as that*
> *I durst not say I loved, nor scarcely think it* (I.ii.244-47, emphasis added).

Thinking and speaking are privileges restricted to men—Putana suffers the ultimate penalty for daring to do either (discussed below, pp. 218-20). Annabella is like the classical Byblis, who finds there is no sexual language available to her in which she can express her feelings:

> Her right hand holdes the pen, her left dooth hold the empty wax.
> She ginnes. Shee doutes, shee wryghtes: shee in the tables findeth lacks.
> Shee notes, shee blurres, dislikes, and likes: and chaungeth this for that.

Shee layes away the booke, and takes it up. Shee wotes not what

She would herself. What ever thing shee myndeth for too doo

Misliketh her (Ovid, *Metamorphoses* VIII.623-28).

Like Byblis, Annabella suffers from the lack of an adequate sexual language, and, what is more, a lack of recourse to words which will adequately express her emotion. Further, Annabella suffers a fear of language in general. Time does not heal this linguistic void. Late in the course of events in *'Tis Pity*, Annabella explains to her father, "I fear much more than I can speak" (V.iii.53). Finally, for Annabella, complete silence is imposed by death. Forced by Giovanni's love to juggle several conflicting ideals (i.e. sister/lover; dutiful wife/dutiful daughter), the living Annabella can be none of these. Therefore, Giovanni concludes that she must die, so she cannot betray him. In other words, she can only be a silent image of what others desire her to be: an angel or a whore.[148] These Giovanni secures through her death—she is forced into silence, in which, to Giovanni, her eternal presence is assured (Finke 230-33).

Annabella and Wound-Imagery: A Deconstructed Construction

The wound imagery I have analysed above need not necessarily be entirely about openness in terms of sexuality, and I will conclude this portion of the study of Annabella with this point. Wounds and scars "visibly record the collision of individual bodies with political forces through war or social conflict." They are "signifiers that construct the individual while deconstructing his or her body" (Marshall 100). This seems to me to be directly relevant to the issue of Annabella's wounds.

Giovanni, for all his talk about their double soul, orchestrates Annabella's life. When she dares to resist him, he kills her. First, Giovanni constructs her: she does not act upon her

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[148] McCabe suggests the fulfilment of these conflicting roles simultaneously satisfies Giovanni's platonic spirituality and base-human eroticism (230).

own passion until he wills it (Act II), and she prizes her life "as nothing" (IV.iii.94) if it means having to reveal to her husband the identity of her lover. Her impregnation by Giovanni signifies the life that he gives her: her empty womb represents her empty life, and its quickening her fuller life. But he who has filled her with life simultaneously deconstructs her: his "dagger's point ploughed up / Her fruitful womb" (V.ii.33-4). The blazon of compliments by which he anatomises Annabella in an effort to praise her in the language of courtly love (see, for example, I.ii.190-201) are grotesquely literalised when he rips her heart out with his sword. He boasts about the deconstructing of his own construction, wishing others could have "beheld the rape of life and beauty / *Which I have acted*" (V.vi.21-21, emphasis added). He is her self-acclaimed "most glorious executioner" (34).

Putana

Putana and Annabella

One of the best ways to consider Putana—this comically shocking figure with a tragically shocking end—is by what she is not. The play seems particularly to juxtapose Putana and her charge, Annabella. Their polarised constitutions are manifested in their very first exchange. Putana, ever jocular, muses over Annabella's potential suitors, and their fight for her hand in marriage. When she discusses a potential partner for Annabella (I.ii.63), she is not merely slighted, but she also makes herself a completely undesired presence to the melancholic Annabella: "my thoughts are fixed on other ends; / Would you would leave me" (68-9). Putana refuses to leave her charge—a loyalty which proves futile later—and continues with her sexually charged speech. Putana is an earthy, lusty, woman, whose morals represent Ford's view of society's baseness. Further, her pragmatism and straightforward speech sets her up as a foil to the other characters' more elevated language. She is the utterer of such pithy maxims as, "Commend a man for his qualities, / but take a husband as he is a plain-sufficient, naked man: / such a one is for your bed," and, later, "They say a / fool's

bauble is a lady's playfellow" (I.ii.95-7; 122-3). Annabella disdains Putana's sexual levity, and concludes that, "Sure the woman took her morning's draught too soon" (I.ii.99). This dialogue, which would suggest her distaste for her surroundings, indicates Annabella's perceived superiority to Parmesan society, and it comes as an ironic shock that her sexuality is equally morally questionable when set beside her neighbouring citizens' lifestyles.

One point that Putana and Annabella verbally agree on is the imbecilic nature of the latter's potential suitor, Bergetto (I.ii.118-20). It is not surprising, therefore, that they both support Giovanni's declaration of love, since Giovanni represents the intellect and melancholy temperament that the comically idiotic Bergetto lacks entirely. Putana hopes that she has "tutored [Annabella] better" (122) than to love a man such as Bergetto. Putana's and Annabella's uniformity on this point serves as justification for their collusive support for Giovanni, despite their continuous bickering over other questions of morality.

Even when Putana and her charge are not deliberately arguing, but rather merely playing with words, their language reveals their polarised personalities. Annabella, upon sleeping with Giovanni, exclaims to Putana, "O guardian, what a paradise of joy / Have I passed *over*," to which Putana's quick reply is, "Nay, what a paradise of joy have you passed *under*" (II.i.39-40; 41, emphases added). In this same speech, despite Putana's apparent representation of Parmesan society, indications of her own social rebellion become apparent. She is not morally offended by Annabella's incestuous act, but instead comfortably rationalises it: "what though he be your brother? Your brother's a man" (43). She alienates herself even further from social convention by suggesting that morality infringes on her right to what she views as her personal autonomy. She would forego any moral sanctions, except "for the speech of the people; else 'twere / nothing" (47-8).

Putana, like Annabella, is finally victimised. She can only challenge social, moral and gender boundaries to a certain extent before society reneges the privilege. Putana's trouble begins with her libertinism, a precedent which is found in such classical nurses as Myrrha's nurse (Ovid, *Metamorphoses* X.430ff.), and libertinism is, if any one's, a masculine privilege. There are ways in which Putana maintains a certain femininity, although even in this she borders on threatening this classification. The particular femininity that she exhibits intimidates men because it indicates a knowledge that they lack: this is evident in her early recognition of Annabella's pregnancy. Certain men have already diagnosed Annabella's illness as the maid's-sickness[149] (Vasques in III.ii.82-3 and the quack doctor in III.iv.8-9). Putana, in contrast, recognises that Annabella "is with child" (6), and when her diagnosis is questioned, Putana defends herself by stating her prognosis:

> How do I know't? Am I at these years ignorant what the meanings of qualms and water-pangs be? Of changing of colours, queasiness of stomachs, pukings, and another thing that I could name? Do not, for her and your credit's sake spend the time in asking how, and which way, 'tis so; she is quick, upon my word (III.iii.10-15).

Putana's gynaecological expertise makes her a threat and, like many midwives or wise women, she is persecuted as a witch in the fourth act (Findlay 26-27), where she is referred to as a "damnable hag" (Ford, *'Tis Pity* iii.224).

Putana's eyes are to be gouged out as a punishment for being indicted as a witch. In this circumstance the 'blind-seer' image becomes inverted. Putana loses her eyes because she has seen too much truth, an image contraposited to the norm, which would be that she did not

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[149] 'Maid's-sickness' is a variant of 'greensickness,' which is explained in Chapter 1 (see 35n.)

see truth until she lost her eyes. A powerful example of the latter, more typical situation is Gloucester in Shakespeare's *King Lear*, who remarks, "I stumbled when I saw. Full oft 'tis seen / Our means secure us, and our mere defects / Prove our commodities" (IV.i.19-21). Putana has not seen more truth than Annabella permitted her to see, but Annabella is hardly one to confine her tutor to the binds of social conventions for women. The men, however, once they have extracted knowledge from Putana, make themselves like God in Eden after the Fall, and place a curse on her: they condemn her, "for example's sake" to be burned outside the gates of the city (Ford, *'Tis Pity* V.vi.135). She, like Eve, found that acquiring knowledge sealed her death.

The Jacobean poet and educator, Aemilia Lanyer, could have been speaking of Putana when she wrote in *Salve Deus Rex Iudeorum* (1611), "Yet Men will boast of Knowledge, which he tooke / From *Eves* faire hand, as from a learned Booke" (807-808). Putana's knowledge is a threat to the men she encounters because in their ignorance they are made inferior to her, and their vengeance requires discovering the identity of Annabella's adulterer. Vasques explains: "to know what / ferret it was that haunted your cony-berry, there's the cunning" (Ford, *'Tis Pity* IV.iii.153-55). That Parmesan society actually punishes Putana for having this knowledge has less to do with the circumstances of the play then it has to do with social convention that women with knowledge must be suppressed.[150] The subversion of Putana's expected femininity—her accumulation of knowledge—destroys and kills her.

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[150] In 1540 Juan Luis Vives noted, "learned women be suspected of many, as who saith the subtility of learning should be a nourishment for the maliciousness of their nature" (168), but the idea that women's knowledge should not be fostered was not unanimous. Many men and women argued for a certain liberty in all areas for women. However, here is where social theory and public practice diverged, as it did in so many circumstances. Take, for example, the arguments about the husband's authority in the domestic sphere. Thomas Gataker, in 1637, argued, "the wise man maketh such gadding abroad a note of a light and lewd housewife" (qtd. in Capp 9). However, the reality was women *needed* to 'gad abroad,' at the very least as part of their domestic duties. Conversely, where authorities such as preachers argued that, even though husbands had the right to assert authority in the household, they were not to practise violence against their wives; the homily of Matrimony "lamented 'common sort of men' who considered moderation in domestic relations to be 'womanish cowardice'" (Capp 12).

The 'blind-seer' image is not the only inverted representation. There is also an inversion of Oedipal self-punishment, a comparison begging to be made in light of the play's incestuous theme. Oedipus, in horror at the knowledge he has gained about the incestuous act he has committed, and the chaos that follows in its wake, gouges out his eyes with the pins from the brooch of his dead mother/wife's garment. In this act he combines those two elements which invert Putana's experiences: he is the instigator of his own punishment, and he becomes a blind seer:

> The King ripped from her gown the golden brooches
> That were her ornament, and raised them, and plunged them down
> Straight into his own eyeballs, crying, 'No more,
> 'No more shall you look on the misery about me,
> 'The horrors of my own doing! Too long have you known
> 'The faces of those whom I should never have seen,
> 'Too long been blind to those for whom I was searching!
> 'From this hour, go in darkness!' (Sophocles, Hall trans. 1268-75).

Oedipus is able to make a choice concerning how he will handle the knowledge he has acquired. Putana has not been given such liberty—her punishment is chosen for her, and she has not, unlike Oedipus, even been racked with guilt over her acquisition of knowledge. She remains amoral to the very end. Oedipus both blinds and exiles himself (Sophocles 1290); Putana is blinded by others, and faces her execution outside of the city, in a parallel banishment, but one that is not self-ordained.

Hippolita

An Unconsciously Gendered Revenger

Revengers in early modern drama are rarely revolutionaries. They are not typically concerned with the reconstruction of society at large. Rather, they feel that they have been

specifically wronged, and they desire simply to redress the injury done either to themselves or to a loved one. Evadne, for example, in *The Maid's Tragedy*, "does not free anyone from the restrictive social behavior identified with biological sex" (Allman 143). Evadne's action—regicide—does "reverse poles of authority" (143), but she does not do this *for the sake of* reversing these poles; it is a self-motivated revenge with no other desire than to seek justice on the wrong brought on herself. Despite, or possibly in spite of, their arguably egotistic approach to reform, revengers often do end up shifting the values of society in some shape or form. Evadne's action leads to the King's replacement by his brother, Lysippus, who uses his brother's regicide as "a fair example" to himself "To rule with temper" (Beaumont and Fletcher, *Maid's Tragedy* V.iii.289-90). A consequential social change often occurs because the revenge plans have been skewed, and the havoc that they have wreaked in the process creates a certain societal resolve to change; however, this is typically inconsequential to the revenger, who has in many cases died before this point in the action. *'Tis Pity's* Hippolita is no exception to this rule. Her desire for revenge is ignited by the wrong Soranzo has done her, for whom she believed she had indirectly terminated her husband's life and with whom she conducted an affair. Despite this, Hippolita has done a service to women—not necessarily because women should follow her example and perform violent acts of unsuccessful revenge, but rather because she has further blurred this distinction between the clear roles society designed for women and men. By becoming a self-acclaimed revenger she has allied herself with the male characters in the play, and a whole history of men who have conducted vengeful acts in the name of their own hurt pride or honour. In this sense her revenge is not simply against Soranzo, but rather against a patriarchal hierarchy which relegates women to passive roles. Because she has not consciously taken this task upon herself, I refer to her as an 'unconsciously gendered revenger.' She has celebrated what can

now be recognised as the levelling nature of vengeful desire. Like the tyranny of death, the tyranny of injustice plagues all sexes and all classes.

In an essay on Jacobean subjectivity, Jonathan Dollimore considers modes of behaviour like Hippolita's to be different from consciously revolutionary behaviour, which he rather identifies as "humanist transgression" ("Subjectivity" 56). He uses the term "humanist" because it reinforces a philosophy of individualism which suggests that a deliberate rebellion from a particular pre-existing framework will enable the rebel to extract her authentic self. In contrast, unconscious rebellion, in the form of self-centred revenge—such as Hippolita's—is a form of "transgressive reinscription…a mode of transgression which seeks not an escape from existing structures, but rather a subversive reinscription within them," (57); this reinscription, in the process, dislocates those very structures on which the rebellious act is situated. Dollimore does not confine his analysis to revengers; in fact, they are mentioned only in passing in his essay. More specifically, Hippolita is never mentioned in his work. However, she appears to me to be an archetypal example of his 'transgressive reinscriber' because of her double role of revenger and female revenger. She is, in Dollimore's terms, the "assertive woman who simultaneously appropriates, exploits and undermines masculine discourse" (57).

Hippolita's revenge speech situates her with the male characters in this play, each of whom delivers similar speeches. Her loquacity is in stark contrast to the other female characters who never utter a word of revenge.[151] Philotis, Bergetto's faithful (if brief) partner, is particularly juxtaposed with Hippolita. Philotis's only mention of revenge is in fear of it—"Alas, I fear / You mean some strange revenge" (Ford, *'Tis Pity* II.iii.14-15)—and when

[151] It is true that Annabella does threaten Soranzo with revenge, but in her case she is not planning on being the agent of revenge herself; rather, she is stoical in the face of Soranzo's death-threat because she knows her male family members (and lover in her case) will avenge her: "I dare thee to the worst: strike, and strike home; / I leave revenge behind, and thou shalt feel it" (Ford, *'Tis Pity* IV.iii.70-71). Annabella is more like Lucrece, trusting the men who love her to execute revenge on her behalf.

circumstances try her philosophy against such violent methods, she proves consistently apprehensive. Her only words upon Bergetto's senseless murder are of sorrow for her lost lover—and the last utterance she offers does not suggest assertive vengeance, but rather posthumous subservience: "O my master, my master, my master" (III.vii.38). Following this, her only re-appearance is in a brief scene in act four in which she hears a speech by her uncle, Richardetto, about Hippolita's skewed revenge, and then, in a striking juxtaposition to this self-assertive woman, obediently agrees to become a nun (IV.ii).

Despite Richardetto's frustration with Hippolita's revenge, he has already himself plotted revenge against the same figure, Soranzo (III.v.22); indeed, so have Grimaldi (II.iii.52-4) and Giovanni (V.iii.61-2). In turn, Soranzo plans his own revenge against Giovanni, who is his rival for Annabella's sexual attentions (IV.iii.141). The only woman, amongst all these men, to find linguistic recourse to her violent impulses is Hippolita:

> How foolishly this beast contemns his fate,
> And shuns the use of that which I more scorn
> Than once I loved, his love. But let him go;
> My vengeance shall give comfort to this woe (II.ii.101-04).

Hippolita's thirst for revenge is inadequately quenched: she dies before ever knowing that Giovanni will perform the much-coveted murder of Soranzo. Further, her desired vengeance is executed not in her name, but in Giovanni's. She is, in Vasques' words, "like a firebrand that hath / kindled others and burnt thyself" (IV.i.72-3). His words imply insult, but he has in fact anticipated a central idea in Dollimore's theory. Her death does not make her a martyr for any cause, because she had no cause outside of revenging herself; however, her 'kindling' of others is an important point. She did not attempt to overthrow her society's structure—rather, she attempted to use it for her own vengeful ends.

A revenger is a victim of circumstances, in that she or he feels forced into privately prosecuting an act for which there seems no recourse to justice. Katharine Eisaman Maus describes the revenger as one who takes matters "into his own hands because the institutions by which criminals pay for their offences are either systematically defective or unable to cope with some particularly difficult situation" (*Four Revenge Tragedies* ix). The revenger's work is of an aberrant nature because it does not appeal to societal norms for justice—on the contrary, it places the onus of extracting justice onto itself. Hippolita is doubly deviant, so to speak, because she is a woman taking on a man's prerogative (i.e., activity), and she is a citizen infringing on a civic authority's jurisdiction. It is necessary for her to take justice into her own hands because as a woman, she is not given a voice to speak her case. At least, such is the contention of the law, contrary to which expectations she proves to exhibit an inherent verbal resplendence.

Hippolita's 'Amazonian' Tendencies

Hippolita is, of course, the namesake of the famous queen of the Amazons—a point almost too obvious to draw attention to. However, I have done so in order to dwell for a moment on the thematic significance her name holds for *'Tis Pity*, as a link between the classical and early modern worlds. The Hippolyta of classical mythology was not only an Amazon, but was also the mother of Hippolytus, later to be the victim of his stepmother's incestuous advances. The incest parallel stops here—Ford's Hippolita has little or no direct involvement in the play's exploration of incest, but perhaps it sheds some light on why Ford chose that particular name.[152]

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[152] The role of Hippolyta, the Amazon Queen, in the classical world is brief, and largely peripheral to the male characters that surround her (see Plutarch's *Lives* XXVI-VII, where she is mentioned as the "Amazon who Theseus married"). Further, her character in a play nearly contemporary to Ford's also suffers banishment to a marginal role, in Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (c.1595; printed in 1600 and 1619). She was wooed in violence and abuse, forced to relinquish her power as Amazon Queen (I.i.16), and then her role becomes nearly as marginal as the Amazonian boundaries from whence she came.

Ford's Hippolita is notably more vindictive than the Hippolyta of the classical world. Plutarch relates that in some myths (he does not specify which), when Hercules invaded the latter's queendom, a treaty of peace was made through her agency (*Lives* XXVII.2). In contrast, Ford's Hippolita shows no signs of grace in her character; rather, she dies cursing Soranzo, the man whom she once saw as her prospective partner. In this respect she transcends the role Hippolyta is confined to elsewhere in early modern drama. Celeste Turner Wright claims that "Shakespeare, Beaumont and Fletcher, like Chaucer, portray [the classical Hippolyta] only as a tamed and contented bride...except she is no weeping spinster when war is mentioned and she likes to talk of hunting" ("Amazons" 437). Ford, in contrast, portrays a woman who dies decidedly single, and hardly tamed or contented. No husband has "shrunk her back into the bounds prescribed for woman by nature," (Wright, "Amazons" 437) like some of the other Amazon queen's namesakes.

Ford's Hippolita does have the man-hating, battle-loving characteristics of the Amazonians, even if she is more interested than they in the hedonistic side of sexual liaisons. Her sexual interest in men, however, a preoccupation which distinguishes her from the mythological warrior-women, has turned to hate. Of course, such a reaction is not untypical in jilted lovers, and offers further insight into her revenge motives. Now that Hippolita's love has turned to hate she raises the angry battle cry of her classical predecessors. Her strong character is emphasised before she ever makes her first stage appearance. Soranzo has entered the stage *solo* and is disturbed by a scuffle "*within*" (Ford, *'Tis Pity* II.ii.*S.D.*). The "rude intrusion" which "interrupts" his peace (21) turns out to be Hippolita, who has 'wronged her modesty' in actively pursuing Soranzo. This 'Amazon' challenges the androcentric dream of the soft-spoken woman before coming onstage. When Soranzo asks Vasques who is causing such a row, Hippolita speaks for herself, with a brusque and monosyllabic, " 'Tis I" (II.ii.25). From a performance standpoint, the delivery of this line

could be an immediate sign of her tenacity. It could be delivered melodramatically, comedically, or villainously, any of which would demand immediate attention after the saccharin speeches of Annabella and Giovanni in the previous scene, and the sensual and Petrarchan tongue of Soranzo directly prior to her entrance. In contrast, Hippolita's strong character is reinforced by the vehement words of her first speech: "Do you know me now? Look, perjured man" (26), followed shortly thereafter with vengeful words:

> know, Soranzo
> I have a spirit doth as much distaste
> The slavery of fearing thee, as thou
> Dost loathe the memory of what hath passed (41-44).

Her transgression of befitting utterance appropriately precedes the havoc she wreaks by her vengeful nature, and her words establish her as a revenge character, seeking to right the wrongs done against her. Both her speech and her actions emphasize her resistance to subjecting herself to the female expectations of silence and passivity. Sartre said, "At the roots of theatre there is eloquence" (qtd. in Kerrigan 28). John Kerrigan affirms this, and adds that revenge tragedy in particular springs from eloquent roots, that the powerful expression of its characters is part of the action (28). Hippolita's revenge speeches are indeed eloquent, but it is the curse she utters at her death which offers Ford an opportunity to show off the possibility of feminine linguistic power. Her *puissance* lies not only in her eloquence, but also in the prophetic nature of the speech: among other curses she wishes that Annabella's "womb bring forth / Monsters" (Ford, *'Tis Pity* IV.i.97-8), and the audience, who knows that Annabella is pregnant by her brother, can appreciate the potency of this curse.

Hippolita's eloquence is, of course, contrary to the silence prescribed to her, and this assertiveness in speech is consistent with the transgressive initiative she has taken prior to the

play's events: during an exchange with Soranzo, spectators and readers learn how Hippolita counselled her husband in such a way as to bring about his death (II.ii.71-81). She accepts the lust-driven force of her transgression in a tale reminiscent of David and Bathsheba in the Old Testament: David, overcome with lust for Bathsheba, sent her husband to certain death at the front of the battle lines (II Sam. 11-12). Again aligning herself with male figures, Hippolita assumes David's role in this, plotting the death of her husband.

Amazons were often featured in early Stuart masques, depicted as martial and exotic. Queen Anne's masques brought "martial woman in from the margins," displacing "the centrality of male power" (Schwarz, "Amazon Reflections" 296). Fittingly, Ford's Hippolita features herself in a masque, as part of her revenge plan. She enters with a group of women "in [masks and] white robes, with garlands of willows" (IV.i.*S.D.*). However, despite her attempt to challenge male supremacy, Hippolita fails to establish for herself the central place of Queen Anne's decentring women. Upon Hippolita's attempt, Vasques kills her with a poisoned cup of wine (Ford, *'Tis Pity* IV.i.*S.D.*). Masques, therefore, are a femino-centric fantasy—a utopian fiction. In patriarchy there is no room for women who move outside of their marginal setting.

Conclusion

The women in *'Tis Pity* all threaten a violation of order. Annabella's incestuous passion oversteps any acceptable bounds of obedience to natural law. Putana's amorality defies the chastity and purity men prescribed for women. It could, of course, suggest she embodies yet another Eve-figure—temptress and harlot—except that she herself conducts no affairs; she is merely the passive commentator on the sexuality of others. Hippolita is the deviant Amazon—she "unnaturally attacks the accepted notion of womanhood" (Ingram 181). By masculinising herself she embodies an inversion of 'natural order' which, if maintained, "denies men their proper place in the normal order" (190).

All three women's lives end in gruesome deaths: Annabella's murder is particularly grotesque (even as stabbings go) because her heart is brought onto the stage for the audience to see. One critic comments that the heart used in performance was likely to have been that of a sheep, immediately recognisable to the audience as something commonly consumed at mealtimes (Hopkins *John Ford* 89). The edible quality of the prop heightens the disgusting nature of the image.

Although it is not performed on stage, Putana's execution is equally grotesque: her eyes are gouged out and she is subsequently burned to death. Hippolita's death is more commonplace, in that poisonings occur frequently in early modern drama. The horror of this particular poisoning lies in the treachery of it. She left her husband because she trusted Soranzo, who failed her. She trusted Vasques, and included him in her revenge plans against Soranzo, only to be murdered by Vasques. Her track record with men leaves much to be desired.

What can be surmised from an analysis of the representation of these three women is that human nature can destroy an individual, if that nature is contrary to society's interpretation of natural law. The contradiction of human nature to natural law does not much differ for men or women—both die in the name of 'unnaturalness.' Giovanni, for example, also dies the death of an outcast. He is a "monster of children" (Ford, *'Tis Pity* V.vi.63), and an "inhuman scorn of men" (70). Soranzo and Bergetto are also victims of human lust for revenge (in Bergetto's case the tragedy is greater because the lust for revenge was not aimed at him—his innocence and stupidity merely stood in the way of Grimaldi's greater plans). The significant difference is that the women's deaths accomplished nothing, thereby proving to be all the more senseless: patriarchy is still the supreme authority at the close of *'Tis Pity*. The Cardinal—exposed as unjust and corrupt himself—closes the final scene pondering on the whoredom of women, without so much as a word upon the nature of the men. His

'tribute' to Annabella: "so young, so rich in nature's store" (V.vi.159) reveals the irony of his lamentation. He is perhaps vocalising the wishes of all men when he says that she did not live long enough for them to construct her at their pleasure. Even in tribute, the belief in female inferiority and subservience is maintained.

Chapter 7. The Body and Anxiety in *The Lost Lady*

Plot Summary

Lysicles, a Greek prince, is in mourning because his beloved, Milesias, has allegedly been murdered by her uncle. Further, Lysicles' best friend, Eugenio, who is in love with the noblewoman, Hermione, has been banished from the land. In his absence, Lord Ergasto is courting Hermione, who rejects his suit, despite the support of her father, Pindarus, for the match. As a compromise, she agrees to marry Lysicles, who (unbeknownst to Hermione) feigns love for her in order to preserve her from having to marry Ergasto. Meanwhile, a mysterious Egyptian woman, Acanthe, comes to Court, in the role of clairvoyant. She announces to Lysicles that Milesias's ghost will meet him at her tomb. There the ghost—who is actually Acanthe in disguise, wanting to test his fidelity to Milesias—reveals to Lysicles that Acanthe was an accessory to her murder, and Lysicles poisons Acanthe in revenge.

Meanwhile, Eugenio has returned to Court, only to find that his beloved Hermione is now engaged to his best friend. In a quick unravelling of complications, the poisoned Acanthe, sweating from her battle with death, finds her black paint washing away, and her disguise is revealed—she is Milesias, whose life had been spared, and who has been plotting against Hermione because she seemed to be replacing Milesias in Lysicles' affections. Lysicles explains that he was only preserving Hermione from the fate of marrying Ergasto, and vows his love to Milesias, whose life has been saved a second time, on this occasion by an antidote. Lysicles and Milesias, as well as Hermione and Eugenio are all happily reunited in love, and Ergasto is appeased by an engagement to Hermione's cousin, Irene.

Textual Obscurity

The Malone Society facsimile edition (1987) sheds light on the possible reasons why *The Lost Lady* has attracted so little critical attention. Until the publication of this edition, it

would seem the play was only available in three forms: a manuscript text, a first folio, dated 1638, and a second folio, dated 1639. There is some concern about the accuracy of these folios, in terms of how precisely they represent the performance script, because they exhibit none of the corrections, made by Berkeley himself, that one finds in the manuscript edition. However, the manuscript is defective in parts, leaving the play slightly fragmented. The Malone Society edition, therefore, presents a transcript of the manuscript text, filling in the omissions with passages from the first folio. Perhaps due to the discrepancies between these three editions and the subsequent need for 'patch-working' a text, this worthy play has been neglected.

Grey Areas in Issues of Black and White

> *You know that they which dwell farthest from the sun, if in any convenient distance, have long days, better appetites, better digestion, better growth and longer life, and all these advantages have their minds who are well removed from the scorchings and dazzlings and exhalings of the world's glory* (Donne, "Letter XIII," 459).

It is not, perhaps, surprising that William Berkeley was interested in issues of race: he was born into a family who held stock in the Virginia Company of London (*Library of Virginia* website, see Works Cited), and he eventually became the longest-running governor of Virginia, beginning his governance in 1642 (Billings, *Virtual Jamestown* website),[153] only four years after the first performance of *The Lost Lady*. Although at this point in England's history black people did not yet comprise a substantial part of England's population (Boose, "Lawful Race" 36), the issue of race was present in people's minds, especially those who, like

[153] The reference to Billings' website seems an odd one, except for the fact that academic work on Berkeley is extremely limited. Warren M. Billings is a historian of the Supreme Court of Louisiana and a professor at the University of New Orleans and has posted his website, *Virtual Jamestown*, as a project that will eventually lead to the first biography on Berkeley. On his website, Professor Billings explains that sketches of Berkeley's life may be found in the *DNB*, the *Dictionary of American Biography* and the *Encyclopedia of Virginia Biography*, but that they are quite inaccurate. He also lists some books which mention Berkeley, but it seems Professor Billings' website is the most exhaustive and carefully researched material available.

Berkeley, would have had more exposure to the experience of exploration and discovery.[154] By the mid-sixteenth century, books were appearing in England that created popular images of people foreign lands for the early moderns, such as John Leo's *Geographical History of Africa* (translated into English in 1600). Further, a few African people were beginning to be brought to England either as 'freak-show curiosities,' or as part of "slaving voyages, such as Sir John Hawkins' three voyages of 1562, 1564, and 1567" (Jones, *Elizabethan Image* 16).

Black people were deemed inferior to the English, possibly seen even as beasts, a point that will become clear in the paragraphs which follow. Edward Topsell, in his encyclopaedic account of animals in *The Historie of Fovre-Footed Beastes* (1607) observes humankind's sliding position in the scale of creation:

> We cannot but thinke that euery story of a beast is like a seuerall Hymne, to praise the Diuine wisdome and goodness...First, thorough the heauenly spirits and degrees of Angels and celestial bodies: afterward thorough the minds of men, beginning at the highest, and so proceeding to the lowest, (for euen in men the giftes and graces of God differ) ("The First Epistle").

How the English concluded that they were superior to the black Africans in the human hierarchy of creation was in part due to the manipulative and influential power of the descriptions English people would have heard prior to seeing darker-skinned people in the flesh. For example, in 1556 a book was printed with the short title, *A Summary of the Antiquities and Wonders of the World*, which outlined "some of the extraordinary types who, according to Pliny, peopled the interior of Africa" (Jones, *Elizabethan Image* 5). This book

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[154] Not all scholars agree on this point. Nabil Matar, for example, contends: "there was an extensive interaction among Turks, Moors, and Englishmen on English soil in the period under study" (7), a demographic which is not without people of colour. Eldred Jones maintains that black people were so numerous in London by 1601 that "Elizabeth had cause to be 'discontented at the great number of 'Negars and blackamoors' which are crept into the realm'," and arranged to have them "transported out of the country" (*Othello's Countrymen* 12-13). I choose here to leave the issue of numbers to be debated by other scholars. In the larger picture, it would seem that exposure and tolerance are not entirely linked: even now, in our global melting pot we are obsessed with issues of race and are perhaps less colour blind than ever.

described such peoples as having " 'no upper lip, they are without tongues, and they speak by signs' " (qtd. in Jones 5). A more debased image was of the people called the Blemmyis, who " 'have no heads, but have their mouth and their eyes in their breasts' " (5).[155] Highlighting the degeneration in these peoples indicated their inferiority in humankind's unique status as having been created in the image of God—this image was, of course, less clearly pronounced in such monstrously deformed figures.

Much of the English 'nationalism' was likely to have been a defence mechanism against the fear of their own international status. This fear seems to have been due in part to their knowledge of the reputation they held, as people of a cold and northern climate, amongst those in the Mediterranean countries, which were both warmer and central to the celebrated civilisations of the ancient world.[156] The English, then, were anxious that the Mediterraneans might indiscriminately group the black Africans with the more northerly English nation, uniting the two as 'Other.' Virgil does indeed unite them in his first *Eclogue*, which was available to the English in their own language by 1575: "But some of vs to droughtie Affrike lande from hence wyll goe / To Scithia and Candy, where Oaxis fearce doth flowe: / As farre as Britain Isle, cut off from the wide world" (65-67). Robert Burton refers to people in northern countries as being "generally dull, heavy;" people in these "cold climes are more subject to natural melancholy" (59 ff.). Milton also mentions England's "cold / Climate" as a defect in nature which might impede his epic's success (*Paradise Lost* IX.44-45).

The nature of some of the British people's defences is evidence of their genuine concern about their reputation as those of more moderate climes held it. Thomas Wright's

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[155] This book had a much earlier precedent, which was very successful in England: Sir John Mandeville's *Travels* (1357), which outlined similarly sub-human species: "And in another yle toward the south duellen folk of foul stature and of cursed kynde, that han non hedes. And here eyen ben in here scholdres, and here mouth is croked as an hors schoo, and that is in the myddes of here brest" (Mandeville 147). The book was immediately successful; in England alone there were five distinct versions known to have circulated in manuscript form, alongside one French and four independent Latin translations (Mandeville, Editor's intro., xiii).

[156] The Greeks and Romans "defined their culturo-geographic position as lying between the great despotic civilizations of Asia and Africa and the primitive tribes to the North" (Shuger, "Irishmen" 497-98). Also see Floyd-Wilson: the English were positioned as " 'other' to the normative middle" (7).

writing exemplifies the nature of English insecurity. Like many of his contemporaries, Wright was quick to defend his country as one that "*hath yielded as profound and learned Schoolemen as any Nation vnder the Sunne.*" This sort of defence was raised in light of the reputation that "*those which inhabit these Northerne Climates, are accounted simple and vnwise*" (Wright, *Passions of the Minde*, "Preface"). Thomas Heywood, too, seems to feel the need to assert the supremacy of the Britons over the Romans: "The *Romans* are Foxes, and Hares, the *Brittaines* are wolves and Greyhounds" (*Exemplary Lives* 77). Perhaps this is why the British people began taking their colonial pursuits so seriously (albeit the dedication was slow to evolve[157]): this established them in their own right, as a successful nation.

There was a time when the British people believed they were of a noble descent, and by right included in the largely accepted view that the temperate climates bred more moderate, 'civilised,' people. In his *History of the Kings of Britain*, Geoffrey of Monmouth traced the Britons' descent from Brutus, the great grandson of the Trojan, Aeneas (I.4; 15-16). Prior to Brutus's arrival, the land was uninhabited "save only of a few giants" which Aeneas and his companions overthrew (I.16). Spenser's *Faerie Queen* takes up the theme of the Britons' noble descent, indicating that Britomart, "the wrothfull Britonnesse" (V.vii.34.i) is a descendant of "the *Troian Brute*" (III.ix.i), who founded the city along the "wealthy *Thamis*" (III.ix.44.ii). The water-bearer, Cob, in Ben Jonson's *Every Man in His Humour* (first performed in 1598), laments the disappearance of "the honestest old brave Trojan in London" (IV.ii.20-21). However, by the early modern period, questions were being raised about the legitimacy of this claim: "with the publication of Camden's *Britannia* in 1586, a radically different model of English prehistory replaces these legitimating myths" (Shuger,

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[157] The English were slow to take part in the colonial explorations that were being seriously undertaken by continental Europeans since the fifteenth century. More than a century elapsed between the time when Spaniards made their first permanent settlement in North American in 1493, and the English made theirs at Jamestown in 1607 (Rowse 2).

"Irishmen" 496). *Britannia* explains from its opening chapters that the British were "uncivill" and "rude," dependent for their civilisation on Roman colonisation (Shuger 496).

In part due to their anxiety over their status, there seems to have been some ambiguity in the English representations of people of colour—sometimes they were overly vicious in their representation, perhaps in a defence-driven need to assert their own 'white' superiority,[158] and sometimes they were genuinely ambivalent, cautious not to overstate the 'Otherness' of other liminally placed peoples. A classic example of this ambivalence can be found in Ben Jonson's celebrated masque, *The Masque of Blackness*, performed at James I and Queen Anne's Court in 1605. The opening song introduces the race of Niger, "who, though but black in face, / Yet they are bright, / ...To prove that beauty best, / Which, *not the color, but the feature* / Assures unto the creature" (emphasis added). Having made this statement, the snowy (i.e. white) cliff, and moon—"*Her garments white*" (emphasis original)—are still granted the attributes of "fair", and "*pure*, auspicious light" (emphasis added). The black women are then promised that they will become white in the land of Britain, and assured "their beauties shall be scorch'd no more." Black is pretty good, but white, it would seem, is better.

Despite the dominantly negative attitude towards black people, it seems that Berkeley attempts in *The Lost Lady* to conflate black and white through the figure of Milesias/Acanthe. One reason for this could be because of the esteem that, ironically, black people had sometimes been accorded, and continued to be afforded right through the Italian Renaissance (Floyd-Wilson 6): early modern geohumoralism, which Floyd-Wilson defines as "regionally

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[158] Such a lashing out does not actually seem tied to issues of black and white, so much as to a defence mechanism the English utilised to explain their own geographical liminality. For instance, they also saw the Spaniards as choleric and untrustworthy (Kupperman 215): Wright is quick to assert that the English are "*farre superior to the Spaniards, and nothing inferior vnto the Italians*" (*Passions of the Minde*, "Preface"). In fact, two Elizabethan " 'Projectors' argued that the summer heat of all European places below forty degrees of latitude 'is unto our boddies offensive, Which cannot prosper in dry and scalding heates. More naturall to the Spaniard than us' " (Kupperman 216). The implication here, clearly, is that those regions, where people are choleric and untrustworthy are undesirable, inferior to this Northern climate in which even Aristotle conceded there lived "a people full of spirit" (qtd. in Shuger, "Irishmen" 498 n.).

framed humoralism" (2), related the blackness that was created by hot climates to "prophecy and genial melancholy" (6).[159] In *The Lost Lady,* Acanthe is introduced as a prominent black personality, but in fact she is not black at all, but rather a white woman in disguise. It is as though Berkeley is deliberately blurring the boundaries between black and white, thereby highlighting the English anxiety about its nation's own marginal status as northern 'Other,' while obscuring the distinctions between them, perhaps in an effort to liken themselves to the prophetic and ingenious aspects of the black race. He was not alone in fostering this ambiguous response to colour. Shakespeare's tragic masterpiece, *Othello*, interrogates early modern stereotypes of race. At the beginning of the play the Venetian state is dependent upon Othello as their bulwark against the Turkish threat; the Senate finds him "all in all sufficient" (IV.i.266-67). His downfall is not blamed so much on his colour, but on the human passion of jealousy. However, the psychological assaults made upon him by Iago are indeed linked with his colour and his sense of 'Otherness.' In a significant scene for its references both to colour and jealousy, Iago heightens Othello's insecurities by suggesting the unnaturalness of Desdemona's attraction to him in the first place: "Ay, there's the point; as to be bold with you, / Not to affect many proposed matches / Of her own clime, complexion, and degree / ... / Foh, one may smell in such a will most rank, / Foul disproportions, thoughts unnatural!" (III.iii.233-38). Shakespeare's Cleopatra is another tragic character who oscillates in her representation between villainous whore and majestic queen; her colouring blurs the boundaries black and white (she is "with Phoebus' amorous pinches black," I.v.28).

Acanthe is presented with extreme ambivalence in her status as hero or villain. She is both a diviner, "enricht with / Thousand other modest vertues," and "this cursd Magitian"

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[159] Many scholars consider the issue of black peoples and their ancient reputation for wisdom. One of the most exhaustive is Lloyd A. Thompson's *Romans and Blacks*, in which he claims that the oldest usage of the term '*Aethiopes*' is a Homeric designation "for people of a utopian world" (57), who were described as having "innocence, love of freedom, peacefulness, moderation, longevity, handsomeness, a semi-divine tallness of stature, and a piety appropriately rewarded by divine favour" (88-9). It would seem the mythic image did not disappear under the pressure of the more 'realistic' findings from more recent expeditions (89).

(Berkeley II.iii.641-42, IV.iii.2115). She is clearly marked as 'Other,' distinct in some of her philosophies. For instance, in a nation and period intensely dependent upon astronomical influences, Acanthe preaches, "our starrs incline not force vs in our actions" (II.iii.690).[160] Not only does Acanthe defy the stars, but she is also reputed to be able to read the future. She is set apart from conventional society in her role as clairvoyant. She is the "powerfull Acanthe" (IV.i.1751), an adjective rich with ambiguity. Power, after all, can be used for good or evil.

Acanthe's absolute defiance of fate is uncommon; however, it certainly appears in other characters, such as in Annabella in *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* (see pp. 211-15). This, too, was a later play, and perhaps as Baconian empiricism grew in its influence, people were growing more sceptical about astrology; however, references in both fictional and non-fictional literature would suggest that belief in the power of the stars still predominated. Robert Burton, for example, explained that melancholy is often caused by the planets and stars: "heauen is Gods instrument...or a great book, whose letters are the starres...wherein are written many strange things for such as can reade" (56). It is significant in *The Lost Lady* that the theme of defying one's fate emphasises a specifically female ability to resist it. Acanthe is not the only woman who tests the powers of the heavens. Hermione, too, suggests that Destiny is resistible, if one shows an extreme will:

> our starrs whose influence doth gouerne us
> are not malignant to vs, but whilst wee remaine in
> this falce earth, *he that hath courage to deuest*
> *himselfe of that, remoues with it their power*

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[160] While early modern England remained heavily influenced by astrological theories, it is nevertheless true that by now strong scepticism was emerging, evident in such circumstances as Acanthe's defiance. Shakespeare had set a precedent for this. See, for example: Cassius in *Julius Caesar*, "The fault, Dear Brutus, is not in our stars, / But in ourselves that we are underlings" (I.ii.141-42); and Edmund in *King Lear*, "This is the excellent foppery of the world: that / when we are sick in fortune... / ...we make guilty of our disaster the sun, the moon, and stars" (I.ii.116-19).

to hurt him (Berkeley II.iii.664-68, emphasis added).

Such a speech is uttered in stark contrast to Ergasto who laments his subjection to his fate: "why has my starrs enforc'd / me to haue nothing else?" (II.ii.522-23). Where he yields to destiny, Acanthe is willing to test this astrological 'absolute.'

At the same time as Acanthe is set apart from society, she is also so intimately coupled with Hermione, who is central to society, that people fear their friendship may even be 'unnatural'.[161] Acanthe's black skin is often brought to readers' and audience members' attention, who learn that "vertue chose that darke inhabitacon / to hide her treasure from the enuious world" (II.iii.974-75). Further, "she is as secret as the / night she resembles" (III.ii.1475-76). She is a "shade" that must be courted, whose lack of reciprocal interest in Phormio is explained as "fire out of the coale" (III.ii.1621, 1664-65). Most explicitly, in terms of actual racism, Phillida, Hermione's servant, comments, "Tis a shame such people should be suffred / neere the Court" (III.ii.1468-70). Her comment, interestingly, has less to do with Acanthe's *colour*, and more to do with her distrust of Acanthe as a foreigner. She fears Acanthe might destroy her reputation through gossip—"we shalbe defam'd" (1474). Scholars of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries are intrigued to know how much early modern 'racism' had to do with colour—Phillida's remark would suggest colour was not the sole determining factor in English xenophobia, and indeed the Tudor/Stuart and Irish relations would suggest that the English were preoccupied by the 'savage Irish.' Edmund Spenser refers to the Irish people's "licentious barbarisme" and their "madness" ("A View of the Present State of Ireland" lines 340; 360). In "A Briefe Note of Ireland," which Spenser addresses to Queen Elizabeth, he makes an explicit contrast between the civil English and the "savage life" of the Irish (line 172), remarking that the English could set themselves up among the Irish and create for them a "civill example" (line 170ff.). There was also, of

[161] See pp. 247-53, where the concept of 'unnatural friendships' is explored further.

course, the Protestant/Catholic divide, which created enormous prejudice between different white groups, a fact that, as D'Amico helps to articulate, "served to complicate the neat compartmentalization of national, religious, and racial types" (8).

While colour may not be the sole or chief criterion for judging inferiority, it does not go unconsidered. The fear Acanthe ignites and the anxiety surrounding her skin colour is marked most explicitly in the juxtapositions of dark and black with fair and white, which permeate the play, even aside from adjectival descriptions of its black antagonist (Acanthe), who is also its white heroine (Milesias). The play opens upon a "dark mistery," connected to a woman—Milesias—who was "barbarously murdered" (Berkeley I.i.128; 16). It cannot be helped but to surmise that the adverb 'barbarously' here was carefully chosen in light of the race issues with which the play is replete,[162] especially since the term in its adjectival form is used a second time, with reference to the murder as a "barbarous homicide" (I.i.204). The play also speaks of "*black* intent," and a "*black* marke vpon thee" (I.i.198, III.ii.1689, emphases added).

Further, *The Lost Lady* utilises images of 'fairness,' setting it up as an antithesis to 'foulness.' Kim Hall argues that the "the trope of blackness had a broad arsenal of effects in the early modern period, meaning it is applied not only to dark-skinned Africans but to Native Americans, Indians, Spanish, and even Irish and Welsh as groups that needed to be marked as other" (6-7), and she further claims that frequently, " 'black' in Renaissance discourses is opposed not to 'white' but to 'beauty' or 'fairness' " (9). Dudley Carlton, a Jacobean observer of Jonson's *Masque of Blackness,* was disgusted by the black make-up that darkened

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[162] The Barbary coast was, of course, the former name for the coastal region of North Africa. While there is significant indication that the region's name is derived from Barbarossa ('Red Beard'), it was often linked to the term 'barbarous.' This word was derived from the Greek, βαρβαρος ('barbaros'), referring to the belief that, as Thomas Cooper explained in *Bibliotheca Eliotae* (1548), "In old tyme all people, excepte greekes, were called Barbari" (qtd. in Smith, "Barbarian Errors" 171-72). In a history of the trade between England and Morocco, James D'Amico refers to sixteenth-century writings that described the peoples of this African coast as "barbarous infidels" (25). Even more generally, the peoples of this coast were referred to as "Barbarians" (36).

the players' faces. His reaction to "the 'loathesome sight' of dark Englishwomen certainly attests to the strength of the age's assumption that beauty meant fairness" (D'Amico 53). Later in the same work, D'Amico draws attention to Shakespeare's "Sonnet 127," commenting that here "the term *fair* not only denotes an attractive appearance but also connotes virtue or purity. Fair often means true or honest" (71). It would certainly seem that anything dark, foul and shady in *The Lost Lady* is set in juxtaposition with anything fair, pure and pale, a phenomenon which Ania Loomba observes: she regards blackness as being "a signifier for various forms of socially unacceptable behaviour" ("Color of Patriarchy" 27). The superiority of things that are fair is underscored by the negative use of the word 'foul': Acanthe raises "ffantosme...by her foule spells" (IV.iii.2119), and Lysicles invokes a punishment of the Gods to be hurled on her "foule Soule" (V.i.2207).

Fair, it would seem, is beautiful and pure. This is suggested, for example, in a description of Hermione's (white) servant, Phillida, who entered as a "faire / day in a cloud" (Berkeley II.iv.1215-16). Early modern drama makes this assertion with considerable frequency. In *As You Like It,* for example, Rosalind reads a telling message aloud to the audience: "Her worth being mounted on the wind / Through all the world bears Rosalind. / All the pictures *fairest* lined / Are but *black* to Rosalind. / Let no face be kept in mind / But the *fair* of Rosalind" (III.ii.88-93, emphases added). Of course, the mark of beauty results in the objectification of the subject, a point made clear in *The Lost Lady*. Phormio concludes that he and his friends must love women who are "praised more for fayre Ladies then Iuditious" (Berkeley II.iv.1174). Significantly, the point of objectification is made clear through the voices of the satirised libertines, Phormio, Cleon, and Ergasto, and therefore the courtly love convention of objectification is mocked even as it is put into play. Irene explicitly mocks the conventions of courtly love (II.ii.497ff.), thus aligning her to Rosalind's reading of Orlando's verses (above), in which his verses are mocked in an exchange between

Rosalind and Touchstone, where they play on his poetic juxtapositions of dark and fair (Shakespeare, *As You Like It* III.ii.95 ff.).

Most significantly, when Acanthe's true, white, nature is revealed, her disguise is described as "black Clouds that hidd / her *purer* forme" (2239-40, emphasis added). At this point in the play, the possibilities for a powerful alliance between white and black emerge, thus aligning white people with those positive associations made with darkness, such as genial melancholy. There is, as I observed above, an early modern connection between black and genial melancholy. In a single moment, Acanthe's blackness becomes a metaphor for the inventiveness of dark-natured people, rather than a literal colour of skin.[163] Now that she is white, and alive, her disguise proves to have served some good, in that the true nature of Lysicles' love for her has been revealed. 'Shade,' rather than being contrasted with the goodness of light, is also now associated with Elysium: while they think she is dying, Acanthe speaks about the meeting of departed spirits "in the *blest* shades" (2290, emphasis added).

The positive imagery with which 'shade' is associated here is not intended, however, to equalise white and black—it only seems to lessen the intense negativity surrounding blackness. It is important to remember that Acanthe, at this point revealed as Milesias, is "purer" now, described as "white as Lillies, as the snowe" (2303), about whom other characters affirm that "Egipt neuer saw / a beauty like to this" (2307-08). The language refers to the supremacy of whiteness, extending the assertion of its superiority with images of light, such as "day" and "flames" (2305, 2312), images associated with Milesias after her painted black 'skin' has washed away. Acanthe—now Milesias—observes, as though she had already forgotten that it was she who had imposed blackness *on herself*, that her uncle who

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[163] The term 'black' was most frequently used negatively, as I have suggested. However, the greatest melancholics, filled (according to humoral theory) with excessive black bile, are remembered well for this excess of black. Black, then, is linked with weighty cognition, overwhelming awe. Shakespeare, for example, highlights Romeo's dark melancholy as being "black and portentious," establishing the colour to parallel something memorable, or momentous (*Romeo and Juliet* I.i.138).

planned her murder had "darke ends" (V.iv.2539), but that she herself was filled with the (white) "milke of pitty" (2551). Her return to life and whiteness is called a "double recovery" (V.iv.2725). Blackness, after all, was hypothesised by some to be a disease, rather than to have had a genetic or climatological explanation. George Best, in *A True Discourse* (1578), claimed "blackness as an infection...unrelated to the effects of the environment" (Floyd-Wilson 8-9).

In the third act of *The Lost Lady*, we encounter a scene that usefully exemplifies the English position on its (white) people: the scene can be read in such a way that it reveals the anxiety the English suffered at their geographical positioning on the globe and its relation and likeness to the black people's more abstract positioning as barbarous inferior. The scene thus far has exhibited the actions of a fickle courtly lover—fickle because he has just swapped one object of eternal, unwavering desire for another—wooing a woman at Court. A stage direction indicates that "whilst he kneeles Hermione and the Moore *looke down* from the windowe" (III.ii.*S.D.*, emphasis added). There they are, black and white, positioned in a united front above the silly games taking place below them. As we saw in *The Sea Voyage*, such physical positioning was a common convention for suggesting a social or psychological superiority (see p. 172-73). It could also be representative of dangerous domineering, of the type we observe in *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, in which Annabella is situated above Giovanni, embodying the towering stance of domination (see p. 217). Like Annabella, Acanthe and Hermione cannot domineer forever, not in a society determined to dominate them. They are situated there only very briefly before Acanthe comments that they must "descend" from this vantage point, a movement that will situate them again with the others (III.ii.1592). This descent could suggest the English people's anxiety at their placement with Africans—in this scene literally embodying what the English more philosophically feared—and the precarious superiority they hold over peoples of any race or colour.

The Love Which Dares Not Speak Its Name

It would seem that both fictional and non-fictional friendships between women (sexual or asexual) did not receive much attention or come under much observation in early modern English writing.[164] Female homosexuality was not connected in the popular imagination to male homoeroticism (Bray 17). Was it infrequently considered *because* it was unmentionable? Certainly male sodomy was targeted as a source of jest and a source of moral questionability (even horror), which would suggest that the unmentionable was certainly a subject for consideration. Valerie Traub traces the history of sodomy as it relates to lesbianism in early modern England: "the summary of patterns of legal prosecutions reveals that, in contrast to the high incidence of prosecution of women for prostitution, adultery, bastardy, and witchcraft, comparatively few women...were prosecuted for sodomy before the eighteenth century" (44).[165]

Harriette Andreadis concedes to a "growing acknowledgement of female same-sexual behaviours and corresponding opprobrium directed at them" ("Erotics of Female Friendship" 241), but she does not pinpoint the reason for this trend.[166] Clearly by the time of the Civil War and the Restoration, a considerable sexual revolution had begun, set in motion in part by the larger freedom women experienced during the Civil War, while their husbands were occupied by military service. It was comparable to the sort of freedom women discovered again in the First and Second World Wars of the twentieth century, when women were called

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[164] Other early modern European nations did not have such a deficit of female-female love literature. Faderman observes, "the most predominant attitude toward lesbian love-making is in French libertine literature" (26). However, she continues with the observation that "it was merely a prelude to heterosexual lovemaking" (26). In other words, same-sex intimacy between women was not, even in a libertarian society, recognised as an end in itself. *The Lost Lady* proves no exception to this rule—heterosexuality is reasserted by the end of the play.

[165] Traub clarifies her use of the term 'sodomy' in this context: "although sodomy today is most often defined as anal penetration, in the early modern period sodomy functioned as a catch-all category for a range of erotic activities and positions...After 1550, legal statutes became more specific about the inclusion of female sodomy" (*Renaissance of Lesbianism* 42). Bray adds to this, noting that it could be used both in homo- and hetero- sexual contexts, and highlighting its specifically feminine usage in the Authorised Version of the Bible, in which "Sodomitess" in Deuteronomy 23.17 is offered as the alternative translation of 'whore' (14).

[166] Andreadis notes this growth as beginning with the works of Aemilia Lanyer, but not really culminating until the mid-eighteenth century, with Mary Leapor's erotic poetry (242).

upon for the purposes of carrying out 'male' tasks in the absence of male hands to execute them. Katherine Phillips is perhaps the most commonly invoked example of the female movement into a more public celebration, or condemnation, of friendships between women. Her poem, "To Mrs. M.A. at Parting" (first published 1667) is one of her more explicit poems on this subject:

> Thus our twin souls in one shall grow,
> And teach the world new love,
> Redeem the age and sex, and show
> A flame fate dares not move:
> And courting death to be our friend,
> Our lives, together too, shall end (49-54).

Slightly later, Aphra Behn's "To the Fair Clarinda Who Made Love to Me, Imagined More than Woman" (1688), also takes up the theme. This poem, while transforming the beloved into a "lovely charming youth" (4), does not deny that "so much beauteous Woman is in view" (8), yet it is this youth/woman that the speaker, "without blushes," pursues (7).

However, *The Lost Lady* was written and performed before the Civil War. At this point, the 'unmentionable' was not so open for consideration, perhaps due to a complete lack of recognition that lesbianism was even possible. Faderman articulates this situation most candidly: "for the most part, English writers seemed not to have been very aware of the possibility of sex without a penis" (27).[167] Of course, women were not given equal opportunity to consider the option of intimate female-female friendships—they were so much

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[167] Not all scholars are of one accord on the issue of early modern English understanding and representation of female-female relationships. However, even one of the most ardent contenders that early modern England "witnessed a *renaissance* of representations of female homoerotic desire" (Traub, *Renaissance of Lesbianism* 7) agrees that many of the representations were governed by a logic "that attempted to reinscribe [its] impossibility" (6). She accedes to the fact that female homosexuality was unrecognised, and further suggests that it was also masculinised, denying female-female pleasure its own status: "In the rhetoric of Early Modern authorities, the commingling of two female bodies was subsumed by a heterosexual, male-oriented narrative...female penetration signifies the imitation of male 'parts' " ("The (In)Significance" 154).

more restricted to their homes, thereby narrowing the window of opportunity to pursue private moments with other women.[168] Men, who were in the public sphere, had more opportunity to liaise with other men, and so there was much greater opportunity for the "eroticisation of male-male relations" (DiGangi 26). Of course, women often went 'abroad' to go to the market, or attend church or child-births, to name a few (Capp 9ff.), but these did not offer opportunity for private encounters with another woman.

For the reasons outlined above, I can only imagine that Berkeley's interest in female homoeroticism had to do with the idea of exploiting the 'unknown,' or at the very least, 'underacknowledged.' In other words, he created this same-sex tension for a titillating effect, a hypothesis confirmed by the fact that the play's conclusion suggests other motives for this friendship, that have to do with espionage and revenge, and have nothing to do with relationships and love. A prominent purpose, then, could be sexual frisson, since the female-female relationship amounts to nothing else in the end except perhaps the endorsement of its impossibility.

One hypothesis that Andreadis puts forward in her consideration of female friendships in the early modern period is that, in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, friendships between women were used "to identify and to stigmatize a distinct category of transgressive woman" ("Erotics of Female Friendship" 242). This line of approach would certainly enable a more complex reading of the relationship between Acanthe and Hermione than a merely eroticised theatrical effect. In the case of *The Lost Lady*, the transgressive woman is the black woman, who has come to Court and 'corrupted' Hermione, whose heterosexual orientation had not come under scrutiny until that point. When Hermione feels she has shared too much

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[168] This was in part due to the fear that women who were liberated from the confines of their homes would defame their husbands (see pp. 54-59), but also connected with the belief that their physiology, which was deemed to be weak, required them not to wander too far from the home. *The Compleat Doctoress* (1656), contends, "women were made to stay at home and look after household employments... accompanied without any vehement stirring of the body" (Martensen 110).

of her grief with Acanthe, she apologises for placing this burden on her friend. Acanthe replies, in a beautiful expression of friendship:

> Would you could [give me your sorrows], with what great willingness
> should I embrace a share of what afflicts you
> Ide hast to meete and ease you of your feares
> now if to one whose interresses doe force her
> to aduance your hopes, you dare deliuer
> the cause of your disquiet you shall find
> a clossett if not a fort to vindicate your feares (II.iii.718-24).

Hermione immediately re-establishes that she is in love "with a young gentlemans [*sic*] now banisht" (726), to dispel any fear that she, the 'good' woman—the 'white' woman—should be moving into something 'unnatural.' Her vow of fidelity to Eugenio is combined with an anticipation of Acanthe's 'advances:' "I shall / neere enioy Euginio. / *darknes shall ceaze me*, ere the tapers light, / my blushes to the foresworne Hymens right" (II.iii.655-58, emphasis added). Although Hermione's vow is an eloquently articulated variation on the idea of an impossible possibility, it is ironic that the play develops the suggestion that darkness, in the form of Acanthe's gripping friendship, will truly seize her. However, Hermione's resolve to remain faithful to Eugenio proves steadfast, and Acanthe seizes her neither sexually nor murderously.

Despite Hermione's best intentions to assert her heterosexual preferences, she is shunned by Cleon, a libertine, as "Epietetus in a petticote,[169] she that disputes / loue into nothinge, or *what's worse, a ffreindshipp / wth a woman*" (II.iv.1158-59, emphasis added). Whilst such a charge may go unfounded, Hermione does not deny that Acanthe instils in her

[169] I am unsure as to why Berkeley would use Epietetus (Epictetus) here, unless Cleon, as a libertine, would have thought of this first-century Stoic philosopher, such a proponent of ethics and reason, to be the most distasteful figure a hedonist could imagine.

feelings of fascinated wonder. When Acanthe offers her advice on love and passion, Hermione marvels how her friend can live with such a sense of security when she is single; she emphasises Acanthe's apparent lack of interest in men: "Where cannot virtue dwell [?] what a still shade / hath she found out to liue securely in? / from the attempts of men?" (III.i.1391-93). Hermione has asked a daring question as to whether virtue can dwell in women who seek women. If she is not explicitly referring to same-sex issues here, Hermione is clearly linking the term 'shade' with someone who is set apart, raising yet again issues of race and 'Other.'[170] Until this point, there has not been any particular sense of titillation in the relationship between Hermione and Acanthe. It would seem Berkeley is drawing attention to this same-sex bond because of the novelty value of female homo*sociability*, as opposed to homo*sexuality*. However, he does tantalise his audience later on, when Acanthe, in the form of Milesias's ghost, tells Lysicles that "the Moore" is "iealous of your loue vnto Hermione" (IV.i.1870). Because the audience is not yet aware that she is jealous, since she is in fact Milesias and in love with Lysicles herself, the audience may begin to wonder what sort of relationship Acanthe desires with Hermione, and what might develop over the course of the play. However, when the true situation is revealed, it becomes clear that no such female-female desire is at hand.

A heavily charged speech on the subject of illegitimate love comes from Hermione's father, Pindarus, who, whilst chastising his daughter for her disregard of his choice for a marriage partner, demands of her:

> Doe you not blush, being soe young to know,
>
> How to distinguish the difference of desires,

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[170] Retiring to the shade is often analogous with retiring from public life, and by default, the 'attempts of men.' See, for instance, Tityrus lying at ease "vnder the broade beeche shade" (Virgil, *Eclogue* I.1), or Ciris's "love of renown" being juxtaposed with the Attic Garden's sweet fragrance, which enwraps one in "fine-flower Wisdom's verdant shade" (Virgil, *Ciris* 1; 3-4). Likewise, Marvell contrasts his lovely garden, where "all flow'rs and all trees do close / To weave the garlands of repose" (7-8), with the "narrow vergèd shade" of public acclaim ("The Garden" 5).

And this so wildly,

That you will put of your obedience

Rather then loose one that *you dare not say*

Hath interest in you (II.i.556-61, emphasis added).

The inference that could be made from his speech is not about the uncommonly close friendship that the Court will say arises between Acanthe and Hermione, but is rather about the banished Eugenio; however, in light of the theme of forbidden alliances, which will shortly be more heavily imbued with the suggestion of same-sex friendships, the lines are rich with double meaning.

In one of her essays on early modern lesbianism, Valerie Traub raises the only possible interpretation that would suggest that Berkeley's motive need not necessarily have been the mere novelty of sexual intrigue, but rather could have intended to reassert the values of heterosexual union. She claims that playwrights who pose eroticism between women as an option seem "only to displace it through the force of a seemingly...ultimately more powerful heterosexual impulse," rendering erotic attraction between female characters a "futile" endeavour ("The (In)Significance" 158). It is unfortunate that she does not include *The Lost Lady* in her study on lesbianism in Renaissance drama, when it seems so relevant to her hypothesis. *The Lost Lady* definitely creates an impression of overpowering heterosexual impulses in each of the women whose sexuality comes under critical observation—the play concludes with the promise of an imminent festival to celebrate the heterosexual unions of both. When Milesias was the black Acanthe, she possesses 'unnatural' desires. Her restoration to her white self simultaneously restored her re-entry into a 'natural,' heterosexual, relationship. Just as her blackness is erased, so is the "tension between the two modes of desire" (Traub, "The (In)Significance" 163).

In contrast to the dubious nature of Hermione and Acanthe's friendship, the friendships between men are openly praised. Lysicles, we learn, "labours / for to recall" his friend Eugenio from banishment (Berkeley II.iii.741-42). When Eugenio returns to Court, and the two are reunited, the audience and readers are granted one of the most moving scenes in the play. Lysicles has begged Eugenio to kill him, which Eugenio only agrees to if "as I lift my arme / to sheath this in your brest, let yours pierce me" (V.iii.2469-70). Lysicles, of course, refuses, and Eugenio remarks, "how you mistake / the lawes of ffrendshipp and comit those faults / you did accuse me of I would not liue so long / to thinke you can suruiue your dyeing ffreind" (2477-80). Female friendships are seen to be disruptive because they threaten the socio-political structure of the family, whereas male friendships seem integral to society. Montaigne refers to Aristotle as having said, "Law-givers have had more regardful care of friendship than of justice" (*Essaies* I.xxvii).[171] Later, in an unabashed statement of why he loves his friend, another man, Montaigne says:

> I thinke by some secret ordinance of the heavens, we embraced one another by our names...we found our selves so surprized, so knowne, so acquainted, and so combinedly bound together, that from thence forward, nothing was so neer unto us as one unto anothers (I.xxvii).

In other words, society has made note of, and approved of, friendships between men, while women's are discouraged, or are rendered conspicuous by their absence.

A Dark Revenge

Milesias's desire for vengeance stems from jealousy. However, hers is not given the honour of being called 'revenge,' and in this she is not so fortunate as Lysicles, who is permitted the opportunity to articulate his vengeful desires against two different people at two

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[171] On this very topic, D'Amico draws readers' attention to the *Nicomachean Ethics* (book 8): "Aristotle says, 'Friendship seems too to hold states together, and lawgivers to care more for it than for justice; for unanimity seems to be something like friendship' " (148).

different times (II.i.398-401 and IV.1.1887-92). Milesias's vengeance is aligned with Hippolita's, in *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*. Both Hippolita's and Milesias's efforts at revenge are driven by jealousy. Milesias's is more unformed than Hippolita's, in that the former's vengeful feelings have precipitated no articulated desire for a clearly-defined end. She has only thought so far as to come to Court in the disguise of a black woman to learn more about why her 'constant lover,' Lysicles, is engaged to be married to Hermione. When Milesias fears she is dying, and her disguise has been sweated away, she speaks her purpose: "before I goe / Let me obtaine your pardon for the wrongs / My jealousie hath throwne upon your innocence. / 'Twas my too perfit knowledge of my want / Of merits to deserve, made me doubt yours" (V.ii.2321-25).

That Milesias is a jealous woman is evident even from her name. [172] When Lysicles pursues Hermione's affections, Hermione begs him, "let not your Milesias ashes shrinke / with a new Peirceing cold w^{ch} they will feele, / ith instant that your hart shalbe consenting / to any new affection" (II.iii.883-86). Human nature understands how his shift of affections would make her jealous, but a shift in Berkeley's own pen underscores the significance of her name. The manuscript edition shows that where he decided upon "Milesias" in this speech, he had first written "malitious," and then deleted it for the name itself. Seeing them together brings to immediate attention the similarity between the two words.

What would have happened if Milesias never learned that Lysicles' love for Hermione was pretended in order to forestall her marriage to Ergasto—"infidelity / but personated" (IV.i.1833-34)? Would she have been jealous enough to murder Hermione? That jealousy

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[172] In the early modern period, the term 'malicious,' and its variants depending on parts of speech, often took on the meaning of 'envious' rather than the modern definition of purposing to do harm (although it could be used in that sense as well). James Shirley stands as a good example of a playwright who tends to employ 'malice' and 'malicious' as terms for envy. See, for example *The Cardinal*, in which envy and malice are explicitly linked. Hernando states, "I envy not his fortune," to which the Cardinal replies, "'Tis above / Your malice" (III.i.35-36). This was not a later development, as the dates of Shirley and Berkeley's plays may suggest. Marlowe also drew on this definition, for example, in *Tamburlaine I*: "And vow to wear it for my country's good, / In spite of them shall malice my estate" (I.i.159).

would certainly explain her tendency to cling to Hermione in order to establish a false friendship: no one would suspect that this woman who so loved Hermione would have also been her murderer. Acanthe indeed proved capable of acting on her own terms. She says as much herself: "The Gods giue vs permission to be false, / when they exclude vs from all other wayes / w^{ch} may preserue our faith" (II.iii.1036-38). This is the closest she comes to a revenge speech about taking justice into one's own hands. Perhaps if she had been able to articulate her plan, she would have more fully experienced the profundity of her emotion, and the situation may not have grown so catastrophic. However, there was little likelihood of her being bestowed with the strength of a voice with which to speak this plan into action; considering she was not so much as given a name until twenty pages into the script, the playwright has not established her as a character with much influence.

One might argue that what I have referred to as Milesias's revenge is not in fact revenge whatsoever—it was not named as such, and it did not result in her wreaking a desired vengeance on another character in the play. However, here it may be useful to highlight how the term 'revenge' was understood in early modern England. It would seem it suggested something more like 'retribution' (Broude, "Revenge and Revenge Tragedy" 39). The *OED* notes this definition for 'revenge' as dating from c. 1456. It points readers to Shakespeare's uses of the term in its retributive sense in *Pericles:* "The gods revenge it upon me and mine, / To the end of generation" (III.iii.24-25). Milton also employs the term with a view towards retribution, in *Paradise Lost*: "Th'infernal Serpent...whose guile / Stird up with Envy and Revenge, deceiv'd / The Mother of Mankind" (I.34-36). Florio's 1598 Italian/English dictionary "gives both *revenge* and *punishment* as translations for *vendetta*" (Broude, "Revenge and Revenge Tragedy" 40).[173] Based on a modern understanding of 'vendetta,' as a

[173] While Florio does not define revenge or vengeance, he does define "vendetta" as: "reuenge, reuengement, vengeance. Also punishment."

prolonged and bitter feud, I would argue there is no question that Milesias pursued a personal vendetta against Hermione.

It is interesting that Milesias's actions are those of the enemy only when she is black. This seems to suggest that darker skin colour corresponds with internal decay, and even that the colour is an external corroboration of an inherent deficiency. He indicates that the white actors wear black masks: "Masques / to hide the rottenness that lyes within." Moreover, people with those masks—in other words, of that colour—are agents of hell (Berkeley V.i.2191-92; 2195-96). Other characters, such as Lysicles, suspect Milesias, in her role as Acanthe, of being able to conjure devils (IV.iii.2120-21). As the poison causes her to sweat, her mask begins to wear off, and "her blacknes falls away" (V.i.2236), all belief in her wrongdoing is subsumed by the joy at Milesias's return—she is no longer a black devil, but a woman resurrected, as I highlighted above, in "her purer form" (2241). From this point forward she is merciful and forgiving, and in turn, humbly seeks absolution. Her jealousy-driven urge for vengeance dissolves with her blackness.

Milesias's vengefulness is linked with her blackness. She herself creates Acanthe-the-black-revenger. In her role as Milesias's ghost, she claims that Acanthe was an accessory to Milesias's murder: "this Moore...confederate with your vncles passion" (IV.i.1884). The 'ghost' charges Acanthe of being the "cause that I doe walke in shades" (1886); it is a line loaded with significance, because Milesias is in Court disguised as a black woman. However, she has failed to think this idea through very well, because Lysicles vows to murder Acanthe (IV.iii.2086-91), and the 'ghost' is forced to delay him, by begging him to be "temperate in your anger" (1894). It is important to remember that we have not watched a white woman's scheming revenge: when Acanthe becomes the white Milesias, all plans for revenge dissipate. The play seems to suggest that, at the very least, *black* women are not successful as avengers.

The Defacing Tradition of Courtly Love

Perhaps the most damaging aspect of the tradition of courtly love was its ability to depersonalise—even figuratively anatomise—the object of affection (the expression '*object* of one's affection' being particularly apt because of the reifying nature of the tradition). The irony behind *amour courtois* was that there was some vague intention to elevate the status of women, to turn them into something near divine. The pastime's roots are in the Platonic tradition in which the lover ultimately desires a "union with the Absolute, achieved through a purifying service to a lady who represents this Absolute" (Brodwin 6). This caused a displaced reverence towards the woman, expressed in the blazon. However, the effect of dwelling on such features in isolation was only damaging; rather than idealising her and celebrating her unattainability, the polarity was reversed: she was in pieces, and therefore disempowered, useless in her fragmented form, and not worth the sum of all her parts. The courtly lover is like the anatomist of Devon L. Hodges' description: "the anatomist cuts, dissects, flays, tears, and rips the body apart in order to know it" (5). Further, like the "paradoxical doubleness" of the anatomist, whose ambition is towards "revealing order, but...causes decay" (6), the courtly lover purports to be raising the esteem of the woman who is the object of his gaze, but succeeds only in breaking her down into parts.

There seem to be a number of different lines of development in courtly love literature. Neoplatonists "looked to the idea of beauty beyond earthly embodiment" (Fowler 4), thus ennobling the notion of love as being beyond the merely sexual. Writers such as Castiglione scoffed at the mere baseness of sexual love. In *The Courtier,* Bembo celebrated beauty beyond the physical (Book IV, pp. 304ff.). Early modernism thus used the transcendent ideals of the courtly lover and put them to a greater purpose. For the early modern period, "Platonism starts with beauty in women at the lowest rung of the Ladder of Love and mounts by successive stages to the concept of abstract beauty in gender;" this is in contrast to

unadulterated courtly love, which "begins with beauty in a woman and ends there" (Fowler 4). An example of this earlier, more 'physical' courtly love is Petrarch's *Rime sparse*, in which readers encounter Petrarch's obsession with the physical image of the lady:

> A youthful lady under a green laurel
> I saw, whiter and colder than snow
> not touched by the sun many and many years,
> and her speech and her lovely face and her locks
> pleased me so that I have her before my eyes
> and shall always have wherever I am, on slope or shore (*canzon* XXX).

Petrarch writes in the tradition of courtly lovers that are obsessed to their peril with a particular woman: "and I know well I am pursuing what burns me" (XIX). Lancelot, in Chrétien de Troyes' Arthurian romance, "The Knight of the Cart," is a perfect example of this sort of bodily love. Both Lancelot and Petrarch's speaker's efforts are rendered futile, but already an awareness of the futility of this sort of love is evident in Petrarch. Whereas Lancelot is remembered for the nobility of his courtly love,[174] Petrarch's speaker recognises that his unrequited love has only anatomised her, leaving him with "a bit of dust that feels nothing" (CCXCII). In the Elizabethan period, an even greater awareness of the physical nature of this sort of love seems to emerge in Sidney's *Astrophil and Stella*. Even though Sidney borrows the emotion and language of the courtly lover, the poem's tone is disdainful of it:

> You that do dictionary's method bring
> Into your rhymes, running in rattling rows;

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[174] Lancelot embodies the courtly lover's desire to gaze upon his beloved. See, for example, the narration of his reaction to the calling of his name, offered by the woman positioned, significantly, above him: "From the moment he beheld her, he began to defend himself from behind his back so he would not have to turn or divert his face or eyes from her" (Chrétien 3638-40). Shortly following, readers learn that "Lancelot's strength and courage grew because Love aided him" (3659-60).

You that poor Petrarch's long-deceasèd woes,

With new-born sighs and denizened wit do sing;

You take wrong ways (XV.5-9).

Sidney understands that all the lofty language of the courtly love poet is a sham, and shows it in the archetypal courtly lover, Astrophil, succumbing to his physical desires.

By the time of Charles I and Henrietta Maria's reign, the neoplatonic forms of transcendent, aphysical love were ignored. Despite the noble efforts of Henrietta Maria to reform her Court (explored below), the language of courtly love was becoming increasingly debased into the *game* of courtly love, where the lover, anticipated by Astrophil, uses the language of service, but expects a sexual favour from the woman to whom he is devoted. In the process, the blazon re-emerges, and it is this defacing that Berkeley satirises in *The Lost Lady*.

While libertines cannot simply be equated with courtly lovers, they were able to exploit the language to suit their own purposes, and it becomes clear that the lovers of *The Lost Lady* are guilty of this exploitation. These are the men, after all, who twice ask each other, "*what* is she you loue" (II.iv.1051, 1141, emphasis added), rather than *whom*: woman is an inanimate object, a material (or immaterial—it does not seem to matter which) object of the gaze. Even Milesias, who has not been embroiled in the game in the same way as Hermione's cousin Irene has, exemplifies the dehumanisation women may suffer as a consequence of this courtly love tradition. Although Milesias's character is introduced in the very first act (I.i.15)—only through words, not in person, remembering that she is allegedly dead—she is not actually named until II.ii, five hundred and eighty lines into the play. Until then, she is referred to as Lysicles' "Mistress / barbarously murthered" (I.i.15-16), "his deere Mistress" (224), or "such a beauty" (237), an aesthetic point apparently more important than recognising her as an individual worthy of a name.

Other plays show a similar interest in the negative aspects of courtly love. Another dramatic work that exploits the language of courtly love is *'Tis Pity She's a Whore.* Annabella remarks on Giovanni's love-torn state: "this is some woeful thing / Wrapped up in grief, some shadow of a man / Alas, he beats his breast, and wipes his eyes / Drowned all in tears" (I.ii.131-34). Giovanni confirms her diagnosis in lines of misery that I have already discussed in Chapter 6 (I.ii.218-26, see p. 216). Both these plays are Caroline, an important point because both playwrights were intimate with the Court, and were familiar with Henrietta Maria's encouragement of the cult of courtly love. Both playwrights emphasise its damaging qualities. Ford highlights its capacity to provoke mania through Giovanni's madness, and its extremism through the literal anatomising of Annabella. Berkeley's distaste is further explored below. Neither playwright, it would seem, shared the queen's enthusiasm. Mark Stavig offers a helpful explanation as to why the queen took such pains to foster *amour courtois* among her courtiers: "faced with the gross behaviour which had become all too characteristic of the English Court under James I, Henrietta Maria took the task of...refining the manners of her new subjects" (37). Whatever the reality of what the conventions of courtly love did to the morality of her courtiers, there are indicators that the queen and king celebrated the virtue of their Court. Thomas Carew's *Coelum Britannicum*, performed in 1633 or 1634, emblematises the transformation of the Caroline Court. In this masque, the virtuous court supplants the constellations of the lascivious heavens, which had been formed from the amorous escapades of the pagan gods: "So to the Brittish Stars this lower Globe / Shall owe its light, and they alone dispence / To'th'world a pure refined influence" (101-03).[175]

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[175] Carew's masque was apparently successful. The introduction to the 1964 edition of the masque indicates, "the Queen praised the production, and the King wished to repeat it" (xxxvi).

The courtiers were anxious to comply with the royal quest for courtly refinement, and seemed to take advantage of the language of romantic love for their own purposes: courtly love was in vogue, and courtly love, as they understood it from continental romances, such as readers encounter in Chrétien de Troyes' "The Knight of the Cart," endorsed adulterous affairs.[176] In *The Lost Lady,* Ergasto's speech is indicative of the 'morality' libertines borrowed from courtly lovers:

> Since I am practiz'd in the world I finde there
> are noe greater libertines then marryed men, tis true
> 'twas a daingerous knot in the first age, when twas
> a cryme to breake vowes, but thankes to venus the Sceane
> is altered and we act other parts (Berkeley I.ii.256-60).

Fidelity to the marriage partner is simply not even a consideration in the guidelines for courtly lovers as represented here by Cleon, a blunt advocate of unfaithfulness: "If I were he, I'de take an honnorable composition / lett her chuse whom she please for husband, and / continue her secret seruant still" (II.ii.540-42). A woman's fidelity is boring, and impedes his own freedom to be unfaithful to his wife himself. Ergasto, a paradigmatic libertine, has twisted some of the 'nobility' of courtly love. True, like the courtly lover, he "addresses another man's wife, and the situation is so carelessly accepted that he seldom concerns himself much with her husband" (Lewis 2-3). However, Ergasto takes the license of adultery to another level, where refined behaviour, and fidelity to anyone, is irrelevant. It would seem that courtly love has metamorphosed somewhat into 'free love.'

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[176] A fundamental basis for courtly love was to ignore the sanctity of marriage, and that true love was adulterous. Marriage was an obstruction to true love (Brodwin 7). Moreover, in a feudal society, marriage was political, had nothing to do with love, and its dissolution was common (Lewis 13). C.S. Lewis comments, "marriage was the rather drab background against which [courtly love] stood out in all the contrast of its new tenderness and delicacy" (13). There seemed to have been a shift in how adultery was represented, however, and eventually "adultery...became the symbol for the perversion of society" (Born-Lechleitner 35), an observation that resonates with Berkeley's distaste for the game of courtly love.

Hermione is shocked at Ergasto's philosophy of adultery, calling him "vnciuill" (543): her tastes are too refined to satisfy the courtly lover, who is in fact not civil at all, but rather uncivil and barbarous in his ideology. This is intended to establish Hermione as a virtuous counterpart to her more libertine cousin, Irene. Irene scoffs at those who laud fidelity, for in her opinion, inconstancy is merely "a monster without Teeth for it deuoures, / none" (III.ii.1426-27). Side-stepping Christianity, she is "of the opinion that the Gods giue a blessing to it [adultery], / for none liue happier then those that haue / greatest abundance of it" (1429-31). Irene's worldview would suggest that fullness of life is found *within* a lifestyle of infidelity. Hermione's serving-woman, Phillida, likewise places little value on constancy: this is evident in her failure to understand Hermione's faithful attachment to Eugenio, when Ergasto offers himself as a ready substitute: "But is not my Lady a strange woeman to weepe / thus for one seruant when she has another in his / place?" (III.ii.1415-17).

The libertine, Cleon, knows the rules for this form of courtly love particularly well, and proves to care little for women as individuals. His depersonalisation of women is seen in his propensity to anatomise them: the parts he speaks of belong to any woman and are not unique to Hermione who becomes of interest simply because she poses a difficult challenge, and whose resistance he and his friends will attempt to break down, bit by bit. It seem as though Cleon has a store of parts he chooses to emphasise—"lockes of hayre" (I.ii.244), for example, or "her uoice" (II.i.481)—by which he hopes to flatter his woman of choice. He purposely objectifies them, and wonders if Ergasto has perfected that same approach: "but does he not speake to her / neuer but in Hiperbolies tells her her eyes are / Starrs" (II.iv.1060-62). Eyes are amongst the parts of the body most frequently alluded to, emphasising the preoccupation with 'the gaze' on which courtly love and its offshoots depend. Ergasto tells Hermione that "the Sunnes raies / are not soe quicke & peircing as your eyes" (II.ii.450-51). It would seem that many women of the period (and even to this day, in fact), internalise this

metonymisation of themselves; in other words, they have so often heard these images linked with them, they have come to believe they are merely the sum of their external parts. Phormio, for instance, knows how women are expected to act towards men in this courtly pastime, and notes how Irene has perfected the expected criteria. He remarks of her: "looke how she casts / her eyes vpon thee" (III.ii.1565-66).

The literal image of a body broken into parts is far from attractive, and so taken at its word, courtly love poetry reduces the body to something ugly and scientifically examinable, as opposed to a unified whole that is worthy of praise. Berkeley lays bare the deficiencies latent in the discourse of courtly love by satirising its dissecting tendencies. He achieves this by explicitly mocking the conventions of courtly love poetry. This is best exemplified by Irene's critique of Ergasto's attempt at literary composition in the style of the courtly lover. With a powerful indication of her distaste for this genre of literature, she suggests that his verses be laid aside until they build up so much dust that an epitaph can be written on them with one's finger (Berkeley II.ii.485ff.). Earlier, too, Berkeley highlights the importance of empirical evidence as necessary to replace the airy philosophies of the courtly lover. Cleon asks Ergasto, "what / hopes haue you of your Mistress?" to which Ergon replies, "Noe airy ones, of likeing & affecton, but myne / are built on Tirra firma" (I.ii.303-06). The irony is that Berkeley actually used the confines of a literary genre to scoff at the conventions of just such a medium.

The language of courtly love is often found in tragic plots, because the tradition associates itself with the achievement of "a true end, a union with the Absolute through the paradoxical embrace of death" (Brodwin 9). In *The Lost Lady*, however, no one dies, and the only unions are a number of imminent sexual ones between the pairs of lovers. Berkeley has put the bodies together again and thereby deconstructed the cult of courtly love.

The Heart's Blood: Berkeley and the Body

While an emphasis on eyes reinforces the objectification latent in the activities of courtly love, a fixation on other parts of the body suggests that Berkeley is occupied by the body in general. There are several possible reasons for the careful attention that he pays it. I have already established Berkeley's interest in voyeuristic behaviour, especially in the context of courtly love and its attitude towards women. Berkeley implies that society viewed women as having bodies to be gazed upon, each part to be 'dissected' and enjoyed. However, those parts make up a fascinating 'whole' in which Berkeley was evidently engrossed.

It is fitting that an entertainer should be intrigued by the body. Michael Neill articulates the parallel between anatomical dissection and the theatre well: "almost as if the body, like the discovery space which gave the Elizabethan stage its structural focus, existed to challenge the curious gaze, as if it were to be *opened*" (*Issues of Death* 123). Opening the body, of course, is how this whole play began: Milesias is allegedly decapitated, and "the trunck of the dead Lady found" (Berkeley I.i.185). Perhaps a grosser image still is created by Phormio's tale of the murderer's proud display of his kill: "the head he carried with him in honour of his cruelty" (186). This is the catalyst for a whole series of allusions to body-parts, finishing in a paralleled 'devisaging' of Milesias's disguised alias, Acanthe, when her "blackness falls away" (V.i.236).

Berkeley was certainly not alone in his fascination with body parts. As I established in the introduction (see p. 39), scientists' interest in anatomy was being revivified, and the interest was spreading to the popular arena of drama. For many sixteenth- and seventeenth-century artists of any media, the increased interest in dissection and anatomy provided the means whereby they could link "spectacles of human dissection with traditional *memento*

mori" (Neill, *Issues of Death* 114).[177] As we saw in the Jacobean period, in Heywood's retelling of the Lucrece legend, this presented an opportunity for displaying the macabre on stage. Images of the macabre captivated the early modern period. We saw it early in the Jacobean period, in Chapman's *Bussy,* in which Tamyra sends a letter to Bussy in her own blood, and in the Caroline period, most explicitly in Ford's *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, where Giovanni enters carrying his sister's heart on the end of his sword. In *The Lost Lady*, Milesias, of her own volition, wounds herself: "in her owne bloud did write her tragedy" (I.i.200). Her agency is emphasised through re-telling moments later:

> She soe much lou'd this barbarous homicide
>
> She would not haue him guilty of her death
>
> And therefore wth her owne hand, wounds her selfe
>
> And as she bledd, she writ vnto her lord (203-06).

Berkeley, like Chapman, was evidently interested in the act of writing in human blood, a substance that by this time was understood to circulate around the body from the heart, which, for the majority of philosophers and scientists, was the seat of all emotion.[178] The heart was of particular interest because its biological importance had been so recently discovered.[179] Further, gender issues are sometimes central to the period's theories of the heart. Because the heart is the seat of bodily heat, and, in humoral theory, men are the hotter sex, the size of the heart is an indicator of masculinity (Paster, "Unbearable Coldness" 430). Milesias's jealous 'ghost,' for example, is angry that Lysicles' lust-sick heart is "swolne with vowes" for Hermione, an unmistakable reference to another 'swollen' part of the body which

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[177] In the theatre, dismemberment was a common trope. Shakespeare's *Macbeth* is a powerful example of a play in which characters are described as being "unseamed…from the nave to th' chops" (I.ii.22). We are instantly assured in this particular dismemberment that a *memento mori* was a part of the act. Macbeth "fixed his head upon our battlements" (I.ii.23).

[178] I referred to this hypothesis in Chapter 6; see pp. 205-11, esp. 144n., where I cited Thomas Wright as a useful reference point for the belief that the heart is the seat of emotions.

[179] For a summary of Harvey's discovery and a brief overview of its reception, see 97n.

might indicate the same lust (Berkeley IV.i.1786). Irene's heart stands as a contrast to the pulsing strength of Lysicles' heart: being that of a 'weak woman,' hers "would tremble" (I.ii.453). Further, when a man secures a woman's affection, he has taken over her own (smaller/weaker) heart. This 'colonisation' of another's anatomy is noted by Hermione: playing for time during Lysicles' advances she suggests, "you are to noble / to glory in the conquest of a hart, / that euer hath admired you" (II.iii.874-76).

Berkeley's literary fusion of colonial conquest and anatomy is not unprecedented; Jonathan Sawday has perceived a significant parallel between anatomical and geographical discovery that many Jacobean and Caroline writers drew on:

> The microcosmic explorer of the body laboured on a project the dimensions of which were held to be every bit as dark as the interior of the continent of the new 'found' Americas...The project was conducted with boundless optimism...The task of the scientist was to voyage within the body in order to force it to reveal its secrets (*Body Emblazoned* 25).

There is little doubt that Berkeley was intensely interested in global discovery, and this may shed some further light on his interest the body in his play.[180]

Conclusion: A White Woman's World

One of the most prominent features of Berkeley's *The Lost Lady* seems to be the number of women who are agents of their own destiny, and whose actions are not permanently quashed, or punished by torture. Granted, the women are discouraged from fully appropriating the masculine territory of public space; for example, whilst male characters seek Acanthe's advice or obey the female ghost's commands, it is not something any of them admit to. Further, revenge may be considered out of women's realm of necessary experience;

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[180] This type of parallel between appropriation of the body (in a more metaphorical and gendered, and less anatomical sense) has already been noted in Chapter 5, on *The Sea Voyage*.

however, women assert their personal autonomy in other arenas. For example, in the game of love, Pindarus asks Hermione for how long she has "undertaken to be your owne dispose[r]" (II.ii.548-49). This would seem to suggest that Berkeley is not averse to countenancing the idea of a certain level of autonomy for women, at the very least in the selection of a partner. While he seems clearly troubled by the supremacy, or even equality, of the *black* woman, the issue of personal autonomy for white women seems partially encouraged. The women, black and white, defy a passive role both on a social level and on a philosophical level, in that it is they who subvert, through their defiance, the contention that astrological influences are not the ultimate authority. (Sadly, the woman of colour is barred from further agency, and even extinguished from the play.) They also reject the father as the ultimate authority, despite the fact that initially Pindarus, Hermione's father, seems to have the final say on Hermione's marriage partner. When Cleon asks Ergasto if he has rivals for Hermione's hand in marriage, Ergasto responds, "None present that I can feare haueing her ffathers / firme consent" (I.ii.364-65). Hermione reasserts her own authority by the end of the play, however. Women, or at least white women, the play would seem to suggest, are partially self-determining. Since they are not forced to be 'under the influence' of anything but their own will, Pindarus's observation of his daughter, in the closing scene of *The Lost Lady,* is perhaps more poignant than even he had intended: "She hath made her / selfe her owne disposer" (V.iv.2753-36).

Chapter 8. A Powerful Duchess in *The Cardinal*

Plot Summary

Duchess Rosaura is a widowed virgin, whose first husband, Duke Mendoza, was killed in battle before they could consummate their marriage. She is now in love with Count D'Alvarez, who reciprocates her feelings, but the wily and ambitious Cardinal, the king of Navarre's chief advisor, has dictated that she marry his nephew, Columbo, general of the king's army. She devises a plan which releases her from this contract, but Columbo learns her intentions and kills Alvarez on their wedding night. Rosaura feigns madness in order to execute revenge. In the meantime, Hernando, a colonel who has been dishonourably dismissed from Columbo's army, offers to avenge her, and seek his own revenge. He succeeds in killing Columbo in a duel.

The play concludes with the death of the principal characters. The Cardinal, who is now the 'mad' Rosaura's guardian, attempts to rape her, but is stabbed by Hernando, who dies in the ensuing scuffle. The Cardinal, believing he is also dying, offers a supposed healing potion to Rosaura, which is actually poison, and drinks it himself to prove it is a *bona fide* antidote to what she believed was her earlier poisoning. She drinks it too, and the draught fatally poisons them both. As the Cardinal confesses his trick, he is forced to admit it has turned sour on him when a doctor reveals his stab wounds were not in fact lethal. The king remains the only major character alive at the end, and he waxes eloquent on the harmful consequences of excessive ambition.

Tempestuous Colonialism

James Shirley was writing plays in an age of extensive naval exploration and colonisation. If he was not aware of the tension between conflicting authorities on these ventures, there is ample space in the playscript for this kind of interpretation. Both the

rapacious nature of imperialisation, and the opportunity for counter-colonisation (a term I will explore below) is implicit in the text. The play addresses issues of power relations, language, and savage behaviour, particularly questioning which members of the power structure are acting savagely. Further, the play embeds these concerns in the language of water imagery, ships and storms, as though the play itself were on a tempestuous voyage of discovery and control.

Bernard Sheehan recounts a story about two German artisans whom the famous English explorer, John Smith, sent to Werowocomoco (in colonial Virginia) in 1608 to build a house for Chief Powhatan of the Powhatan nation. The artisans exemplified for Smith the acute danger posed by the attractive nature of 'savagism' when they adopted Powhatan as their chief, and felt liberated from, in Smith's words, " 'those miseries that would happen in the Colony' ". Not only did the artisans encourage the Powhatan nation to move further into the wilderness, away from the colony, but they also dared to recommend an attack on the English (Sheehan 114). This story reinforces the questionability and ambiguity of the Europeans' motives and successes in their efforts to colonise other parts of the world. The European mission to civilise the 'savage,' or, the 'Other'—and thereby participate in a "worke of ...Piety, vpon a barbarous Nation," as William Strachey referred to such efforts in 1612 (8)—is turned, in present postcolonial discourse and in this chapter, into a question of who in fact were the 'savage' and who the 'civilised.'[181] The 'savages' were, as it turned out, not so savage, if such a term signifies 'unevolved.'[182] They had ceremonies and rituals, sophisticated agricultural practices, and delineated class and gender roles. Montaigne had already noted the European's tendency to call those things savage that were foreign to them: "I finde...there is nothing in the nation that is either barbarous or savage, unless men call that

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[181] Richard Rich also emphasised that the purpose of colonising Virginia was "To glorifie the Lord.../...and to no other end" (B2r).

[182] The word can simply refer to people of 'undeveloped places,' or, woodland ('savage' being derived from the Latin, *silva*, or 'wood;' see *OED*) and thus does not have to refer to people who are brutal or violent by nature.

barbarisme which is not common to them" (*Essaies* I.xxx). Europeans had to create the *image* of savagery, when in actuality they learned a great deal from the indigenous peoples. Reliance on the natives was integral to Europeans' survival—the natives knew how to grow food, on which the Europeans were dependent, and introduced the tobacco trade to the English. James I argued that smoking tobacco, that "cōmon herbe…first found out by some of the barbarous *Indians,*" was an imitation of the "barbarous and beastly maners of the wilde, godlesse, and slauish *Indians*" (*A Covnterblaste* B1v); despite the controversy surrounding smoking from the outset, the tobacco industry thrived. Further the colonials were not sufficiently advanced as to adapt to the climate in the New World. Sheehan notes that the English were soon a "sorry sight" in Jamestown, Virginia. Unable to sustain themselves, they grew sick and died. The natives cultivated a "powerful contempt for the incompetence of the people who had invaded their country" (105).

I choose to call this reversal of the traditional perception of the power structure 'counter-colonialism.' The colonists' image of civilised Europeans taming the 'savages' seems to have been, at times, a defensive reaction to the fact that the indigenous peoples of the 'New World' were attractive and differently accomplished. The 'uncivilised barbarians,' were a threat to the civilised society because the citizens of the latter, who had come to colonise the peoples and their lands, discovered they were dependant on the former for food (Sheehan 89). In defence, European colonists often created the illusion of natives' dependence on the superior knowledge of the Europeans for those people back in England and on the continent. These 'armchair travellers' were in turn dependent on colonisers' reports, and many readily believed in their inherent superiority. Paul Brown regards this phenomenon as colonialist discourse that does not simply "announce a triumph for civility, [but also] must continually produce it" (58).

Parallels between natives and women can be seen in the establishment of the 'froward' image of woman—by creating an image of woman as a wild, uncivilised dependent being, patriarchalism was able to maintain control, especially when women had themselves internalised the patriarchal discourse that relegated them to a severe liminality. Sixteenth- and seventeenth- century writings on the 'perverse' attributes of women abound, one of the most memorable being Joseph Swetnam's infamous exposition. By drawing attention to her "painted clothes" Swetnam seems to be implying woman is but a clothed savage, who has not yet internalised the social lessons that would civilise her:

> For take away her painted clothes, and then they look like ragged walls; take away their ruffs, and they look ruggedly; their coifs and stomacher, and they are simple to behold; their heir untrussed, and they look wildly…For the heat of the young blood of these wantons leads many unto destruction for this world's pleasure. It chants your minds and enfeebleth your bodies with diseases…but most of all it endangereth your soul. How can it otherwise choose, when lust and uncleanness continually keeps them company, gluttony and sloth serveth them at the table, pride and vainglory appareleth them (E2r).

Such a description parallels similar commentaries about the first sight of the natives in the New World:

> At the first ariuing…there they founde…nothing shewing trafique or knowledge of any other Nation, but the people naked, vnciuill, some of them deuourers of mans flesh, ignorant of shipping, without all kinde of learning, hauing no rememberance of history or writing among them, neuer hauing heard of such religion (Abbot E5v).

There was a belief amongst many in early Stuart England that women were ignorant and malleable, needing to be taught. Shakespeare, for example, whose speakers at least

occasionally defended females on this point, still did not deny the belief that they had "waxen minds" (*Rape of Lucrece*, 1240); he merely argued that they could not be "authors of their ill, / No more then wax shall be accounted evil" (1244-45). Their malleability, it would seem, was taken for granted. The early moderns believed it was an inherent deficit in a woman's psyche; similarly, some natives began to believe there was much to learn from the colonials, and were "teachable and capable of all good Learning" (de Las Casas 252). They were, for instance, eager to trade with the Europeans, and would supply the colonisers with grain in exchange for " 'peeces, powder, and shotte' " (William Bradford, 1627, qtd. in Oberg 93).

A further parallel between indigenous people and women is in the tendency towards a diametrically opposed perception of both groups; Ania Loomba highlights this parallel: "binary oppositions imposed on women are analogous to and reinforce those of colonial discourse," and exemplifies this comment with some of the polar opposites which are imposed by patriarchal thought, and which pertain to both women and aboriginals: "private/public, danger/safety, pure/polluted" (*Gender, Race, Renaissance Drama* 113). Sheehan reinforces Loomba's contention by arguing: "savages might be either noble or ignoble, either the guardians of pristine virtue or the agents of violent disorder" (2). But even the ignoble savage, like the whorish woman, "had hope for his salvation. He participated to some degree in the common human inheritance which, in Christian terms, meant that he would benefit from the preaching of the Gospel" (6). Savages and English women were taught scripture accordingly.

The view European men held on their absolute right to colonisation is made apparent through the natives' absence in many colonial texts. A persuasive example is the 1620 publication of the English explorer Richard Whitbourne, who proposes to develop a plantation on "New-found-land," in what is now Eastern Canada. After his initial description of the natives as "rude and sauage people," emphasising their ignorance about politics and

Christianity, and conceding to their natural generosity (D1v), he completely ignores their presence on the island. For the next eighteen pages, nearly half of the publication, he considers tactics for English settlements in Newfoundland, and creates a paradisiacal image of the landscape and climate. On page thirty-one (G3r) he mentions the natives in passing, referring to their savagery, and then ignores them again until page thirty-nine, at which point they enter the book's consideration of Newfoundland in the remaining few pages of the book. This finale to the composition is preoccupied more with the land itself and its possibilities for English settlement than on the nature of the natives, to whom Whitbourne has so contentedly failed to give adequate consideration.

The parallel vision held of colonisation of natives and women is made explicit in Whitbourne's subsequent publication, bound in the same book, *New Englands Prospect*. In this work he no longer excludes natives from his discussion, but he addresses characteristics only of the male natives. In the final chapter of this book he makes a brief remark on the nature of the native women: "To satisfie the curious eye of women-readers, who otherwise might thinke their sex forgotten, or not worthy a record, let them peruse *these few lines*" (94, emphasis added). Women are conspicuous by their absence in this publication just as the natives were in the previous pamphlet, and both these marginalized groups, when they are remembered, are discussed in literature of the period as something to be improved upon by 'colonising' men.[183]

Returning to *The Cardinal*, the play's exploration of seventeenth-century colonial efforts is most explicit in its language of seas and storms, and its abundant water imagery. Water imagery is not exclusively associated with women, and is employed atypically. Rather than being suggestive only of the fluidity and inconstancy of women, it is linked to the

[183] Negation and invisibility as they pertain to *The Cardinal* are considered in some detail below, see pp. 294-300, esp. 296-97.

nautical imagery of colonialism, and issues of power, confusion, trial, destruction and dissembling.

That both female and male characters employ, and are described by, water imagery so liberally is indicative yet again of the subversive nature of colonialism in this play—images typically associated with the 'weaker sex' are now employed for both genders. The lords of the Court lament Rosaura's fate, applying images of a ship tossed at a storm's will, with a simultaneous and appropriate suggestion of Fortune's wheel:

> She moves by the rapture of another wheel
> That must be obeyed; like some sad passenger,
> That looks upon the coast his wishes fly to,
> But is transported by an adverse wind (I.i.45-48).

Alvarez, engaging similar imagery for himself, explains:

> I am a man on whom but late the king
> Has pleased to cast a beam, which was not meant
> To make me proud, but wisely to direct
> And light me to my safety (I.ii.188-91).

These extracts establish that Rosaura and Alvarez are both equally subjected to a greater power than themselves. Because they are both dominated by another's control, they are inadvertently placed at a more equal level. Despite their emotional equality, in that they are equally dedicated lovers, Rosaura and Alvarez are not acting in a way that is socially acceptable, and their 'inappropriate' views of who is an appropriate partner must be controlled. She being a duchess and he a count supposedly offends their superiors' senses of decorum, and Alvarez articulates this obstacle to their love: "I am not ignorant your birth and greatness / Have placed you to grow up with the king's grace / And jealousy" (I.ii.183-85).

That the suggestion of the impropriety of their relationship is embedded in terms of ships and exploration is indicative of the colonial theme of this play.[184]

The love interest between Alvarez and Rosaura is also an interesting instance of counter-colonialism. Colonial expansion was marked in part by European male explorers marrying native women; a famous example is the marriage between John Rolfe and Pocahontas. By marrying a woman of 'Other' status, Rolfe claims to be obeying his "godly duty," a "theological mission" in which he helps redeem the sinner, by converting the heathen (Brown, "This Thing of Darkness" 49), but he is at the same time upsetting what was viewed in England as acceptable partnerships. This act can be paralleled to intermarriage of classes within one society, which disrupts 'normal' social structures—the "signs of noble birth are bought and consequently devalued by the rising of the merchant class...traditional social order is askew" (Hall 161). Conduct books and marriage guides were replete with warnings against marrying outside of one's rank. Edmund Tilney, for example, in *The Flower of Friendship*, a marriage guide that went through seven editions in its first nine years of publication (5) turned to the wisdom of the ancients for advice on marriage:

> Marry not a superiour, saith *Plutarch.* For in so doing, in steede of kinsfolkes, thou shalt get thee maisters, in whose awe thou must stande, and a rich woman, that marieth a poore man, seldome, or never, shake off the pride from hir shoulders (108).

In a study of Webster's *The Devil's Law Case*, Kim Hall notes "the marriage that Contrarino proposes underscores the danger of opening up social strata, destroying all decorum" (162). This hazard is poignant in *The Cardinal* on many counts, where class and gender are involved

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[184] Many parallels between *The Duchess of Malfi* and *The Cardinal* can be appreciated. Certainly both are concerned with the remarriage of widows and rank. In Webster's play, the title character knows that by choosing to court Antonio she is "going into a wilderness / Where I shall find nor path, nor friendly clue" to be her guide (I.ii.267-68).

in a complete subversion of social expectation: woman chooses man, high rank chooses social inferior.

Further, in a society where a rising merchant class was becoming a threat to the 'god-given' right of aristocratic rule, Alvarez's 'claim' to Rosaura served as a mutinous threat to the socially senior Columbo. In colonial efforts, "insubordination, mutiny, conspiracy, and rebellion appear with monotonous regularity in the accounts of discovery, conquest and settling of the New World" (Jones, *O Strange New World* 133). This was illustrated in *The Sea Voyage*, in which Sebastian relates the tale of his sailors' mutiny:

> I had command too, when I landed here,
> And led young, high and noble spirits under me.
> This cursèd gold enticing 'em, they set
> Upon their captain, on me that owned this wealth
> (Fletcher and Massinger I.iii.175-79).

In *The Cardinal* this sort of usurpation of their superiors' power would have been a significant reason for the Cardinal and Columbo's resistance to the marriage between Alvarez and Rosaura.

The question of the pure motive behind the superiors' counsel is also drenched in water imagery, and signs of Rosaura's refusal to heed this poor counsel are evident early in the play. She insists that "the king he hath no power nor art / To steer a lover's soul" (Shirley I.ii.67-8), and likewise the Cardinal gives "false aim" (II.iii.157), but her torment over her predicament is equally expressed in water imagery: a "flood is let into her heart" (I.ii.76), her "heart is in a mist" (I.ii.239), and her soul "doth bathe itself in a cold dew" (II.ii.39).

The flood which Rosaura finds engulfing her heart is further linked to images of dissembling, or the fluidity of one's external character. She has just been informed that Columbo, her undesired intended, is to be sent to war imminently. Her emotional response

would suggest a deluge of horror at his leaving, but the audience's knowledge of where her heart really lies suggests instead a flood of joy: she wishes that he may die, or, in sea-faring terms, may voyage "to the unknown world, if my thoughts might convey him" (I.ii.78). She has earlier on expressed a will to dissemble, also couched in rebellious language: "Thus I must counterfeit a peace, when all / Within me is at mutiny" (I.ii.27-28). "Mutiny," a term which often implies a nautical usurpation of the captain, suggests the rebellious nature of her character—she is subverting her status as 'subordinate' by suggesting she will instead govern herself.

The destructive aspects of water are used, then, for both genders, as established by both Rosaura's and Alvarez's employment of them. Further, even those in power are susceptible to destruction, and this play tends to depict such description in water imagery as well. Antonio, Rosaura's secretary, wishes the Cardinal's destruction:

> it were a spectacle
> Most rare to see him topple from the precipice,
> And souse in the salt water with a noise
> To stun the fishes; and if he fell into
> A net, what wonder would the simple sea-gulls
> Have, to draw up the o'ergrown lobster (V.ii.107-12).

The Cardinal's own dying words also employ sea-faring imagery: "My wings that flag may catch the wind; but 'tis / In vain, the mist is risen, and there's none / To steer my wandering bark" (V.iii.281-3). He recognises the futility of the power he held, and this recognition has subdued him.

The most violent of tempestuous imagery is reserved for Columbo, whose "wrath of thunder" (II.iii.62-3) threatens to divide Rosaura and Alvarez. Because of her strength of character, the duchess fears "no lightning," but her lover is more pessimistic; he fears "a

shipwreck on the coast" (II.iii.70). Columbo's further connection with water suggests he, like his famous colonial predecessor, Prospero, can conjure up storms: "The clouds are gathering, and his eyes shoot fire; / Observe what thunder follows" (Shirley, *Cardinal* II.i.91-2).[185] Significantly, it is Rosaura who "provokes this tempest" (Shirley II.i.110), and whose calm is immediately juxtaposed with Columbo's frenzy. Of Rosaura it is said, "Her grace ne'er showed more freedom from a storm" (111); in contrast, Columbo's "rage flows like a torrent" (II.iii.3).

Further, Columbo's tempestuous nature is the root of his determination to be Rosaura's "conqueror" (I.ii.125), and here colonialist discourse is most strongly linked with gendered power relations. There are many ways in which stereotypical colonialist discourse manifests itself in this play, most potently in the notion of the civilising power of language, and this will be discussed below. However, counter-colonialism rears its angry head in Rosaura's own tongue—she, like *The Tempest*'s Caliban, has turned 'civilised nature's' language on itself. There appears to have been a belief in seventeenth-century England that there existed 'proper' forms of speech. We see this clearly evidenced in Miranda's speech to Caliban in the first act of *The Tempest:*

> I pitied thee,
> Took pains to make thee speak, taught thee each hour
> One thing or other. When thou didst not, savage,
> Know thine own meaning, but wouldst gabble like
> A thing most brutish, I endowed thy purposes
> With words that made them known (I.ii.355-60).

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[185] In Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, Prospero admits his role in causing the illusory shipwreck that has driven the passengers to the island which he has claimed for himself (I.ii.26-9). His daughter, Miranda, pleads for mercy on behalf of the passengers and crew: "If by your art, my dearest father, you have / Put the wild waters in this roar, allay them. The sky, it seems, would pour down stinking pitch" (I.ii.1-3).

That Miranda utters these words is worthy of note,[186] since women were deemed at best inferior to men.[187] They were not necessarily privy to this language—they were constructed by it and bound to it, but this does not mean that achieving a fluency and eloquence of the tongue was either their privilege or even to their advantage. As we saw in the case of John Healy's commonwealth of women, women's speech could be seen to be a sort of babbling, either empty or harmful (see pp. 171-72). Theirs, then, was more 'brutish,' and less 'civilised.' Stephen Greenblatt extends this concept of masculinist language to colonialist expansion in early modern Europe: like women's 'babbling,' the opinion that "[native] speech was close to gibberish remained current in intellectual as well as popular circles at least into the seventeenth century" (*Learning to Curse* 19). There had been few attempts to decipher native forms of speech, until Thomas Harriot took upon himself the task of mastering some of the native languages, believing they could be logically categorised. His attempts to vouch for the logic behind the unrecognisable tongues was hardly widely embraced, and was not published until the twentieth century (Salmon 6; Quinn 16): "his ideas could have only inspired a small number of explorers who might have had access to the manuscript" (Salmon 10). Furthermore, there were many who absolutely disagreed with his optimism in the possibility of some sense of method to these languages. The French traveller, Lescarbot, for example, "regarded the variety of languages among the American Indians as derived from the events at Babel" (Salmon 3).

The 'civilised' Prospero and Miranda had taught Caliban to speak their language: he contemptuously dismisses the futility of their efforts: "language, and my profit on't / Is I

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[186] While the folios of 1623 and 1685 attribute these lines to Miranda, from Davenant's late-seventeenth century adaptation through to the early twentieth century, they were given to Prospero, with the basic assumption that it would be indecent for Miranda to reply to Caliban's immediately previous lines about sexual activity (Lindley 119). However, this seems to add greater weight to the fact that the earliest editions *intended* them to be spoken by this young woman.

[187] Even Protestant theology continually reminded early moderns of the relative positions of men and women. Thomas Becon, a licensed preacher at Canterbury under Edward VI and Elizabeth I, reminded readers in *The Book of Matrimony* that "God in his holy ordinance hath appointed the husband to be head ruler and governor of his wife" (111).

know how to curse. The red plague rid you / For learning me your language" (I.ii.365-7). In *The Cardinal,* the civilising power of language is suggested in the king's charge to the Cardinal to "commend us to the Duchess, and employ / What language you think fit and powerful, / To reconcile her to some peace" (IV.i.51-53). The inflated tongues of the 'civilisers' are, of course, absurd, and this point is not overlooked. The Cardinal's language is so convoluted the duchess complains, "your phrase has too much landscape and I cannot / Distinguish, at this distance you present / The figure perfect" (IV.ii.222-24).

Language can be put to another use: to speak out against those who have created it. However, women's lack of recourse to (masculine) speech evidences itself in this play in Rosaura's lady-in-waiting, Valeria, whose very name suggests sedateness.[188] She has internalised some of the masculine stereotypes of women, and remarks that Alvarez's potential role as tempter is a function that has "too much of woman in't" (I.ii.39). The minimal language she does use is constructed by male stereotypes of gender—she refers to "female pride" (41), and talk that will "fright a lady" (55). When Celinda, her counterpart who has not been so indoctrinated, speaks convincingly of flirtation with Columbo, Valeria shows she is intrigued: "Thou hast converted me, and I begin / To wish it were no sin" (136-7). However, her recourse to language is limited, and she laments that she has not "the confidence / To tell [Alvarez] my free thoughts" (98-99), implying that there is no uniquely female language or freedom in which to express herself. Similarly, Rosaura notes her dependence on men and their rhetorical skills. She cannot speak at Hernando's assured level—there is not a language available to her by which she can convince him of her desire for revenge. Instead, she must ask Hernando to speak to himself on her behalf: "dare tell / Your confidence that I despise my life, / But know not how to use it in a service, / To speak

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[188] The root of the valerian flower is used as a herbal sedative. Heywood praises a Valeria of antiquity, as a woman "married to Servius" whose accolades include goodwifeliness and chastity (Heywood, *Gynaikeion* 127).

me his revenger" (IV.ii.140-3). Women, of course, did not have the same educational opportunities to learn rhetoric (Sharpe 273; Sonnet 102-03), and, like Rosaura, "know not how to use" the language to their advantage.

Despite Rosaura's restricted recourse to language, she uses what she has been taught against her teachers. This is most evident in II.iii, where the Cardinal and the duchess meet shortly after Columbo has released the duchess from their marriage contract. The conversation begins in a strained, but polite manner, each character referring to the other as "Madam" and "My lord." The same terms of formal address are used throughout, but their value is given a more ironic tone as the conversation turns into an exchange of ferocious insults, in which he attacks her chastity and she his devotion to the church. This is the opposite experience to colonisation, which moves from 'barbarous tongues' to the 'civilised speech' of the Europeans. Her mutiny here is of language, and she has reduced the 'master of language' to savagery in his speech.

Acts four and five grow more vicious in their attack on the dangerous imposition of colonisation. The despairing duchess contemplates the treachery and death around her: "Whose bloody hand wrought all this misery?" (IV.ii.38). It is, of course, Columbo's who, along with his uncle, the Cardinal, is the worst of the 'colonisers,' the appropriators of their 'inferiors.' Like the Spanish and French Jesuits, who came to the New World under the banner of redemption, and violently attacked the natives, the Cardinal "carries angels in his

tongue and face, but [his heart is] suspect" (V.ii.88-9).[189] His attempted rape of Rosaura portrays his corruption and tyranny; rape is perhaps the ultimate example of the brutality under which the Europeans sought to civilise the savages. The Cardinal has been made the guardian of the 'mad' Rosaura (V.i.12). She does not welcome this appointment, and her aversion is justified because of his plan to "rifle first her darling chastity, / 'Twill be after time enough to poison her" (V.ii.91-2).

Although the Cardinal is unsuccessful in his attempt, Rosaura's near-rape by him is described as "a lamb given up to a tiger" (V.ii.68). Here, the question of who is the civilised and who needs civilising is raised—the savage image is now given to the patriarch (the coloniser)—while the image of sacrifice is blended with the pastoral image of a sheep, to suggest the 'savage of the New World' image was produced merely as a pander to the Europeans' pride. Further, the allusion to Isaiah 53.7 cannot be ignored, in which the prophet speaks of the Christ to come, who will be "brought as a lamb to the slaughter." The duchess is portrayed as one who has become a Christ figure. Like many other women characters studied in this thesis, the duchess takes on the image of the male Christ, highlighting the fluidity of gender that was inconsistent with the distinctions many early Stuart writers were attempting to create.

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[189] Stories of brutality against the aboriginals in the early modern period were as widespread as stories of colonial brutality are today. Rosario Romeo observes that "the shattering crisis in the religion of the [natives] came as a result of the attempts to convert them: the new religion often appeared connected with the most brutal forms of violence and abuse, and its clergy [Jesuits] *were* often greedy and coarse. In many [natives], the collapse of the old beliefs caused the loss of inner equilibrium, total passivity, drunkenness" (172). This brutality is further exemplified in a tale about the conquest of Peru, in which Pizarro and his men, covetous of Peruvian gold, seized the Incan Atahuallpa and massacred thousands of his attendants. A Christian priest exclaimed to Pizarro, " 'Do you not see, that, while we stand here wasting our breath in talking with this dog [Atahuallpa], full of pride as he is, the fields are filling with Indians? Set on, at once; *I absolve you,*' " (qtd. in Jones, *O Strange New World* 46). There are also stories of English brutality. See, for example, *Lord Sackville's Papers Respecting Virginia, 1613-31*, in which it is reported how a certain interpreter was sent to the natives by Captain Tucker: "After a manye fayned speeches the pease was to be conclued in a helthe or tooe in sackee which was sente of porpose in the butte with Capten Tucker to poysen [the men of the great Kinge Apochanzion]" (Bennett, "Letter to Edward Bennett, 1623" 507).

A Dangerous Trinity: The Widowed Virgin Duchess

Rosaura must be suppressed in order to be controlled. She wields inordinate power for a woman, from three angles: she is a duchess, and therefore holds power by virtue of her rank; she is a widow, and she is a virgin. Her rank as duchess is an interesting one because her character and authority can be compared with that of Elizabeth I. For example, Duchess Rosaura bemoans the consequences of her rank:

> Misery of birth and state!
>
> That I could shift into
>
> A meaner blood, or find some art to purge
>
> That part which makes my veins unequal (Shirley, *Cardinal* I.ii.199-202).

This recalls Elizabeth's desire to be a milkmaid, because she would not then be forced to subordinate her private body to the public image of her political body. In Elizabeth I's speech to the closing of the March 1576 parliament, the queen remarked: "If I were a milkmaid with a pail on mine arm person might be little set by, I would not forsake my single state to match myself with the greatest monarch" (qtd. in Mueller 7). This comment has a daringly unorthodox quality about it, especially since a woman voices it: not only does it elevate the virgin-state above marriage, but it also makes rank of little consequence beside the claims of the single life.

The duchess's virginity is another way in which she resembles Elizabeth—and is thereby linked to Elizabeth's power—and also the way in which she establishes her own power. Constance Jordan articulates how Elizabeth was empowered *through* her virginity:

> that is, through her dismissal of suitors, a dismissal that depends to some extent on her being perceived as virile...I wish...to suggest that her power as fictional male is represented as including the kind of power to control and possess her suitors that is entirely at her discretion, a power that her

> contemporaries saw as proper to male sexuality functioning in a patriarchal culture ("Representing Political Androgyny," 168).

Rosaura likewise controls and possesses men at her discretion. Within the course of the play she has been married once, but did not lose her virginity to this man, loved a second, but also chose to remain a virgin, temporarily flirted with a third, leading him to believe he would benefit from their relationship, and taunted a fourth, with promises that he was the only man living that she might love. Moreover, her rank causes men to willingly subvert the social expectation that demands women's obedience to men—both Alvarez and Hernando vow obedience to her. Alvarez openly presents himself to her as "one that was glad to obey your grace, and come / To know what your commands are" (I.ii.162-3), and likewise Hernando seeks her command for revenge (IV.ii.165). Like Elizabeth I, Rosaura drove men to distraction with their passion for her, or for her power. After he has been shunned by her, even Columbo, the third of these 'lovers,' vows like a jealous inamorato that, since she will not have him, neither will she have any other man. His interest in her is likely to be only mercenary, however, since her marriage to him would have added "more lustre to our family by the access / Of the great Duchess' fortune" (III.i.27-8). He threatens to kill any future lovers she may acquire.

Rosaura's virginity may not have been a matter of choice, at least in the case of her first husband, but she used her virginal state regardless and sought power from that source. Likewise, Elizabeth's actual physical virginity certainly came under suspicion during her own lifetime, and remains suspect to this day—indeed, there is some evidence to suggest she participated in *coitus interruptus* ('onanism' was the early modern term) (Crawford, "Sexual

Knowledge" 99), at the very least with her courtier, Christopher Hatton.[190] Whether or not she was a *virgo intacta*, however, is not the question. The point at issue is that Elizabeth used the public assumption of her virginity for her own ends, and the same is true with Rosaura's motive for retaining her virginity.

The strange combination of widow and virgin, the last two aspects of Rosaura's triadic source of power, is a threat to a patriarchal social order which dictated woman's dependence on man. Those women that were not bound by marriage were at risk of a 'dangerous' self-sufficiency. Therefore, widowhood and celibacy were two states that early Stuart England eschewed, in part because it was afraid of losing control over its women. Evidence of the actuality of masculine anxiety on this point is to be found in Thomas Heywood's *Gynaikeion*:

> the foure parts of the world haue their denominations from women.... if the women of our age did fully apprehend and truly vnderstand, how insolently would they boast of their worth and dignitie? how would they glorie in vaine boasts and ostentations, how much vncontinuall chidings would they vpbrayde their husbands, still casting in their dishes their owne virtues and goodnesse; still commemorating and vrging, that women beare the names of all the foure parts of the diuided world; that wisedom and the theological virtues are personated vnder the sex of women; that the Arts, the Disciplines, the Muses, the Graces, and almost whatsoeuer is good, are deciphered both by the names and in the persons of women: therefore (I feare) this had beene better kept as secret as mysteries in Sanctuaries, and not to haue been published to them in their owne mothers tongue, in which they are so nimble and voluble (60-61).

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[190] Although Christopher Hatton vowed " 'voluntarily and with vehement asservation that he never had any carnal knowledge of Her Majesty's body' " (qtd. in Weir 50), Weir cites evidence that "matters may have gone further" (290). A friend of Hatton's, Edward Dyer, writes in a letter to the former: "'Though in the beginning, when Her Majesty sought you...she did bear with rugged dealing of yours until she had what she fancied; yet now, *after satiety and fullness*, it will hurt rather than help you' " (290, emphases added). Weir indicates, "there has been much conjecture as to what Dyer was referring" (290).

Spenser also noted that the suppression of women had its root in such concerns:

> But by the record of antique times I finde,
>
> That wemen wont in warres to beare most sway,
>
> And to all great expolites them selues inclind:
>
> Of which they still the girloined bore away,
>
> *Till enuious men fearing their rules decay,*
>
> *Gan coyne straight lawes to curbe their liberty*
>
> (*Faerie Queen* III.ii.2, emphases added).

It would seem from evidence of this nature that male suppression of women may well have originated in such anxiety, and that this has not been a psychological imposition on a culture that thought little about such issues. The misogyny which would stifle the active woman is not rooted in their fear of her sexuality—it would seem, on the contrary, the men are fascinated by the pleasure this brings them—but rather it is inherent in the androcentric social structure of early Stuart England. Latent in the literature of the period is a fear of betrayal that is concomitant with sexually active women. The prominent theatrical example to underscore the tragic proportions to which such anxiety could grow, is Shakespeare's *Othello*, in which we observe a sudden demise of his belief in his wife's fidelity in III.iii.

A patriarchal discourse of virginity "carried encoded within it the notion of an anomalous female nature" that was a threat to Christian notions of woman's submissiveness and subordination (Jankowski, *Women in Power* 31-32).[191] This image of anomalousness was created because of the imminent danger to patriarchal absolutism, felt if women sought

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[191] Jankowski traces this power back to the Christian belief that there was no gender in heaven, which led to the idea that women martyrs became men. In daily life this translated into a belief that consecrated women virgins could be classified socially and legally as men. They therefore posed a threat, because they were regarded as trying to transcend their own gender and engage in a process of inventing themselves. This was, obviously, a dangerous level of control in a patriarchal social structure (*Women in Power* 28-9).

virginal independence from men. Margaret L. King elucidates the rationale behind this uneasiness:

> Since women's roles were defined by sexual and economic relationships to men, society made little place for the woman who was unattached to a man...unattached women were especially vulnerable to improper sexual advances, a matter of extraordinary gravity because of the value accorded to chastity in the economic and social system of the Renaissance. Their honor consisted in the maintenance of their chastity (29).

Men, it would seem, found the controlling of a woman's sexual activities an important aspect of effective patriarchal governing. Such a rigidly defined view of virginity suggests a male perspective; it perceives virginity as the exclusive method for controlling male bloodlines; a woman's virginity should only be lost to the man with whom her father agrees she should continue a particular family tree (Jankowksi, *Pure Resistance* 134). A feminist discourse on virginity might emphasise its power instead. A number of scholars have considered a feminist view of virginity, in which virgins reject the sexual economy that patriarchy would impose on them by refusing to take part. In this sense, virginity can be "interpreted as a resurrected life whereby woman is freed from the two-fold curse on Eve (sorrows of childbearing and male domination)" (Ruether 159). Andrea Dworkin, in *Intercourse*, states that "in the woman's frame, virginity is a fuller experience of selfhood and identity. In the male frame, virginity is virtually synonymous with ignorance; in the woman's frame, it is recovery of the capacity to know by direct experience of the world" (113). Like the virgin who is unattached to a man, the widow holds greater autonomy than married women. She is an independent woman, "free from the legal and personal control of husbands...widowhood gave her legal rights to control her property in her own...interests" (Jankowski, *Women in*

Power 35). Further, she "contradicted and was a threat to a patriarchal social order that saw all women as needing a man's control" (35).

The duchess's status as virgin and widow is of such importance that it is immediately established, within the first few lines of *The Cardinal*: "How does her grace since she left her mourning / For the young Duke Mendoza, whose timeless death / At sea left her a virgin and a widow?" (I.i.4-6). Although the question may have been posed out of a genuine concern for her well-being, it foreshadows the fear with which other people view this situation later in the play. There are already hints of frustration at her virginal position by the second act, although they are veiled in comments surrounding the sexual naivety she brings to her next husband. A colonel in the king's army laments, "'Tis much pity / The young duke [Mendoza] lived not to take the virgin off" (II.i.143-4). Again, obsession with her status manifests itself—the duchess herself draws attention to her unique position, promising to come to Alvarez "thy virgin, wife, and widow" (IV.ii.107).

When Rosaura dies, she does so with her virginity and widowhood intact, but willing to give up the power latent in that position when she joins Alvarez in heaven. Perhaps Shirley is foreshadowing her sexuality in the afterlife when he writes her dying words to her lover, "I come, I come, Alvarez" (V.iii.291). It would seem the verb 'to come' as sexual slang had at least some usage in the seventeenth century. The *OED* records its usage in this way in a composition by one Bishop Percy, entitled *Walking in Meadow Green* (1650): "Then off he came, & blusht for shame soe soon that he had endit." Shirley's potential sexual innuendo also had a precedent in a song by John Dowland, a sixteenth-century English composer whose fame spread throughout Europe as he travelled back and forth between England and the

Continent (Poulton 19).[192] His *First Booke of Songes or Ayres*, published in 1597, and reprinted into the seventeenth century, includes a song entitled "Come Again: Sweet Love," whose lyrics are:

> Come again sweet love doth now invite,
>
> Thy graces that refrain to do me due delight,
>
> To see, to hear, to touch, to kiss, to die,
>
> With thee again in sweetest sympathy (Dowland 39-40).

At the very least, a twenty-first century performance of *The Cardinal* could ensure the line carried such an insinuation, and, considering the strength of Rosaura's character, this would not seem to be incongruent.

"That Cunning Writ": Women and the Dangers of Writing

The vehemence with which many early moderns argued against women writing for publication may seem astonishing to the modern reader. Whether the dispute was more a rhetorical *topos*, a displacement of other fears surrounding power, or a truly misogynistic view of women is open to debate.[193] Nevertheless, the issue did raise important questions about the power of the pen. *The Cardinal's* Duchess exemplifies the case against women and writing. Hers was a subversive act, which defied the restrictions of silence and obedience, a damaging act whose implications were explicitly seen in Tamyra's act of writing in *Bussy D'Ambois*.

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[192] Joseph Gwilt, who writes a short biography on Dowland in his collection of early modern music, notes: Dowland "says in the preface to his *Pilgrim's Solace*, that some part of his poor labours had been printed in eight most famous cities beyond the seas, viz. Paris, Antwerpe, Collein, Nuremburg, Frankfort [*sic*], Leipsig, Amsterdam, and Hamburg" (Dowland 7).

[193] For scholarship on this debate, refer to Linda Woodbridge's *Women and the English Renaissance*. For how treatment of women became part of a literary game that celebrated 'friendship-love' to amuse an elite society, see Juliet Dusinberre's *Shakespeare and the Nature of Women*, and for research on the production of femininity as "a saleable commodity in the literary market" (Purkiss 69), see "Material Girls: The Seventeenth-Century Woman Debate" (Purkiss 69-101).

Duchess Rosaura does not submit to authority quietly. Her rank among the nobility means that she is accustomed to being appeased, and even in areas where, in a patriarchal system, gender overrode rank, Rosaura takes a certain freedom for granted. Her initial acceptance of the marriage contract between Columbo and herself is abhorrent to her, and as time passes she realizes the necessity of removing herself from this entanglement. She writes a letter to him on that subject. Upon receiving it, Columbo marvels:

> She writes and counsels,
> Under my hand to send her back a free
> Resign of all my interest to her person,
> Promise, or love (Shirley, *Cardinal* II.i.98-101).

Columbo's initial response is that "the woman is possessed with some bold devil, / And wants an exorcism" (II.i.103-5). Here, a woman who writes is equated with demonic possession. Upon further thought, however, Columbo determines her act to be a ruse: women are dissemblers, and "love has a thousand arts" (129); therefore, she must be writing this to ignite a further flame of love in him. He, therefore, writes a letter in return, releasing her from their contract. Love, of course, is not his concern, but pride is, and her letter 'shrinks him in fame' (97), the implied undermining of his manhood not being overlooked.

The implicit message seems to be that woman's writing has the power to undermine male authority. If writing has such potential, then perhaps it should be denied to women. If women learn to associate their literacy with a monstrous nature, then perhaps they will not even attempt it, and men's prerogative will remain in tact. In *The Cardinal*, the title character unconsciously conjoins Rosaura's act of writing to things "most dark." Rosaura's letter was not intended to be a spark by which to inflame Columbo's heart; rather "she sent / That cunning writ in hope to take him off" (III.ii.171-2). The Cardinal cannot believe his nephew would write a letter of amiable release such as he has done, and attributes it to "strange arts

and windings in the world, most dark, / And subtle progresses" (II.iii.92-3). The strange art, in fact, is Rosaura's initial letter. Later in the play, the Cardinal's consciousness of this link is drawn closer to the surface, when Columbo explicitly makes the connection between this woman's writing and demonic activity that the Cardinal has only implied:

> Read there how you were cozened, sir,
> Your power affronted, and my faith, her smiles
> A juggling witchcraft to betray and make
> My love her horse to stalk withal, and catch
> Her curlèd minion (III.ii.137).

That he refers to himself as her "minion" does not necessarily imply demonic activity, but, particularly since he has just charged her with "a juggling witchcraft," the temptation to view her as a type of Hecate is powerful. I mention Hecate here (a ruler over the souls of the dead, or, Greek goddess of witchcraft and magic), as opposed to an unspecified witch because of Hecate's ambiguous status in classical mythology.[194] She is "mighty in heaven *and* hell" (Virgil, *Aeneid* VI.248, emphasis added), and "honoured exceedingly" by the gods (Hesiod, *Theogony* 412). Hesiod describes her as a blessing to men: "Great honour comes full easily to him whose prayers [Hecate] receives favourably, and she bestows wealthy upon him; for the power is surely with her" (*Theogony* 415 ff.). Certainly Duchess Rosaura had similar potential for Columbo's welfare. Two Lords discuss this very matter, commenting on the fortune that marrying the rich duchess would secure: "men of coarser blood [than Columbo] / Would not so tamely give this treasure up" (Shirley, *The Cardinal* I.i.29-30). Because of the blessings she yielded, men honoured Hecate, in this capacity. Relevant to this is the quality

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[194] Hecate was a common image in early modern drama, although she was almost always associated with the darker side of her classical representation. Shirley refers to her harmful nature in *The Lady of Pleasure* (IV.i.95), Shakespeare to her assocation with the night in *Hamlet* (III.ii.246), and Middleton and Rowley with potential witchcraft in *The Changeling* (III.iii.80). However, her multifaceted nature was emphasised (e.g. Middleton, *Ghost of Lucrece* line 2); 1581 translation of Seneca's *Hippolytus* II), and sometimes references to her suggested she was the moon (e.g. Chapman, *Bussy D'Ambois* V.iii.146).

of leadership found in historical traces of Hecate, which Rosaura, as duchess, also embodies. The first known "Hequit" seems to have been "one of the oldest goddesses of predynastic Egypt, with a name derived from the Egyptian word for *intelligence* or *tribal ruler*" (Roberts, *Shakespearean Wild* 172), and in the capacity of goddess, the Hecate could preside over peoples and bestow whatsoever beneficences she desired.

Hecate, however, has another capacity, an association with sorcery and black magic, and here, too, she is like Rosaura, and the 'sorcery' the duchess can conjure with her pen. It is the "juice of Hecats flower" that turns Arachne into a spider because "the poison had such power" (Ovid, *Metamorphoses* VI.174ff.). Hecate is "threefold," and "wailed to by night;" she teaches "the vengeance exacted by heaven" (Virgil, *Aeneid*, IV.511; IV.609; VI.564).[195] She, therefore, variously represents herself; she is at one turn an admired leader who bestows gifts on her subordinates, and at another, a feared crone, the changeability in her character symbolized by her multiple faces.[196] Rosaura, in her position as leader and dissembler perfectly captures the ambiguity of such an association.

Roberts captures another facet of the goddess/witch Hecate that seems appropriate to the construction of Rosaura's character, and that is the trivialising of such a prominent presence. The Triple Hecate is the goddess of the meeting place of roads—in *The Aeneid* she is called upon by night "at the crossways" (IV.609)—and is consequently often called Trivia (*tri-via*): "the trivialization of the word is a mark of the trivialization of the goddess, and trivialization is a form of taming" (Roberts, *Shakespearean Wild* 172). The efforts of the principal characters in *The Cardinal*, especially the title-character and his self-absorbed nephew, to trivialise the importance of the duchess stem from their fear of her alleged "witchcraft." Like Hecate, Rosaura's name is denigrated, in the latter's case because of her

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[195] See also Seneca's *Hippolytus*, in which she is referred to as "threefold shapen" (II).
[196] Thomas Middleton refers explicitly to this triadic shape in *The Ghost of Lucrece* (published 1600), when Lucrece refers to "Medea's magic, and Calipso's drugs, / Circe's enchantments, Hecate's triform" (lines 1-2).

madness. The Cardinal, for instance fears that she is, now that she is not fully sane, "beneath my great revenge; / She is not capable to feel my anger" (V.i.30-31). She has, in the words of one of noblemen, "turned a child again" (V.i.16). Her status, Hecate-like, is 'trivialised.'

The Cardinal contemplates Columbo's charge of witchcraft. He does not indicate he agrees with his nephew's claim, but neither does he free the duchess from blame. He rather wonders why she would dare, by writing, "forfeit / Her modesty" (III.ii.138-9). Like Daniel Tuvill, who calls the pen a "pander to a virgin chastity" (see above, p. 30), the play also connects women's writing to issues of modesty. This is because writing is a form of breaking women's silence—it is a metaphorical speaking. An opening of the mouth is symbolic of an opening of the genitalia, and therefore a 'whorishness' on the part of the woman. The liberal-willed woman, in Bakhtinian terms, is "the gaping mouth, the open window, the body that 'transgresses its own limits'...[she] negates all those boundaries" which constrain her potential for power (Stallybrass 128).[197] William Whatley anticipates this Bakhtinian construct of the grotesque by more than three centuries. Insubordinate women are "monsters in nature, botches of human society, rude, graceless, impudent, next to harlots, if not the same with them" (33). Rosaura, therefore, through the act of writing, becomes a witch, a whore, and an image of the grotesque. This, however, could be read as a positive construction—as a proto-Bakhtinian revolution of woman. Gail Kern Paster assesses the revolutionary nature of the grotesque body (in the case of Rosaura, specifically the female body), observing that such a body "threatens forms of established order for the sake of its own immediate self-celebration and for the long-term goal of promoting social cohesion and purposiveness from

[197] Bakhtin distinguishes between the grotesque and the classical body, the former, of course, being inferior to the latter. The grotesque represents something unfinished, in contrast to the classical, which is complete. The grotesque emphasises those parts that are open to the outside word, i.e. the mouth, genital organs, breasts, phallus, nose, while the classical emphasises the head as the seat of reason (Bakhtin 25-27).

below" (*Body Emblazoned* 15).[198] Rosaura's revolution seems to have failed: revenge is denied her, and she is poisoned. However, the upheaval of order she has caused has staved off the marriage she is threatened with, and her death in fact reunites her with her lover. Like Hippolita in *'Tis Pity*, Rosaura has not consciously started a revolution, but she has wilfully acted in a way which re-establishes order.

Madness and Revenge

Rosaura desires nothing more than to avenge Alvarez's death. When Hernando chastises her for failing to act, she defends herself: "You do not know the business of my heart" (IV.ii.138), explicitly clarifying her will:

> I so much
> Desire to sacrifice to that hovering ghost,
> Columbo's life, that I am not ambitious
> To keep my own two minutes after it (IV.ii.146-9).

Her lack of ambition for personal gain shows the purity of her motive. For Rosaura, this is not an issue of honour and reputation—it is wholly, purely, a matter of love-driven revenge. Hernando cannot boast the same. He maintains that his position as revenger is for Rosaura, but his chastisement of Rosaura's inactivity proves to be self-serving. What he really desires is a scapegoat for his own violent revenge. He asks her, "I beg / That I may kiss your hand for this, and may / The soul of angry honour guide it," to which she responds "Whither?" and he replies, "To Don Columbo's heart" (IV.ii.153-6).

It becomes evident that Hernando's motive is his own honour. He admits this himself on several occasions, threatening that the wrongs done to him through Columbo's actions "may one day be counted for" (III.i.42), and remarking that the general and Columbo's uncle,

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[198] The grotesque body was often understood as feminine by its very definition of having multiple orifices, which were subject to penetration and leakage (Greenfield 238).

the Cardinal, "have injured me" (IV.i.31). When Hernando engages in a duel with Columbo, though the latter states that Hernando is "the Duchess' champion" (IV.iii.37), Hernando insists that he comes "to revenge *my* honour, stained and trampled on / By this proud man" (IV.iii.23-4, emphasis added). Hernando, therefore, has previously employed, and continues to employ, language that shows his actions are for his own ends. This proves to be one of Hernando's defining characteristics, and it manifests itself frequently, in situations other than his revenge-seeking. An example of this is the way in which he uses religious language. He admits that, since the king has restored Columbo, he will "be now / Of no religion" (IV.i.18-19), and later even more explicitly abandons a belief in divine justice and intervention—he separates the duchess's religion from Divine omnipotence: "Your cause is so religious you need / Not strengthen it with your prayers, trust it to me" (IV.ii.198-9). His hubris here is in contrast to a later, orthodox piety, which he adopts when it strengthens his argument for 'revenging the duchess:'

> I come
>
> To vindicate, and while I am killing thee [Columbo],
>
> By virtue of her prayers sent up for justice,
>
> At the same time in heaven I am pardoned for't (IV.iii.43-6).

In instances such as these, woman becomes the excuse for male villainy. Hernando's revenge is the sort which, in Francis Bacon's expression, "the more Mans Nature runs to, the more ought Law to weed it out" (*Essayes* 19). This is in contrast to the duchess's desires, which rise from the fact that she has no defence—the king, who should be the fountainhead of justice, has failed to punish Columbo. Hers is the more "tolerable sort of *Reuenge*...for those wrongs which there is no Law to remedy" (Bacon, *Essayes* 19).

Another manner in which the nature of the duchess and Hernando's revenges differs is how they are portrayed to the audience. Hernando is entitled to the honourable duel; Rosaura

simply loses her wits. Because early modern England did not have an organised police force for the suppression of civil unrest, the highest authorities often left civil disputes to the civilians themselves (Broude, "Revenge and Revenge Tragedy" 48-9), and the duel was a popular method of fighting for one's honour.[199] Hernando receives acclamation for engaging in a duel; even his adversary offers words of praise: "Hernando, now I love thee, and do half / Repent the affront my passion threw upon thee / ...This [duel] makes good thy nobility of birth" (Shirley, *Cardinal* IV.iii.1-4). He is the "valiant Hernando" (V.ii.80), whose greatness may be the source which " 'twill fetch [Rosaura's] wits again" (82).

The dilemma is that the authenticity of Rosaura's madness is questionable, and therefore, while Hernando seeks revenge for honour, the duchess's revenge is linked not only to madness, but also to notions of dissembling and deceit (an aspect of her character which will be further explored in the following section). While Hernando is not restricted to the silence and passivity of womanhood, the duchess, despite her rank, is forced to adopt a persona. Madness is her only recourse to revenge.

Elaine Showalter discusses a nineteenth-century performance of *Hamlet*, in which Ellen Terry creates an unconventional interpretation of the role of Ophelia, one which inspired other actresses to rebel against the conventions of invisibility and negation associated with the part ("Representing Ophelia" 89). The same can be said about Rosaura's role in *The Cardinal*. Rosaura, like Ophelia, is in comparatively few scenes, and her madness comes late in the play. This 'invisibility and negation' is consistent with the honouring of Hernando and his resultant overshadowing of Rosaura. The duchess's madness is also ineffective in that she is not even the revenger in the end, which had been her purpose for donning this cloak of insanity; rather, it is Hernando who takes this role. In a performance could she, like Ophelia

[199] Francis Bacon, who was reputedly averse to the practice of duelling, referring to it in his pamplet, "Touching Duels" (1614) as "a kind of satanicall illusion," (qtd. in Kelso 102) conceded that "so strong was the stream of popular opinion that even staid and sober-minded men who saw rightly the vanity of duelling must conform 'or else there is no living or looking upon mens faces' " (102).

be interpreted as a woman who transcends that negation? In order for her to have a substantial presence in the play's analysis, one must consider her in this light: her defiance of invisibility must become the focus of the play.

For Rosaura, defiance of invisibility necessitates donning the cloak of madness. The duchess has to appear mad in order to act, because as a 'sane' woman—a socially well-behaved woman—she would be silent and passive. Rosaura steps outside of patriarchal expectation of silence, and in so doing, she is described as 'mad.' The patriarchal privilege is, like the colonials' privilege, to call savage (or in this case, insane) what is in fact merely contrary to social norms. In other words, the principal male characters impose madness on her, despite the fact that she takes control of it by determining to "pretend my brain with grief distracted" (Shirley, *Cardinal* IV.ii.316). Since they have called her mad, she will use it against them, undertake a criminal action, and let her 'insanity' make the act "appear no crime, but my defence" (IV.iii.321). Evidence that her madness is superimposed by external viewers is manifested by the symbolic act of the Cardinal sending flowers to Rosaura, connecting her 'distraction' with the impromptu picking of flowers:[200]

> I know not where he is, but in some bower
> Within a garden he is making chaplets,[201]
> And means to send me one (Shirley, *Cardinal* V.iii.17-19).

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[200] While flowers do not necessarily always signify madness, they do identify a break from the conventional images associated with reason, and mark a return to nature and civilised life. Madness could be visually displayed "on the surface of the body, in its disguises, its disarray" (Salkeld 60). Cordelia's grief over her distracted father's madness, during which he is "crowned with rank fumitory and furrow-weeds, / with burdocks, hemlock, nettles, cuckoo-flowers, / Darnel, and all the idle weeds that grow / In our sustaining corn" (Shakespeare, *King Lear* IV.iii.3-7) is a clear indication of this connection between madness and wildflowers. Images of madness were not restricted to wildflowers, but natural growth as a foil to human-made products. The mad Ophelia, for example, is seen with a general assortment of flowers and herbs (Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, IV.v.174ff.).

[201] Chaplets are garlands of flowers, used alternately as a pastoral decoration and a victor's garland. In Ford, for example, it is employed in victory: "the chaplet!—Ithocles, / Upon the wings of fame" (*The Broken Heart* I.ii.61). In Shakespeare and Fletcher's *Two Noble Kinsmen*, a stage direction indicates a pastoral usage of the wreath: "*Then Theseus between two other nymphs with wheaten chaplets on their heads*" (I.i.S.D.).

This is followed immediately by her refusal to accept the gift of flowers—"I'll not take it" (19). However, even the formidable duchess does internalise some patriarchal stereotyping, evidenced by her slippage into real madness, which she attempts to justify: "if you had / The burden of my sorrow, you would miss / Sometimes your better reason" (V.iii.43-5). Rosaura's madness, then, like Ophelia's, can be read as a protest or rebellion: "the madwoman is a heroine, a powerful figure who rebels against family and social order...and the hysteric who refuses to speak the language of patriarchal order, who speaks otherwise" (Showalter, "Representing Ophelia" 91).

Despite Rosaura's potential for depth as a character, the playwright seems to have different designs, and belief in the necessity of the restoration of order denies Rosaura the right to succeed in her appropriation of madness for the sake of revenge. Madness is conventional in revenge tragedy (Hieronimo in Kyd's early revenge drama, *The Spanish Tragedy,* is an archetypal example). Charles and Elaine Hallett would go so far as to suggest it is "universally found in revenge tragedy" and is "an integral part of the revenge theme" (9). Its prevalence, however, is designed so that the revenger can be successful—if she or he is *not* mad, the revenger would be "unable to free himself from the restraints that forbid the act of vengeance" (9). What the Halletts argue, however, is important in that it fails to follow for Rosaura—her madness leads to nothing. The play-within-a-play motif, symbolic of the other world a mad revenger slips into, a subjective world "which is approbative of his desire for revenge" (10) is denied Rosaura. Unlike, for example, Hamlet, whose successful revenge is in part justified by the truth which is revealed by his play-within-a-play, Rosaura's madness leads to her imprisonment and an attempt of rape upon her body.

Since madness is a convention of revenge tragedy, Rosaura's mental disturbance is not distinctive; what is more unique in this play is her madness as a *female* revenger. She would have willingly been her own revenger, which she establishes explicitly: "I had intent this

night with my own hand / To be Alvarez' justicer" (Shirley, *Cardinal* V.iii.245-6). For the world to carry on androcentrically, Rosaura must fail in her attempt, and be silenced once more. Her self-activated revenge needs to be unsuccessful. Rosaura's fiction of madness seemed harmless enough to her enemies, and the king, in her defence, says "You were mad, / And thought past apprehension of revenge" (V.iii.247-8). As it turned out her madness *was* harmless—Hernando was strong enough to overthrow Rosaura's independent quest for control. Her madness was benign, her resistance passive, and she was, drowned in a river of patriarchal ambition and revenge. Revenge requires action, and action was discouraged in women; Rosaura could join in the lament of many failed revengers before her, such as Hippolita in *'Tis Pity*, or, Vittoria in *The White Devil*, the latter of whom articulates their failures best: "o womans poore revenge / Which dwels but in the tongue" (III.ii.283-84).

Rosaura's madness, created to a certain extent by those to whom she was subject, became the grounds on which those rulers could justify their need to guard her, to correct her. Like Elizabeth I, she is a ruler whose gender immediately undermines her authority. Lisa Hopkins explores female rulership in terms of Miranda and *The Tempest*, addressing its colonial perspective in a way very relevant to *The Cardinal*:

> As European and potential ruler, [Miranda] is a coloniser, but as potential ruler and female, she is a threat to the very system which authorised her, while as a female she, like the native Caliban, finds herself constituted in a society as a site suitable and necessary to be colonised by male discourse and ideology and as a corrective to the perceived inherent instability of the female psyche (Hopkins, "The Gaze Returned" 40).

The similarity here to Rosaura, is particularly apt on two counts: the oxymoronic position of female ruler, and the view that men are a corrective for the inherent instability of the female psyche. Rosaura, who does not exert her power to any effect, is stripped of it: a rape is

attempted on her and then she is poisoned. Her inherent instability is depicted in her madness, and the imposition of the Cardinal as her guardian exemplifies a male belief in the need to gain control over such instability. Here, too, we see another correlation between natives and women, in the idea of English patriarchal justification for male civilisation of the Other (whether it be native or woman). In *New Englands Prospect*,[202] there is an account of how, when under attack, a band of natives called the Tarrenteenes, fled to "their *English Asylum*, whither [their enemies] durst not pursue them" and where they were "presently cured by *English* Chirurgery" (60). Translate this into a metaphorical attack and injury, and one finds women dependent on men for the preservation of their fragile psyches.

"Love has a Thousand Arts:" Dissembling and Integrity

Psychomachia—interior battles—are portrayed with considerable frequency in early modern characters, just as they were a well-known form for creating subjectivity in classical literature.[203] This sort of battle raged in Tamyra; she exhibited the conflicting emotions of "feare and hope" (II.ii.168). Amintor, too, suffers the battle of conflicting passions (Beaumont and Fletcher, *The Maid's Tragedy*, III.ii.150ff.). Degenerative tendencies in society at large, and in the microcosm of the individual were commonplaces in that period. This was perhaps partially due to the loss of a sense of humanity's importance, based in part on the emerging Copernican model of the universe, and a general sense of the increasing decay in the world itself. Godfrey Goodman, Queen Anne's chaplain, observed humankind's fall "from the heauens to the earth" (17)—a fitting image for the Copernican disturbance of their sense of superiority—and noted that, as opposed to the Edenic situation that once had been enjoyed, now "you shall see the dogs hailing at Bulles, and at Beares; or if you please, it

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[202] This work is mentioned above, as a publication coupled with *A Discourse and Discovery of Newfoundland* (see p. 272-73).

[203] One of the most famous classical examples is Medea's internal struggle, expressed in a lengthy soliloquy (Ovid, *Metamorphoses* VII.13-101).

shall be a stage, or Theater, where you shall see...the changes and variety of fortunes...all of them the vndoubted markes of corruption" (20-21). The struggle of an individual who finds herself, or himself, in this unstable society, is eloquently expressed by one of Shirley's Caroline contemporaries, Humphrey Mill. In this poem the speaker is musing on the changing state of the world as Time, "in his speedie course" pushes humankind out of control (B1r):

> But yet my spirits were by in a trance,
> For Darknesse with his mantle spread me ore,
> With that, I did my courage much advance
> 'Gainst darknesse, yet the combate was so sore
> That I grew sadder than I was before (B1v).

In *The Cardinal*, Rosaura is psychologically torn between her sense of integrity and her desire to dissemble for the purposes of revenge. Her psyche becomes a battleground on which dissembling and integrity are thrown into conflict. The dissembling characteristic that has been dormant is stirred by a resolve to "repair / My poor afflicted bosom" (Shirley, *Cardinal* I.ii.64-5). She believes the first step is revenge, made possible only by dissembling, yet she is a novice in this art. Although she deceives her ladies in waiting by telling them that their company has "enlarged my spirits" (90), she knows she has failed to fully hide her sorrow: "I have not the skill to contain myself" (94).

Shortly following her determination to conceal her grief, the conflict between integrity and dissembling condenses itself into a single speech, and highlights the tension between these warring impulses in her psyche: "Forgive me, virtue, that I have dissembled, / And witness with me, I have not a thought / To tempt or to betray him, but to secure / The promise I first made to love and honour" (I.ii.151-4). Her misrepresentation of her self, therefore, is as new a manifestation as her madness. Further, it is ignited by the despotic control she

suffers at the hands of those who wish to control her. Rosaura uses this newly-awakened skill for her own benefit, to seek vengeance for Alvarez. It becomes natural to her as time passes, and she grows to apparently enjoy the skill she has acquired: "Do not I walk upon the teeth of serpents; / And, as I had a charm against their poison, / Play with their stings?" (II.ii.18-20). She does indeed play with the Cardinal's naïvety, for he mistakenly believes she is "no dissembling lady" (II.iii.133). Later, when he learns of her dishonest self-representation, he identifies her 'duplicity,' like her letter-writing, with a lack of modesty: "Is it possible / The Duchess could dissemble so, and forfeit / Her modesty with you and to us all?" (III.ii.97). Anything subversive is, of course, a threat to whatever is the dominant ideology and must be extinguished.

The duplicitous woman constructed by patriarchal discourse is here represented in Rosaura. Despotic control breeds in her a scheming nature, which leads her to take on one form of dissimulation: feigned madness. The flame of her newly-found craftiness is ignited by the love she has for Alvarez, and the passion that stirs in her for revenge. She pretends to care for the Cardinal, and make amends to him: "I must believe, / And ask your grace's pardon; I confess / I ha' not loved you since Alvarez' death, / Though we were reconciled" (IV.ii.288-91). This reconciliation proves to be feigned, when later in the scene she determines, "this Cardinal must not / Be long-lived; all the prayers of a wronged widow / Make firm Hernando's sword, and my own hand" (IV.iii.312-14). Interestingly, the same love which heightens her capacity to dissemble also establishes her strength of character. Her decision to initially accept the engagement shows a considerable integrity.[204] She could have, like Evadne, who married Amintor as a cover for her affair with the king, married Columbo

[204] Not all scholars agree on this point. Fredson Bowers, for example, blames Rosaura wholeheartedly for the situation in which she finds herself, contending that she is "not strong enough to resist with frank integrity the combined pressure of king and cardinal" (232).

and conducted an affair with Alvarez, but she was determined not to be Alvarez's mistress and Columbo's unfaithful wife.[205] Loyalty and fidelity prove to be integral to her.

Conclusion

In many ways it seems impossible to determine exactly how James Shirley intended his audience to respond to Duchess Rosaura. Like so many female characters constructed in that century, she is deliciously cunning. However, unlike certain strong women, such as the Duchess of Malfi, it is not Rosaura's strength which prompts her downfall—her cunning does not reverse on her to her peril. It is rather her position as a dependant on her male superiors, such as the Cardinal, that results in her demise. Rosaura's greatest act of dissembling was, paradoxically, the humiliating experience of madness. Ultimately, this led only to her being prevented from executing her own revenge, and to create a proximity between her and the Cardinal that led to his attempted rape of her.

To close where I began, with a consideration of colonialism, it would seem, despite the final lack of power accorded to Rosaura, that James Shirley's deliberate ambiguity in his representation of this duchess demonstrates, in the end, a support for her character. Homi Bhabha argues that the point of intervention in colonial discourse should "shift from *identification* of images as positive or negative, to an understanding of the *process of subjectification* made possible (and plausible) through stereotypical discourse" (18). If appropriation of the Other (natives or women) depends on fixity, which is "a sign of cultural, historical and racial difference" (18), then the very rejection of such a rigid definition for Rosaura suggests she has the fluidity necessary to slip through the fingers of the colonisers.

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[205] The most obvious example of the 'marriage to cover an illicit relationship' *topos* is in Middleton's *Women Beware Women* (c.1620s). The sub-plot involves the love affair of Isabella and Hippolito. Isabella consents to marry a man she does not love for the express purpose of being able to continue a clandestine affair with the man she does love, but whom legal sanctions do not permit her to marry. (Although she believes otherwise, Hippolito is thought to be her uncle.)

In the end Rosaura is indeed killed, but she has longed for this death for some time and in this sense she is not defeated, but rather victorious. Further, she has conquered the madness she herself created, as well as the mental instability she suffered that was separate from that of her own making. In this way she has risen once again above the subordinate role expected of her as Other. Her 'fluid mind' paradoxically showed an incredible firmness of character. It was this fortitude which threatened the men around her, and for which she died; it was in this death that she was able to be reunited with her lover.

Conclusion: Hoping For Future Havoc

I have suggested over the course of this thesis that the women in the plays considered are victims in two senses: they are physically tortured and killed in circumstances where their actions may seem not to warrant the horror of such treatment; and, in modern scholarship, they have been castigated, trivialised through reductivist readings, or, more often, shamefully neglected. Sometimes the playwrights seem to endorse their suppression, but more often they seem to lay bare the vices of society, in order to contextualise women's actions, and possibly even to defend them. Constance Jordan suggests, "the disorderly woman signifies the putting back into competitive play of objects that have already been assigned a use, a time and place of operation, and in interest or purpose" (*Renaissance Feminism* 53). Jordan encapsulates here the way in which these women have been ignored in recent scholarship because the literary theories that were in play found them irrelevant. For example, essentialist theories seeking traits of 'universal man' looked to characters such as Hamlet, paying little attention to how Hamlet does *not* represent all humankind in all places across all times, and paying less attention to how other principal characters who were women may, or may not, speak to a transcultural and transhistorical audience. It is my contention that early Stuart drama had been mined so earnestly for evidence of the essential and homogenising attributes of humankind that by the mid-twentieth century, scholars were beginning to exhaust this approach. Scholarship is making a timely and radical change in its emphasis. However, these more varied critiques still focus predominantly on the works of Shakespeare, Marlowe, Middleton, Webster and Jonson.[206]

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[206] See, for example, works such as Hawkes's *Alternative Shakespeares*, Ziegler's *Shakespeare's Unruly Women* (bibliographic entry under Dolan), or Erickson's *Rewriting Shakespeare, Rewriting Ourselves*. These, while important works, are limited in the artists they discuss. Not all scholars have been glad of the move towards new perspectives in early Stuart drama. Robert Watson, for example, in his contribution to the *Cambridge Companion to English Renaissance Drama*, charges the new scholarship with constructing "artificial boundaries between past and present" (301).

It is the process of recognising the disorderly aspects of a female character, respecting those as traits to be examined, and therefore, returning her to the "competitive play" of dramatic analysis, rather than throwing the drama she inhabits back into the fire of forgotten literature to which it had been fed. I will conclude by considering some of the recurring issues in these plays that are worthy of reading more closely as we attempt to gain further insight both into what these plays presented to an early Stuart audience and what they could present today.

Failed Ambition

Early Stuart drama represents the ambitious woman in many ways: as acting sexually, deceptively or vengefully, and sometimes a number of these in conjunction. For instance, Tullia, as demonstrated in Chapter 2, is ruthless and salacious, but her power was brief and her dynasty equally as short. She was a failure as a daughter, a mother and a ruler. However, she is not entirely a failure—Heywood seems not only to have created Tullia so that he could present the futility of ambition; she is also given the notoriety of the label, 'villain.'[207] While this may not be a positive representation, it is still a notoriety that the failure to analyse this play has denied her. Tullia herself is represented as an autonomous and evil *force* that needs purgation; she is not merely part of an evil dynasty. Her dying words, while mocking and derisive, exhibit a remarkable strength of character that readers have not recently considered, much less intended to stage. Heywood gave her a potential nobility in death, through her stoicism and her unwavering character, that earlier accounts had not chronicled, and that the present-day failure to stage or study this play has equally denied her.

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[207] Clarence Valentine Boyer notes the paradox of the villainous hero. Despite their wilful and deliberate violation of the standards of early modern morality, they become a protagonist in that their deeds become the centre of dramatic interest. The result is a type of play in which the hero is a villain (8). These hero-villains are "characters who, in the consciousness of their own superabundant power, override the barriers of human and divine restraint" (9).

Evadne, too, is self-confessedly ambitious. Like Tullia, who conjoined sexuality and ambition (Heywood, *Rape of Lucrece* 167), Evadne, in *The Maid's Tragedy*, used her body sexually in order to gain favour and power from the king. However, Evadne, much more than Tullia, has been unjustifiably villainised by subsequent literary analysis (see Chapter 3). Twentieth-century criticism was much quicker to condemn Evadne to silence than was the theatre-going public in the seventeenth-century. Indeed, *The Maid's Tragedy* was performed regularly throughout the seventeenth century and kept in repertory well into the eighteenth. The nineteenth century saw some variations on the play, but *The Maid's Tragedy* itself was losing popularity. The twentieth century has offered a handful of productions, including two radio productions, but the notoriety that Beaumont and Fletcher had once gained by this play's success was by then long-forgotten (Maus, *Four Revenge Tragedies* xxxvii-xxxix).

Attitudes to Suicide

Chapter 2, on Heywood's *The Rape of Lucrece*, clearly established the tension early Stuart England felt in representing suicide in literature and on stage. Heywood was no exception to the ambivalence with which his culture dealt with this issue. He joined his contemporaries in highlighting Lucrece's self-consolation rather than presenting her suicide as a damnable act. To his credit, Heywood, more than others who depicted this instigator of the Roman republic, portrayed Lucrece as so unswervingly virtuous that her internalisation of the rules of 'goodhuswifery' could even seem superfluous, at least to present readership. It is interesting to observe that, despite the great pains Heywood took to make his heroine virtuous, he never took away her voice.[208] Compared with Shakespeare's more famous

[208] I use the term 'heroine' advisedly here. Considering the heinousness of suicide in early Stuart England, and, since her husband had forbidden it, the disobedience inherent in this act might suggest we have here yet another hero-villain. Although her act of defiance could serve to categorise her as a 'bad woman,' she is clearly being established as a type of hero.

Lucrece, Heywood's heroine is even garrulous. Heywood did not stop her mouth; that was inadvertently done much later by the silencing of the play itself.

In Chapter 3, on *The Maid's Tragedy*, the potential confusion about suicide in the early Stuart mind was also demonstrated. The confusion here lies in the fact that Aspatia does not fall upon her own sword; she is rather vivisected by Amintor's. However, as I sought to establish in that chapter, these two characters are really two halves of a whole, their likenesses blurring gender boundaries and creating a suicide out of a homicide. Evadne's suicide is less ambiguous, and probably less mourned, in spite of attempts to establish her status as victim in a play in which she is typically vilified by her critics. Amintor's suicide, too, is unapologetically self-murder, but in his united front with Aspatia we are forced once again to question how much this was an extension of her own self-slaughter. The questions raised here suggest that adjudicating the morality of suicide was a pressing concern, worthy of continuous exploration. Suicide was not a black-and-white issue at that time, a fact that becomes increasingly clear as we return to early modern texts in our own time. While the majority of theological treatises categorically forbade it, alternative views were certainly present.

The Death of the Self

Another sort of ambiguous suicide was encountered in Chapter 4, on *The Queen of Corinth*. Merione's is not a suicide of a physical nature, but it is a deliberate erasure of her identity, which raises issues of subjectivity, especially in the case of women, in the early Stuart period. Merione seems to believe in a subjective self, which she attempts to suppress: once she has married she will adopt the name and family of her husband and will submit to his shaping of her. This highlights a heavy irony: the sense of a subjective self is undermined by the very fact that self-fashioning, for a woman, is subsumed by socio-cultural influences that deny a female subjectivity. Merione's rape is emblematic of this patriarchal hegemony.

It would seem that, in the case of rape, the only action a woman can take is to slaughter herself, either literally, as in the case of Lucrece, or figuratively, as in the case of Merione, whose only autonomy lay in the decision to assume the identity of her husband. What has happened in *The Queen of Corinth* is a contradictory representation of self- or cultural-construction, and the identification of which is true is never fully resolved.

Melancholic Genius

Aspatia's significance (Chapter 3) seems more to reside in the blurring of absolutes about character than for the purposes of presenting self-destructive behaviour. Further, she shakes the foundations of the contention that men are melancholic in the elevated sense and women are merely mad. Many of the female characters I have concerned myself with in this thesis are endowed with what Robert Burton called love melancholy, which I established was a mental affliction mostly associated with men, the female counterpart being hysteria. Aspatia indeed elevates herself to the level of the great melancholics; however, she simultaneously deconstructs the nobility of this status—the condition is, in the final analysis, a neurotic one, and she ultimately ranks among the notable neurotics.

Much later in the period, the representation of Annabella in *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* (Chapter 6) also challenges those who would suggest women are merely hysterical. Burton's *Anatomy* noted that symptoms of love melancholy include fear, sorrow and anxiety, and, as Chapter 6 made clear, there seems to be no doubt that Annabella is subject to these emotions even before she has ever vocalised her thoughts to her brother. Finally, Rosaura in *The Cardinal* (Chapter 8) exploits the stereotype of female madness to execute revenge. She, too, exhibits a particular cunning because of the dubious nature of her madness (like Hamlet, she admits to having *put on* her antic disposition). Under the cover of this diagnosis, she attempts to execute revenge: she uses her 'madness' to undertake a murder.

Another use of melancholy is seen in Merione (Chapter 4, *The Queen of Corinth*). When Merione is read as emblematic of humoral temperaments, she also becomes a contending voice against the stubborn theories of humoralism which continued to dominate the seventeenth century, even in the face of empirical evidence that tried to discredit it. Merione stands as a flaw in Bright's theories concerning the aggravation of dominant humours. By consistently refusing to represent her melancholic state as the result of physical humoral imbalances, she comes to convey the possibility of the potency of mental illness.

Power Relations in Rape

It was through being raped that Merione became emblematic of the various hypotheses on humoralism. In Chapter 4, the tentative suggestion was made that Merione used this rape for her own benefit, as a means of revenge that would return her to her lover, the very man who had raped her. Despite her very own cries of eternal dishonour, Merione finds agency in this new life which follows her rape. The shift in her style of rhetoric and her powers of persuasion that succeeded this 'baptism through fire'—a baptism in a macabre but fairly literal sense, as immediately following the rape she is anointed with water—is pronounced as she awakes to a new life in which she finds an acknowledged voice. Like the raped Lucrece, Merione's voice only finds a persuasive power in death. Lucrece's is a literal death, and Merione's is suggested through the effacement of her identity through marriage. Chapter 8 (*The Cardinal*) also explored rape, linking it with concerns about the violence and injustice of appropriation, and raising questions in a period of colonial exploration about the appropriateness of conquest.

Bound to Failure in Revenge

T. F. Wharton is, to my mind, accurate in saying that a modern audience of Ford's *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* "might feel some qualms about the way, upon the failure of Hippolyta's scheme of revenge against Soranzo, the pious chorus of onlookers comments on the

righteousness of heaven...and on how richly deserved an end the 'vile creature' Hippolyta has come to" (*Moral Experiment* 100). The circumstances which lead to the *failure* of her revenge (and the revenges of other female characters, such as Rosaura) are equally as interesting, or perhaps more so, as the revenge tales themselves. They lead us to wonder whether the playwright was in fact endorsing that inevitable failure, or rather bringing to light the circumstances that ensured Hippolita would fail. Concomitant with her 'odious' personality is the appreciation of the equal odiousness with which she is treated. Because she is so unjustly brought to death we may find ourselves wishing she knew that Soranzo did die in the end. At the same time, we must recognise the revenge she so craved was barred from being hers, and must come to terms with the fact that the result she desired (Soranzo's death) is unsatisfactorily fulfilled, since she was denied the pleasure of enjoying her intended means to that end.

Heywood's *The Rape of Lucrece* also supports the same possibility, that the playwright may be questioning the monopoly men hold on revenge. Lucrece, because she feels forced to commit suicide, has to leave revenge in the hands of her family and friends, rather than being able to carry it out herself; however, we *lament* Lucrece's fate, and find ourselves wishing she would live so that she could execute her own revenge. There is no doubt she lusts for revenge.[209] It is unfortunate then, that an opportunity for agency is thwarted by her decision to die.

Female Friendship

Clearly, the suggestion of female homoeroticism in the early part of *The Lost Lady* is superseded by a heterosexual finale. As Chapter 7 sought to establish, the issue of lesbianism seems to have been raised so that the impossibility of it could then be endorsed. The practice

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[209] See Chapter 2 for the long line of writers, including Heywood, who place revengeful words in Lucrece's mouth.

of raising it as a possibility generally seems to have been a later phenomenon: in the earlier part of the seventeenth century, it was scarcely addressed as an issue at all. Female homosexuality's 'non-existence' rendered it harmless. Bettina Matthes remarks, "while at the beginning of the century, Thomas Heywood depicted the nymphs' homoeroticism as natural, in later dramas, this desire is staged precisely in order to be condemned" (189). Matthes is referring here to Heywood's *The Golden Age* (1609), which contains a rendering of the classical story of Diana and Callisto that features homoerotic desire between women (Matthes 182). Theodora A. Jankowski similarly draws our attention to an even earlier play, John Lyly's *Gallathea* (1592), in which Gallathea and Phillida's "refusal to relinquish their female-female love reinforces...the power of women characters to find ways of defining themselves and their affections that are 'outside' the patriarchal sexual economy" (*Pure Resistance* 25-26).[210]

William Berkeley's *The Lost Lady* endorses the point that later dramas condemn the homoeroticism latent in some earlier drama, such as *Gallathea*. The love between women is lost as soon as all is 'set right' in the heterosexual world. The same outcome is seen in a play set in the middle of the Early Stuart period, *The Sea Voyage* (1622), where the "cold and chaste / Embraces" (Fletcher and Massinger III.221-22) between the women are replaced by the suggestion of heterosexual liaisons. Tibalt says of Crocale that she "will cut / My leaden dagger if not used with discretion" (V.106-07). However, while the words "cold and chaste" may have negative connotations, they do not necessarily suggest an alternative to heterosexual activity that is dull and inferior (a point I elaborated in Chapter 5). Neither

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[210] Granted, in Lyly's play, Venus solves the same-sex issue by turning one of the women into a man (V.iii); however, before this proffered solution, both Gallathea and Phyllida were prepared to love each other as women, though the goddess Diana insists that Nature would have it otherwise (V.iii.125-26): "I will never love any but Phyllida," vows Gallathea, "Her love is engraven in my heart with her eyes" (127-28). It is only after this declaration that Venus—who says of their love, "I like well and allow it," insisting, "never shall it be said that Nature or Fortune shall overthrow love and faith" (134-38)—suggests turning one of them into a man.

erotic nor tedious, women's relationships could have a vivacity that would be a chaste alternative to penetrative sex with men.

However, as in so many other plays of the period, women are used as instruments of titillation. Four centuries later, female characters still often serve to titillate, and while platonic female-female friendships are widely accepted, lesbianism is still a sensitive subject in terms of twenty-first century morality. It frequently continues to be presented sensationally rather than to challenge social mores. Continuing to bring the issue to light, as playwrights like Berkeley, Fletcher and Massinger did, could be a helpful method for a current understanding of aspects of female-female sexuality in early Stuart England, that a failure to perform and analyse these plays inhibits.

Paying the Price for Knowledge

> *And the serpent said to the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil* (Gen. 3.4-5).

Eve paid the ultimate price for knowledge—death to her, her husband, and all of their progeny, for the rest of time. But the question remains, can she be solely blamed for the fall of humankind? If she is not the only one at fault, then why has she been shouldering the blame for so long? These are questions the playwrights force us to confront when they present the circumstances of a society so quick to blame women for its moral decrepitude. Putana, who is remembered in Ford's *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* for her "farmyard morality" (Hopkins, *Female Hero* 133), knew, arguably, too much. Her knowledge both of Annabella and Giovanni's affair, and her ability to spot a pregnancy quickly, threatened the masculine society that was ignorant of both. Herein lies the tragedy: that forbidden knowledge should bring upon itself violent physical disempowerment. The gouging of her eyes is clearly a horrifying action. She had 'forbidden' knowledge, like Oedipus or Gloucester, both of whom also lost their eyes, and we weep for all three alike. Ford is *likening* her to these other tragic

figures. Putana has been burdened with the curse of knowledge. Although the parallel is never noted, she has been 'granted' the same status as the wise Tiresias, struck blind for his wisdom. She, like he, puts pressure on gender absolutes, Tiresias having "been of both sects [sexes]" (Heywood, *Gynaikeion* 5). A.P. Hogan remarks that Putana was burned against a background of "cold, facile rigor, coloured by secret unsexual but vindictive egotism" (315). Ford, in other words, is creating a society which is no better than Putana, but which "claims to work through justice" (316). He seems to be encouraging us to scoff at the injustice of this claim.

Writing seems to be another field of knowledge from which attempts were made to exclude women. Whatever they wrote, destruction lay in its wake. Like Eve, their activity precipitates not only self-destruction but also implicates others as well. As we saw in *Bussy D'Ambois* (Chapter 1), Tamyra's act of writing was the direct cause of Bussy's death, and was a metaphorical destruction of her femininity. It indicates that action is equivalent to destruction: before ever writing in blood, Tamyra's agency—her active role in her adulterous affair—stirred a wrath in her husband so great that she was forced to undergo the torture that inevitably led to the writing that secured Bussy's death. In the case of Rosaura, in Shirley's *The Cardinal* (Chapter 8), her act of writing portrayed her unwillingness to submit to authority, and caused a contagious virus of homicidal activity. It is even suggested that women's writing could be linked with demonic activity, leading us back to Eve's 'conspiracy' with Satan.

Protofeminism?

It would be foolish to suggest that early Stuart playwrights were protofeminists. Indeed, women were frequently derided, suppressed and subjected to sexual domination of all kinds, in the name of commercialism. Chapman's view, at the dawn of the seventeenth century, was perhaps the most limited of all, in that, while a considerable sympathy is created

for Tamyra (Chapter 1), conclusions are drawn about women that are disparaging and confirm the negative stereotypes of the age. As we have seen throughout these plays, women were disempowered, demonised, and tortured. However, it would be equally foolish to suggest that the playwrights were consistently misogynistic. There are great opportunities in these plays to consider a political agenda that lobbies for greater freedom for women. We saw in *The Queen of Corinth* (Chapter 4), for example, that Merione's 'rights' are limited to a patriarchal series of options: isolation as 'whore' or nun, or marriage to her rapist. However, this could be performed as agitation propaganda, in which the playwrights highlight the absurdity of her 'rights,' and her concept of clemency, which results in her self-appointed erasure.

We encountered a similar seeming endorsement of women's rights in *The Sea Voyage* (Chapter 5), through the positive presentation of Aminta's voice. The playwrights seem to be approving women's efficacy in the public sphere. They have severed that tenuous connection between internal genitalia and voice (paralleled as unobtrusive and silent). The playwrights even dare to suggest the men are too barbaric for the public sphere, because they attempted to silence Aminta through their projected cannibalism—neither shrew nor scold, and yet verbose, Aminta rises above the stereotype of the garrulous woman.

Shirley, too, offers a glimpse of hope for female agency through the 'grotesque' body of Rosaura (*The Cardinal*, Chapter 8). It is possible to read her subversion as a proto-Bakhtinian revolution: by subverting the classical order of nature, Rosaura is asserting herself as an individual. Through madness, which she first feigned and then truly suffered, Shirley permits Rosaura an opportunity for protest or rebellion, even if her power in this madness is very brief.

Last Words

While these plays clearly reinforced the cultural assumption that transgressive women must be suppressed, they simultaneously exposed their society to issues worthy of debate. These playwrights, now remembered (when they *are* remembered) as 'minor,' wilfully flung open a Pandora's Box that was shut in later centuries, through reductivist, essentialist, masculinist readings. The playwrights may have portrayed at times, even often, the message that women need to be bridled, but in so doing they still staged women whose voices forced audiences to think about contemporary social issues. The women in these plays who wreaked havoc did it well, until their mouths were stopped through reductive or neglectful criticism. The playwrights and early modern audiences, it would seem, were not so stifling as the following centuries have been to the women who are presented in this drama. It is time to let them wreak havoc again.

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Abbreviations

CSRLC *Cambridge Studies in Renaissance Literature and Culture*
CUP *Cambridge University Press*
NY *New York*
ELH *English Literary History*
ELR *English Literary Renaissance*
OUP *Oxford University Press*
Ms(s) *Manuscript(s)*
PMLA *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America*
Ren. Drama N.S. *Renaissance Drama New Series*
RQ *Renaissance Quarterly*
SEL *Studies in English Literature*
SQ *Shakespeare Quarterly*
SSEL *Salzburg Studies in English Literature*
SUS *Salzburg University Studies*
U. *University*
UCP *University of California Press*
UP *University Press*

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